

Regional El Niño Preparedness and Response Chapeau for East and Southern Africa Region (ESAR)

November 2023 - April 2024



Over 24 million people in need across 16 countries.

Context and humanitarian consequences

El Niño, a global climate phenomenon characterized by atypical warming of sea surface temperatures across the tropical eastern Pacific, is anticipated to occur in 2023 and 2024, with several countries already experiencing its effects.¹ Projections indicate a strong likelihood of a robust El Niño that is forecast to reach peak intensity in late 2023 and then dissipate by mid-2024.² Across the African continent, the effects of El Niño vary geographically. In southern and western Africa, El Niños are associated with below-normal rains, while in East Africa and the Horn of Africa, El Niños are associated with above-normal rains and flooding.

The ongoing 2023 El Niño event will have both negative and positive effects on acute food insecurity across the globe.³ The Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) anticipates that a total of 105 to 110 million people will need food assistance through at least early 2024, comprising a net increase in needs in Southern Africa and the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) regions and a net decline in needs in East Africa.

Experience from past events has highlighted challenges, including limited preparedness measures, delayed emergency declaration by governments, inadequate access to affected areas due to damaged infrastructure, low financial and technical capacities to respond effectively; poor connectedness among early warning systems, forecasting and disaster preparedness tools; and limited focus on building community resilience. It is imperative to strengthen our preparation efforts to protect and prioritize children and young people at risk of El Niño. This will be done via shock-responsive and adaptive humanitarian actions; as climate change's impacts escalate, so will the climate-driven impact on the population.

Most countries in East and Southern Africa have stretched capacities, financial constraints, and challenges around cross-sectoral and inter-agency coordination to respond effectively, requiring anticipatory action, early preparedness, and strategic response to help countries at high risk minimize the impact of El Niño.



Projections indicate a strong likelihood of a robust El Niño lasting through the first part of 2024.

1 Global ENSO Analysis Cell | July 2023

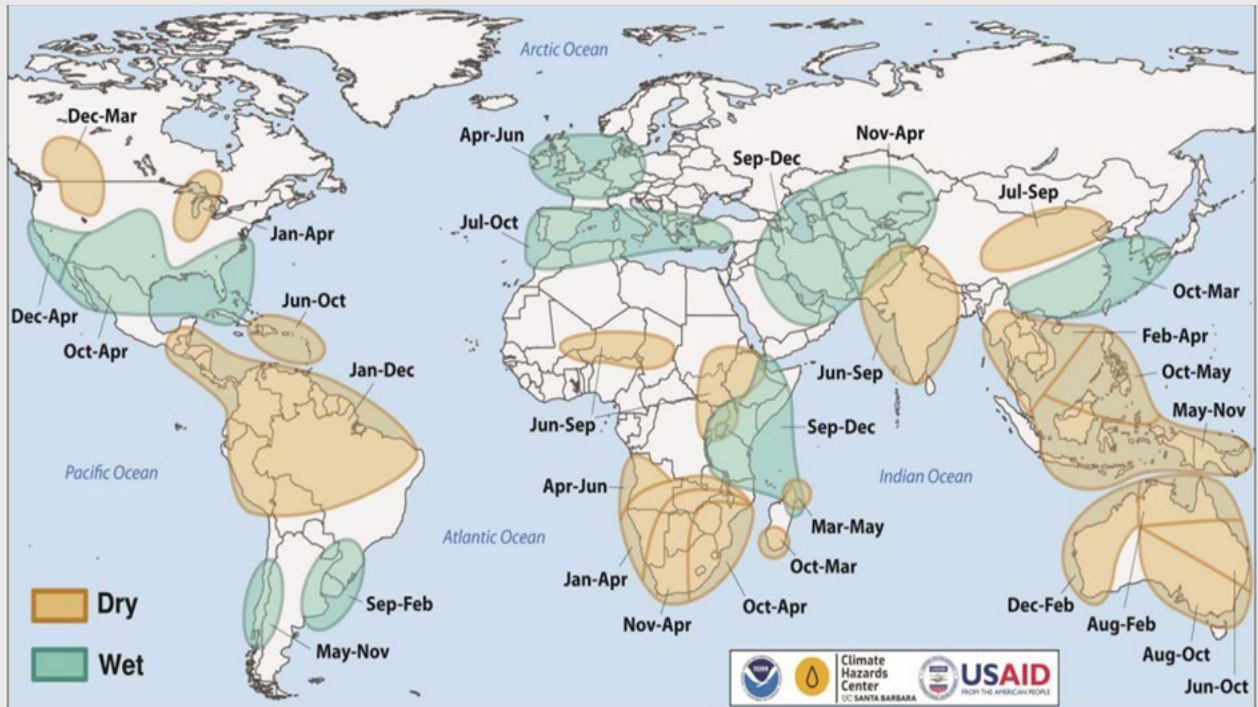
2 FSNWG, Special report, October 2023. Available at <https://fews.net/southern-africa/alert/november-2023>

