EL NIÑO FORECAST AND HUMANITARIAN CONSEQUENCES

• Drier-than-average conditions are expected to continue, increasing the possibility of reduced food production. The Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee's 2015 evaluation indicates that nearly 1.5 million people will be food insecure during the peak hunger period of January to March 2016. The Government draft contingency plan notes that up to 5.4 million people could require food assistance, and 85,000 people potentially affected by floods later in the rainfall season.

CURRENT AND PROJECTED HEALTH CONDITIONS

• Nutritional status of vulnerable groups in affected areas is particularly at risk. Chronic malnutrition and stunting rates are already high and are likely to rise with an increase in food insecurity.

HEALTH PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE ACTIONS

• In September 2015, the HCT released a humanitarian response plan requiring USD 132 million to respond to the food security crisis, including 4.5 million for the nutrition sector.
• In October 2015, WHO, together with FAO, UNICEF, and WFP announced a joint appeal to humanitarian and development partners for USD 86 million.
• A contingency plan is being finalised by the Government and HCT is currently developing an El Niño inter-agency contingency Plan aligned with the Government plan.
• The Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement is working with partners in developing nutrition informational material to influence practices in regards to infant and young child feeding.