



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**

Malawi

Drought Flash Appeal
2025

El Niño-induced drought has left millions of people in Malawi acutely food insecure. With over 80 percent of the population employed by the agriculture sector, agricultural livelihoods and the country's economic stability have been severely impacted. **Affected communities urgently need support to boost food production** and protect animals many depend on for survival.



TO ASSIST
1 million people



FAO REQUIRES
USD 40.5 million



JANUARY–DECEMBER
2025

What investments in agriculture can achieve

USD 195 =

With a crop production package, a household can produce 1.4 tonnes of maize and 50 kg of beans, worth USD 1 060 on the local market.

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Support a family to produce enough staple food for a year

USD 170 =

With a livestock package, five goats and an assorted animal health kit, a household can earn at least USD 400 annually by selling goats or meat. As the goats multiply over time, their potential income can increase exponentially.

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Enable a family to access nutritious animal products, especially milk for children, and income

USD 80 =

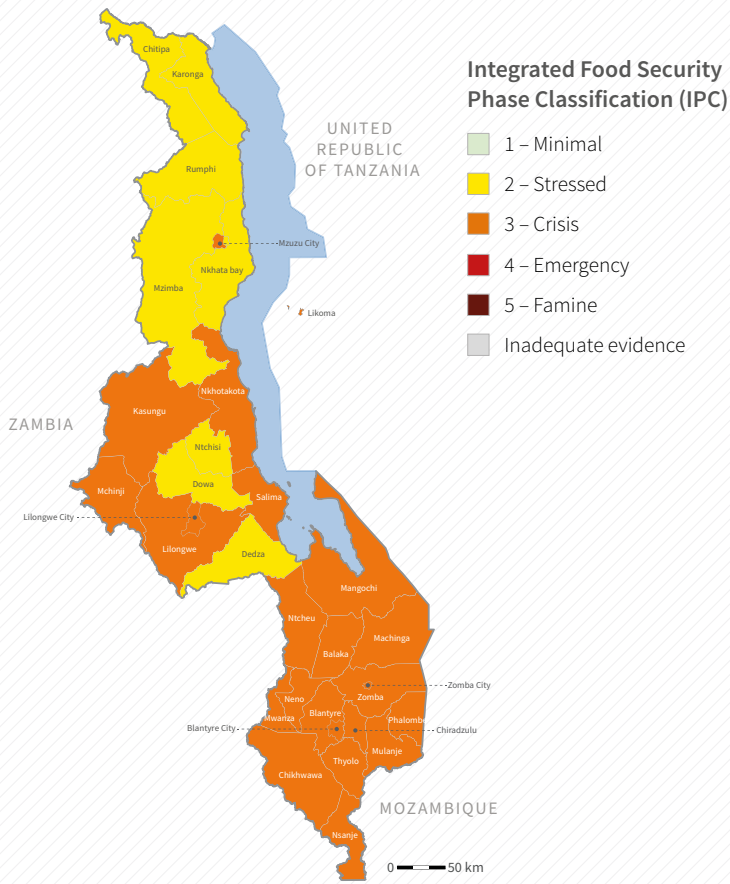
With a fishing package, a household can earn at least USD 3 428 annually by selling fish.

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Provide a family with a sustainable source of income and protein

Projected acute food insecurity situation (October 2024–March 2025)



Note: Refer to the disclaimer on the last page for the names and boundaries used in this map.
 Source: IPC. 2025. *Malawi: Acute Food Insecurity Situation, May 2024–March 2025*. Lilongwe, Malawi.
<https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1157089>

Urgency of humanitarian agricultural assistance

Malawi's 2023/24 agricultural season was severely affected by El Niño weather conditions. Prolonged and severe dry spells occurred at key developmental stages for various crops, including maize (the main staple crop) which registered a decrease of 17 percent from the previous year. This ultimately led to a declaration of a state of disaster in 23 out of 28 districts, with almost 6 million people acutely food insecure. The economy, specifically the agriculture sector, which contributes 22.3 percent of the country's gross domestic product, was particularly hit. Maize prices, for example, are 160 percent higher than the five-year average and inflation has continued to rise. Families have exhausted their food stocks, leaving them no choice but to adopt negative coping mechanisms, such as children missing or leaving school to participate in household chores or manual labour to bring in additional income. In the Southern Region and parts of the Central Region, households have been forced to migrate to other districts, urban areas and in some cases, to neighbouring countries such as Mozambique, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia for food and income.

Affected families urgently need emergency agricultural assistance to protect and restore their livelihoods, which depend on farming, and boost food production and stocks to alleviate hunger and strengthen resilience.

Drivers of food insecurity

- Drought
- Floods
- Economic decline
- High food prices
- Pest and disease

Key facts

Country population: **20.7 million**



5.7 million people facing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above)



17% drop in maize production compared to 2023



85% of population employed in agriculture sector



9 million people negatively impacted by El Niño



USD 1.10 out of 100 in humanitarian assistance to food sectors went to support agriculture and livelihoods (2016–2023)



In 2024, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) reached 40 000 people with emergency agricultural assistance in Machinga, Mangochi, Phalombe and Zomba districts. Farming communities in the districts of Balaka, Chikwawa,

and Neno also received agricultural advisory messages on El Niño. In total, FAO disbursed nearly USD 1.43 million to vulnerable households through cash transfers that contributed to increasing incomes and enhancing food security.

Coordination

As co-lead of the National Agriculture Cluster with the Government of Malawi, FAO works closely with 20 institutional counterparts and local and international partners to ensure a needs-based, coordinated and effective response.

FAO priorities

Priority	Type of assistance to be provided/ content of assistance package	Cost per household (USD)	Number of beneficiary households	Total cost (USD)	Funds needed by	Planned implementation period
Intensify crop production to boost food production	Crop seed package (10 kg maize, 3 kg legume/pulses, 50 kg basal fertilizer, and 50 kg top dressing fertilizer) and training on climate-smart agriculture	195	100 000	19 500 000	February	February–July
	Provision of disease-free breeding stock to households that lost their livestock: four female (does) and one male (buck)	170		12 818 000		
Safeguard livestock loss and promote productivity	Provision of assorted animal health drug kits, including dewormers and antibiotics; veterinary check-ups and treatment of livestock against common illnesses	40	75 400	3 016 000		May–November
	Vaccination for up to 20 animals/ household against Newcastle disease in poultry and other diseases to prevent outbreaks, and sensitization of communities	10		754 000		
Implement fisheries and aquaculture restoration initiatives	Pond management activities including pond cleaning and maintenance, water quality management, aquatic vegetation control, and pest and predator control	30		1 500 000		March–November
	Provision of up to 1 500 fingerlings/ household for re-stocking	30	50 000	1 500 000		
	Provision of improved fish-feed stocks for aquaculture: 20 kg/household as initial start-up feed	20		1 000 000		

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