

Food airlift in Mozambique

11 7.10.86

MAPUTO.

AN airlift of food and other essential goods to the northern province of Niassa, where over 440 000 people are facing famine, is now under way, reports yesterday's Noticias.

So far, Mozambique Airlines has run seven cargo flights from Maputo to the two largest towns in Niassa, Lichinga and Cuamba, carrying a total of about 80 tonnes of goods. These include rice, sugar, vegetable oil, medicines and clothing.

Lubricants for vehicles that will have to transport goods into the rural areas are also being flown to the province.

The director of Mozambique's natural disasters office, Cde Amos Mahanjane, told Noticias that without immediate aid, people would die from starvation in Niassa.

The crisis in Niassa arises partly from torrential rains that washed away much of this year's crops, and partly from the activities of the South African-backed MNR bandits who have left peasant families without food reserves.

The provincial government estimates that about two-thirds of Niassa's population is at risk — more than 600 000 people. — Ziana-AIM.