

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Between October and March, the bulk of continental southern Africa is expected to receive normal to above normal rainfall. Flooding usually affects the region between December and May.

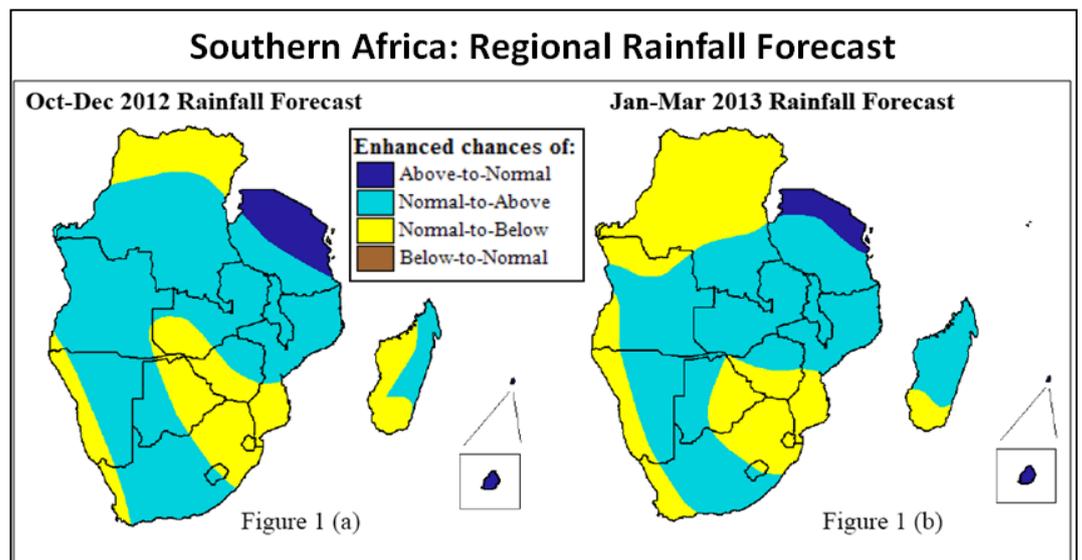


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## 2012/2013 Seasonal Rainfall Forecast

The first forecast for the 2012/2013 rainfall season has been issued by the sixteenth annual Southern African Regional Climate Outlook Forum (SARCOF), held in Harare on 23 and 24 August 2012. The forecast predicts that most of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) is likely to receive normal to above-normal rainfall, with significant exceptions especially over the south-eastern and central parts of the region.



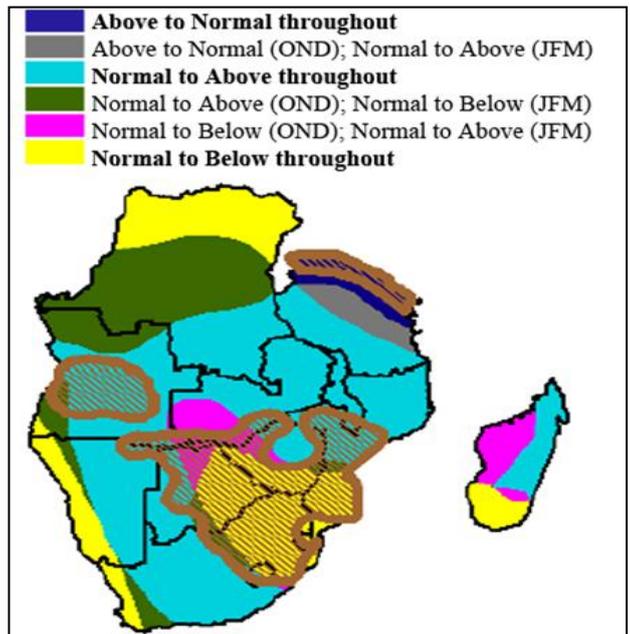
Source: SARCOF, SADC FANR

Flooding affects the region annually between December and May, and based on this forecast, the same can be expected in 2013. Malawi appears to have a good chance of normal to above-normal rainfall, even in the southern districts that were affected by dry spells the previous season. This also applies to the north-eastern parts of Madagascar (also normally affected by cyclones) which indicates a high probability of normal to above-normal rainfall that may lead to flooding in low-lying areas. Also, northern parts of Tanzania show a high probability of above-normal to normal rainfall, enhancing chances of flooding (depending on current hydrological and geological conditions).

Some areas that are predicted to receive normal to below-normal rainfall are also of concern. According to analysis conducted by the [SADC Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources \(FANR\) Directorate](#), many of the areas that were affected by dry spells last season are currently forecast to have increased chances of normal to below-normal rainfall during the 2012/2013 season.