3 https://fews.net/sites/default/files/2023-10/Alert-Global-El-Ni%C3%B1o-202310-Final_0.pdf

Current projections anticipate that **105 – 110 million** people will need food assistance through the first part of 2024.



Global Climate drivers / Outlook: El Niño / La Niña

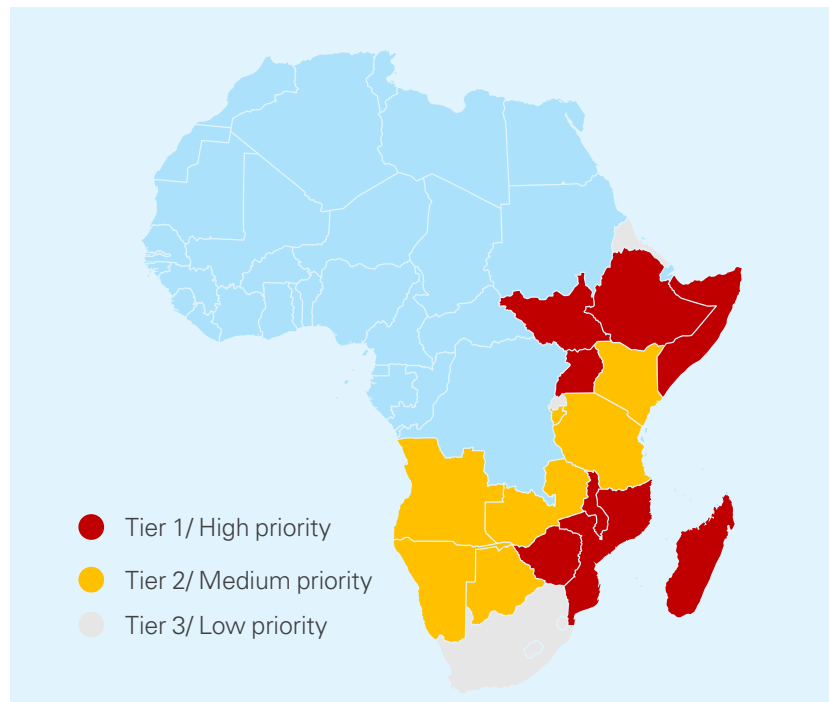


Source: Famine Early Warning Systems Network (2020), *El Niño and Precipitation, Agroclimatology Fact Sheet Series, Vol. 1, pp. 1-2.*

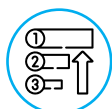


Priority countries

In ESAR, UNICEF is prioritizing **8 countries in Tier One** that are projected to have worse consequences due to El Niño: Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Madagascar, Uganda, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia. These countries currently have other existing emergencies that El Niño may exacerbate. UNICEF will continue to closely monitor the impact of El Niño in **Tier 2** vulnerable countries in ESAR: Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, Kenya, Tanzania, Angola, Rwanda, and Burundi.



Tier 1 Countries	Population in need	Other pre-existing vulnerabilities / risks
Malawi	4,400,000	Cholera, food insecurity
Mozambique	2,500,000	Conflict, cyclone, drought, cholera
Madagascar	2,300,000	Food insecurity, drought, cyclone
Zimbabwe	2,700,000	Cholera, food insecurity and economic deterioration
Ethiopia	1,562,324	Cholera, refugees, insecurity
Somalia	1,656,529	Cholera, insecurity, IDPs
South Sudan	1,000,000	Cholera, measles, food insecurity, refugees, insecurity, displacement, including the Sudan outflow
Uganda	470,000	Cholera, food insecurity and refugees
Total population	16,588,853	



UNICEF Priority Actions

Based on the El Niño plans developed by country offices, along with UNICEF's core commitments to children in emergencies and building on the lessons learned from the previous floods, drought, and public health response in the region, UNICEF will focus on the following critical preparedness actions:

