



GIEWS Update

The Republic of Haiti

Acute food insecurity surges at unprecedented levels

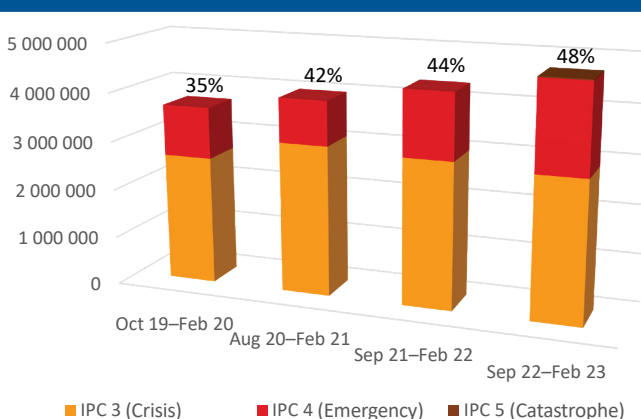
Highlights

- Between September 2022 and February 2023, about 4.7 million people are projected to experience high levels of acute food insecurity.
- Economic contraction, sociopolitical instability and worsening insecurity has gradually deteriorated the food security situation in the country.
- The cholera outbreak is likely to hit vulnerable populations who are already facing food insecurity, and humanitarian assistance is urgently needed to save lives.

Food insecurity in Haiti has been worsening since 2018 due to the economic downturn, high inflation, low agricultural production and frequent natural disasters, exacerbated by persistent political instability and worsening security situations. According to the latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis, the number of

people facing acute food insecurity is projected at a record level of 4.7 million between September 2022 and February 2023, representing nearly half of the population analysed (Figure 1). This figure includes 1.8 million people in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency) and 19 000 people who have been classified, for the first time in the country, in IPC Phase 5 (Catastrophe). The population experiencing “Catastrophe” levels of acute food insecurity is located in the Cité Soleil commune of the capital city, where intergang violence is affecting households’ access to markets and essential services. While the outbreak of cholera since October 2022 requires urgent life-saving assistance, the heightened insecurity and with fuel shortages are likely to limit access to the affected areas, hindering an adequate provision of medical supplies.

Figure 1: Haiti - Evolution of population classified in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) or above (October 2019–February 2023)



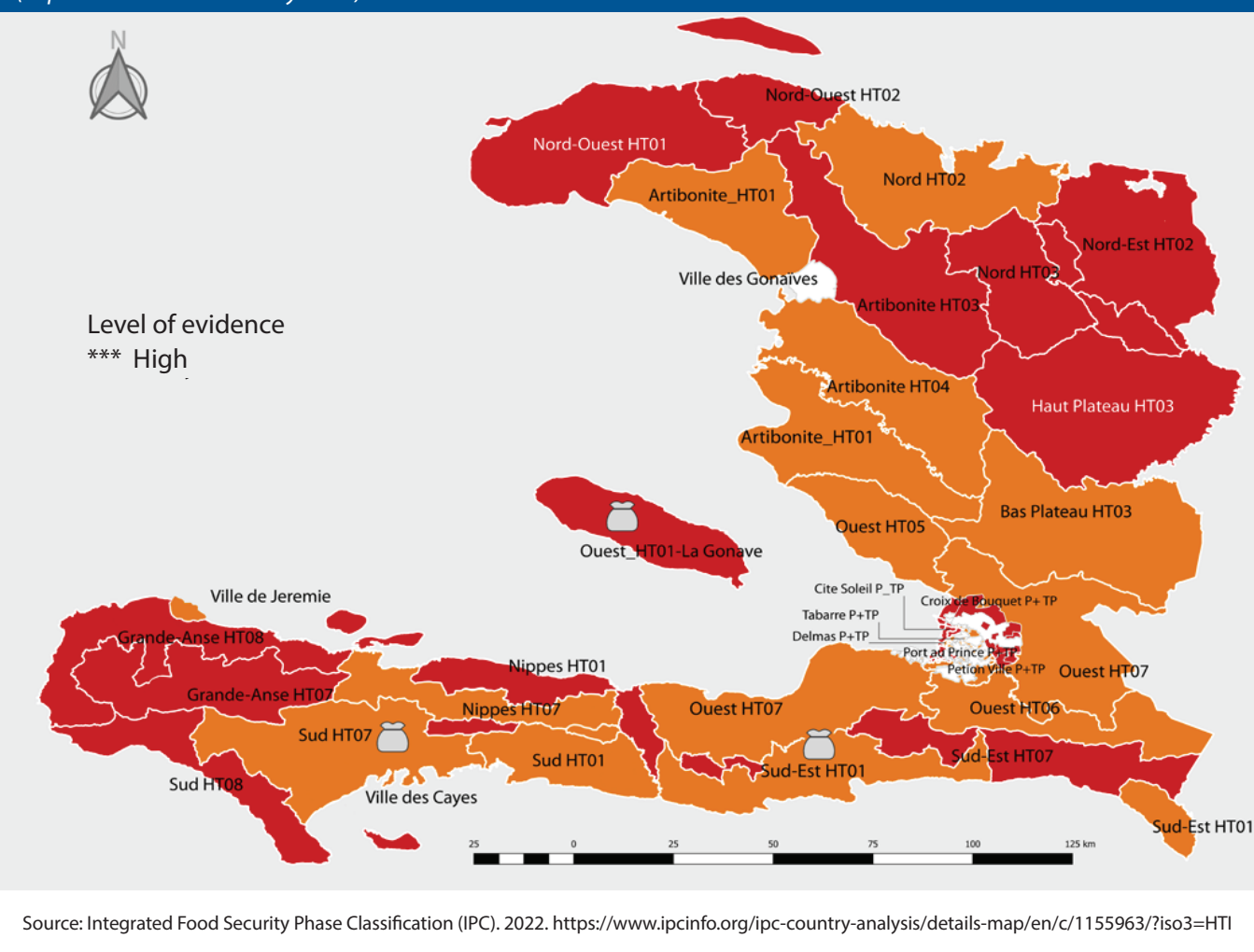
Note: Percentages refer to the share of people classified in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) or above, out of the total population analysed.

