



World Food Programme



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WFP Southern Africa El Niño Situation Report

Situation Report #2, 23 March 2016

HIGHLIGHTS

- A total of 31.6 million people are food insecure in the region, according to the Southern Africa Food and Nutrition Security Working Group. This figure represents the number of food insecure people at the peak of the current lean season and marks an increase from 29.9 million in February, 2016.
- WFP El Niño related programmes in southern Africa are currently facing a 74% shortfall through to February 2017. Please refer to page 6 for project requirements.
- The SADC Council of Ministers met 14-15 March in Gaborone, Botswana and agreed there should be a declaration of a regional drought disaster. This followed a SADC convened special meeting on 25th-26th February in Johannesburg to discuss the impacts of the El Niño and develop an action plan.
- Lesotho, Swaziland and Zimbabwe have completed rapid multi-sectoral assessments; while updates are ongoing in Mozambique and Namibia.

SITUATION UPDATE

- Southern Africa's unprecedented El Niño-related and weather-related stress has triggered a second year of food insecurity for the vulnerable with serious consequences that will persist until at least the next harvest in March 2017.
- The current regional cereal deficit of 7.9 million tonnes will increase steeply and unprecedented food price volatility will continue through to the next harvest. This will aggravate the food and nutrition security, health and HIV situation in the region and calls for stronger regional cooperation to facilitate cross border movements to the areas that are most affected.
- The current El Niño event is expected to persist for an additional 4-6 months, with the potential to change to La Niña in southern Africa before the end of the year. La Niña is characterized by increased rains and the possibility of flooding.
- There are early signs of nutritional deterioration with acute malnutrition increasing in Zimbabwe, southern Madagascar, Malawi and Mozambique. In Zimbabwe the ZIMVAC rapid assessment found a Global Acute Malnutrition rate of 5.7%, the highest it has been in 15 years. In Mozambique, acute malnutrition is rising and in southern Madagascar acute malnutrition rates are significantly worse than in 2014.

WFP/FAO supported the SADC El Niño conference held 25/26 February in Johannesburg with participation of 160 stakeholders. The conference acknowledged the reoccurrence of El Niño/La Niña events and a combination of both immediate and longer term measures were proposed to minimize the impact on communities. Some of the measures include providing preliminary data on the people affected and food deficits, importing food and essential non-food items and scaling up social protection programmes. A statement was prepared at the end of the conference and a draft action plan was prepared following the conference and shared with Member States.

Rapid needs assessments are currently underway in some affected countries updating the numbers of currently food insecure people and crop production assessments are on-going. Starting April, the annual national vulnerability assessments (VACs) will be conducted and will further inform the emergency response.

The region accounts for one-third of all people living with HIV worldwide. WFP is supporting the development of the Nutrition and HIV Trend and Impact Monitoring tool in collaboration with the Food and Nutrition Security Working Group (FNSWG). This tool seeks to consolidate national/subnational level data from the region to provide analysis on trends and indications of a deteriorating nutrition situation and possible impact on the HIV situation.

WFP is working to preposition stocks in view of the deteriorating food security situation. Though WFP's Global Commodity Management Facility, an estimated 20,000 MT of commodities (mainly maize) is being prepositioned in strategic locations. This will enable affected countries to swiftly draw upon supplies when contributions are received. Country offices urgently require resources to utilize this rapid response facility. To heighten El Niño preparations, a supply chain assessment has been conducted by WFP, which will be shared with regional stakeholders once completed.

WFP is using mobile technology to gather real-time food security information. This tool is being rolled-out in Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Madagascar. Please refer to the following site for more information on WFP mVAM monitoring:
http://vam.wfp.org/sites/mvam_monitoring/

Read the WFP report

**El Niño: Undermining Resilience -
Implications of El Niño in Southern Africa
from a Food and Nutrition Security
Perspective**

Released 29 February 2016



LESOTHO

Lesotho is one of the worst affected countries in the region, with reports showing that the 2015/16 agricultural season has failed. The harsh climatic conditions have depleted most water sources, including rivers and dams, leading to an acute shortage of potable water and strict water rationing.