- Many areas that experienced dry spells last season face normal to below-normal rainfall, which could have a negative impact on livelihoods.

In the adjacent figure, the combined October to December and January to March forecasts are overlaid with some of the areas affected by dryness during the 2011/2012 season, shown in brown. This indicates that many of the areas that were affected by dryness in South Africa, southern Mozambique, southern Zimbabwe, eastern Botswana, Swaziland, and Lesotho are again vulnerable to normal to below-normal rainfall this season, and therefore face an enhanced risk for repeat episodes of poor crop performance and reduced pasture, which could impact on livelihoods.



- Humanitarian partners should focus on strengthening flood contingency planning, and factor this forecast into current operations.

### Actions Required

The most important actions required is flood contingency planning, which needs to be strengthened for northern Tanzania, northern Madagascar, northern Mozambique, northern Zimbabwe, most of Malawi, most low-lying areas of Zambia, northern Namibia and parts of Angola. It should be noted that rainfall is only one variable in flood forecasting and even food security. Other factors, including timely provision of inputs to farmers, control of pests (e.g. locusts in Madagascar), rainfall duration, distribution and intensity, will have a bearing on food production and finally food security; while hydrological conditions (e.g. soil moisture, river discharge, dam levels) are important factors in determining flood risk. It is also important to note that down-scaled country forecasts give a better reflection of possible local variations which may exacerbate flooding, e.g. micro-climates as determined by topographical features in some countries. Humanitarian organisations need to work closely with local meteorological and hydrological government departments to strengthen flood and drought scenario development, as well as monitor hazard trends for early warning/early action.

Furthermore, current ongoing humanitarian action should factor in the forecast so as to also include strengthened preparedness in areas at risk of flooding or food insecurity so as to mitigate a deterioration in the situation. For areas traditionally affected by cyclones, which include north-eastern parts of Madagascar, coastal areas of Mozambique and countries close to the Mozambique coast (such as Malawi and Swaziland), there is need to factor in the possibility of cyclones which may increase chances of flooding.

RIACSO will continue to updated forecasts and analysis to inform planning and scenario updates.

The number of people facing food insecurity in southern African countries has increased dramatically.

## Regional Food Security Worsens

The 2011/2012 rainfall season was not favourable to crop production, due to the late onset of rains and prolonged dry spells over many parts of the region. This in part has led to an increase in the estimated number of food insecure people in the region to 8,283,318. Additionally, in Madagascar, which is currently suspended from SADC and thus not part of the Vulnerability Assessment Committee system, an estimated 517,000 people face severe food insecurity.

Normally the peak of the hunger season in the region is December/January. However, in view of the precarious situation, the Governments of Lesotho, Angola and Malawi, with support from the humanitarian community, have each developed national response plans for early action. Several donors are already providing support and partners are encouraged to assist the most affected countries with early humanitarian action to avoid the peak of the crisis. This sentiment was echoed at the recent SADC Heads of State Summit held in Mozambique on 17 and 18 August 2012, which issued a [communiqué](#) highlighting the gravity of the food security situation and calling on Member States to

implement lasting solutions to the food security problem, in addition to humanitarian action.

#### Southern Africa: Food Insecure Population in 2012 (as at end of July)

Country	Population Food Insecure	% of Total Population
Angola	1 835 950	10%
Lesotho	725 519	39%
Malawi	1 630 007	11%
Mozambique	255 297	1%
Namibia	754 306	36%
Swaziland	115 713	11%
Tanzania	945 524	2%
Zambia	353 002	3%
Zimbabwe	1 668 000	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,283,318</b>	

Note: Excludes Madagascar. Source: SADC VAA

- In Lesotho, the Humanitarian Country Team has drafted a food security response plan detailing over \$40 million in projects.

#### *Lesotho: 39 per cent of population food insecure*

An estimated 725,500 people are food insecure in Lesotho, which accounts for 39 per cent of the total population. Overall cereal production is only 32 per cent of the normal harvest and is the lowest in 10 years by far. The Lesotho Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) has drafted a response plan detailing over \$40 million in projects. Included in this plan is \$8 million being sought through the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to meet the needs of 118,000 of the most vulnerable people by providing agricultural inputs for the next planting season (in October), food aid and cash grants. It is expected that the Government of Lesotho will release their own response plan, which will hopefully follow a donor meeting scheduled for 12 September. For more information on the food security situation in Lesotho, see the [Lesotho Food Security Situation Report No. 2](#), issued on 27 August 2012

- Chronic malnutrition in Swaziland has reached critical levels due in part to a drop in food aid, on which an estimated 20 per cent of the population is dependent.

