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# Information bulletin

## Southern Africa Region: Food Insecurity

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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**This bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation.**

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## The situation

Initial indications from the currently ongoing Vulnerability Assessment Committee (VAC) and annual crop forecasting assessments are that the crop harvest will be significantly reduced this season in Southern Africa. This is confirmed by the latest June 2012 regional inter-agency standing committee office (RIACSO) Food Security Matrix, prepared jointly by FAO, FEWSNET, OCHA and WFP. While general food security conditions appear favourable, localised acute food insecurity is being experienced in southern Malawi, the semi-arid districts of southern and central Mozambique, the southern and western provinces of Zimbabwe, most parts of Lesotho and some parts of Angola. An overall view of results is available and presented in the *Humanitarian Bulletin Southern Africa issue 2 June 2012*.

In Malawi it is estimated that 1.63 million people are food insecure and will require support for 3 to 6 months. While in Lesotho, following the failure of two successive crop seasons due to flooding and adverse weather, maize production fell by 77 percent compared to the 2010/11 season; which was already not a very good year. Angola is equally experiencing the worst drought in recent memory; with 1,833,900 people affected, of whom 533,000 are children under 5 years. In Zimbabwe, the national cereal production is estimated at 33 per cent less than the 2010/11 season harvest and 15% below the 2006 – 2011 average. In Mozambique, the areas for concern include southern and central regions of the country.

More countries and regions will require close monitoring as we approach the normal hunger period especially including Zambia and Swaziland. The Regional Vulnerability Assessment Committee (RVAC) dissemination meeting will take place at the end of July, where official data on food security will be released.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The national societies in southern Africa are working closely with other humanitarian organisations and UN agencies, such as FAO, WFP, OCHA and national governments in carrying out assessments through the National VAC and participating in dissemination forums for crop forecast. Malawi Red Cross is working on a concept note to work in partnership with WFP in three districts that are at risk of food insecurity. Angola Red Cross has requested deployment of an RDRT assessment team to assist the CVA to design and formulate response interventions. The RDRT has been deployed and assessments are currently ongoing.

The IFRC is closely monitoring the situation at this stage, liaising with other agencies like WFP and FAO and other humanitarian actors in the region through the regional inter-agency standing committee office (RIACSO). A regional DREF application will be launched to carry out detailed needs assessment and provide immediate relief assistance to the most at-risk households.

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## Contact information

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## How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
  2. Enable healthy and safe living.
  3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.
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