



**WFP Regional Bureau for Southern Africa  
SPECIAL OPERATION 200993**

Country:	Regional Bureau for Southern Africa
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	Augmentation of WFP support to the SADC Secretariat and member states in response to El Niño-related drought
Total cost (US\$):	<b>US\$ 2,167,392</b>
Duration:	10 months (20 June 2016 – 19 April 2017)

**Executive Summary:**

1. Southern Africa's unprecedented El Niño-related drought and weather-related stress has triggered a second shock-year of hunger and hardship for poor and vulnerable people with serious consequences that will persist until at least until the next harvest in 2017. Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland and Zimbabwe have all declared states of emergency due to El Niño-induced drought, as have seven of South Africa's nine provinces. Mozambique declared a Red Alert, the highest level of national emergency preparedness, in the central and southern provinces.
2. The exceptional lack of precipitation, compounded by the impact of poor rainfall in previous years, has resulted in significant rain-fed yield losses, below-average irrigated crops, poor pasture conditions and high cattle mortalities. South Africa and Zambia, the usual maize surplus countries, have significantly reduced crop estimates, which will necessitate huge imports into the region. This follows a 2014-2015 agricultural season that was similarly characterized by hot, dry conditions and a 23 percent drop in regional cereal production.
3. In the 2014/15 lean season, some 32 million people were food insecure in the Southern Africa region – approximately 10 percent of the population – largely as a result of the drought which led to a poor harvest last year.<sup>1</sup> Updated estimates for the numbers of food insecure people for most countries in the region, following the conclusion of the 2016 national vulnerability assessments conducted by governments in partnership with key United Nations agencies and non-governmental organisations stand are estimated by the Southern African Development Community to stand at 39 million. Food and nutrition security will begin deteriorating by July in worst-affected areas, reaching peak levels between December 2016 and March 2017. Combined with some of the world's highest HIV rates, this is likely to lead to a further deterioration of the already poor nutrition situation in the region.

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<sup>1</sup> See "El Niño: Undermining Resilience - Implications of El Niño in Southern Africa from a Food and Nutrition Security Perspective, February 2016" for further background

4. In addition, there is a 70 percent likelihood that La Niña, generally associated with above average rainfall in many areas of Southern Africa, will occur by December 2016 particularly in the southern half of the region. While helping to reduce water deficits that have accumulated over the last two seasons, La Niña could also result in flooding in some flood-prone parts of the region, necessitating the incorporation of flood scenarios into contingency plans.
5. Given the scale of the El Niño response and La Niña potential, preparedness and response mechanisms are being scaled up at the regional level as well as in different countries supported by various partners and key stakeholders. On 15 March 2016, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Council of Ministers approved the declaration of a regional drought emergency and approved the creation of a regional Logistics Coordination Centre to coordinate the immediate response. Since then, WFP, together with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) have been working with the SADC Secretariat to analyse data being received from member states on the projected impact of the drought, and agree on priority technical support required.
6. On 26 May 2016, SADC announced the establishment of the SADC El Niño Response Team (including the logistics cell). UN partners supporting the cell include FAO, OCHA, UNICEF and WHO, and WFP will provide support in food and nutrition security analysis and logistics coordination and information management.
7. WFP launched a two-month regional Immediate Response-PREP 200979 (May 2016 – July 2016) in order to provide timely technical support to the SADC Response Team. This Special Operation 200993 will succeed the IR-PREP and cover additional requirements, including support to member states to enhance assessments and real-time monitoring as well as surge capacity in emergency preparedness and response at the regional bureau level. This Special Operation has a duration of ten months (mid-June 2016 – mid-April 2017) and a total budget of US\$ 2,167,392.

## **Project Background**

8. Over the last two years, food insecurity across Southern Africa has increased due to the depletion of regional cereal stocks and higher-than-average food prices. Previous hot, dry conditions are likely to reduce yields in both chronically food deficit areas and key surplus-producing parts of the region, including northern South Africa, northern Zimbabwe and possibly southern Zambia.
9. Some assessments are still ongoing to determine the full impact of El Niño on the main April harvest, but it is known that the impact will be severe. El Niño is expected to aggravate nutritional vulnerabilities across the region. There is a dearth of recent information on the nutrition and HIV situation from representative surveys. While the quality and timeliness of data varies,

national prevalence of malnutrition ranges between 1 percent and 15 percent across the region. Three to four out of ten children in Southern Africa are stunted and are therefore not able to achieve their full physical and cognitive potential.<sup>2</sup> The region accounts for one-third of all people living with HIV worldwide, and significant gaps in treatment and adherence complicate the situation. It is expected that nutritional and HIV indicators will further deteriorate as a result of El Niño.