#### *Swaziland: Drop in food aid leads to critical levels of malnutrition*

In Swaziland, the number of people at risk of food insecurity increased from 88,115 to 115,713. Cultivated area decreased from 61,251 ha to 52,064 ha, and the country currently faces a cereal deficit of about 83 million tons, which can only be met through imports from other countries in the region. In addition, chronic malnutrition has reached critical levels due in part to a drop in food aid, on which an estimated 20 per cent of the population is dependent. An additional 751,628 people are to be monitored as food insecurity is likely to rise and households reduce the quantity and quality of their food consumption, as a response to the lower income and/or rising food and fuel prices.

#### *Angola: Government allocates funds to drought response*

The Government of Angola has released \$12 million for food security responses. This amount has been distributed as follows:

- The Institute of Agriculture Development (IDA) received \$3 million for seeds, fertilizers and pumps. This amount is also to be shared with other Government agencies, such as the Ministry of Rural Development and Fisheries (MINADERP) and the Institute of Veterinary Services;
- b) The Ministry of Agriculture and Social Reintegration (MINARS) received \$5 million for food aid distribution; and \$4 million for equipment (water trucks, etc.).

IDA has already launched tenders for the supply of seeds, fertilizers and motor pumps, which will complete the CERF-funded activities implemented by FAO.

- Malawi requires a total of \$89 million to address chronic food insecurity, of which around \$18 million has been sourced.

### *Malawi: 1.63 million people in need of food aid*

In Malawi, it is estimated that between 1.63 million people (of whom 277,000 are children) may not be able to meet their minimum food requirements for three to eight months, with the next harvest only expected in March 2013. The Government of Malawi, supported by international partners, has developed an initial response plan to address food insecurity in rural areas. The total funding requirement, including recovery activities for the next two years, is \$89 million. Around \$18 million has already been sourced for food assistance activities (Government of Malawi: \$5.5 million; USAID/FFP: \$7.8 million; and UKAID/DFID: \$4.7 million). Government and partners are also developing a complementary response component for urban areas, and a comprehensive response plan is expected to be presented in the coming weeks. UNDP's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) is also working on a Resilience Building Strategy.

- In Madagascar, around 517,000 people are facing severe food insecurity, in addition to around 1.24 million people facing moderate food insecurity.

### *Madagascar: 517,000 people facing severe food insecurity*

In Madagascar, the sector most affected by cyclone Giovanna, tropical storm Irina and the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ICTZ) in February and March 2012, was agriculture. According to a nutrition assessment conducted by the UN Food Security and Livelihoods Sector in May 2012, an estimated 91,200 households (517,000 people) are facing severe food insecurity for the duration of the hunger season (August to March). In addition, around 1.24 million people face moderate food insecurity. The Madagascar United Nations Country Team (UNCT) has received \$2 million from the CERF under-funded window, most of which allocated for food security response following the floods earlier this year in eastern and south-eastern Madagascar.

Furthermore, the current locust outbreak in south-western Madagascar could seriously exacerbate the food security situation unless an aggressive campaign is launched to contain the crop-devouring insect. The 2011/2012 eradication campaign has just been completed by the National Centre for anti Locust (CAN), with the support of the Ministry of Agriculture and FAO. However, 25 per cent of the infested area was not treated, and there are fears that the outbreak could spread to more areas.

- An estimated 1,668,000 people in Zimbabwe will be in need of food assistance during the peak hunger period of January to March 2013.

### *Zimbabwe: Over 1.6 million people will require food assistance*

The food security situation in Zimbabwe is deteriorating. According to the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee, an estimated 1,668,000 people - representing 19 per cent of rural households - will need food assistance during the peak hunger period of January to March 2013 - a 60 per cent increase from last year. Late and erratic rains, poor agricultural practices, constrained access to inputs, and a reduction in planted area have all contributed to reducing the national cereal harvest by 33 per cent this year. Economic challenges, including a lack of diversified livelihoods and the rising cost of living, have also contributed to the food-insecurity and income insecurity situation, which is likely to worsen as the lean season progresses.

On 29 August, the Government of Zimbabwe sent a formal request to the Humanitarian Coordinator seeking support in 1. The mobilization of additional financial resources to cover the current shortfalls for food insecure households; 2. Additional funding support for challenges being faced in the livestock sector; and 3. Logistical support from WFP to transport cereals from Government-managed Grain Marketing Board depots to areas in need. Humanitarian partners have started consultations on how best to address these requests.