The compounding effects have led to the **declaration of a state of drought emergency by Lesotho's Prime Minister on 22 December, 2015**. The results of a multi-stakeholder Rapid Drought Assessment conducted in January 2016, show that 535,000 people in the rural areas are experiencing food insecurity through June 2016. The situation is expected to worsen in the second half of the year into 2017.

Photo credits: WFP/Tsitsi Matope; Lesotho



Preliminary findings from the March Market Assessment indicate that cash is a viable option for at least 28 (44%) of the 63 Councils covered, where markets are fully functioning and with good road and financial infrastructure. Vouchers were recommended for 25 (41%) of the 63 Councils, where traders preferred assurances that food stocks would be procured.

WFP has started distributing cash to 4,000 households in two of the most drought-affected districts, Mafeteng and Mohale's Hoek. Each family will receive USD 65 a month for the next three months. The cash transfer will benefit 20,000 people.

WFP's response is being implemented within the government framework such as the Drought Response and Mitigation Plan, which includes a Health and Nutrition Response Plan. WFP continues to assist government in strengthening its Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience framework. Alongside, WFP is implementing joint resilience programming with the Disaster Management Authority and the Ministry of

Forestry that focuses on enhancing income and farm-based assets in order to increase farmers' resilience to shocks and school feeding for pre- and primary children.

MALAWI

The combined effects of severe floods and dry spells have left Malawi facing the worst food insecurity in a decade, which is now deteriorating further due to the second worst El Niño on record since 1900.

WFP Malawi is responding to the humanitarian needs of 2.4 million Malawians, in addition to the annual 1 million Malawians targeted under WFP social protection, nutrition and resilience building support. Following a year of the worst floods in 50 years and subsequent droughts, Malawi suffered a notably poor 2014/15 growing season resulting in its **first maize deficit in 10 years**. As per the Humanitarian Response Committee decision, WFP will begin assisting from March an additional 32,390 people identified as in need of assistance based on the recommendation of the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee.

In February, though rainfall improved in northern/central districts, in many areas this erratic rain came too late for proper crop development. Southern Malawi continued to experience low rainfall. Given the expected low rainfall for the rest of the season, central and southern Malawi are projected to experience poor and failed crops.

WFP is planning to continue assistance into April to a portion of the affected population (pending funds) with activities designed to boost productive capacity and contribute towards resilience building. The Rural Resilience Initiative, for example, which is an integrated risk management project (R4) supporting smallholder farmers to mitigate drought risk, is being implemented.

For more information on mVAM in Malawi, see the
WFP Malawi mVAM Report #3
Released 25 February 2016



MADAGASCAR

The preliminary results of the Emergency Rapid Food Security Assessment Mission (January/February 2016) indicate that 1.14 million people in the Androy, Anosy and Atsimo Andrefana regions are facing food access difficulties, **of which 665,000 people are severely affected. This represents 80 percent of the population** in the seven most affected districts. Many households have exhausted their food stocks

and are dedicating their remaining resources exclusively to procuring food. It's estimated **that 70 to 80 percent of the 2015/2016 maize crop has been destroyed.**

Following a national meeting led by government in February, several ministries have committed to implement action plans in the next 100 days, though the budget has yet to be approved. Major actions will include water supply projects; the distribution of 500 tons of food aid to 350,000 people; setting up of mobile health structures; distribution of therapeutic food for acute malnutrition treatment; and food-for-assets activities.

WFP is currently assisting 140,000 drought-affected people in five districts through food-for-assets and cash-for-assets programmes; 40,000 children under five and pregnant and nursing mothers in five districts under a supplementary feeding programme for moderate acute malnutrition treatment; and is implementing a School Meals programme for 260,000 primary school children in 1,200 schools in three southern regions.



Photo Credit: WFP/Erin Collins - Malawi

MOZAMBIQUE

The Government of Mozambique, through the National Institute for Disaster Management (INGC) and the Technical Food Security and Nutrition Secretariat (SETSAN), has **requested UN support to assist about 380,000 people**. Meanwhile, the much below average rainfall and the poor start of the agricultural season further exacerbates the lean season food insecurity.