- 1. Enhance coordination and leadership for preparedness:** Supporting the leadership and coordination response, along with national and local stakeholders and in compliance with humanitarian principles, nominating dedicated staffs, across sectors to coordinate interventions.
- 2. Establish and strengthen WASH infection prevention and control (IPC):** Strengthen infection control measures in communities and access to safe water, sanitation services, and hygiene practices.
- 3. Health:** Support access to life saving, high impact and quality health services in affected areas
- 4. Nutrition:** Strengthen and support access to diets, services, and practices that improve nutrition status.
- 5. Strengthen child protection,** including alternative care, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), and gender based violence in emergencies (GBViE).
- 6. Establish and strengthen risk communication and community engagement (RCCE)** with local

governments and partners in El Niño-impacted areas based on country-specific risk assessments.

- 7. Education:** Support access to inclusive, quality education and learning in safe and protective environments.
- 8. Purchase and preposition key multi-sectoral supplies.**



Funding requirement for 8 ESAR prioritized countries

UNICEF has developed individualized El Niño response plans for each of the affected countries based on their unique conditions. In total, **UNICEF is appealing for US\$ 11,800,000** to initiate minimal preparedness actions and provide lifesaving WASH, health, risk communication, nutrition, child protection, social protection, and education services to women and children affected by El Niño. However, the overall estimated cost for both preparedness and response for all 16 likely affected countries is **US\$ 119,028,804** over a period of 6 months. These interventions will be aligned with the existing government and inter-agency preparedness and response plans across the countries.

Tier 1 Countries	Estimated Budget for BOTH Preparedness and Response (US\$)	Estimated Budget for Key Preparedness Activities (US\$)
Malawi	2,812,524	2,100,000
Mozambique	9,238,484	800,000
Madagascar	12,713,538	1,500,000
Zimbabwe	11,149,918	1,500,000
Ethiopia	22,546,199	1,900,000
Somalia	23,689,638	2,000,000
South Sudan	3,499,500	1,250,000
Uganda	3,156,335	750,000
Total	88,806,136	11,800,000



Projected impact of El Niño and other vulnerabilities

The impact of El Niño will vary across countries depending on its magnitude in particular locales and the existing levels of vulnerabilities in countries and their coping capacities.

- ➔ **Increased prevalence and severity of acute food insecurity.** There is an estimated 5.8 million food insecure people in Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)⁴ countries.⁵ This situation will likely contribute to a rise in severe acute malnutrition in East Africa in 2023/2024.
- ➔ **Exacerbating existing vulnerabilities especially public health epidemics** in cyclone countries particularly Mozambique, Malawi and Madagascar and the loss of crops in a country like Mozambique, which has persistently been on food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 3 outcomes.⁶
- ➔ **Limited access to essential services due to prolonged dry conditions.** Consecutive cyclones have already damaged schools, health facilities, water sources, livelihoods, and households. With poor access to portable and safe water and disruption of protection services, the risks for children displaced by droughts extend beyond threats to their physical well-being and protection. There is an increased risk of malnutrition, absenteeism, dropout from school, GBV, forced displacement, family separation and psychological distress.
- ➔ **Displacement leading to an increase in the number of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs).** There are already 5.9 million refugees and 12 million IDPs in the East and Southern Africa region.⁷ The impact of El Niño will increase the number of forcibly displaced populations and the vulnerability of those already displaced.
- ➔ **Disruption in access to essential services.** Damage to infrastructure, including the road network, may hinder access to essential services, such as health, HIV, nutrition, education, protection, and WASH. Persons with disabilities (physical, sensory, intellectual, or psychosocial) are among those most adversely affected, sustaining disproportionately

4 IGAD countries include Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda.

5 FSNWG Special Report: El Niño and Positive Indian Ocean Dipole to have Significant Multi-Sectoral Impacts in East Africa. 11 October 2023. Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/fsnwg-special-report-el-nino-and-positive-indian-ocean-dipole-have-significant-multi-sectoral-impacts-east-africa-11-october-2023>

6 FSNWG. El Niño Update for the East Africa Region. July 2023.

7 UNHCR Operational Report. June 2023

higher rates of morbidity and mortality, and at the same time being among those least able to have access to emergency support.⁸

➔ **Increased negative coping mechanisms.** Floods could lead to loss or continued lack of livelihoods, increasing negative coping mechanisms such as child labour and child marriage, and a rise in cases of

gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual exploitation and abuse.

➔ **Increased incidence of waterborne, vector-borne and zoonotic diseases.** Most countries in the region are still experiencing active cholera cases, and the situation will likely worsen with the increase in rainfall.



