Zimbabwe: Government, UN launch a US$715m humanitarian response plan for 2020

02 April 2020, Harare – The 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan for Zimbabwe was launched today, targeting 5.6 million people with food assistance and support in the areas of health, water-sanitation-hygiene, education, protection, nutrition, shelter, and camp coordination and management. The plan requests for a total of US$715 million from international community.

The Humanitarian Response Plan was signed by the Minister of Local Government, Public Works, and National Housing, Honorable July Moyo and the UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Maria Ribeiro in the presence of His Excellency President Emmerson D. Mnangagwa, Government Ministers, WHO and WFP representatives and the media.

The launch of the Humanitarian Response Plan takes place in the context of the COVID-19 Virus Pandemic at a time when there are almost one million infections in the world. In Africa 41 countries had reported a total of 3,664 confirmed cases and 86 deaths. To date, the Ministry of Health and Child Care in Zimbabwe reported eight confirmed COVID-19 cases including one death, as well as 233 suspected cases of COVID-19 who tested negative.

The Humanitarian Response Plan will play a key role in mitigating the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and protecting those most vulnerable in communities in Zimbabwe.

Following the declaration of COVID-19 as a national disaster by President Emmerson D. Mnangagwa on 19 March 2020, efforts have been scaled up to further contain the spread. The United Nations in Zimbabwe have added immediate complementary interventions to the Humanitarian Response Plan for 2020, in support of the Zimbabwe COVID-19 Preparedness and Response plan.

The Zimbabwe Humanitarian Response Plan addresses the increasing vulnerabilities of an estimated seven million people who need multi-sectoral humanitarian support. Food insecurity remains the major concern with over 4.3 million people – or 46% of the rural population – requiring continued assistance.

Since 2019, Zimbabwe has experienced multiple climate and economic related shocks impacting the lives of many in both rural and urban communities. Today the COVID-19 Pandemic is the latest shock impacting on the wellbeing and livelihoods of Zimbabweans.

Urban vulnerability has also been on the increase due to persistent economic shock, leaving some 2.2 million people food insecure according to the latest urban Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee assessment. Those hardest hit have been forced to resort to negative coping mechanisms, with particularly dangerous consequences for women and girls who are simply striving to survive.

The Humanitarian Response Plan prioritizes life-saving and life-sustaining support targeting the people most in need, including residual humanitarian needs of Cyclone Idai-affected communities and on-going support to refugees.

The response plan for Zimbabwe will be implemented in collaboration with 47 operational partners through cluster approach, in which, of the total USD 715m required: approximately 60% or USD422m planned for food security; USD 63m for health; USD 61m to water, sanitation and hygiene; USD 42m to education; USD 21m to protection; USD 18m to nutrition; USD 10m to shelter, and USD 950,000 to camp coordination and management.
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