

**Alert Type:** Slow-onset Crisis

**Alert Title:** Prolonged effects of the El Niño linked drought in Zimbabwe

**Alerting Organisation(s):** Dreamtown

**Date Received:** 7-1-25

**Decision Date:** 8-1-25

**By:** DERF Fund Management

**Crisis country and location(s):** Zimbabwe

**Decision:** Not to activate the DERF to respond to prolonged drought in Zimbabwe

**Reason:**

Following the 2023/24 El Niño-induced drought, the complex humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe continues to deepen with below-average rainfall during the month of November 2024. For the first quarter of 2025 the World Food Programme predicts that 50% of the population will be affected by the drought.

While recognising the seriousness of the drought situation in Zimbabwe (and other countries within the region), it is clearly a slow-onset crises that has been ongoing and worsening over a long period of time and thereby falls **beyond the mandate the DERF** to respond to. The DERF may only open calls that can be responded to within the first three months of a rapid-onset or a slow-onset crisis.

The option of opening a call based on a 'spike in a prolonged crisis' can also not be supported, as there have been **no drastic changes or sudden worsening of the situation**. Having reached food insecurity levels IPC 3 can in this context not be described as a spike / worsening of the situation from how it was during the months before. Comparably, several regions of Somalia, northern Kenya as well as parts of Malawi and Mozambique are currently also experiencing prolonged droughts characterised through IPC 3 food insecurity levels with some forecasts (February-May 2025) here showing potential worsening scenarios (IPC 4+ levels).