**THE danish emergency relief fund**

**Alert note**

**Section A: Basic information**

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| Organisation: | *Ulandshjælp Fra Folk til Folk - Humana People to People (UFF-Humana)* |
| Title of alert: | Humanitarian Intervention for Zimbabwe's Drought Emergency |
| Type of crisis: | * *rapid onset humanitarian crisis (please fill out section B)* * *slow onset humanitarian crisis (please fill out section C)* * *spike in protracted humanitarian crisis (please fill out section D)* |

**Section C: Slow onset humanitarian crisis**

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| **c.1 Where is the crisis? *Describe the areas affected***  The identified crisis is unfolding in Zimbabwe, a country already highly impacted by the effects of global warming and climate change. Throughout the country, the current El Niño phenomenon exacerbates these challenges, representing one of the most potent occurrences on record.  According to OCHA, the targeted Masvingo Rural District in Masvingo Province is among the top 5 districts in the country (which are all situated in southern Zimbabwe) in terms of vulnerability to El Niño. The district is home to 238,103 people and falls under ecological region 5, characterized by an average annual precipitation of 57.17mm. Here, the convergence of water scarcity, agricultural challenges, and food insecurity necessitates immediate relief efforts.  **c.2 What is the nature of the crisis?**  The crisis unfolding in the region is characterized by a climate change-induced drought exacerbated by the El Niño phenomenon. This combination is leading to extremely high temperatures (8°C higher than three years ago) and a significant reduction in rainfall (25% below the seasonal average). These circumstances are severely affecting agricultural output and leading to adverse food and nutritional shortages. The consequences of this crisis are particularly dire for rain-fed agricultural-dependent smallholder farmers, who comprise approximately 70% of Zimbabwe's population. The dwindling water sources and soaring temperatures also pose significant challenges to livestock well-being. The slow or failed harvests have led to increased food prices and limited access to markets. Projections estimate that due to these circumstances 2.7 million people will be pushed into hunger. Due to pre-existing inequalities, vulnerability and poverty, women and children are particularly impacted by the emergency, as they face increased exploitation and abuse and growing rates of child labour, school dropout, early marriage, and gender-based violence (GBV). Moreover, the scarcity of safe drinking water poses a significant health risk, with the potential for outbreaks of waterborne diseases such as Acute Watery Diarrhea and Cholera. Already, over 800,000 rural people lack access to safe water, heightening the risk of disease outbreaks and further aggravating the humanitarian crisis.  **c.3 What information do you have about the situation? What is the source of that information?**  We are gathering our information from both international and national official information channels, where we diligently monitor updates. We rely on reputable sources such as UN press releases, FAO reports, and updates from organizations like UNICEF, among others. Moreover, UFF-Humana's local partner DAPPZ is organized with an Emergency Response Team (ERT), it has a presence in clusters and other forums in local districts and conducts regular evaluations of the situation. DAPPZ recently conducted a general assessment in Masvingo district. Despite the activity of other organizations in the targeted areas, there is limited geographical coverage of the wards in need by the existing partners in the district, and no resilience programs have been activated. Currently, there are no other stakeholders providing cash/voucher assistance for food and basic needs purchases in the district. The Meteorological Service department is responsible for disseminating weather information to various departments such as Social Services and AGRITEX, and these departments take mitigatory measures based on the received information. Two key committees have been activated: (i) District Food Nutrition Security Committee and (ii) District Drought Relief Committee. However, the communication channels used to disseminate information, such as weather bulletins, national radio station etc, are not commonly used by rural communities, which rather communicate via local community radio stations, Agricultural Extension Officers, and community gatherings. The community's food security is threatened by zero yields, numerous pests resulting from drought affecting grazing land and livestock and limited capacity for water harvesting among households/farmers. Data indicate a decrease in meal consumption to two meals per day or even one. Increased poverty among households due to reduced income is straining social relationships. Communities are responding by seeking casual labor and witnessing an increase in migration toward cities among youth and men, leaving women burdened with childcare responsibilities. This has led to a rise in crime rates, child marriages, commercial sex work, GBV, and high rate of school dropouts.  *Links to relevant documentation attached.*  **c.3.1 Provide as strong as possible evidence of why there is a change in the current slow onset crisis. Describe also when the change occurred**  The crisis has notably intensified during the first three months of 2024, primarily due to the El Niño-induced subdued rainfall pattern, resulting in a significant food deficit across the country. This escalation reached a critical point in March 2024, prompting Zimbabwe's President Emmerson Mnangagwa to declare a State of National Disaster on April 3rd, 2024, in order to address the prolonged drought crisis.  **c.3.2. How could DERF grants make a difference for the crisis affected population?**  Urgent and comprehensive intervention is necessary to address the immediate needs of affected populations and mitigate the long-term impacts of the crisis, particularly on vulnerable communities in hard-to-reach rural areas, as described above. Given the limited reach of other donors in the Masvingo district, DERF grants could offer critical support during the acute phase of the crisis. This would encompass interventions to sustain people's access to adequate food and sustainable livelihoods (including cash-based vouchers to improve nutrition intake, especially among children), WASH activities, as well as programs to strengthen disaster risk reduction (DRR) capacities. DERF support is vital to bridge existing gaps and to ensure that vulnerable communities receive necessary and life-saving assistance.  **c.4 Are you already responding to this emergency? In which locations/sectors? For which target group? Through which forms of local presence? What is the outcome of your latest assessment and what have you done since then?**  UFF-Humana is not currently involved in responding to this emergency. However, DAPPZ has conducted a situational assessment in Masvingo district, which prompted this alert to DERF. |