Background

With the rainy season in Southern Africa merely half way through its course, unusually early and heavy rainfall has already damaged the homes and crops of nearly half a million people in Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe. For many families, this damage has compounded devastating and irrecoverable losses caused by the 2007 floods and other severe climatic hazards. The floods have forced over 120,000 individuals to abandon their homes and assets, in addition to some 805,000 people identified to be at immediate risk. Prompt assistance is critical at this time to address both the immediate and imminent needs of flood-affected communities in Southern Africa. Response in 2008 was initiated by the Governments of all four countries, placing emphasis on the need for immediate preparedness efforts to ensure rapid response and to avert escalating losses and suffering as the flooding is expected to worsen in the coming months.

The 2008 Southern African Region Floods Preparedness and Response Plan has outlined strategic priorities, in line with Government efforts and national contingency plans, to best assist and protect the region's most flood-affected communities. Launched earlier than previous appeals, the 2008 Preparedness and Response Plan aims to combine immediate assistance with prevention, preparedness and early recovery measures, thereby reducing the impact of the crisis before losses and suffering are at their most acute.

Challenges facing food security and livelihoods

The vast majority of households in Southern Africa depend on agriculture-related activities for their food security and livelihoods. The floods, which are affecting the region’s main cropping season (October to April), have washed away crops, destroyed granaries, triggered weed infestations and caused soil nutrients to leach, increasing both the likelihood of a food gap in the short-term and longer-term difficulties in replanting. Livestock overcrowding due to successive migrations from flood-affected areas and water-borne parasites have also increased the risk of livestock disease outbreaks, including Rift Valley Fever which also affects humans. The potential spread of Epizootic Ulcerative Syndrome fish disease from the Zambezi-Chobe River system into aquaculture would devastate the livelihoods of millions of fishers.

Affected areas are home to some of the region’s most vulnerable rural families who already suffer a lack of resources and social services, particularly women and children. It is crucial that these families are equipped with the means to resume their livelihoods and begin replanting in time for the agricultural season. Agriculture-based assistance will be paramount to improving food security in flood-affected areas of Southern Africa while building the resilience of affected households to better cope with future shocks.

FAO in Southern Africa

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is playing a key role in the 2008 Preparedness and Response Plan at both country and sub-regional level to improve food security through the timely provision of life-saving livelihood assets associated with agriculture, livestock and fisheries while building capacity at the institutional level.

Through FAO’s proposed assistance, many communities will be able to take advantage of receding flood water, and plant and harvest within three to four months, thereby reducing the need for extended food aid. Moreover, FAO will continue to share its technical expertise to build the capacity of local government services and civil society to mitigate the impact of floods and empower communities to “build back better”.

Within the framework of the 2008 Preparedness and Response Plan, FAO’s main objectives in Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe are to:

- reduce food insecurity through the timely provision of essential inputs coupled with training;
- maximize production from the 2007/2008 agricultural season through quick replanting, restocking of livestock and introduction of sustainable agricultural technologies;
- support early recovery and reduce vulnerability to future disasters through the promotion of a capacity building approach with focus on the diversification of livelihoods and cropping patterns, thereby strengthening coping strategies; and
- prevent the spread of animal diseases through improved veterinary services, surveillance and awareness raising.

As part of the 2008 Preparedness and Response Plan, FAO is appealing for US$9.5 million to implement its proposed projects, as detailed below.
**Project title:** Emergency support to prevention of the spread of EUS fish disease from the Zambezi/Chobe River system

**Objectives:** Inform fisheries staff about Epizootic Ulcerative Syndrome (EUS) disease and how to limit its spread in southern Africa; provide training to fisheries staff and others involved in all aspects of fishing to identify the disease and contribute to surveillance efforts; and implement an effective public awareness campaign on EUS and how to mitigate its spread

**Beneficiaries:** 50,000 households involved in fishing and marketing of fish in Southern Africa, fish pond owners and the general public

**Implementing Partners:** Ministries of Fisheries, Departments of Fisheries, NGOs involved in supporting fishing communities

**Funds Requested:** US$600,000

FAO’s proposed project “Emergency support to prevention of the spread of EUS fish disease from the Zambezi/Chobe River system” aims to raise awareness on Epizootic Ulcerative Syndrome (EUS) disease and build capacity at all levels to prevent its spread throughout the region.

