

SOUTHERN AFRICA

HUMANITARIAN KEY MESSAGES



HIGHLIGHTS



More than 400,000 people across the region have been affected by floods and cyclones in 2018.



There is a 65-70 per cent probability of an El Niño event between December and February, as compared with a 90 per cent probability ahead of the same period in 2015 - 2016.



People in two districts in Madagascar and three in Zimbabwe are facing Emergency food insecurity.

KEY MESSAGES

- More than 9.6 million people in Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe are expected to face severe food insecurity (IPC phase 3 and above) in the coming months.** Both Madagascar (Beloha and Ampanihy Districts) and Zimbabwe (Kariba, Binga and Rushinga) have populations facing Emergency (IPC Phase 4) food insecurity. The highest numbers of severely food insecure people are projected to be in Malawi (3.3 million), Zimbabwe (2.4 million people just in rural areas), and Madagascar (1.3 million). Increases in food insecurity are closely linked to heightened protection risks for the most vulnerable. In Madagascar, there are reports that households from Grand Sud are traveling long distances in search of work, and that very poor households who rely on charcoal or firewood for a living are traveling longer distances to collect them, exposing them to insecurity.
- The risk of an El Niño phenomenon between December and February, which coincides with the cropping season in Southern Africa, is currently 65-70 per cent. This is lower than at the same time in 2015, when the probability was 90 per cent.** However, there is still a need to closely monitor the situation and ensure that preparedness actions are undertaken, building on the lessons learned from the 2016-2017 El Niño-induced drought. El Niño is historically associated with depressed rainfall in the southern half of the region. According to the most recent Southern African Regional Climate Outlook Forum (SARCOF) report a possible El Niño event could therefore lead to a further deterioration in food insecurity in the region in 2019 - 2020, particularly following the low and erratic rainfall recorded to date in 2018.

3. **At least 400,000 people across Southern Africa were impacted by floods and cyclones during the 2017/2018 season.** This includes 212,000 people who were impacted either directly or indirectly by Tropical Cyclone Ava (161,000 people) and Tropical Storm Eliakim (51,000) in Madagascar. Northern Mozambique was affected by heavy rainfall in January, affecting more than 73,200 people and damaging over 14,400 houses and 422 classrooms. Meanwhile, Mauritius and La Reunion impacted by both Tropical Cyclone Berguitta (January 2018) and Tropical Cyclone Dumazile (March 2018). Localized floods caused displacement and infrastructure damage in Botswana, Malawi, Tanzania and Zimbabwe.
4. **Over 10,000 cholera cases have been recorded in the region to date in 2018,** including in Angola, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Tanzania saw double the cases recorded from January to August 2018 (3,739) compared to the same period in 2017 (2,466), while Zambia accounts for nearly 40 per cent of all cases in the region. Of particular note, a new outbreak has started in Harare, Zimbabwe, on 6 September, with 3,349 suspected cases reported and 32 deaths as of 14 September. The major risk factors propagating the Zimbabwe outbreak are unsafe burial practices, erratic water supply, burst sewer pipes and the use of unprotected water sources. Other communicable diseases are also present in the region, including Hepatitis E in Angola and Namibia, Guinea Worm in Angola (first case confirmed in June 2018), measles in Mauritius and Zambia, typhoid in Zimbabwe, listeriosis in South Africa and dengue fever in the Seychelles and Tanzania.
5. **Protection, particularly of refugees, migrants and children, continues to be a regional challenge.** The number of refugees and asylum seekers hosted in Southern Africa has decreased to 878,000, primarily as a result of the repatriation of Burundian refugees from Tanzania. Some 44,000 Burundian refugees have so far been assisted to repatriate voluntarily to Burundi, citing improved overall security in the country, desires to reoccupy farmland, and to reunify with family. However, an average of 1,000 Burundian refugees continue to arrive in neighbouring countries each month, citing insecurity, harassment, and fear. Ahead of the elections in DRC in December more people may seek protection in neighbouring states. In Northern Mozambique the risk of new attacks by non-state armed actors remains high and clashes with security forces from October 2017 to July 2018 have reportedly resulted in deaths and displacement of civilians, although numbers have not been verified. Children living with albinism in Southern Africa face discrimination and abuse, often culminating in abduction, murder or human trafficking.
6. **Under-funding is negatively impacting the delivery of protection and assistance to refugees arriving in Southern Africa,** including from the DRC and Burundi. The DRC Regional Refugee Response Plan requires US\$211 million for 2018, of which only \$27 million has been received, leaving Angola 7 per cent funded, Tanzania 14 per cent funded and Zambia 18 per cent funded as of July 2018. Remaining Southern African countries in the appeal have not yet received any funding.
7. **While governments in the region continue to respond to recurrent shocks, there is an urgent need for comprehensive action by governments and development partners to address the root causes of chronic vulnerability in the region, in particular through investments in shock-responsive social protection systems.** Regional humanitarian partners are supporting governments to enhance their preparedness for disasters and assisting the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) to develop a Regional Resilience Strategy. However, broader macro-economic and policy measures are urgently required to reduce chronic needs and respond to crises in the future. These include building fiscal buffers, building resilient production systems and markets, and building on existing social safety net programmes, as [highlighted](#) following the 2016-2017 El Niño-induced drought. Without urgent and comprehensive action to this end, chronic needs across the region will continue to become acute when vulnerable communities are hit with even the smallest shock.

For further information on the food insecurity and nutrition situation, see the [latest Food and Nutrition Security Working Group Update](#).

* For the purposes of these Key Messages, the Southern Africa region includes: Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.