

Zimbabwe: Drought and Complex Emergency Situation Report #1 (FY 2007)

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<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/SJHG-75N5P9?OpenDocument&rc=1&cc=zwe>

Background

Conditions for the majority of Zimbabweans continue to deteriorate due to the country's collapsing economy, declining access to basic social services, and the effects of HIV/AIDS.

Detrimental Government of Zimbabwe (GOZ) policies and the poor 2006/2007 agricultural growing season are exacerbating the humanitarian situation. Following seven consecutive years of economic decline, which have been characterized by hyperinflation and high unemployment rates, Zimbabwe is increasingly unable to maintain the infrastructure necessary for agricultural production, water and sanitation services, power facilities, and fuel.

Commercial land redistribution policies have resulted in a dramatic decline in domestic food production.

Internal displacement and urban vulnerability substantially increased in 2005 as a result of Operation Murambatsvina, a GOZ campaign to destroy thousands of informal homes and businesses in urban areas. According to the U.N., the operation displaced nearly 700,000 people and indirectly affected 2.4 million others. The operation, as well as displacement due to the GOZ's land redistribution policies, has resulted in widespread loss of housing and livelihoods, increasing Zimbabweans' vulnerability and poverty. New displacements continue to periodically occur due to GOZ operations and policies.

On October 6, 2006, U.S. Ambassador Christopher W. Dell reissued a disaster declaration in Zimbabwe due to the ongoing complex emergency. On June 11, 2007, U.S. Ambassador Dell declared a second disaster for Zimbabwe due to drought. In FY 2007, USAID/OFDA has contributed more than \$2.6 million to provide assistance in the sectors of agriculture and food security, protection, relief commodities, humanitarian coordination and information management, and water, sanitation, and hygiene.

Numbers at a glance

Population that will Require Food Assistance 4.1 million

Source

FAO and WFP(1)
– June 2007

FY 2007 Humanitarian funding provided to date

USAID/OFDA Assistance to Zimbabwe: \$2,649,094

USAID/FFP(2) Assistance to Zimbabwe: \$171,000,000

Total USAID Humanitarian Assistance to Zimbabwe: \$173,649,094

Notes:

(1) U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization and U.N. World Food Program

(2) USAID's Office of Food for Peace

Current situation

Poor rains and drought conditions during the October 2006 to March 2007 agricultural growing season, combined with limited agricultural input availability, have resulted in widespread crop failure and severe yield shortfalls in southern Zimbabwe, particularly in Matebeleland North, Matebeleland South, Midlands, Masvingo, and Manicaland provinces.

FAO and WFP estimate that the number of Zimbabweans in need of food assistance will peak at 4.1 million—more than a third of Zimbabwe's estimated total population—at the height of the hunger season between January and March 2008.

Recent GOZ policies to control inflation and cross-border imports are exacerbating the already existing shortages of food, basic commodities, and fuel. On June 26, in an attempt to curb profiteering related to inflation, the GOZ ordered manufacturers and retailers to reduce

the price of goods by 50 percent. As a result of the price cuts, staple foods and basic commodities have become scarce, and the production and import of commodities have slowed down. The lack of food commodities for purchase has adversely affected the food security of urban households.

While current reports indicate that the GOZ will not enforce announced policies to restrict cross-border food imports, Zimbabweans continue to face an uncertain future. Any stoppage of informal cross-border imports from neighboring countries, on which many families rely given recent price cuts and hoarding, could potentially worsen food availability and access throughout the country.

Food Security and Agriculture

The June 5 joint FAO and WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission (CFSAM) report estimated Zimbabwe's 2006/2007 crop production at 800,000 metric tons (MT), leaving between one-third and one-half of the country's food requirements unmet. USAID's Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) reported a 45 percent decrease in national production of maize, sorghum, and millet compared to last year. To reduce the food gap, the GOZ has announced plans to import 400,000 MT of maize and 239,000 MT of wheat and rice from neighboring countries. Ongoing foreign currency and fuel deficits raise questions about the GOZ's capacity to purchase and transport these commodities.

To date in FY 2007, USAID/OFDA has contributed more than \$1.8 million through multiple non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to provide assistance in agriculture and food security. Program activities will benefit more than 58,000 drought-affected individuals.