10. People with greater nutritional needs remain most at risk, including young children, nursing mothers, the elderly and those living with tuberculosis and/or HIV on DOTS/ART treatment. Feeding frequency and dietary diversity are decreasing, as households prioritise staple foods over more micronutrient-dense foods in times of food scarcity and increasing food prices. Water scarcity is affecting the normal functioning of hospitals, health centres and schools, and exposes the most vulnerable (in particular those living with HIV) to water-borne diseases and other health-related problems.
11. The need for more harmonised and comparable data on the numbers of people affected and the depth of food insecurity resulting from the El Niño drought crisis, has created the necessary momentum for SADC and the Food and Nutrition Security Working Group (FNSWG)<sup>3</sup>/United Nations agencies to effectively promote the use of Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) initially in at least four of the most affected member states (Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland and Zimbabwe). By applying the IPC analysis and classification framework immediately into the Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis (VAA) and reporting process, this will enhance the quality and comparability of country findings and reports.
12. Within this context, SADC and the FNSWG/United Nations agencies are making efforts to integrate nutrition, HIV and gender-related indicators in annual vulnerability assessments conducted by Member States. To date, four countries have successfully done so, including Lesotho, Swaziland, Malawi and Zimbabwe.
13. Massive food and non-food procurement and imports, over and above traditional year-to-year levels, call for corresponding sizeable additional financial and logistics requirements on all systems<sup>4</sup>. Effective and efficient management of large import demands and commodities flows requires solid coordination, enhanced monitoring and access to real-time information. It has been acknowledged that there is a need to facilitate planning of logistics and resource mobilisation based on regional food requirements for the 2016/17 marketing year; creation of a web-based platform allowing for information sharing; production of proactive communication bulletins to keep all parties

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<sup>2</sup> The State of the World's Children, 2016, UNICEF

<sup>3</sup> Co-chaired by FEWSNET and WFP, core membership includes FAO, IFRC, OCHA, OXFAM, SADC/RVAA/PMU, UNICEF and WVI. The overall mission of the group is to contribute to enhanced programming for improved food security, nutrition and livelihoods in Southern Africa

<sup>4</sup> Southern Africa El Niño Preparedness, Issues paper: WFP Regional Supply Chain Assessment, March 2016

abreast of the response to the effects of El Niño; coordination and facilitation of food commodity importation.

14. In addition, the latest consensus El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) forecast from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) and International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI), two international climate centres that regularly track and forecast ENSO, suggests a high chance of La Niña, generally associated with above average rainfall in many areas of Southern Africa.
15. Ongoing responses in Member States include emergency food and cash assistance and the scaling up of social safety net programmes. Rapid assessments have been conducted in Lesotho, Swaziland and Zimbabwe which have informed preliminary government response plans. The 2016 SADC Regional Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis (RVAA) Dissemination Forum held early June shared preliminary results of the vulnerability assessments carried out by Member State National Vulnerability Assessment Committees (NVACs) indicating that close to 40 million people across the region will be food insecure at the height of the lean season (January to March 2017). Of these, an estimated 23 million require emergency assistance. However, it should be noted that figures for Angola, DRC, South Africa (rural plus urban) and Tanzania are projections, some assessments are still pending and the numbers will change in the coming months.
16. On 26 May 2016, the SADC Secretariat announced that it had established a regional response team to coordinate activities in close collaboration with Member States. The SADC El Niño Response Team will:
  - Analyse and communicate the regional extent of the impacts of El Niño and the financial and logistical requirements for an effective response;
  - Coordinate the systems and institutional requirements for an effective importation and distribution programme of food and non-food commodities in the SADC region to mitigate the impacts of the El Niño event;
  - Perform monitoring and evaluation of the response to allow for effective decision making during and after the response; and
  - Based on lessons learned during the response, make recommendations for future disasters.
17. Given the need for additional capacity to ensure an efficient coordination mechanism is put in place, cooperating partners, including WFP, have been called upon to provide technical support to the SADC Secretariat. SADC is planning to issue a regional appeal to donors before the end of June 2016.
18. To complement the SADC Appeal, OCHA is coordinating the development of a RIASCO<sup>5</sup> Regional Action Plan for El Niño with three pillars: a)

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<sup>5</sup> OCHA Regional Office for Southern Africa (ROSA) chairs RIASCO. RIASCO is part of the regional accountability framework of the Regional Director Team for Southern and Eastern Africa (RDT), and thus part of RDT's Emergency Preparedness and Response Cluster for Eastern and Southern Africa.

