Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GIEWS Country Brief
The United Republic of Tanzania

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FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- **Erratic temporal distribution of seasonal rains affecting yields of "Masika" and "Msimu" crops**
- **Maize national average price in May close to its year-earlier level**
- **Pockets of acute food insecurity due to crop losses and high food prices**

Erratic temporal distribution of seasonal rains affecting yields of "Masika" and "Msimu" crops

In northern, northeastern and coastal bimodal rainfall areas, harvesting operations of the 2026 "Masika" crops, planted between February and March, began in early July and will conclude in late August. Seasonal rains, spanning from March to May, were characterized by above-average cumulative rainfall amounts, but they had an erratic temporal distribution, with torrential rains received in March followed by below-average to average precipitation amounts in April and May. In northeastern and coastal areas, the soil moisture surpluses accumulated in March sustained generally favourable crop conditions. However, in some northern areas, severe rainfall deficits in April and May led to below-average vegetation conditions and are expected to result in localized production shortfalls.

In southern and central unimodal rainfall areas, the 2026 major "Msimu" harvest concluded in late June. The rainy season, which normally extends from November to April, has been characterized by prolonged dry spells between December 2025 and mid-January 2026, adversely affecting early crop development and vegetation conditions in several cropping areas. According to FAO's Agricultural Stress Index (ASI), about a third of cropland in Dodoma and Mbeya regions, which account for almost 20 percent of the national cereal output, was affected by severe drought in late January. Although above-average rainfall amounts during the remainder of the cropping season improved vegetation conditions, crop losses were already irreversible in some areas, particularly in western and central parts of the country.

Yields of most crops have also been affected by generalized low application rates of fertilizers. As about 95 percent of the country's fertilizer requirements are met through imports, the sector is highly dependent on efficient port operations. The lockdowns and curfews imposed following the social unrest that

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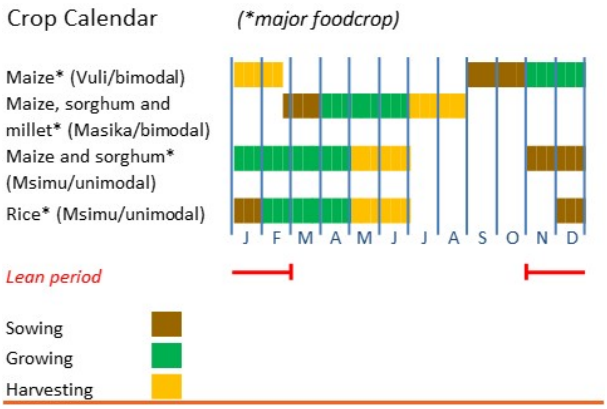
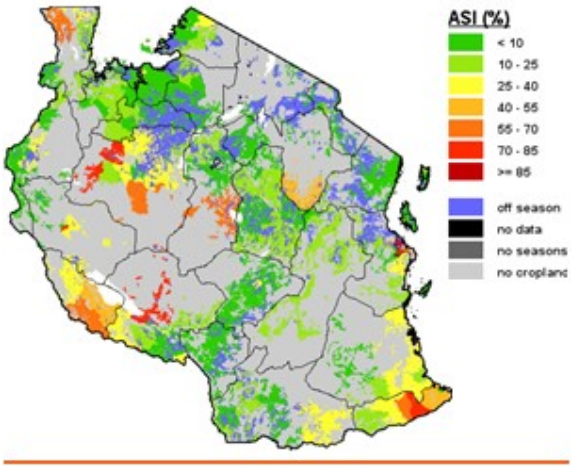


United Republic of Tanzania - Agricultural Stress Index (ASI)

from start of season 1 to dekad 3, May 2026



erupted after the October 2025 elections disrupted port operations and delayed fertilizer deliveries by several weeks, limiting timely applications at the beginning of the major “Msimu” cropping season. Subsequently, rising international fertilizer prices in early 2026, linked to the conflict in the Middle East, constrained input use during planting of the 2026 “Masika” crops, with an expected negative impact on yields.

