



## GIEWS Country Brief The Republic of Yemen

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### FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Although overall security situation improved, economic crisis and localized conflict, especially in frontline districts, continue to threaten livelihoods
- Slightly above-average 2022 cereal harvest estimated
- Stable cereal import requirements forecast, yet import bill significantly higher due to elevated international prices
- Over 17 million food insecure people (about 54 percent of population) in October-December 2022 period

### Although overall security situation improved, economic crisis and localized conflict continue to threaten livelihoods

Sorghum is grown across the country. In Central, Northern and Southern highlands, it was planted in mid-April, for harvest from September. In areas with no distinct rainy season along the Red and Arabian sea coasts, the first planting of sorghum took place in February and March, and the second will follow in August and September. In Central and Southern highlands, areas with distinct rainy seasons, wheat will be planted in June.

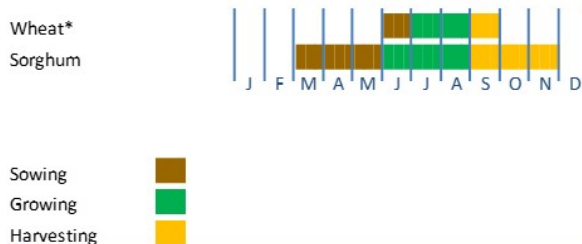
According to meteorological observations, seasonally dry weather conditions prevailed between January and mid-March 2023 across the country. Abundant rainfall in late March caused localized flooding in Central highlands and Southern uplands, while torrential rains in the second decade of April across most of the western parts of the country triggered broader flooding that affected both rural and urban areas, including Sana'a, and resulted in loss of lives and material damages. The country's infrastructure remains insufficient to prevent annual flooding events.

The truce agreed under the auspices of the United Nations in April 2022 expired in October 2022, but the warring parties have largely remained in an informal state of ceasefire since then. Although the overall security situation is reckoned to have partially improved, localized conflict in warring fronts and the protracted economic crisis, prevented any significant economic

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Crop Calendar

(\*major foodcrop)



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Cereal Production

	2018-2022 average	2022	2023 forecast	change 2023/2022
	000 tonnes			percent
Sorghum	199	210	200	-4.8
Wheat	98	100	100	0.0
Millet	46	45	45	0.0
Others	61	60	60	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>-2.4</b>

Note: Percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

recovery across the country. Generally, prices of [fuel](#), mostly diesel, an important input to agricultural production, especially for irrigation, have been relatively stable or declining in the areas under Sana'a based authorities (SBA), reflecting stable exchange rates and improved availability of imported fuel, resulting in declines by almost 60 percent year-on-year in some markets away from the conflict front line. On the contrary, in the areas under control of the Government of Yemen (GoY), fuel prices remain high and volatile, reflecting exchange rates variations and different exchange rates in each area (discussed later in the brief).

The country is prone to periodic desert locust outbreaks. As of May 2023, low numbers of solitarious adults were detected in the country. Latest forecast point to below-average to average amounts of rainfall from June to September. An average level of precipitation might be conducive to small-scale breeding to occur.

### Slightly above-average cereal harvest in 2022

Total cereal production in 2022 was estimated at 415 000 tonnes, about 5 percent below the previous year's harvest and almost 25 percent below the five-year average. From 2010-2014, the five-year average cereal production exceeded 850 000 tonnes. The average area planted with cereals decreased from the average of 830 000 hectares in 2010-2014, to slightly less than 500 000 hectares on average between 2017 and 2021. Part of the decline in planted area is attributable to physical access to the fields, including due to displacement mining.

On average, total domestic cereal production covers less than 20 percent of the total utilization (food, feed and other uses). The country is largely dependent on commercial imports and food assistance to satisfy its domestic consumption requirements for wheat, the main staple in urban areas. The import requirement for cereals to guarantee a sufficient calorie in-take in the 2023 marketing year (January/December) is forecast at a near-average level of 4.6 million tonnes, including 3.5 million tonnes of wheat (including flour in grain equivalent), 700 000 tonnes of maize and 410 000 tonnes of rice.