Humanitarian b) Resilience and c) Macro Finance/Economic. WFP's Regional Bureau for Southern Africa is thus expanding its capacity in order to contribute actively to these inter-agency meetings, which are now weekly at the Johannesburg level, especially given its co-chair role of the FNSWG. WFP is also actively co-leading the Technical Working Group to develop a tool/process to better enable national/regional trend analysis over time to capture signs of a nutritional/HIV deterioration.

19. Special Operation 200993 aims to improve the efficiency and coordination of the regional emergency response to the impact of El Niño and preparedness for the potential effects of La Niña, by providing technical support to the SADC Response Team, technical support to Member States in conducting rural vulnerability assessments and analysis, integrating nutrition, HIV and gender in assessments and analysis, and by boosting WFP's internal capacity at the regional level.

### **Project Justification**

20. The situation in the region is bleak; in addition to the food and nutrition security situation, macro-economic conditions are poor amid falling international commodity prices and currency depreciations, unpredictability of regional border crossings, logistics access constraints and an unstable transport market. The need for coordination of both humanitarian and development interventions based on credible and timely data across the region is key, given the above challenges being faced by many SADC Member States. There is recognition that this crisis requires a regional response team, and also appetite for use of more digital-based technology to enhance information flow.
21. While the capacity of governments in the SADC region to respond to emergencies has increased in recent years, with many countries having succeeded in reaching middle-income status and all countries now having established national disaster management authorities (NDMAs) and/or NVACs, a number do not have recent experience in responding to major humanitarian emergencies. NDMAs and NVACs are severely under-resourced and vary in functionality. They thus need coordinated support from the SADC Secretariat in Botswana, who in turn is looking to International Cooperating Partners (ICPs) for technical support.
22. Given the scale of the El Niño emergency, as well as the forecasted effects of La Niña, the SADC Secretariat requires augmented logistics and information management capacity to ensure efficient and effective information sharing in support of humanitarian responses across the region.
23. This Special Operation builds upon and furthers the activities of WFP's IR-PREP (May – July 2016), and ensures an important level of continuity in the assistance provided to the SADC Secretariat. It also augments WFP's capacity to provide support in food and nutrition assessment and market monitoring.

### **Project Objective(s)**

24. The primary objectives of this Special Operation are to:

- **Provide technical support to the SADC Response Team**, located in Botswana at the SADC Secretariat. Specifically to:
  - improve food and nutrition security data collection and sharing;
  - provide relevant logistics information to the all stakeholders to enable the timely and effective identification and resolution of logistics bottlenecks; and
  - establish an efficient and easily accessible platform for communications and information exchange between various actors in the region, to keep all parties abreast of the response.
- **Enhance data comparability, assessment and monitoring** in selected countries. Specifically to:
  - strengthen linkages between food and nutrition security as well as market dynamics;
  - enhance food and nutrition security monitoring activities in selected countries;
  - support timely decision-making by governments and other stakeholders for prioritising assistance to those most in need; and
  - enhance data comparability through support to IPC processes.
- **Provide surge capacity at WFP's regional bureau for Southern Africa** for emergency preparedness and response, humanitarian programming, food security data analysis (including baseline and exit surveys), GIS, and supply chain and demand planning.

## **Project Implementation**

### ***Component 1: technical support to SADC Response Team***

25. This component has begun under IR-PREP 200979 for a period of two months (June-July) and will continue for an additional four months through this Special Operation, for a total of six months of support as requested by SADC.

26. Several staff will be seconded to support the Response Team:

- One Senior Advisor (P4 level) to directly support the SADC Coordinator in day-to-day coordination of Response Team activities, including proactively identifying preparedness and operational response needs, providing regular reports and effective communication, and advocating and liaising with donors;
- One Food Security Analyst (P3 level), as part of a multi-sectoral team of data analysts;
- Two Logistics / Transport Experts (P4 level) to provide analytical support to the logistics coordination centre, including the collection and analysis of relevant information, and advising Member States on coordinating and scheduling shipments and effective use of corridors; and
- One Communications and Information Management Expert (P2 level), focusing on the collation and dissemination of a range of different

information as part of the Communications and Information Management sub-unit of the Response Team.

