

**Press Release**

**The United Nations and Humanitarian Partners appeal for US\$136.5 million to assist people affected by El Niño-induced Drought in Malawi**

**Lilongwe, 24 July** – The United Nations (UN), in collaboration with the Government of Malawi, has launched a Flash Appeal to address the devastating impacts of El Niño-induced drought currently affecting the country. The appeal requires US\$136.5 million to provide life-saving assistance, including food to 4.7 million most vulnerable people.

On 23 March this year, President Lazarus Chakwera declared a state of disaster in 23 out of 28 districts due to inadequate rains and prolonged dry spells that have severely damaged crops and food production. The Government estimates that around 44 per cent of the national maize crop area has been severely impacted. Additionally, other vital crops such as rice, soya beans, cowpeas and groundnuts have suffered significant damage, while over 80 per cent of the population depends on agriculture for their livelihoods. The preliminary assessment of the impact of El Niño, referenced in the state of disaster declaration, indicated that nearly 2 million farming families, representing over 9 million people, have been experiencing substantial losses in agricultural production.

Meanwhile, the food security situation in the country is precarious, with 4.2 million people projected to face acute food insecurity between May and September this year, according to the latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification analysis. With the impacts of the drought, these people will struggle to meet their basic food needs.

Rebecca Adda-Dontoh, the UN Resident Coordinator, highlighted the critical nature of the situation, stating, “The severity of this drought calls for immediate and coordinated action. This Flash Appeal is designed to support the national response efforts, addressing urgent needs and filling critical gaps to ensure comprehensive relief. We must act swiftly to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe and support the people of Malawi in this time of crisis.”

[The Flash Appeal](#) aims to complement the National El Niño-induced prolonged dry spells and [Floods Response Appeal](#) launched by the Government of Malawi in April 2024. It seeks to build upon national initiatives and address areas not covered by the national plan, ensuring that the response is comprehensive and effective.

The priority for this appeal is food assistance, which requires approximately \$50.7 million to support food procurement, distribution and cash transfers to the most vulnerable people. The funds will be crucial in providing immediate relief and preventing further deterioration of the food and nutrition security situation in the country.

The UN and partners call on the international community and donors to support this Flash Appeal and stand with the people of Malawi.

**For more information, contact:**

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