



Background

In 2009, Madagascar has suffered the effects of multiple crises, including drought and cyclones. Political instability, which led to the recent ousting of the President, has exacerbated the effects of the natural disasters, delaying assessments and response initiatives. Overall, an estimated 410 000 people are in need of food assistance, including 150 000 people in the drought-affected south and 260 000 in the four major cities where the effects of political unrest have been the worst.

The erratic rainfall between September 2008 and January 2009 had a devastating effect on the December 2008 harvest, resulting in increased food insecurity. In the south, attention has been diverted from humanitarian interventions that were previously underway as a result of the political crisis. The situation has affected preparedness, while security concerns have delayed operations, particularly regarding the transport of essential inputs.

The Madagascar Flash Appeal 2009 was launched on 7 April to prevent the deterioration of the humanitarian situation, save lives, bolster social safety nets and, should the political situation allow, support time-critical recovery.

Challenges facing food security and livelihoods

Approximately 80 percent of Madagascar's population depends on agriculture-related activities for income and, for many, as a means to provide food for their families. Partners estimate that, since the beginning of the socio-political crisis in January 2009, the number of food-insecure households in urban areas has increased. Price increases have put the most basic commodities beyond the reach of 512 000 people who had already been classified as food-insecure according to an assessment conducted by the World Food Programme (WFP).

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) estimates that 30 to 40 percent of the expected cereal production could have been lost in the drought-affected south. The first harvest of 2009 is expected not only to be poor, but also delayed by three months, until June 2009. With the rainy season ending in April 2009, FAO estimates that it will not be possible to replant cereals such as maize and sorghum before November 2009. Consequently, subsistence farmers' food security will depend almost entirely on horticultural production and animal husbandry.

In January 2009, a joint Government/ United Nations Children's Fund/WFP mission indicated that although an acute nutritional crisis was not yet evident, indicators would deteriorate rapidly in the absence of immediate assistance.



Affected farmers need immediate assistance to sustain their agricultural livelihoods.



FAO response

FAO aims to improve food security for the most vulnerable groups in four major urban areas and 31 drought-affected communes in southern Madagascar. The Food Security and Livelihoods sector will be led by FAO and WFP to ensure coordination among humanitarian partners and technically sound interventions, avoid overlap and maximize the synergies of agricultural interventions and their outcomes.

Within the framework of the Madagascar Flash Appeal 2009, FAO has requested **USD 1.3 million**. The main objectives of the proposed projects include:

- enhancing rapid urban agriculture to increase the availability of fresh food for self-consumption and provide complementary sources of income; and
- improving rapid and small-scale vegetable production, as well as promoting small animal rearing, in the drought-affected south.

This appeal will be revised as the situation evolves and further data becomes available.



FAO'S COMPONENT OF THE MADAGASCAR FLASH APPEAL 2009

Total funding required: USD 1.3 million



Project title: Emergency agricultural support to vulnerable populations in urban and peri-urban areas of Antananarivo, Fianarantsoa and Ansirabe

Objective: To increase availability of food products (fresh horticultural products) for self-consumption and commercialization (small trade) in urban markets; to generate income for vulnerable populations in urban and peri-urban areas; and to preserve a minimal production capacity.

Beneficiaries: 10 860 households (54 300 individuals).

Partners: *Caritas*, national and international non-governmental organizations, *Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Élevage et de la Pêche* and local authorities.

Funds Required: USD 800 000.

“Emergency agricultural support to vulnerable populations in urban and peri-urban areas of Antananarivo, Fianarantsoa and Ansirabe” seeks to support rapid urban agriculture to increase the availability of fresh food. The project will assist beneficiaries in the development of vegetable gardens in the above-mentioned areas, focusing on families that are dependent on urban farming activities for survival within the municipalities with the highest agricultural potential.

With donor support, 10 860 urban households will receive 2 tonnes of assorted vegetable seeds, enabling them to sustain their livelihoods and provide for their families. The planting of vegetables and tubers should begin by the end of the rainy season (May), hence procurement and distribution of seeds should start immediately. Project activities will be progressively expanded according to partners' capacities.

Project title: Emergency support to drought-affected populations in the Anosy, Androy and Atsimo Andrefana regions

Objective: To improve food security of the poorest households in drought-affected southern regions through improvement of rapid and small-scale vegetable production and promotion of small animal rearing.

Beneficiaries: 4 500 households.

Partners: *Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Élevage et de la Pêche*, local authorities and national and international non-governmental organizations.

Funds Required: USD 500 000.

“Emergency support to drought-affected populations in Anosy, Androy and Atsim Anrefana regions” aims to distribute essential agricultural inputs to vulnerable households throughout the regions most severely affected by drought in southern Madagascar. Given the expected decline in agricultural production in 2009 as a result of the drought, increasing the self-reliance of affected farming households is crucial at this time.

As reflected in the Madagascar Flash Appeal 2009, the socio-political crisis has, to an extent, diverted attention from the looming crisis in the south. The nutritional status of drought-affected farmers could deteriorate rapidly in the absence of immediate assistance to support their agricultural livelihoods. Donor support will enable the procurement and distribution of 15 000 poultry and 300 kg of vegetable seeds to 4 500 subsistence farmers in the drought-affected south.

For more information please contact:

Mr Amadou Moustapha Kamara
FAO Representative for Madagascar
PO Box 3971, Antananarivo 101
Cell: (261) 32 0710 971
E-mail: amadou.kamara@fao.org
Website: www.fao.org/emergencies

Ms Angela Hinrichs
Senior Operations Officer
FAO Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, Rome 00153, Italy
Office: +39 (06)570 54070 | Fax: +39 (06)570 54941
Email: angela.hinrichs@fao.org
Website: www.fao.org/emergencies