27. Other staff providing complementary support to the Response Team are being seconded by other United Nations agencies including FAO, UNOCHA, UNICEF and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Plans have been formulated jointly.
28. Quality data collection and analysis is crucial for effective planning and response. The WFP Senior Advisor and Food Security Data Analyst will liaise with the RVAA programme on food and nutrition security data and processes, and will ensure that linkages with key national institutions are created to improve data collection and sharing. These institutions will include regional and national early warning systems, national-level disaster response systems, national-level strategic or contingent food reserve systems, regional and national vulnerability analysis and assessment systems, and regional and national agricultural information management systems, among others.
29. Other WFP staff will focus on providing critical logistics information services, such as collating and disseminating timely and accurate information on all matters relating to port and transport activities in the region. Seconded staff will liaise with corridor groups that will be activated within Member States and at the regional level, comprising all relevant actors. At national level, these groups could comprise government agencies, transporters, freight forwarders, early warning units, national disaster preparedness institutions, food and non-food handling and storage facility providers and other relevant actors.
30. Information management activities will be undertaken in the interests of promoting and facilitating sharing for better decision-making. Relevant and timely information collected, analysed and disseminated will relate to ongoing activities, key infrastructure, road access constraints, available storage and transport capacity in the affected areas, as well as custom procedures, tax exemption procedures, border crossings and other important provisions such as the access to government civil-military assets.
31. A possibility to set up joint food procurement (including tapping into national and regional strategic reserves and redirecting supplies on sea), shipping, storage and forwarding arrangement under the leadership of the El Niño LCC will be assessed in the framework of this Special Operation.

***Component 2: enhanced assessment and monitoring to support effective decision-making***

32. This component seeks to strengthen food and nutrition security assessment and monitoring to support timely decision-making by governments and stakeholders in order to prioritise assistance to those most in need. There are three sub-components.

33. The first will support the **integration of nutrition, gender and HIV in rural assessments/updates**. Provision will be made to support data collection, analysis and reporting costs associated with the inclusion of important nutrition, HIV and gender-related indicators in assessments/updates in five priority countries (Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Swaziland and Zimbabwe). Regional capacity to support these efforts (particularly to ensure that data is used in national VAC reports/updates and informs response design) will also be strengthened.
34. The second sub-component involves **initiating and/or scaling up mobile remote monitoring of household food security (mVAM) in eight countries in the region**. The objective is to monitor the dynamics of household food security and market prices, generate data needed to design appropriate and effective responses, and thereby inform strategic planning and decision-making. Monitoring price signals will also be useful in informing the national strategic grain reserves where and when to release food commodities.
35. WFP rolled out mVAM in three countries in Southern Africa (Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe) in late-2015 in response to the urgent need for timely, high frequency food security information in the context of El Niño. In the first quarter of 2016, this has now been expanded to include Madagascar and Lesotho.<sup>6</sup> Through this Special Operation, provision will be made to continue implementation of mVAM in all five countries until April 2017, in order to allow for data collection and comparison over a full annual cycle and until the end of the 2016/2017 lean season, and to initiate roll-out in an additional three (Mozambique, Swaziland and Angola).
36. Key activities will include: data collection relating to coping strategies, sentiments and perception of food and nutrition security, and information on market prices and dynamics; establishment of in-house call centres, or contracting third parties, and conducting SMS-based or integrated voice response (IVR) surveys; and production and dissemination of mVAM products.
37. The third element of this component will provide **support to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) process** in select countries. This will involve fielding a high-level mission to advocate for the adoption or acceleration of IPC in Botswana, Namibia and Zambia. IPC Acute certification training will be conducted in four countries in which the process is already established but hindered by national capacity gaps (Zimbabwe, Malawi, Madagascar and Angola). Developing the process across the region will further allow for country-by-country comparisons and a more disaggregated analysis of food and nutrition security in Southern Africa.

### ***Component 3: surge capacity at WFP's Regional Bureau for Southern Africa***

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<sup>6</sup> A scale up of mVAM in these five countries (Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Madagascar and Lesotho) is being supported through a separate Trust Fund until November 2016.



38. The Regional Bureau has activated an Emergency Task Team to ensure coordination of multi-functional emergency preparedness and response support to countries. It has been recognized that additional staffing is required to support WFP Country Offices in priority areas.
39. These will include the following, for which this Special Operation will supply surge staffing capacity in the form of stand-by partners or consultants:
  - Programme: one Emergency Preparedness and Response Officer and one Senior Regional Humanitarian Advisor, who will work with RIASCO members to align and promote common linkages for short term response and regional resilience work; one epidemiologist (to provide capacity for enhanced support to country offices in the design and data analysis of baseline and endline surveys) and one GIS Specialist to support information management;
  - Supply Chain and Demand Planning: two Data Analysts to provide regular updates on WFP operational scenarios in preparation and response to El Niño related scale-ups at country and regional level involving coordination of demand planning, sourcing and logistics strategies; and
  - Reporting: one Emergency Reports officer to strengthen timely issuance of operational and external reports.