Source: Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC). 2022.
https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Haiti_Acute_Food_Insecurity_2022Sept2023June_Report_French.pdf.

Reduced food supply pushed prices up, limiting access to food

Similar to the last four years, the 2022 cereal output is forecast at below average levels as farmers struggled to access agricultural inputs, amid reduced availabilities and elevated prices. Currently, the harvest of the 2022 second minor maize and paddy crops is ongoing, and production is forecast at a below-average level. The poor performance is due to the high costs of agricultural inputs, widespread shortages of fuel and reduced availability of seeds

Map 1: Haiti - Acute food insecurity situation
(September 2022–February 2023)



from the preceding main season that was affected by dry weather conditions between May and July.

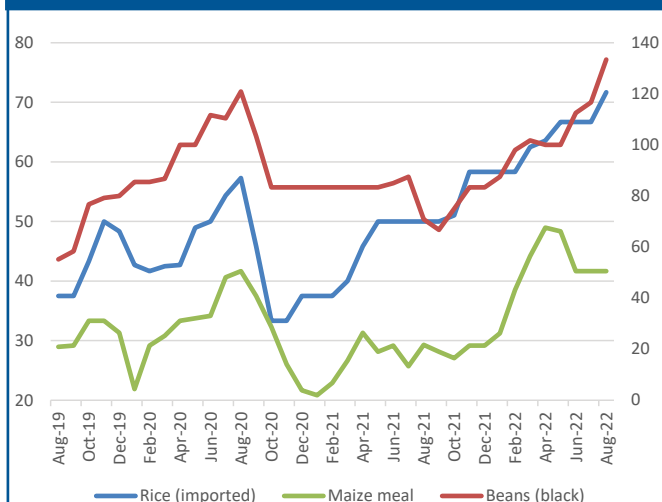
The low availability of locally produced food crops since 2019 resulted in high import requirements to satisfy the country's consumption needs. However, imports of cereals, mainly wheat and rice, were below-average levels in 2020 and 2021, constrained by the country's low import capacity due to the significant depreciation of the Haitian gourde. As the national currency keeps weakening, below-average imports of cereals are likely to be registered also in 2022.

Reflecting the reduced supplies, prices of both domestically grown cereals and imported food commodities have been on the rise since 2019, with the exception of the September–December 2020 period (Figure 2), when the revaluation of the country's currency by the Central Bank exerted a

short-lived downward pressure on prices. In 2022, food prices have been well above their year-earlier levels, with an annual food inflation rate officially estimated at 30.5 percent in July 2022.

The decline in food supplies and elevated prices have had a severe impact on food security. The high levels of food prices have diminished the purchasing power of highly vulnerable households, limiting their access to food. In rural areas, below-average cereal production in recent years limited financial gains of farmers and reduced food availability for their own consumption. According to the latest IPC analysis, the food insecurity situation worsened at least in one area in all departments, moving from IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) to IPC Phase 4 (Emergency) between 2021 and 2022. The deterioration is mainly attributed to the heightening insecurity in urban areas, production shortfalls in rural areas as well as lasting effects from the 2021 earthquake that devastated the southern region.

