



World Food Programme
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برنامج الأغذية العالمي



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EU BOOSTS ASSISTANCE TO DROUGHT-AFFECTED PEOPLE IN LESOTHO

MASERU – The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) welcomes the European Union (EU) contribution of €1.5 million (equivalent to about M24 million) in humanitarian support, enabling WFP to expand ongoing emergency drought assistance to an additional 22,100 people on top of the 77,880 people that are already receiving assistance.

“The situation in Lesotho is very worrying. Climate change has been the driving force behind recurrent droughts that have pushed more than half a million people into a major food security crisis,” said UN Resident Coordinator Salvator Niyonzima. “It is imperative that comprehensive action is taken now to address the negative effects of climate change and ensure that the most vulnerable people are not left behind,” he noted.

The EU’s funding comes at a time when over 30 percent of the population across the country is experiencing crisis levels of food insecurity during the ongoing lean season as a result of drought. The production of maize, the staple food, declined by a whopping 78 percent in 2019 compared to the previous year. Rural communities have been worst-affected, with the vast majority of the country’s more than 500,000 food insecure people living in rural areas.

“We are happy to assist the government and UN agencies in addressing the immediate emergency, but we also contribute to overcoming recurrent food insecurity through long-term resilience building”, said Christian Manahl, the European Union Ambassador to Lesotho.

Last year, a national drought emergency was declared, and a flash appeal was made to support of the Government-led Drought Response and Resilience Plan. The flash appeal requires € 74 million (M 1.2 billion) to target 261,000 people in 10 districts between November 2019 and April 2020.



Thanks to donors like the EU, WFP is reaching 100,000 people every month with a combination cash and food assistance. This assistance ensures that people have access to nutritious, healthy food, while also giving them the choice to buy what they need most at local markets.

“We urge the international community to respond to the government’s appeal for humanitarian assistance to ensure that the most vulnerable people in the country receive life-saving assistance,” said Mary Njoroge, WFP’s Country Director in Lesotho. “We are only 33 percent funded and urgently require an additional € 10 million to assist communities affected by emergency levels of food insecurity,” she added.

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The United Nations World Food Programme is the world’s largest humanitarian organization, saving lives in emergencies, building prosperity and supporting a sustainable future for people recovering from conflict, disasters and the impact of climate change.

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