EL NIÑO FORECAST AND HUMANITARIAN CONSEQUENCES

- Below-normal rainfall is expected in some areas until the end of February 2016, particularly in the Shire Valley, which will further exacerbate severe levels of vulnerability. Malawi is currently experiencing the worst food insecurity in over a decade with nearly 3 million people who will require food assistance up to March 2016.
- El Niño forecasts indicate that the country is likely to experience normal to above-normal rainfall until January 2016 that may lead to flooding in some areas. 192,000 people may be affected with humanitarian consequences that could last until mid-2016. The country is still recovering from floods that occurred earlier this year resulting in displacement of 230,000 people.

CURRENT AND PROJECTED HEALTH CONDITIONS

- There are concerns of possible increased malnutrition rates, with 47% of children already undernourished.
- There is also an increased likelihood of water-borne diseases, particularly cholera, linked to flooding.

HEALTH PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE ACTIONS

- A National Food Insecurity Response Plan is already implemented requiring USD 80 million to cover needs up to March 2016, and the Department of Disaster Management Affairs is currently preparing a national multi-sectoral Contingency Plan including floods, dry spells and disease outbreaks (mainly cholera).
- Currently, the National Nutrition Response Plan is 48% funded. However, there is a funding gap for a preventive Supplementary Feeding Program (SFP) which could result in up to 60% of the targeted vulnerable women and children not receiving SFP support.
- WHO Regional Office for Africa has conducted disaster risk management training for key staff from the WHO Country Office and the Ministry of Health in Malawi both at central and districts levels in September 2015.

*INFORM (Index for Risk Management) is a global risk assessment index for humanitarian crises and disasters: http://www.inform-index.org/