The latest updates received from provincial governments confirm that the population in need of food assistance is increasing. **FEWS NET estimates that about 600,000 people are currently in crisis (IPC Phase 3)** and in need of urgent humanitarian response. SETSAN is conducting a Food Security and Nutrition assessment to update the data of people in need of food assistance and results of the assessment are expected to be available by end-March.

As an immediate response, WFP, under the overall coordination of the government, intends to provide a minimum of 6-month food assistance to 250,000 people through Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) schemes and 50,000 people through General Food Distribution (GFD) from March onwards.

WFP is supporting government systems and programmes. It is expected that WFP's response will evolve and integrate as much as possible its response within the national social protections programmes, namely the productive safety net and emergency school feeding programmes.

SWAZILAND

El Niño conditions have led to extensive crop losses and cattle deaths in the country. **Maize prices increased by 66% in January 2016**, and a year-on-year decrease in maize production of 64 per cent is projected. Government and stakeholders have conducted a rapid assessment of food insecurity. Its preliminary results confirm the hardest-hit regions are Lubombo and Shiselweni. With a 30 to 60 day delay in the rainfall season, and poor rains when they did commence, thousands of subsistence farmers did not plant this season. This will also have a knock-on effect in 2017 as farmers will not have the resources, like seeds to plant again.

Swaziland faces fiscal and economic challenges, with poor predictions for Southern Africa Customs Union (SACU) revenue, continued slow economic growth and the devaluation of the South Africa Rand to which the local currency is pegged. **The Prime Minister of Swaziland declared a national state of emergency in February 2016** and launched the government's National Emergency Response Mitigation and Adaptation Plan (NERMAP), which calls for **immediate food assistance targeting 300,000 people in need throughout the entire country**.

While USD 7.4 million have been mobilized for emergency food assistance under the NERMAP, significant funding is still required, including \$29.3m for food assistance. The Prime Minister requested

technical and financial assistance from the international community to support the emergency response plan. The UN is developing a joint proposal to support the response through the UN emergency response funding window. However, substantial gaps in funding will remain.

WFP has prepared an Immediate Response Emergency Operation that will assist 72,000 beneficiaries, in the Lubombo and Shiselweni regions of Swaziland, which include some of the most drought-affected areas in the country.



Photo credits: WFP/Evin Joyce: Zambia

ZAMBIA

Maize prices currently exceed five year averages. Prices are highest in border areas due to cross border trade. In the south-west, FEWS NET forecasts food security will deteriorate to 'Crisis' levels (IPC Phase 3) in March. An evaluation of projected needs conducted by the Government's Disaster Mitigation and Management Unit (DMMU) in February estimates that **1,501,000 people in 34 districts will require food assistance for eight months from August, 2016**. This assistance will consist of 100,000 MT of cereals, 12,000 MT of pulses, 6,000 MT of oil and 1,800 MT of High Energy Biscuits. The ongoing provision of food assistance by the Government of Zambia to 800,000 people since August 2015 is planned to end in March, having distributed more than 30,000 MT of maize over the past eight months.

The DMMU, Ministry of Community Development, DFID, WFP and UNICEF have developed an Integrated Emergency Response Model to address the multifaceted problems triggered by El Niño. The target population to be reached using this model is estimated at 1.5 million and will be validated through upcoming assessments. The proposed transfer modalities will include social cash transfers and in-kind food

assistance depending on market functionalities. With the integrated response, government will lead food in-kind support for the cereals, while pulses and oil and High Energy Biscuits/Super Cereal Plus will be handled by WFP.

Further to avoid school dropouts due to worsening household food insecurity, discussions are underway between government and partners on expanding the coverage of the Home Grown School Feeding programme. An emergency supplementary and/or therapeutic feeding programme through health facilities will also be developed to address worsening child malnutrition.



Photo credits: WFP/Justin Ellis; Zimbabwe

ZIMBABWE

Vulnerable people in Zimbabwe will continue to receive relief assistance from WFP through what is usually a period of bounty but which this year has turned into a time of want. WFP is extending its relief programme due to the impact of El Niño on the food security of the country.

