



**World Food  
Programme**

**OMJ Introductory Statement  
Second Regular Session of the Executive Board  
4-7 November 2013**

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

- The OMJ region continues to be marred by high levels of food insecurity caused by climatic shocks (droughts, floods and cyclones), armyworm and locust infestation, civil conflict (DRC) and political disputes (Madagascar) .
- This has contributed to increase the number of food insecure population in the southern Africa region to **18 million** people, **an increase of almost 25% from last year.**
- Just in **Malawi and Zimbabwe** there are respectively **1.5 and 2.2** million food insecure people. In Malawi, where we also anticipate a possible increase in the assistance requirements to up to 2 million people, WFP has contingency measures planned for a response to 1.93 million people. In Zimbabwe, we will assist 1.8 million people.

- In rural **Madagascar**, **4 million** people are food insecure and **an additional 9.6 million people are at risk of food insecurity** .
- **DRC** is the worst affected country in the region at the moment (**6.3 million food insecure**), due to its long-standing large-scale humanitarian crisis situation, including civil conflict affecting the eastern part of the country.
- The situation is exacerbated by the low level of funding of WFP operations. Food stocks and the financial resources for cash and voucher activities will be partially or wholly depleted in most of WFP's intervention by early December.
- This will affect some 500,000 food-insecure displaced people in the provinces of Orientale, North Kivu and South Kivu and will jeopardize the life-saving assistance being given to some 180,000 malnourished children and mothers across the country.
- Suspension or reduction of assistance will compromise long standing efforts to bring food security to vulnerable communities in DRC and could hamper efforts to bring peace and stability in eastern DRC. As the ED mentioned in her opening remarks yesterday, the resourcing situation in DRC is dire. As of October 2013, the six-month operational shortfalls around \$70 million, of which \$7.9 million is for cash and voucher activities.

This has particularly serious consequences for our planned relief programs, nutrition, recovery and resilience activities.

- We will not be able to implement nutritional activities beyond December 2013. The extremely poor funding situation will also require us to close up to 6 sub-offices and reduce staffing.
- The situation in the region, elsewhere, brings good news. So far in 2013 the OMJ procurement team has purchased some 150,000mt of assorted food commodities worth over US\$60 million; The majority of this food was purchased within the OMJ region (64%), and within this majority, the bulk (60%) came from Zambia.
- It is worth noting that despite GoZ restrictions enacted in 2012, the Zambian government granted WFP a special waiver for the exportation of white maize for humanitarian needs.
- Mr President, distinguished delegates, I would now want to talk about our partnership with SADC. This is growing from strength to strength. As you would recall, WFP signed the partnership agreement with SADC in May of 2012.
- The objective of the partnership is to improve food and nutrition security and to ensure long-term solutions in the region, together with member states and partners.

- A major pillar of collaboration foreseen is the strengthening of vulnerability assessment committees, so as to enable them to conduct continuous monitoring and assessment of food security and vulnerability. WFP, in collaboration with RVAC partners is assisting national VACs in planning and conducting continuous monitoring by strengthening and developing monitoring tools and approaches for vulnerability assessment, for example providing training in EFSA approach, working with FAO to align the IPC approach and facilitate cross learning between SADC member states
- The second area of collaboration is the strengthening of tools for conducting urban vulnerability assessments. At a recent quarterly meeting in Pretoria, It was agreed that WFP with financial support from OCHA will sponsor an urban assessment workshop in December in Johannesburg. The objective is to harmonise on-going experience in and practices within methodological and tools development for replication within the SADC region.
- The third area of partnership is the integrating of HIV and AIDS indicators in vulnerability assessments. In response to SADC's request to help guide member countries on minimum standards for nutrition support to people living with HIV in SADC countries, WFP is collaborating with the SADC HIV/AIDS team to share information/expertise that WFP has in this area.

Thank you Mr President.