



## RIACSO REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY SITUATION REPORT: LESOTHO

Updated – 12 MARCH 2009

- Highlights**
- Improved rainfall may result in better cropping conditions for the 2008/09 season although excessive rains could also negatively impact on crop development
  - Price monitoring on food commodities and agricultural inputs taking place in the country.
- Actions**
- Need to follow up to see if government has released the post-harvest crop assessment report for 2007/08 yet.
  - Need to get a better idea of the area planted this year in relation to last year and prospects for harvest.

Agriculture Situation	Food Availability	Food Access/Prices	Nutrition, Health and Food Utilization	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During the month of February, normal to above normal rains were received countrywide in Lesotho with most areas recording above normal cumulative rainfall amounts.</li> <li>• According to the Lesotho Meteorological Services: the first dekad of February 2009 was characterised by normal to above normal rains in most parts of the country with improve soil moisture content except in areas in the south where cumulative rainfall is still 5%-15% below normal and crops are reportedly suffering from moisture stress. Areas that received above normal rains experienced difficulties with weed control as weeding activities were affected.</li> <li>• Due to the prolonged wet conditions, especially in the western lowlands of the country, crops were reported to be waterlogged in some areas while weeding activities were also affected. However, the general picture points to a fair to good crop condition.</li> <li>• Observations during post-planting field visits indicate crop planting was generally done late particularly in the southern lowlands. Late planting was attributed to delays in effective rains and lack of sufficient inputs by farmers due to the high costs.</li> <li>• FAO is sill undertaking a post-planting survey to determine areas planted and performance of the crops planted through various support interventions to farmers. Results are expected in March/April.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maize production for the 2007/08 season was 69,005MT while sorghum production was 8,445 MT (Bureau of Statistics estimates)</li> <li>• The Bureau of Statistics did a post-harvest crop assessment late last year to verify the findings of the earlier crop estimates. Results not yet publicised by Government.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 353 000 people (70 600 households) in rural and peri-urban areas require assistance for the current consumption year (LVAC June 08)</li> <li>• 60,000 people were found vulnerable in urban areas following high food and fuel prices (DMA/WFP urban study, 2008)</li> <li>• WFP led an inter-agency mission to help the government to make a plan to tackle price rises both in the short and long terms.</li> <li>• Food inflation for December was at 14.3% down from 15.7% in November 2008 (in line with decline in maize prices on SAFEX and globally from Oct to Dec).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Nutrition Survey conducted in November 2007 indicated low levels of acute malnutrition across the country.</li> <li>• However, levels of chronic malnutrition or stunting were very high (45%) especially in the mountain areas where one in every two children is stunted.</li> <li>• Crude mortality was at alarming levels in some districts, most likely due to the impact of high levels of stunting and HIV and AIDS in the country.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Country continues to face chronic food insecurity – only 30 to 40% of national food requirements are met by national production.</li> <li>• Need updated information on last season’s production and this season’s progress.</li> </ul>



## RIACSO REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY SITUATION REPORT: MADAGASCAR

Updated – 12 MARCH 2009

- Highlights**
- Violence in the capital included looting of some rice stocks.
  - High levels of chronic food insecurity persist in urban areas.
  - No major damage from tropical storms and cyclones so far this season.

- Actions**
- Need an update on the agricultural season across the country, with comparisons to previous seasons by region.

Agriculture Situation	Food Availability	Food Access/Prices	Nutrition, Health and Food Utilization	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major delays in planting season in the southern regions due to lack and erratic rainfalls over the last two months.</li> <li>• In the plateau and highlands and east coastal areas rains started relatively normal and crops are relatively well.</li> <li>• Rift Valley Fever outbreak in the central highlands is still under surveillance.</li> <li>• Positioning of the Inter-tropical convergence zone (ITCZ) above the central and northern parts of the country brought continuous rainfall for a week.</li> <li>• The political unrest and low rains in the South are threatening the livelihoods of many Malagasies. Droughts are feared in the south, while the political unrest had more impact in the urban areas than the rural.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• April crop harvest in the South could be jeopardized.</li> <li>• Arrival in the market of 21,000 MT of recently imported rice.</li> <li>• Harvest of the first-season rice in selected areas (this accounts for about 10% of the annual production)</li> <li>• Supply of some major urban markets with domestic rice has been a little bit disrupted by the incessant rainfalls generated by the ITCZ.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Food Security Assessment led by WFP in the 6 major urban centres of the country has demonstrated the high level of chronic food insecurity (more than 60% of population facing moderate to severe food insecurity) prevailing in the poorer urban districts. Combined in many places with very poor sanitary conditions, this situation could become quickly alarming for a large number of households at risk of new wave price increases.</li> <li>• In general, prices of rice, cooking oil, sugar are stable. However, they are still at much higher level than before the start of the political crisis.</li> <li>• Increasing prices of substitute products (maize, cassava) due to high demand.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Madagascar consistently has the highest levels of acute malnutrition (15%) and chronic malnutrition (53%) in Southern African.</li> <li>• The country also has very high level of Under 5 mortality (112/1000 live birth) most likely due to the critical levels of acute and chronic malnutrition.</li> <li>• In order to assess the impact of political unrest and potential drought (in the south), UNICEF is conducting nutrition surveys in the south and scaling up the IMAM approach within the existing health centres for early identification and treatment of the acutely malnourished.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beans normally planted in Feb/March can still be planted with residual moisture from the cyclone.</li> </ul>