WFP's seasonal relief, designed to help vulnerable people through the difficult pre-harvest months, usually runs from October to March. This year – for the first time ever – the programme will continue

running throughout the year and into next year.

The unprecedented decision is in response to last month's announcement by the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC) that 2.8 million people – more than a quarter of the rural population – do not have enough to eat and have little or no guaranteed access to food.

The updated results project an 88% increase of the food insecure population from an initial forecast of 1.5 million people (16% of the rural population). **This is 400% higher than in 2014, which had an estimated food insecurity projection of 6% at peak.** This is the highest increase of prevalence of food insecurity the country has had in the last six years.

WFP estimates the prevalence of food insecurity in the rural population to fluctuate from 30% in April to 49% (approximately 4.4 million people) during the peak of the lean season from January to March 2017.

With recent rains, livestock grazing conditions have started to improve though, as of February, 19,000 drought-related cattle deaths have been reported. The improved grazing is however unlikely to change the situation of the livelihoods, especially for those who have started selling reproductive animals because it takes more than one season to recuperate from cattle loss.

Despite the late rains, crop development is unlikely to register any change, **the area planted under maize crop has significantly declined compared to the last 5 years.**

WFP is this month providing food and cash-based assistance to some 730,000 vulnerable people. Operations are being scaled up to reach an estimated 2.2 million people in the early months of next year, with the Government and development partners assisting the rest.

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WFP Southern Africa Requirements and Shortfalls March 2016 - February 2017

Total Requirement US\$482 Million; Shortfall US\$355 Million (74% shortfall)

Country	Operation	Total Planned Beneficiaries 2016*	Requirements (US\$)	Shortfall (US\$)**
Lesotho	CP 200369 - Lesotho Country Programme	99 250	5 724 236	3 048 812
	TF 200771 - Lesotho School Feeding	250 000	6 216 988	0
	IR-EMOP 200939 - Emergency assistance for vulnerable households affected by El Niño drought conditions in Lesotho	20 920***	1 000 000	0
	EMOP (Draft)	140 000	6 072 988	6 072 988
Madagascar	CP 200733 - Madagascar Country Programme	424 000	12 672 286	6 003 661
	PRRO 200735 - Response to Food Security and Nutrition Needs of Populations Affected by Natural Disasters and Resilience-Building****	292 000	11 113 814	7 462 752
Malawi	CP 200287 - Malawi Country Programme	898 070	18 735 260	9 219 871
	PRRO 200692 - Responding to Humanitarian Needs and Strengthening Resilience	2 500 988	95 398 455	59 058 631
Mozambique	CP 200286 - Mozambique Country Programme	239 210	13 202 394	2 748 605
	PRRO 200355 - Assistance to Disaster Affected and Vulnerable Groups	358 000	48 030 135	43 438 530
Swaziland	IR-EMOP 200954 (Draft) - Emergency assistance to vulnerable households affected by El Niño induced drought in Swaziland	72 000	680 078	680 078
	DEV 200353 – Food by Prescription	15 892	1 649 821	1 308 398
	DEV 200422 - Support to OVC, Secondary School Children and Informal Vocational Training Students Affected by HIV/AIDS	52 000	2 765 175	2 639 249
Tanzania	CP 200200 - Tanzania Country Programme	150 622	23 486 350	13 067 177
Zambia	CP 200891 - Zambia Country Programme	1 024 240	12 450 854	9 025 666
Zimbabwe	PRRO 200453 - Responding to Humanitarian Needs and Strengthening Resilience to Food Insecurity	943 009	49 308 605	22 678 804
	PRRO 200453 - Responding to Humanitarian Needs and Strengthening Resilience to Food Insecurity	1 143 555	169 901 230	168 310 868

* As per approved WFP programmes/currently under approval - figures subject to change as the situation evolves and further needs assessments are undertaken.

** Based on project pipeline data as of March 2016. Requirements and shortfalls to change as WFP scales up programming or adjusts its programmes in response to further needs assessments.

*** IR-EMOP beneficiaries overlap with EMOP and are therefore not counted twice in total.

****These figures may increase significantly soon as WFP re-calibrates its response to new El Niño needs.