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Southern Africa: Achieving Resilience in the face of El Niño and Climate Shocks

Concept Note

Side Event

Second Regular Session of the Executive Board

Wednesday, 16th November 2016, 13.15 — 14.45

Purpose: To showcase Rome Based Agencies work supporting SADC states to achieve their medium to long-term food, nutrition and agriculture goals, while addressing climate-related shocks in Southern Africa.

Chair: SADC

Co-Sponsor: USAID

Background: Southern Africa's worst drought in 35 years has propagated a crisis of unprecedented scale throughout the region.

El Niño, coupled with two successive years of erratic rainfall, resulted in poor or failed cereal harvests—severely impacting rural people's livelihoods.

The food and nutrition impacts are severe. Some 32 million people have been classified as food insecure. People in Lesotho, Swaziland, Malawi, Mozambique, Madagascar and Zimbabwe are among the most-affected.

The humanitarian needs, however, extend well beyond food and nutrition, as vulnerable people face a variety of health, economic and social shocks.



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The immediate crisis threatens long-term national resilience to shocks and capacity to manage risk.

As a result of the crisis, the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) declared a regional emergency and launched an appeal. This appeal was immediately followed by the Regional Inter Agency Steering Committee (RIASCO) *Plan of Action* for the most drought-affected countries.

Significant contributions have been mobilized by national governments and development partners, which have enabled critical steps scaling-up humanitarian assistance within high-priority countries, as providing surge support and technical expertise to the SADC's Regional El Niño Response Team and Logistics Cell.

Issues:

Current and Future RBA Collaboration: how Rome-Based agencies are working jointly to develop and strengthen regional, national and local efforts, such as support to agricultural campaigns, food and nutrition security, as well as longer-term resilience.

Multi-Year Efforts: the need for multi-year efforts to build resilience, manage risk and adapt to climate change vital to break the cycle of seasonal hunger.

Challenge of Prioritising Resilience During Crisis: during crisis the focus shifts from longer-term development interventions such as stunting prevention, risk mitigation and capacity strengthening, in favour of immediate actions.