Yet with just US$ 139 million of the required US$ 399 million secured, the international community must promptly step up if a more severe crisis is to be averted.

WFP Response by Country

With Zimbabwe enduring its worst hunger emergency in a decade because of drought, flooding and economic crisis – 5.5 million people in rural areas are forecast to be severely food insecure by January, up from 3.6 million now – WFP intends to continue scaling up assistance to reach 2.7 million people. Significant support to urban residents is also envisaged.

In Mozambique, 2 million people will experience crisis and emergency levels of hunger due to the effects of cyclones and flooding in the centre and north of the country and drought in the south. WFP plans to support 1.25 million people at the peak of the lean season.
**WFP Response by Country (continued)**

Because of drought, **Zambia**, traditionally a breadbasket, is experiencing one of the region’s sharpest spikes in food insecurity — now affecting 2.3 million people — and has been obliged to restrict maize exports. WFP will support the government’s response by procuring and delivering pulses, and moving maize to vulnerable districts.

With 25 percent of families in **Madagascar**’s drought-prone south now suffering crisis and emergency levels of food insecurity, up from 20 percent in July, and acute malnutrition rates still stubbornly high, WFP intends to support 783,000 people with much-needed food and nutrition assistance through March.

Having suffered its worst drought in a generation during the last growing season, a 53 percent drop in 2019 cereal production and large-scale livestock deaths, **Namibia** has also seen hunger surge. More than 40 percent of its 2.5 million people are now characterised as severely food insecure. In close coordination with the Government, WFP plans to assist up to 379,000 people, including 101,636 on antiretroviral treatment.

**Eswatini**’s hunger crisis, too, is deepening, fuelled by drought, a poor harvest, inflation and rising unemployment. The number of people in IPC Phases 3 and 4 is estimated to have risen to 230,000 — one-quarter of the rural population — from 200,000 in mid-year. WFP plans to support 163,000 people through March.

While **Malawi** enjoyed a 25 percent year-on-year increase in maize production notwithstanding the ravages of Cyclone Idai, WFP is planning to assist, through March, 415,000 of the 1.1 million people in IPC Phase 3 as a result of drought and cyclone-induced flooding.

Two drought-stricken harvests in succession — cereal production dropped by 36 percent in 2018 and by 70 percent this year — have contributed to an alarming surge in severe hunger in **Lesotho**. The number of people in IPC Phases 3 and 4 is 430,000, one-third of the population. WFP plans to assist 174,000 people.

These country-specific responses will address immediate food needs and also strengthen resilience programmes.

**Recipients of WFP Assistance—Planned**

- **Zambia**: 379,000
- **Lesotho**: 174,000
- **Eswatini**: 163,000
- **Malawi**: 415,000
- **Madagascar**: 783,000
- **Namibia**: 379,000
- **Zimbabwe**: 2,700,000
- **Mozambique**: 1,250,000

**7.2 million**

**Sustainable Funding is Key**

Going forward, higher temperatures and drier weather are set to continue cutting crop yields, exacerbating structural poverty, inequality and chronic hunger, and rendering instability and conflict more likely.

According to the IPCC, six of nine African countries set to be major food insecurity hotspots because of climate change are in Southern Africa: DR Congo, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. With the region so prone to shocks and afflicted by high rates of hunger and inequality, more investment in resilience is essential. Maize is Southern Africa’s staple crop, accounting for 70% of total cereal production and is highly susceptible to heat and lack of water. Experts say that in certain areas its cultivation will become untenable in a matter of years.

Because resilience can take years to meaningfully build, multi-year funding, presently scarce, is likewise crucial.

WFP’s work to boost the assessment capacities of SADC and its Member States is advancing the bloc’s ability to promptly measure and report vulnerability in a harmonised and integrated manner.

Bolstered by improved climate science, WFP is working with disaster-prone countries in the region to achieve a meaningful shift from traditional lean-season assistance to early-response programming. Clearly, early action to build resilience can significantly cut spending on emergency response.

With host governments and partners, WFP Country Offices in Southern Africa are devising such early response plans. Among other things, these promote drought-resistant alternatives to maize, improved storage and reduced post-harvest losses. These plans are designed to generate medium- and long-term benefits and to minimise the need for emergency lean season assistance.