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## Subregional Southern Africa

### Climate hazards

#### Urgent call for assistance

#### Context

In line with forecasts by the Southern Africa Regional Climate Outlook Forum and other global weather forecasting models, most parts of the Southern African region – where more than 70 percent of rural populations depend on agriculture for their livelihoods – have received normal to above-normal rainfall due to La Niña phenomena, greatly affecting nearly 10 million people.

Since the end of January 2023, devastating cyclones, storms, torrential rains and flash floods were recorded in Malawi, Madagascar, Mozambique and Zambia. Between January and March 2023, Tropical Cyclone Freddy – the most energetic cyclone on record – and Tropical Storm Cheneso battered Malawi, Madagascar and Mozambique. At the same time, Zambia experienced destructive storms and torrential rains that resulted in severe flooding, affecting large swaths of inhabited and cropped lands. Critical social and economic infrastructure, fisheries equipment, livestock and hundreds of thousands of hectares (ha) of crops have been lost. Compounding these issues, flooding increased the movement of livestock and wild animals, triggering outbreaks of transboundary animal diseases. As a result of these climate shocks, the crop production, food security, nutrition and livelihoods of some of the most vulnerable households have been severely jeopardized.

According to the Department of Disaster Management Affairs, in southern **Malawi**, Cyclone Freddy's second landfall caused a trail of destruction, resulting in the loss of critical infrastructure, 300 000 livestock and 200 000 ha of crops. This affected over 1.4 million people in the agriculture sector, of whom 280 000 require emergency assistance.

In **Madagascar**, just weeks after Tropical Storm Cheneso wreaked havoc on local communities, Tropical Cyclone Freddy made landfall, where powerful winds and heavy rainfall destroyed homes, infrastructure and crops. This affected over 2.1 million people – of whom 1.9 million require emergency assistance – dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods and food security.

In central and southern **Mozambique**, Tropical Cyclone Freddy struck again. Coupled with devastating floods from torrential rains, almost 400 000 ha of crops were destroyed, affecting around 900 000 people dependent on agriculture to sustain their livelihoods. Of this total, 75 000 of the most vulnerable require emergency assistance.



To assist

#### 2.5 million people

- 1.9 million in Madagascar
- 280 000 in Malawi
- 200 000 in Zambia
- 75 000 in Mozambique



FAO requires

#### USD 247 million

- USD 164 million in Madagascar
- USD 24 million in Malawi
- USD 20 million in Zambia
- USD 39 million in Mozambique



Period

#### May 2023–April 2024



Targeted countries

#### Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia



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In **Zambia**, floods from heavy and prolonged torrential rains ravaged crops, livestock and infrastructure, affecting an estimated 400 000 people, of whom 200 000 require emergency assistance.

### Objective

To address the immediate needs of affected populations by restoring their production activities and livelihoods and building their resilience.

### Early actions

Through the Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) mobilized USD 1 million to support the provision of agricultural inputs and resilience building for vulnerable households in Malawi, Madagascar and Mozambique.

FAO is working with governments, other United Nations agencies and humanitarian actors to ensure a coordinated and effective response to cyclone and flood emergencies in the affected countries. The Organization has undertaken activities to support the activation of country-based agriculture and food security clusters, the implementation of multistakeholder rapid assessments, and has also conducted geospatial assessments of affected croplands.

A scaled-up and sustained emergency response will enable people to resume agricultural production and their livelihood activities to rebuild what climate shocks destroyed.



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## Response

Based on government-led multistakeholder assessments in the four countries, overall needs have been determined. Affected households require urgent humanitarian assistance to protect lives, restore their production capacity and strengthen their resilience to future shocks. In coordination with governments and partners, FAO plans to implement the following activities.

### Outcome 1. Smallholder farmers receive emergency support to resume food production

- Provide agricultural inputs (such as early maturing seeds, tools and equipment) to immediately restore production in the winter (May to August) and main planting seasons (October to March).
- Build farmers' capacities in post-harvest storage and food preservation.
- Support ecosystem restoration of croplands degraded by floods by distributing seedlings and seeds and promoting agroforestry.

### Outcome 2. Livestock and fisheries livelihoods are safeguarded

- Carry out small livestock restocking (goats, poultry, sheep) to diversify households' diets.
- Conduct livestock disease monitoring and surveillance and generate early warning messages.
- Support the provision of livestock vaccination and treatment (against East Coast fever and peste des petits ruminants).
- Provide fisherfolk with fishing gear, repair fishing equipment and restock fish for small-scale aquaculture.

### Outcome 3. Food security and livelihoods information, analysis and coordination

- Support scale up of the collection, analysis and timely dissemination of evidence-based agriculture and food security data and information.
- Contribute to multistakeholder needs assessments.
- Provide technical support to governments and partners.
- Support coordination and joint planning in agriculture and food security for humanitarian platforms.



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## Partnerships

Activities will be aligned with the Southern African Development Community Preparedness and Response Strategies 2016–2030, which emphasize partnerships, cooperation, coordination, resource mobilization and implementation. FAO will synergize its work with other United Nations agencies and humanitarian partners.

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