

With 9 million now facing hunger, Zimbabwe increases appeal for aid to US\$3.3 billion

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Local Government Minister Daniel Garwe

Zimbabwe on Monday [27 May] launched an appeal for US\$3.3 billion to feed an estimated 9 million people who require food aid until March 2025.

Initially, the figure of food insecure people stood at 7.7 million in both urban and rural areas and aid required at US\$2.2 billion but Minister of Local Government Daniel Garwe revealed the numbers had increased.

Zimbabwe is grappling with an El Nino-induced drought which has since been declared a national disaster by President Emmerson Mnangagwa.

Government on Monday launched a joint US\$429.3 million flash appeal with the United Nations to cater for close to 3.1 million people.

“Preliminary indications are that an estimated 9 million people will be food insecure and require food assistance until March 2025. This figure covers both the urban and rural population. It is critical therefore to support these vulnerable households along with those directly affected by the drought.

“This Appeal provides all sector requirements that the Government and partners ought to prioritise. In response to the El Nino drought, the Government has prioritized the following intervention strategies among others.

“The Humanitarian Appeal focuses on immediate needs, recovery and resilience building of the affected populace”, said Garwe.

The minister added, “In this stride, there is a moral obligation and an urgency for the international community to lend a hand for life-saving support to those most in need. We are thankful to the development and humanitarian partners for their generous support to date. Overall estimated requirements for interventions by all sectors of the economy is staggered at US\$3.3 billion”.



UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Zimbabwe, Edward Kallon and Minister Daniel Garwe

The United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Zimbabwe, Edward Kallon, noted the areas which are affected by El Niño induced drought.

“The Government of Zimbabwe has indicated that due to the El-Niño-induced drought in Zimbabwe, an estimated 9 million people will be food insecure and require food assistance until March 2025.

“Since December 2023, long dry spells, and high temperatures, coupled with poor rainfall performance, negatively impacted crop and livestock production.

Estimates for the 2023/2024 crop season indicate that about 700,000 metric tons (MT) of maize, out of an annual requirement of 2.2 million MT have been harvested. More than 1.4 million cattle risk facing deteriorating body conditions or starving due to lack of food, pasture and water.

“The impacts of El Niño have negatively affected local production, with estimates of a 52 per cent shortfall. Zimbabwe’s crop production was negatively affected with 40 percent of maize crops classified as ‘poor’, and 60 percent as a write-off’. As cattle herds converge in search of forage and water, livestock diseases have increased.

“The livestock sector risks being seriously affected, in the coming winter season between June and October, due to very poor pasture quality and lack of drinking water. To respond to this situation, this Flash Appeal requires US\$429.3 million for humanitarian partners to assist close to 3.1 million people.

“The appeal aims to mobilize humanitarian action to complement the Government’s relief efforts”, said Kallon.

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