With donor support, 50,000 households who depend on fisheries-related activities for their livelihoods will receive training and build their capacity to identify EUS, mitigate its spread and contribute to disease surveillance in their communities. The project will carry out awareness campaigns, disseminate information relevant to Ministries of Fisheries staff and the general public on EUS mitigation and prevention. Project efforts will contribute to protecting the livelihoods of thousands of fishers who depend on the Zambezi/Chobe River system as a means to generate income and feed their families.

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**Project title:** Support to the prevention of Rift Valley Fever in the flood-affected provinces of Mozambique, Zambia, Malawi and Zimbabwe

**Objectives:** Support surveillance, vaccination and awareness campaigns to prevent the spread of Rift Valley Fever (RVF) in livestock and human populations; prevent RVF through vaccinating ruminants before outbreaks occur; strengthen the capacity of Veterinary and Human Health Services to detect the disease before it spreads, causing the loss of lives and livelihoods

**Beneficiaries:** 60,000 households

**Implementing Partners:** Ministries of Agriculture, Departments of Veterinary Services and the National Disaster Management Agency in each country

**Funds Requested:** US$1,000,000

FAO project “Support to the prevention of Rift Valley Fever (RVF) in the flood-affected provinces of Mozambique, Zambia, Malawi and Zimbabwe” seeks to help 60,000 pastoralist households to safeguard their health and livelihoods through improving disease mitigation in high-risk areas throughout the region. To achieve this, the project aims to vaccinate animals against RVF before outbreaks occur while strengthening the capacity of Veterinary and Human Health Services to detect the disease as quickly as possible.

In addition to training, FAO will also carry out major public information campaigns through government information services and extension services to promote widespread awareness on RVF. Increasing preparedness in RVF detection and response will have a resonant impact not only on beneficiaries of this project but also surrounding communities.

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**Project title:** Support to coordination and monitoring of the agriculture and food security sector response

**Objectives:** Ensure that government and humanitarian partners’ agriculture and food security sector interventions meet international standards, norms and lessons learned through standardized monitoring activities

**Beneficiaries:** National governments, cooperating partners, affected populations

**Implementing Partners:** Governments, UN agencies, NGOs, Agriculture and Food Security Clusters

**Funds Requested:** US$150,000

“Support to coordination and monitoring of the agriculture and food security sector response” endeavours to strengthen the impact of humanitarian interventions in the region by enhancing coordination among stakeholders involved in flood relief efforts. The project will support monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities and provide technical back-stopping services to projects being implemented in the region with the collaboration of an experienced agronomist and an M&E expert.

The project will also provide training to government and international staff working in flood-response and rehabilitation and ensure close liaison with other actors involved in the response.
The floods have devastated over 1,670 hectares of crop fields in Malawi and pose increasing risks for livestock disease outbreaks. FAO project “Agricultural response to flood-affected populations (focusing on preparedness for immediate response and early recovery)” aims to support Government efforts to assess and respond to the needs of flood-affected communities.

Donor funding will enable FAO to provide Malawi’s most vulnerable rural households with improved crop varieties (cassava cuttings, sweet potato vines and assorted legumes) and healthy animals (goats and poultry), coupled with training in improved agricultural and livestock practices. Beneficiaries of planting material inputs will multiply and redistribute the cassava seed and sweet potato vines, thereby passing on the benefits of project activities to others in their community.

FAO will provide technical and administrative support to the Ministry of Agriculture in organizing ITFs and implementing a voucher system for the fairs. Using a capacity building approach, the project also seeks to improve coordination among humanitarian partners involved in the sector, thereby increasing the effectiveness of interventions and avoiding duplication of efforts.