PROJECTED IMPACT:

Limited access to essential services, acute food insecurity, and increased incidence of waterborne, vector-borne, and zoonotic diseases

⁸ Analytical Study on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Context of Climate Change. Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. UN Doc. A/HRC/44/30. 22 April 2020. Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/thematic-reports/analytical-study-promotion-and-protection-rights-persons-disabilities>



UNICEF humanitarian leadership, coordination, and strategy

UNICEF will support the provision of an integrated package of life-saving services for El Niño-affected women and children across health, nutrition, WASH, education, social protection, and child protection, while leveraging its development program and resources. Key cross-cutting actions such as protection against sexual abuse and exploitation, social and behaviour change (SBC), community engagement, humanitarian cash transfers, accountability to affected populations, and gender-responsive and disability-inclusive interventions will be strengthened and streamlined across all sectors.

UNICEF will continue to strengthen humanitarian leadership and coordination at national and subnational levels through its cluster leadership of the WASH, education, and nutrition sectors and the child protection area of responsibility and its engagement in the health sector life-saving interventions. Focus will be to ensure mainstreaming of El Niño interventions across the sectors in collaboration with government and partners.

UNICEF's humanitarian response will contribute to the climate change resilience-building of communities affected by El Niño and systems through programmes that reinforce localization of the response, build the

capacity of communities, and prioritize sustainable climate-smart technical solutions.

UNICEF partners will provide on-the-ground implementation support to mobilize the most vulnerable to use government-UNICEF services, while seeking feedback from beneficiaries and monitoring results. The response strategy aims to reduce the burden on already over-stressed systems that are responding to other emergencies like conflict, drought, displacement, floods, and public health, while supporting the alignment of humanitarian interventions with government national priorities and the El Niño response plans.

UNICEF will participate in different regional, national, and sub-national coordination mechanisms that involve the UN, NGOs, and the government. UNICEF will use these platforms to advocate for the needs of affected populations, particularly the most vulnerable, across all regions. Overall, UNICEF's leadership, coordination, and strategy will aim to ensure a well-coordinated and efficient response to humanitarian needs, leveraging partnerships and collaborating with relevant stakeholders for maximum impact.



UNICEF partners will provide on-the-ground support to **mobilize the most vulnerable to use UNICEF-supported government services, while seeking feedback from beneficiaries and monitoring results.**

Annex: ESAR Countries Affected by El Niño

Countries	People in Need	Estimated Budget for BOTH Preparedness and Response (USD)	Estimated Budget for Key Preparedness Activities (USD)	Other Pre-existing Vulnerabilities/Risks
Tier 1 Countries				
Malawi	4,400,000	2,812,524	2,100,000	Cholera, food insecurity
Mozambique	2,500,000	9,238,484	800,000	Conflict, cyclone, drought, cholera
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Ethiopia	1,562,324	22,546,199	1,900,000	Cholera, refugees, insecurity
Somalia	1,656,529	23,689,638	2,000,000	Cholera, insecurity, IDPs
South Sudan	1,000,000	3,499,500	1,250,000	Cholera, measles, food insecurity, refugees, insecurity, displacement
Uganda	470,000	3,156,335	750,000	Cholera, food insecurity and refugees
Sub-Totals	16,588,853	88,806,136	11,800,000	
Tier 2 Countries				
Angola	1,350,000	1,650,000	1,650,000	Food insecurity, drought
Burundi	1,500,000	1,253,485	1,253,485	Cholera, refugees
Rwanda	33,000	2,000,000	250,000	Floods, refugees
Kenya	2,000,000	19,019,183	6,000,000	Cholera, refugees
Tanzania	75,000	4,900,000	500,000	Cholera, refugees
Namibia	579,000	750,000	750,000	Drought, food insecurity
Botswana	1,248,000	250,000	250,000	Drought, food insecurity
Zambia	1,580,000	400,000	400,000	Drought, food insecurity, refugees
Sub-Total	8,365,000	30,222,668	11,053,485	
Total	24,953,853	119,028,804	22,853,485	

For every child
Whoever she is.
Wherever he lives.
Every child deserves a childhood.
A future.
A fair chance.
That's why UNICEF is there.
For each and every child.
Working day in and day out.
In 190 countries and territories.
Reaching the hardest to reach.
The furthest from help.
The most left behind.
The most excluded.
It's why we stay to the end.
And never give up.



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