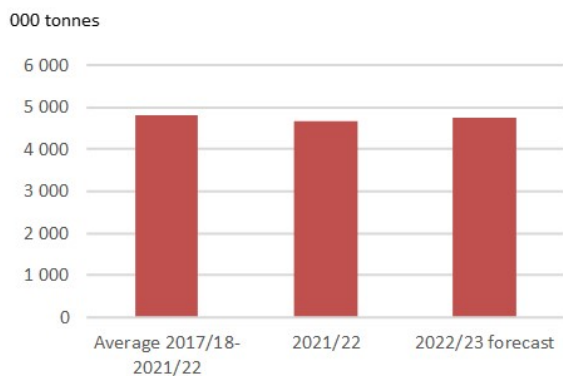
The country traditionally relied on imports of wheat grain from the Russian Federation and Ukraine. Since 2017, the share of wheat grain sourced from the Russian Federation gradually declined from 45 percent to 20 percent in 2021, while the share of wheat grain sourced from Ukraine increased from 5 percent in 2017 to 27 percent in 2021.

In 2022, the start of the war in Ukraine, a major grain and oilseed exporter, raised concerns about the availability of certain food commodities, including wheat, on the global markets and the capacity of food-importing countries to secure sufficient supplies and urgently diversify their sourcing origins.

According to the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism for Yemen (UNVIM), [2.98 million tonnes of wheat grain](#), were imported in 2022, about the same amount as in the previous years. About 75 percent of imported wheat entered via the ports of Al Hodeidah and As Salif (both under control of SBA), while the rest entered via ports of Aden and Mukalla (both under control of GoY).

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### Cereals Imports



Notes: Includes rice in milled terms. Split years refer to individual crop marketing years (for rice, calendar year of second year shown).

In 2022, import origins have been diversified, away from northern Black Sea: one-third of wheat grain was imported from Australia and over 20 percent from the United States of America, both traditional suppliers to the country, while almost 15 percent of wheat grain imports were supplied from India and 10 percent from France. The shipments under the Black Sea Grain Initiative (BSGI) from Ukrainian Black Sea ports amounted to about 304 000 tonnes, slightly over 10 percent.

## More than 17 million people food insecure

Despite some improvements in security, the economic crisis and localized conflicts continue, fuelled by persistent political instability, insufficient external revenues and elevated global commodity prices weighting on the import bill. Despite the relatively high global crude oil prices, oil exports from ports in the areas controlled by the GoY did not resume after repeated attacks on the crude oil infrastructure in late 2022, with seriously curtailing GoY's export revenues.

After November 2019, when USD 1 was traded for YER 575 across the country, the exchange rates between southern and northern governorates started diverging significantly. In March 2023, USD 1 was traded for YER 1 244 in the south (GoY), depreciating 3 percent compared to March 2022. In the north, controlled by SBA, the average exchange rate remained stable at YER 545/USD 1, appreciating by 10 percent year-on-year.

Diverging exchange rates have an impact on food prices: the cost of the Minimum Food Basket (MFB) in March 2023 averaged YER 115 327 in GoY areas and YER 54 956 in SBA areas. Converted to United States dollars using the local exchange rates, the cost of the MFB in the GoY amounts to USD 110 and in SBA about 105 USD.

In the latest countrywide Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis, more than 17 million people (54 percent of the population) were estimated to be in crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 [Crisis] and above) levels of acute food insecurity, including 6.1 million people in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency) between October and December 2022. It represents a slight improvement compared to the period January-March 2022, when 17.4 million people were estimated in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) and above. In 2023, a partial IPC analysis in GoY-controlled areas, where approximately 25 percent of the population in acute food insecurity resides, shows that the situation remains dire.

During the second half of 2022, humanitarian food assistance has scaled up following the improved access facilitated by the truce, contributing to a relief from catastrophic conditions that were previously projected for 161 000 people between June and November 2022.

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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/>*