

Zimbabwe Humanitarian Situation Report

United Nations Relief and Recovery Unit in collaboration with Famine Early Warning Systems Network
August 06, 2002

The *Zimbabwe Humanitarian Situation Report* is a United Nations publication by the Relief and Recovery Unit in the UN Resident Co-ordinator's office. It is carried out in collaboration with FEWSNet, a USAID funded organisation that is not part of the United Nations group. In writing the articles appearing in the *SitRep* the RRU uses data obtained from many sources, including FEWSNet analyses, government agencies, and NGO assessments.

Humanitarian Co-ordinator Appointed in Zimbabwe

Mr. J. Victor Angelo, current UN Resident Co-ordinator, has been appointed UN Humanitarian Co-ordinator in Zimbabwe.

Review of Vulnerable Population Levels and Needs

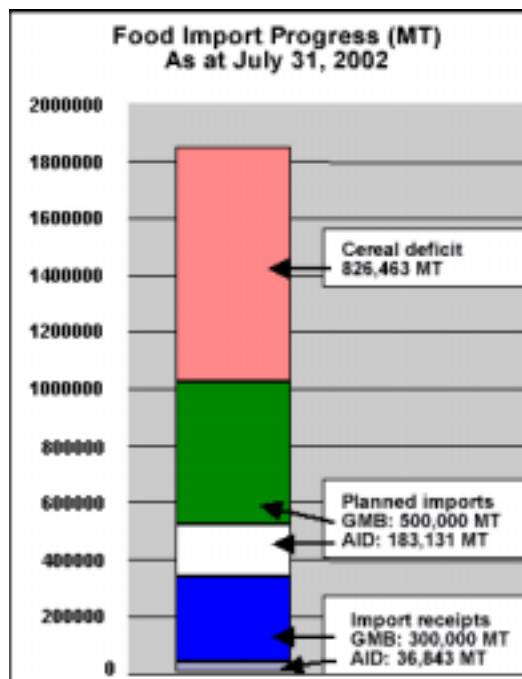
Throughout the six countries in Southern Africa worst affected by drought this year, SADC and a number of international agencies are carrying out a joint food security assessment. In Zimbabwe, the Vulnerability Assessment Committee, in collaboration with WFP, FAO, UNICEF, RRU, SC-UK, CARE and FEWS-Net will be carrying out the fieldwork. The assessment is based on a survey of 1,920 households in 132 sites purposefully selected throughout the country to allow development of district food security profiles. Fieldwork for the assessment started on 19 July 2002 and will last until the 18th of August. The nation-wide questionnaire survey will be complemented with detailed Household Economy Assessments in six sites in the Mashonaland provinces, which will provide more detailed information to complement and assist in interpreting the questionnaire data. The areas identified as requiring such analysis include communal and commercial farming areas. These are traditionally productive and food secure areas, however the effect on employment and labouring opportunities of the closure of many commercial farms means that there may be some population groups whose needs have been under-estimated. The assessment will aim to generate information on the food security and nutrition status of different socio-economic groups in Zimbabwe's 57 districts. District profiles will then be developed to allow district food aid prioritisation, estimation of percentage of populations requiring food and the amounts of food aid required. Input requirements for agricultural recovery will also be assessed in order to underline the need to increase food production in the short term and to help protect vulnerable population's productive assets from erosion by the effects of the food crisis.

The assessment report is expected to be ready by the 26th of August 2002, in time for the Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South African. It is planned that the Special Envoy on the Humanitarian Crisis in Southern Africa, Mr. James Morris, will use the new insights generated by the assessment on the food security situation in Zimbabwe to once again appeal to the international community for food aid assistance for Zimbabwe and indeed for its neighbours as well as underline the need for greater and quick response to the food crisis gripping the Southern African region.

Current Food Aid Targeting Insufficient

Communities and local food committees continue to raise concerns that the number of deserving and eligible beneficiaries far exceeds the WFP target limit, with less than 20% of households covered in most villages. Local food supplies are diminishing as wild fruits, such as *ncibi* and *amarula*, are drying up with the winter dry season. WFP recently conducted a survey in Chipinge district of Manicaland Province, where the WFP programme covers 13 out of 30 wards with a total of 37,175 beneficiaries. The survey noted that school dropout rates had risen steeply since January, from less than one percent to 10% in July. Half of the children surveyed ate only one meal a day. Only 10% had some breakfast – usually left over *sadza* – before going to school. It has become common to have children fainting from hunger. Dropout and absenteeism rates are increasing: children are reluctant to go to school if hungry, parents encourage children to stay home rather than travel to school on an empty stomach, girls especially tend to stay home as they are expected to look after their siblings

while mothers are away from home, engaged in petty trading or other economic activity aimed at feeding the family.



Import Pipeline not yet Sufficient to Cover Requirements

Total food imports since the start of the current marketing year on 1 April 2002 to the end of July 2002 has reduced the initial national cereal deficit by just 18% from 1.854 million MT to about 1.53 million MT. From 1 April to 31 July 2002 a total of 336,843MT of food had been imported through both Government and donor humanitarian assistance. Government imports account for about 90% of total food imports while WFP is responsible for about 74% of all the food aid imported into Zimbabwe by end of July 2002. The rest has been imported by NGOs: World Vision (16%), Plan International (6%), Save the Children UK (3%) and CAFOD (1%)

The rate of food imports to date falls far short of the national demand. Hence, maize meal and maize grain remain in short supply. Total cereal imports currently are just enough to cover two months of national

consumption requirements. When planned food imports are added into the analysis, the food security prospects for Zimbabwe look a bit better. Press reports indicate that the government's Grain Marketing Board (GMB) has contracted for the purchase of 500,000MT of white maize from South America (GMB, however, are unavailable to confirm this) and WFP is still to bring into the country a total of 137,094MT of food pledged by donors responding to both their EMOP I and EMOP II for Zimbabwe. These pending imports taken together with food imports to date reduce Zimbabwe's current consumption year's initial cereal deficit by about 55% to 840,813MT and cover the nation's food needs for about seven months.