Figure 2: Haiti - Retail prices of selected staple food items in Port-au-Prince (August 2019–August 2022)



Source: FAO Food Price Monitoring and Analysis (FPMA) Tool. 2022. <https://fpma.fao.org/gIEWS/fpmat4/#/dashboard/home>.

Insecurity hinders access to markets with severely negative effects on food security

Gang violence has heightened in urban areas since mid-2021 amid political turmoil, with severely negative effects on households' access to markets and basic services. Gang presence has hindered access to the main highways that connect the capital with northern and southern areas, while a minor road to the southern peninsula (Laboule 12) remains blocked since June 2021. Between mid-September and early November 2022, gangs blocked access to the Varreux port terminal in Port-au-Prince, the main entry point for fuel and other imported commodities, causing a widespread shortage of fuel and underpinning sharp increases in retail prices. Heightened insecurity has also resulted in displacement of the most vulnerable

people. As of November 2022, about 85 percent of the 113 000 internally displaced people in the whole country fled gang violence in the capital Port-au-Prince.¹

Widespread large-scale protests intensified after the government announced an increase in fuel prices in September 2022. Mass demonstrations, often associated with road blockages, are further hampering transportation of goods and households' access to markets. Between September and October 2022, several warehouses of major humanitarian organizations were looted in the departments of Artibonite and Sud, losing critical health and nutrition supplies for households experiencing dire food security situation.

Areas affected by the cholera outbreak already face high levels of food insecurity

After the first cases of cholera were confirmed in the country in early October, the disease continues to spread, reaching 12 987 suspected cases, 1 153 confirmed cases and 273 deaths, as of 2 December.² About 80 percent of the confirmed cases of cholera were reported in Ouest Department, where the capital, Port-au-Prince, is located. The outbreak of cholera is likely to exacerbate the already fragile situation, as about one-third of the population has no access to basic water services.³ In addition, the communes of Port-au-Prince and Cité Soleil have high number of confirmed cholera cases and are also classified in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency), with 5 percent of the population of Cité Soleil in IPC Phase 5 (Catastrophe). The heightened insecurity, along with fuel shortages, is likely to limit access to affected areas, hindering epidemiological monitoring and adequate provision of medical supplies.

¹ International Organization for Migration (IOM). 2022. *Haiti Crisis: Cholera & Displacements. Flash Appeal November 2022–April 2023*. Port-au-Prince. <https://haiti.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd11091/files/documents/Cholera%20Flash%20Appeal%201611%20%281%29.pdf>.

² Ministry of Public Health and Population of Haiti (MSPP). 2022. *Situation épidémiologique du choléra*. Directorate of Epidemiology Laboratory and Research (DELR). Port-au-Prince. https://mspp.gouv.ht/site/downloads/Sitrep%20cholera_03_D%C3%A9cembre%202022..pdf.

³ United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). 2022. *Haiti - Cholera Humanitarian Situation Report No. 3 (22 October–4 November)*. UNICEF Haiti. Port-au-Prince. [https://www.unicef.org/media/130071/file/UNICEF%20Haiti%20Humanitarian%20Situation%20Report%20No.%203%20\(Cholera\)%20-%202022%20October%20-%20204%20November%202022.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/media/130071/file/UNICEF%20Haiti%20Humanitarian%20Situation%20Report%20No.%203%20(Cholera)%20-%202022%20October%20-%20204%20November%202022.pdf).

FAO to provide assistance for livelihoods restoration

As an emergency response to the cholera outbreak, the Government of Haiti, the United Nations and partners appealed for USD 145.6 million to provide life-saving assistance to 1.4 million people living in the most affected areas.⁴ The food security sector requires USD 71.9 million to assist 568 000 highly vulnerable people and aims to provide warm

meals to patients in cholera treatment centres and disburse cash transfers to cholera patients as well as people classified in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency) and above. To support livelihoods of those who have been affected by the cholera outbreak, FAO plans to engage 8 000 households (40 000 people) in agricultural activities, such as microgardening and small animal husbandry, with an estimated budget of USD 3 million.⁵

⁴ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). 2022. *Haiti 2022 Appel Éclair Choléra+ (novembre 2022)*. Port-au-Prince. Cited 15 November 2022. <https://reliefweb.int/report/haiti/haiti-2022-appel-eclair-cholera-novembre-2022>.

⁵ Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). 2022. *Haiti - Appel à une assistance d'urgence*. Rome. <https://www.fao.org/3/cc3274fr/cc3274fr.pdf>.

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