At the same time, food assistance partners are preparing to meet the growing needs of the people through the Seasonal Targeted Assistance programme. This will be done through a combination of in-kind food distributions with regionally procured cereals, and cash transfers or voucher interventions where appropriate. WFP has developed a Response Strategy for food security in Zimbabwe, which aims for a harmonized approach between the Government, donors and the UN. WFP's total requirement until the end of March 2013 is approximately US\$119 million, of which US\$87 million has yet to be sourced.

### *The way forward*

RIACSO partners will continue to monitor the situation in the region to promote early interventions and resource mobilization where needed, including the potential launch of flash appeals. Lasting solutions are required to address issues of chronic food insecurity in some countries. The compounded nature of hazards and vulnerabilities in the region calls for a more integrated approach by governments and partners to address risks.

- The Comoros Floods Early Recovery Plan seeks to allow communities to resume their lives with dignity and increased resilience.

## Comoros Launches Early Recovery Plan

Following devastating floods in late April 2012, the Government of the Union of the Comoros launched an Early Recovery Plan to ensure the recovery of those directly affected, as well as to implement priority measures to reinforce national disaster preparedness.

The Early Recovery Plan was presented by a delegation led by the Minister of Interior from the Government of the Union of Comoros in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 5 September 2012. The launch was hosted by the South African Department of International Relations and Cooperation, and co-chaired by the Comoros Ministry of the Interior and the Comoros United Nations Resident Coordinator, with OCHA support. The Plan is seeking a total of US\$19.2 million to restore the living conditions of those affected to pre-flood levels by addressing all relevant sectors, including livelihoods and food security; infrastructure; shelter; water, hygiene and sanitation (WASH); health and nutrition; and education and protection. The Plan also includes measures to enhance disaster preparedness and risk reduction, in order to strengthen the resilience of communities to withstand future disasters. The launch aimed to raise the necessary funds among regional donors, and was attended by many foreign embassy representatives and international donor organizations.

In late April 2012, Comoros experienced intense torrential rains, receiving 72 per cent of its average annual rainfall in a 5-day period, which caused massive flooding across the island archipelago. Around 65,000 people were directly affected (9 per cent of the total population), with an estimated \$20 million in damages. On 25 April 2012 a state of national disaster was declared by the President, followed by a request for international assistance. Thanks to an impressive mobilization of the international community whose in-kind and cash contributions for the emergency phase is estimated at more than \$8 million, the Government was able to address the immediate needs of the affected population, with support of external partners and the UN system, including the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) managed by OCHA. The funding of the Early Recovery Plan will not only complete the response started in April, but allow communities to resume their lives with dignity and increased resilience.

## Regional Humanitarian Trainings

### *Preparedness and Simulation Training*

The IASC Working Group on Preparedness partners will be hosting a Regional Facilitators Training in Emergency Preparedness Planning and Simulation from 11 to 14 September 2012 in Johannesburg, South Africa. The aim of the training is to familiarize participants with the Inter-Agency Emergency Preparedness & Response Planning process and with the IASC approved Emergency Simulation Guide (Inter-Agency and Government parallel versions). The workshop will culminate with a simulation, which will provide an opportunity to practice using an emergency response scenario.

The training will specifically target disaster managers, NGOs and UN technical focal points. Participants who complete the training will be included in a roster of regional emergency preparedness and simulation facilitators. The trained facilitators will be able to co-facilitate both an emergency planning process and a simulation, within their own country and more broadly within the region.

### *Regional Training on CERF and the Flash Appeal*

OCHA will be hosting a regional training on the CERF and the Flash Appeal processes. The training will take place from 25 to 27 September 2012 in Johannesburg, South Africa. The main objective is to familiarize humanitarian partners, including UN, IOM and NGO partners, on the details of the CERF and Flash Appeal process; specifically it will allow participants to:

- Review the flash appeal and CERF application process;
- Improve their general understanding of the CERF application process, life-saving criteria and reporting requirements;
- Understand the basic criteria and methodology for producing a Flash Appeal, and its subsequent revision;
- Share lessons learned from the region;

The training specifically targets sector/cluster lead representatives, disaster management focal points, and field and programme officers. Participants who complete the training will form a cadre of agency staff and NGO colleagues with detailed knowledge of the CERF and Flash Appeal processes who can provide expert advice to country teams preparing CERF requests and the development of a Flash Appeal.

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