### **Project Cost and Benefits**

40. This Special Operation has a total cost of US\$ 2,167,392
41. Through Component 1, as part of the SADC El Niño Response Team, WFP will provide a wide range of food and nutrition security analysis, logistics information and mapping services to the humanitarian community and all government entities involved in humanitarian responses. The aim is to reduce bottlenecks and logistics gaps, and to facilitate an integrated and coordinated response to the requirements of the humanitarian community, alongside efficient operational information sharing.
42. Through Component 2, WFP will: contribute to the promotion of harmonised and comparable data on the numbers of population affected and the depth of food and nutrition insecurity; provide technical assistance to government counterparts to support enhancing nutrition, HIV and gender surveillance; and generate information through mVAM to detect hotspot areas adversely affected by the effects of the El Niño and provide early warning information needed to understand the seasonal changes of food security and for early action and response. Data collected through mVAM will be made publicly available and mVAM reports may also serve as a basis to design effective programmes in resilience building.
43. Through Component 3, WFP will ensure technical leadership and input on food and nutrition security within the design and implementation of all three pillars of RIASCO Action Plan.

### **Project Management**

44. The WFP RBJ RD will be the fund manager for this Special Operation, and the RBJ Finance Officer will be the allotment manager.

## Monitoring & Evaluation

45. Outcomes and outputs have been introduced to measure the performance of this operation in compliance with the WFP M&E normative framework.

<b>Component 1</b>		
<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>
National institutions, national bodies and the humanitarian community are able to prepare for, assess and respond to emergencies.	User satisfaction rate <sup>7</sup>	80%
<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>
Emergency management capacity supported	a. Number of technical assistance activities provided, by type	6
	b. Number of people trained in data collection, disaggregated by sex	15
Technical support provided to enhance management of food supply chain, food assistance, nutrition and food security systems, including food security information systems	c. Number of technical support activities provided on food security monitoring and food assistance, by type ( <i>technical workshops, meetings at national and sub-national level</i> )	8
<b>Component 2</b>		
<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>
National institutions, national bodies and the humanitarian community are able to prepare for, assess and respond to emergencies.	User satisfaction rate	80%
<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>
National systems for monitoring trends in food security and nutrition strengthened	d. Number of countries where national annual rural assessments integrated food security, gender and nutrition with WFP support	5 countries
	e. Number of Countries receiving technical assistance in scaling	8 countries

<sup>7</sup> One user satisfaction survey will be conducted for both C1 and C2 at the end of this operation.

	up mVAM	
	f. Number of countries where government counterparts are trained in collection and analysis of food and nutrition security data	4 countries (IPC certification training) & 3 countries (IPC missions)
	g. Number of food security and nutrition monitoring reports produced with WFP support	40
<b>Component 3</b>		
	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
	Emergency management capacity supported	Number of surge staffing capacity supplied to support WFP country offices in priority areas
		<b>Targets</b>
		7 (standby partners and/or consultants)

### Exit Strategy

46. The effects of the El Niño phenomenon are foreseen to continue into 2017, severely impacting drought-affected populations. With the 70 percent chance of La Nina bringing above average rain, planning for mitigation and response in flood prone areas at least until the end of the rainy season is essential.
47. Thus the duration of this Special Operation 200993 will correspond with the end of the lean season and the rainy season - April 2016. At this time, it is likely that further activities will be required past this end date, and thus additional identified needs would be included through a budget revision/extension.
48. WFP logistics and information management support will ensure coordination and information sharing through regular contact with partners, regular coordination meetings with a continued strong focus on SADC counterpart involvement and ownership for smooth hand over. For other activities, WFP will encourage and support national governments to incorporate monitoring systems in appropriate departments to ensure their sustainability.

### RECOMMENDATION

This Special Operation covering the period from 20 June 2016 to 19 April 2017 at a total cost to WFP of US\$ 2,167,392 is recommended for approval by the Chief of Staff, under the Executive Director's delegated authority with the budget provided.

### APPROVAL

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Jim Harvey  
Chief of Staff