



Food and Agriculture
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FAO provides seeds and tools for the main agricultural season in Gaza and Cabo Delgado provinces: Anticipatory Actions to protect El Niño and conflict-affected farmers.

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According to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) in the period between May to September 2023 around 2.6 million people were in acute food insecurity, requiring urgent assistance. Of these, 126,000 people were in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency) and the remaining 2.5 million in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis).

For the period from October 2023 to March 2024, 3.3 million people face acute food insecurity of Crisis or higher (IPC Phase 3 or above) of which 220 000 people are in Phase 4 (Emergency). They represent 21 percent of the population of the districts most affected by the shocks in 2023 and included in the analysis in urban and rural areas of Mozambique.

In Cabo Delgado, where most of the country's Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are located, the number of people requiring emergency food assistance remains high: 863,000 people are estimated to be in IPC Phase 3 or above (32% of the total population) in the period between October 2023 to March 2024. Comparing the previous period, the number of people in IPC phase 3+ increased by 19%.

In the south and centre of the country, the number of people requiring assistance results from the depletion of food reserves and the impact of El Niño. El Niño is a natural climate phenomenon, in which surface waters of the central and eastern Pacific become unusually warm and cause changes in weather patterns around the world. It re-occurs every 2-7 years and typically lasts 9-12 months.

In response to this threat to food security, FAO is providing high-quality certified seeds (using e-vouchers and in-kind inputs) to farmers, to ensure they are able to produce food during the main agricultural season, thus partially reducing the risk of food insecurity in the most vulnerable areas.

For the main agricultural campaign in Cabo Delgado, FAO is targeting to provide agricultural kits to 24 600 households (123 000 people), of which 7 954 (32%) are IDPs, 3 276 (13%) host communities and 13 370 (54%) returnees. The kits (composed of seeds of maize and beans, and farming tools) are being distributed in 12 districts: Ancuabe, Balama, Chiure, Macomia, Mecufi, Muidumbe, Meluco, Namuno, Nangade, Palma, Quissanga and Mocimboa da Praia.

In collaboration with the authorities of the Gaza Province, FAO is also assisting the most vulnerable households to avoid food shortages during the peak of the drought period.

Through this action, FAO is supporting 12 500 people (2 500 households) in the districts of Mabalane, Mapai and Massingir with access to improved seeds and agricultural tools through an e-voucher system, where each beneficiary receives a voucher of the value of 3.200,00 Meticaís (about 50 USD) to buy seeds and tools from local agro-dealers.

The e-voucher card gives access to seeds of short-cycle crops like maize, beans and vegetables, including tools such as hoes, watering cans and machetes. This short-cycle crops allow them to harvest before the drought hits.

Furthermore, FAO is prioritizing families who lost their production as a result of the effects of the bad weather that affected the area in the last agriculture campaign, families headed by people with physical disabilities, by women and widows, elderly people or orphaned children, families with pregnant women, and extended families living with children under 5 years of age and chronically ill people.

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These interventions contribute to address the food security challenges in the most critical areas of the country, where FAO and other humanitarian organizations, alongside the Mozambican government, are implementing programs aiming at restoring and improving agricultural production in conflict-affected areas. These programmes include the distribution of food assistance, as well as seeds, tools, and training on climate-resilient farming techniques.

El Niño and FAO Anticipatory Actions

In the current humanitarian crisis in Mozambique, most of the affected vulnerable population depends on agriculture for survival. Supporting farmers to meet the planting season or to keep their livestock alive are critical time-sensitive interventions. If delayed, the vulnerable populations affected by the crisis can be pushed into deeper poverty, further displacement, or irreversible destitution and long-term dependency on food assistance.

The present El Niño /La Niña Southern Oscillation (ENSO) forecasts confirmed the presence of El Niño will affect the 2023/24 agricultural season in the southern and central part of Mozambique. Based on that, the Government of Mozambique approved the implementation of the Anticipatory Action Plan for drought in the critical districts of Gaza province.

In response to the Government declaration, FAO launched the El Niño Anticipatory Action and Response Plan, which outlines the key measures. As part of the anticipatory actions, FAO is working on awareness campaigns on precautions to take facing drought and El Niño effects, to help farmers not to lose their livelihoods.

The latest predictions point to a greater than 80 percent chance of El Niño continuing through March-May 2024, following declaration of the onset of El Niño conditions in early July 2023 by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

FAO has developed Anticipatory Action protocols and is part of inter-agency Anticipatory Action frameworks in many of the countries historically affected by El Niño, and where food security is a major concern.

In close coordination with governments and other key partners, FAO is already implementing Anticipatory Action to mitigate the impact of forecast El Niño-induced climate extremes on agriculture and food security. However, the available financial resources are extremely limited compared to the expected effects of this phenomenon.