Preparations for the 2002/2003 Agriculture Season

1. Land

Ninety-five farms measuring about 74,000ha have been listed by the week between 29 July and 2 August 2002. The farms are listed to effect the maximum farm regulations Statutory Instrument 288 of 2000. The land is required to meet the balance of over 30,000 applicants for Model A2, as well as about 45,000 who were down-graded to Model A1. The continued listing of farms is likely to impact negatively on the preparations for the main cropping season.

The main cropping season preparations are underway and the table below shows the government anticipated area for the four main crops:

AREA PLANNED FOR FOUR MAIN CROPS

Crop	2001/2002 ¹ (ha)	Planned for 2002/2003 ² (ha)	% Change (likely)
Maize	1 395 371	2 000 000	+ 46%
Soy bean	58 229	147 000	+152.5%
Cotton	405 921	295 000	-27.3%
Tobacco	80 519	191 000	+137.2%

¹ FAO/WFP Crop and Food Assessment Mission to Zimbabwe 29 May 2002

² Ministry of Lands Agriculture and Rural Resettlement.

2. Inputs

While government has allocated about Z\$8.5 billion for inputs, the undertaking requires in excess of Z\$160 billion. Already the tobacco sector is falling far behind schedule as no adequate funds have been secured for land and nursery preparations. There could also be serious problems with the supply of seeds as the projected areas are far in excess of normal.

Despite announcements by seed companies in Zimbabwe that they have enough maize seed to satisfy Zimbabwe's needs, there is a critical shortage of the maize seed in both urban and rural markets. Over 40,000MT of seed maize is available in the country for planting in the forthcoming 2002/2003 season. This is adequate for over 1.6 million ha of maize, about 23% above the 1990s average area planted to maize in Zimbabwe by all farming sectors.

However, the seed companies are not willing to put their seed on the market at the current controlled price of about Z\$1,000 per 10kg because they will make a loss. This issue needs to be dealt with soon as time for planting is not very far off.

All types of fertilizers are in short supply, primarily because imported components for the manufacture of fertilizer cannot be secured in the desired quantities due to foreign currency shortages, and the controlled price of the commodity make it unviable to produce the product. About 400,000MT of fertiliser is available in the country. Normally, another 200,000MT is required, however the indicated planned increases in cultivated land seems to imply that more will be required. Efforts to import the fertilizer shortfall or to import components necessary to manufacture the national fertilizer deficit need to be put in place urgently together with viable fertilizer prices to ensure good yields in the coming season.

Agricultural Recovery

Government tabled in Parliament on 25 July 2002, and got endorsement for, a supplementary budget of Z\$52billion, 16% of which is for financing agricultural inputs for mainly newly resettled farmers. This development comes at a time the Portfolio Committee on the Lands, Agriculture, Water Development, Rural Resources and Resettlement indicated that Zimbabwe's ailing agricultural sector requires at least Z\$32.5 billion in the 2003 budget to recover.

Discussion between the Minister of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement and Mr. Oshima on 27 June 2002 indicated that government requires assistance in the following;

- With inputs for the new farmers particularly, seeds, fertilisers and chemicals
- Tillage support as most of the farmers do not have either draught or traction power and are opening virgin lands;
- In the livestock sector with vaccines and dipping chemicals;
- To the extension services with materials, information and support to through the media to educate the new farmers,
- Strengthening of home economics institutions so as help educate people on nutritional values of food crops.
- Strengthening the collaboration with FAO on irrigation programmes to the new farmers.

One of the non-food components of the Consolidated UN Appeal for Zimbabwe launched on 18 July 2002 in New York, centered on agricultural recovery. The component is seeking about US\$16.1million to promote agricultural production among the vulnerable populations, protect productive assets for the vulnerable communal households, promote increased fisheries production and to support control of foot and mouth disease in Zimbabwe. Funding of the Appeal will assist the food crisis affected communities to regain their ability to produce food for themselves in the coming season and beyond.

Livestock Health Beginning to Suffer

A recent Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak was reported in the Gokwe area back to back with the 2001 outbreak in Matebeleland and Masvingo Provinces. Consultations have been going with stakeholders on the rehabilitation of broken veterinary boundary fences in the affected provinces. The FMD outbreak further delays the lifting of the ban on exports of beef to overseas markets until April/May 2003. Government now requires 3.4 million doses for FMD vaccines at a cost of US\$4.2 million, as well as 300,000 doses for rabies and 500,000 doses for anthrax vaccines at a total cost of US\$84,000. An appeal for assistance with resources for the vaccines has also been made in the Zimbabwe Consolidated Appeal. Press reports indicate that Botswana has offered to supply 250,000 doses of FMD vaccine, although GoZ has not indicated how it will repay Botswana.

Contacts

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This Situation Report can be accessed on the Web at: www.reliefweb.int - then click on “by country”, then click on “Zimbabwe”.