



SOUTHERN AFRICA FLOODING

FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE SITUATION AND ACTIONS

23 February 2011

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Heavy rains in the wake of Cyclone Bingiza have caused flooding in southeastern Madagascar.** The Agriculture and Food Security Cluster is planning a joint assessment to evaluate the damage to agriculture and food security, and the impact on households.
- **In Mozambique, the alert status was downgraded for Incomati and Limpopo but remains a Red Alert for the Zambezi Valley.** To-date, 21 114 ha of crops have been lost due to floods.
- The impact of the floods **remains of concern in Lesotho**, where damage to crops and large-scale loss of livestock were previously reported.

FLOODS SITUATION OVERVIEW

Angola:

- Flooding and severe storms have been reported, with 88 flood/storm-related deaths.
- 6 797 households have been affected and 34 380 people displaced in 63 municipalities.
- Currently, there are no reports of impact on food security.

Botswana and Namibia:

- Currently, there are no reports of flooding or impact on food security.
- In Namibia there is concern about a new flood wave of over 3 m arriving at the Kuiseb Pass Bridge.

Lesotho:

- No new updates, although concern remains regarding previously reported damage to crops and loss of livestock.
- **FAO actions:** working with the decentralized offices of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, FAO has initiated a system to update information on the agricultural situation as a result of the heavy rains. This will facilitate an effective response based on good information.

Madagascar:



- Southeastern regions have been most affected by heavy rains causing intense flooding following the passage of Cyclone Bingiza.
- According to a preliminary aerial assessment conducted by Care International and Medair, Vohipeno, Farafangana, Manakara and Mananjary are the most affected districts, with waters covering houses and field crops (see photos on the left).
- Further assessment is needed to determine the extent of the damage.
- **FAO actions:** the Agriculture and Food Security Cluster plans to meet on 23 February 2011 to collect information from partners based in the field and plan a joint assessment mission to evaluate damage to agriculture and food security and the impact on households.
- Some short-cycle seed stocks are pre-positioned in the flooded areas ready to be distributed to the most-affected households. However, should the damages be greater than can be met with existing agricultural inputs, FAO will need additional support to assist affected families.

Photos: Flooding in southeastern Madagascar

Malawi:

- No new updates.
- **FAO actions:** co-chairing the Food Security Cluster with the Ministry of Agriculture; preparing and planning are ongoing for emergency food security and agriculture assessments in areas where they are needed; and supported flood contingency planning.

Mozambique:

- 7 provinces have reported flooding: Maputo, Maputo City, Gaza, Inhambane, Sofala, Manica and Tete.
- The Red Alert is being maintained in the Zambezi Valley as river basins are above alert levels; with the improving situation in southern regions (Incomati and Limpopo) the Government has dropped the alert level to Orange.
- To-date, 21 114 ha of crops have been lost to flooding and 32 ha to pests. Gaza province has seen the greatest losses, with 12 442 ha (2.48 percent of total area) lost, and Maputo province has the largest percentage area lost at 3.34 percent.
- **FAO actions:** assisting the Ministry of Agriculture in carrying out a countrywide crop assessment to evaluate the actual crop situation in the country, including the damage caused by the natural disasters.
- FAO's Emergency Rehabilitation and Coordination Unit is developing a TCP project to assist flood-affected areas. The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) is coordinating activities in collaboration with the National Disaster Management Institute (INGC) and FAO's role in providing technical advice on agriculture is crucial.
- Within the HCT, FAO is co-leading the Food Security Cluster, which is preparing for fund raising and developing food security interventions in affected areas. HCT and INGC are planning a meeting with the donor community on 24 February 2011.

South Africa:

- Government assessment is ongoing and preliminary results have not yet been published.
- **FAO actions:** In anticipation and informal communication with the Government, the Resident Coordinator for South Africa convened a meeting with RIASCO to determine available potential technical expertise surge capacity. FAO REOSA attended and will provide emergency support through FAO's Representation in South Africa and RIASCO, as required.

Zambia and Zimbabwe:

- No reports yet of flooding in Zambia.
- There has been some localized flooding in Hurungwe district of Mashonaland West province in Zimbabwe.
- Osborne Dam in eastern Zimbabwe, and Manyame and Bhiri-Manyame are at alert levels.
- Water levels in the Limpopo River have been dropping, as is the case for Kariba Dam.
- **FAO actions:** FAO is the lead agency for the Agriculture Cluster. The Cluster meets on a monthly basis and the meetings provide a platform for information sharing and dissemination. Updates from the Meteorological Services Department and Department of Civil Protection have been shared with participants.

FAO REGIONAL EMERGENCY OFFICE FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA

CURRENT ACTIONS

- The **FAO Regional Emergency Office for Southern Africa (REOSA)** is supporting all ongoing preparedness activities and will provide technical and coordination surge support for coordination in case of a major humanitarian disaster. Standard Operating Procedures have been developed with colleagues in headquarters and at country level to better coordinate the FAO response to flooding in the Southern Africa region. As part of this preparedness plan, functional teams at headquarters, regional and country levels have been identified and procedures established. FAO REOSA is identified as the overall coordinator for the field, linking with headquarters and country ECRUs. An Action Plan has been developed and will be updated regularly.
- FAO is working with the World Food Programme and UNOCHA within the **Flood Analysis Working Group** to assess the impact of the floods, particularly in relation to agriculture, livelihoods and food security. A first meeting was held on Friday 11 February.
- **FAO, WFP and the Famine Early Warning Systems Network** are highlighting flood impacts within the regular regional food security matrix, to be included with the UNOCHA weekly Humanitarian Update on the Southern Africa Floods.
- FAO is freeing up resources to provide surge capacity and technical inputs to rapid assessments and emergency response if needed.

FAO'S POTENTIAL ROLE IN PREPARATION, RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

- **Innovative Emergency, Recovery and Rehabilitation Responses:** FAO will seek to not only support the recovery of agricultural production through seed distributions, but also to identify, document and promote more innovative responses to disasters, such as improving the resilience of farming systems by helping farmers to plan for disasters and supporting quicker recovery through local seed multiplication and improved storage.
- **Advocacy:** In Southern Africa, FAO is advocating for the incorporation of disaster risk management principles within agricultural and food security policies. In Lesotho, advocacy is needed to promote conservation and better land use practices to prevent excessive erosion.
- **Animal health:** Through technical advice and resources, FAO can support governments and partners in responding to animal disease outbreaks related to flooding.

REGIONAL INTERAGENCY ACTIVITIES

- The RIASCO Flood Analysis Working Group is monitoring the progress of rainfall and flooding and analyzing their impacts. The first meeting was held on 11 February 2011.
- A RIASCO Food Security Working Group meeting was held on 10 February, and the next meeting is planned for 3 March to provide a review of food security preparedness gaps across agencies in the region.
- A regional emergency appeal is being discussed should the situation deteriorate.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE FLOODING

The UNOCHA Regional Office for Southern & Eastern Africa (ROSEA) issues regular *Southern Africa Floods Situation Updates*, as well as posts other country flood reports on their Web site. See the UNOCHA ROSEA Web site: <http://ochaonline.un.org/rosea> or contact: Hein Zeelie at zeelie@un.org.