In addition, to date in FY 2007, USAID/FFP has provided 175,590 MT of P.L. 480 Title II emergency food assistance, valued at more than \$171 million, through WFP and the Consortium for Southern Africa Food Security Emergency (C-SAFE), an emergency food assistance program that comprises several NGOs. This contribution will meet an estimated one-third of the assessed food deficit through the next harvest in April 2008 and feed more than 500,000 people for six months.

Vulnerable Populations

Zimbabweans continue to suffer due to the effects of high levels of unemployment and inflation, Operation Murambatsvina, and ongoing displacement resulting from OZ land redistribution policies. Since FY 2003, SAID/OFDA has provided funding to support multi-sectoral activities for vulnerable populations throughout Zimbabwe. In FY 2006 and 2007, USAID/OFDA has provided more than \$1.1 million to support a multi-donor, multi-sectoral program that enhances food distribution and provides basic household commodities and emergency relief supplies to households displaced in urban and rural areas.

In FY 2006 and 2007, USAID/OFDA, together with other international donors, has also contributed more than \$720,000 to support a consortium of seven NGOs to provide livelihood support, improve economic capacity, and reduce food insecurity for 12,000 urban and periurban households in five provinces.

Health and Nutrition

According to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), worker strikes in the health care sector have continued throughout 2007, resulting in the disruption of basic services and lack of access to health professionals. In addition, high inflation and volatile economic conditions have resulted in shortages of medical supplies such as essential drugs.

The 2006 GOZ Food and Nutrition Council report indicated that although severe and global acute malnutrition remained below emergency thresholds, chronic malnutrition rose from 28 percent in 2005 to more than 31 percent in 2006.

The 2005/2006 Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) reported a decline in the national adult HIV/AIDS prevalence rate from 20.1 percent in 2004 to 18.1 percent in 2005 and 2006. Despite the decline, more than 1 million people are infected with HIV/AIDS in the

country, exacerbating household vulnerability and food insecurity. According to the DHS, HIV/AIDS kills nearly 3,000 people per week in Zimbabwe.

In FY 2006 and 2007, USAID/OFDA has contributed funding to support the creation of community health volunteer networks, mobile outreach services for health care assistance, and the implementation of a disease surveillance database and early warning system.

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

Water, sanitation, and hygiene conditions remain a critical challenge throughout Zimbabwe, particularly in Bulawayo, the country's second largest city. On July 18 and 19, Bulawayo authorities decommissioned four of the city's water dams, leaving one dam to supply water to an estimated 1 million residents, according to field reports. The country's lack of foreign currency has drastically limited the import of raw materials, such as water treatment chemicals and materials for water systems infrastructure.

Soap and other basic hygiene supplies are increasingly beyond the purchasing power of many poor Zimbabweans, who struggle to purchase enough food to eat. Reduced access to safe water and adequate sanitation makes Zimbabweans susceptible to water- and sanitation-related diarrheal diseases, particularly given the collapse of the health system.

According to international media reports, diarrhea has killed 34 people in the town of Kadoma, Mashonaland West Province, since June 2007. As part of the multi-sectoral initiatives in FY 2006 and 2007, USAID/OFDA is supporting increased access to potable water and sanitation facilities and the management of solid waste disposal for vulnerable populations throughout the country.

Humanitarian Coordination and Information Management

Humanitarian coordination and information management remain integral in strengthening relief efforts in Zimbabwe. OCHA plays an important role in coordinating efforts among numerous relief agencies in Zimbabwe. In FY 2007, USAID/OFDA has contributed \$100,000 to OCHA to support humanitarian coordination in Zimbabwe.

Implementing Activity		Location	Amount
Partner			
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE (1)			
Multiple	Agriculture and Food Security, Relief Commodities, Shelter and Settlements	Countrywide	\$375,000
Multiple	Livelihood Assistance to Vulnerable Urban Populations	Bulawayo, Harare, Manicaland, Midlands, Masvingo provinces	\$351,668
Multiple	Agriculture and Food Security	Masvingo, Mashonaland East, Matabeleland South, Midlands provinces	\$1,822,426
OCHA	Humanitarian Coordination and Information Management	Countrywide	\$100,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA			\$2,649,094
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE (2)			
C-SAFE	88,930 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Countrywide	\$96,000,000
WFP	86,660 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Countrywide	\$75,000,000
TOTAL USAID/FFP			\$171,000,000
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO ZIMBABWE IN FY 2007			\$173,649,094

Notes:

(1) USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of July 31, 2007.

(2) Estimated value of food assistance.