Economic instability, poor rainfall, crop pests, and livestock and crop diseases undermine food security in Zimbabwe. More than 90 percent of rural households in the country depend on agriculture as their primary livelihood.

**SITUATION**

- **The Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) projects** that Crisis (IPC 3) levels of acute food insecurity will persist in areas where crop production is not sufficient to meet the population’s food needs from June–September. Most other areas of the country will likely face Stressed (IPC 2) conditions, as FEWS NET estimates the limited harvest will meet households’ minimal food needs and reduce their dependence on market-purchased food for three to four months.

- Erratic rainfall and dry spells from October–March have diminished crop production, increasing the likelihood that household food stocks will be depleted earlier than usual and triggering an early start to the 2019/2020 lean season—the period typically lasting from November to March when food is most scarce—according to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. Additionally, economic volatility and currency shortages limit poor households’ livelihood opportunities and may significantly worsen food insecurity conditions if prolonged.

- In mid-March, torrential rainfall from Tropical Cyclone Idai caused flash flooding in eastern Zimbabwe, resulting in more than 300 deaths, destroying property and livelihoods, negatively impacting the food security of approximately 192,000 people, and displacing approximately 51,000, according to the UN.

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**RESPONSE**

- To respond to the needs of cyclone-affected populations in Zimbabwe, USAID Office of Food for Peace (FFP) partner the UN World Food Program (WFP) is providing emergency food assistance to more than 130,000 people. Additionally, World Vision is providing FFP-funded logistical support and resources to relief actors and other stakeholders.

- With FFP support, WFP provides in-kind food assistance to vulnerable populations during the lean season. WFP also carries out productive asset creation activities to strengthen infrastructure—such as dams and irrigation systems—that increase households’ resilience to shocks and gradually reduce the need for seasonal food assistance.

- FFP also supports multi-year development activities through World Vision and Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture. These multi-year programs aim to improve the nutritional status of children younger than five years of age, expand and diversify agricultural production, increase household income, and help communities prepare for disasters through risk-reduction activities.