According to the Tanzania Meteorological Authority (TMA), ongoing El Niño conditions, expected to persist at least until early 2027, are likely to result in above-average rainfall amounts from October 2026 onwards in Dar es Salaam, Tanga, Morogoro, Lindi and Mtwara regions and in Unguja and Pemba islands. In Dar es Salaam and Tanga regions and in Unguja and Pemba islands, located in bimodal rainfall areas, the expected above-average rains will likely boost yields of secondary season 2026 “Vuli” crops, to be harvested in January and February 2027. In Morogoro, Lindi and Mtwara regions, located in unimodal rainfall areas, the expected above-average rains will likely benefit germination and establishment of the 2027 “Msimu” crops, to be harvested between May and July 2027. However, excessive rains will heighten the risk of floods, pest and disease outbreaks, degradation of grazing areas, and damage to fisheries and aquaculture infrastructure, with ensuing crop and livelihood losses.

Aggregate cereal production in 2026 (including an average output of the “Vuli” harvest) is tentatively forecast at near average 12.8 million tonnes. Maize production is put at 7.3 million tonnes, about 3 percent below the average, while the paddy rice output is forecast at 4.3 million tonnes, about 10 percent above-average, as farmers substantially increased plantings in response to high market prices.

Maize national average price in May close to its year-earlier level

The national average price of maize seasonally increased by 11 percent between October 2025 and March 2026, and subsequently declined by 3 percent between March and May as traders released stocks in advance of the “Msimu” harvest. Despite the reduced production in 2026 and the high fuel prices linked to the Middle East conflict, which increased production and transport costs, maize prices in May were near their year-earlier levels, reflecting adequate domestic availability and limited export outflows due to restrictive permit procedures.

Pockets of acute food insecurity due to crop losses and high food prices

According to the latest IPC analysis, published in late April 2026 and conducted in 30 vulnerable rural districts of mainland Tanzania about 507 000 people (5 percent of the analysed population) are projected to face severe acute food insecurity between June 2026 and January 2027. The main drivers are crop production shortfalls in 2024 and 2025 due to extreme weather events (floods and dry spells) and outbreaks of pests and diseases (including Fall Armyworm and Quelea Quelea birds) as well as high food prices.

As of May 2026, about 147 000 refugees and asylum seekers, mainly from Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, were residing in the country, mainly in Nyarugusu camp in western Kigoma Region, near the border with Burundi. Most refugees and asylum seekers lack adequate access to livelihood opportunities and rely entirely on humanitarian assistance.

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Cereal Production

	2021-2025 average	2025	2026 forecast	change 2026/2025
	000 tonnes			percent
Maize	7 517	7 500	7 300	-2.7
Rice (paddy)	4 071	3 898	4 300	10.3
Sorghum	773	750	750	0.0
Others	414	417	417	0.0
Total	12 775	12 565	12 767	1.6

Note: Percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

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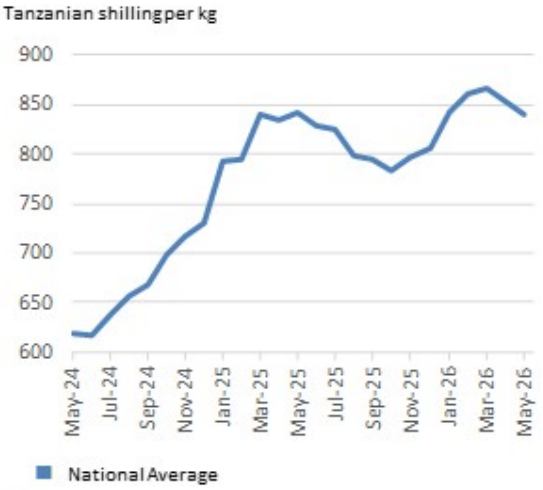
Wholesale prices of maize



United Republic of Tanzania - Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)

Projection June 2026 – January 2027

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This brief was prepared using the following data/tools:
FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet (CCBS) https://www.fao.org/giews/data-tools/en/.
FAO/GIEWS Food Price Monitoring and Analysis (FPMA) Tool https://fpma.fao.org/.
FAO/GIEWS Earth Observation for Crop Monitoring https://www.fao.org/giews/earthobservation/.
Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) https://www.ipcinfo.org/.