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“The urgent provision of agricultural inputs to ensure rapid and timely restoration of smallholder food production in the flood-affected provinces of Mozambique” endeavours to equip agricultural households with the means to replant their crops in time for the second agricultural season. In addition to the distribution of seeds and tools, Input Trade Fairs (ITFs) will be implemented by the project as a vehicle to improve access to suitable agricultural inputs and technologies, while injecting money into local economies and promoting local seed producers and entrepreneurs.

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FAO’s proposed project “Support to smallholder farmers in small livestock restocking in the flood-affected provinces of Mozambique” plans to distribute small ruminants to 30,000 households who depend on livestock production for their livelihoods. The provision of healthy animals will strengthen the ability of pastoralists to better cope with the impact of the floods and future shocks.

To promote livestock health, the project will also carry out surveillance activities to monitor and prevent the spread of transboundary animal diseases in the case of outbreaks, with specific focus on RVF and EUS.
Recent assessments reveal that the floods have already forced over 82,000 Mozambicans to resettle, with over three times that number affected. FAO’s proposed project, “Support to flood-affected resettled households through agricultural gardens in the flood-affected provinces of Tete, Manica, Sofala, Zambezia, Inhambane” seeks to help 20,000 households to establish gardens in five flood-affected provinces.

In addition to providing training in improved agricultural practices, FAO will also build capacity in environmentally-friendly methodologies, such as conservation agriculture, thereby ensuring that families reap sustainable benefits from their labour.

### FAO’s Component of the Southern African Region Floods Preparedness and Response Plan

#### Zambia

**Total funding required: US$1,553,000**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project title</th>
<th>Emergency provision of agricultural inputs to vulnerable farmers affected by the 2007/2008 floods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Provide support to flood-affected vulnerable farming households in southern Central Province and other parts of Zambia to recover and restore their household agricultural production base during 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>30,000 households</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementing Partners</td>
<td>OXFAM, CRS, CCF, C-FAARM, LWF, CARITAS, Africare, MACO, DMMU, Concern, WV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funds Requested</td>
<td>US$1,103,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activities of FAO project “Emergency provision of agricultural inputs to vulnerable farmers affected by the 2007/2008 floods” aim to restore household food production among Zambia’s most flood-affected communities. With donor support, 30,000 households will receive the seeds, tools and other basic inputs necessary to resume agricultural production.

FAO will provide training to maximize the benefits of project inputs and activities, including the promotion of conservation agriculture. By increasing the production capacity and self-reliance of affected communities, the project will contribute to reducing dependency on food aid.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project title</th>
<th>Emergency vaccination of livestock against transboundary animal diseases in flood-affected areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Support emergency immunization of cattle in areas affected by floods through provision of vaccines and operations in the field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>10,000 households</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementing Partners</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture, Land O Lakes, CARE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funds Requested</td>
<td>US$450,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Emergency vaccination of livestock against transboundary animal diseases in flood-affected areas” seeks to safeguard the productive assets of 10,000 pastoralist households facing the increasing risk of livestock loss due to flood-induced disease outbreaks.

Donor support will enable FAO to distribute much needed vaccines and drugs for the emergency immunization of cattle in flood-affected areas. The project will provide support and coordination assistance to Government Veterinary Services for vaccination campaigns and drug distribution activities.

### FAO’s Component of the Southern African Region Floods Preparedness and Response Plan

#### Zimbabwe

**Total funding required: US$386,403**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project title</th>
<th>Enhance food and nutrition security through vegetable production (inputs, training, extension)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Enhance food and nutrition security through the empowerment of communities in winter gardening crop production activities and impart skills on gardening, vegetable production and nutrition through training and extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>3,000 households (15,000 people)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementing Partners</td>
<td>Fachig in Muzarabani, NFN and Zim Ahead in Chipinge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funds Requested</td>
<td>US$386,403</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reports reveal that an estimated 12,000 hectares of maize, cotton and sorghum fields in Zimbabwe have been lost to the floods. FAO project “Enhance food and nutrition security through vegetable production (inputs, training, extension)” aims to improve the gardening activities of 3,000 households through input distribution and capacity building based on community-specific needs.

Proposed activities include water resource assessment, the procurement of irrigation equipment and tools (treadle pumps, garden tools, seed and fertilizer packs) and garden establishment, among others.