## RIACSO REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY SITUATION REPORT: MALAWI

Updated – 12 MARCH 2009

- Highlights**
- For the most part the agricultural season is progressing well with a few areas affected by late rains or flooding.
  - The Government, with support from the UN teams is well prepared to handle severe acute malnutrition as well as the cholera situation in the country.
- Actions**
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Agriculture Situation	Food Availability	Food Access/Prices	Nutrition, Health and Food Utilization	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 2008/09 planting season was favorable for households supported through various input support while those farmers who did not receive input support faced problems of accessing the inputs from the markets as prices were very high.</li> <li>• Most parts of Malawi continued to receive good rains although reduced from previous months. These rains provide an opportunity for planting crops such as sweet potato.</li> <li>• However, severe crop damage has been reported in the Lower Shire districts of Nsanje and Chikwawa due to prolonged dry spells. This is likely to worsen the hunger situation in these areas which also suffered poor crop production last season.</li> <li>• As the crop matures, some households from parts of the central region are consuming green maize, pumpkins and other crops. A few households are reported to have started harvesting their crops. This situation has improved the household food security situation.</li> <li>• The main harvesting period is between April and June. Those facing hunger is areas such as the Lower Shire maybe forced to harvest their crop much earlier than normal in an attempt to secure food for their families.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total maize production for 2007/08 was 2,777,438 MT and cassava was 3,539,660 MT (MinAg: 3<sup>rd</sup> Crop Assessment).</li> <li>• The NFRA and ADMARC are reported to have enough maize supplies (approximately 98,000 MT) to meet domestic requirements up to end of March 2009. Official maize imports are therefore said not to be necessary at point.</li> <li>• Poor households in the southern region continue to rely on food markets after own stocks ran out.</li> <li>• According to the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) February 13, 2009 report that 5,978 households in 22 districts had their houses damaged from floods or storms while crops for 5,107 households covering 1,232 hectares in 8 districts have been damaged.</li> <li>• The demand for maize in markets especially in the southern region is high and ADMARC is trying all it can to meet the demand and maintaining the Government fixed price of MK52.00/kg for maize.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data collected from 62 local markets across the country during the first two weeks of February 2009 indicate that maize prices were highest in Limbe market in the south at MK102.00 per kg and lowest at Hewe in the north at MK47.22 per kg.</li> <li>• Average prices were at MK70.00 per kg compared to MK39.31 at the same time last year in spite of the record harvests for the last three years.</li> <li>• ADMARC has maize in stock in all its depots which is selling at MK52 per kg as per Government recommendation.</li> <li>• Maize is still coming into the country informally from Mozambique. (SAXBt).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Malawi has very high levels of stunting (46%) and high under 5 mortality (118/1000 live births)</li> <li>• There is an extensive network of Nutritional Rehabilitation Units (NRUs) as inpatient care and outpatient therapeutic programmes OTPs that treat severely acute malnourished children across the country.</li> <li>• WFP is supporting supplementary feeding programmes in the country.</li> <li>• 2-8 Feb, 2009 there had been 713 cases of cholera reported with 13 associated deaths.</li> <li>• A total of 2,635 cases with 67 deaths have been reported since 15<sup>th</sup> November 2008. Lilongwe alone has reported 1,478 cases with 44 deaths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First round crop estimates for the 2008/2009 season are expected to be released within this week.</li> <li>• The poor households now dependent on markets, are facing access problems due to current maize price levels that have risen above the 5-year average and are well above those of the same time last year</li> <li>• In January 2009, WFP Malawi provided 2.5 MT of corn soya blend (CSB) to Ministry of Health for supplementary feeding to recovering cholera victims. The supplies were enough for 100 individuals for one month and a buffet stock for 177 individuals was also provided</li> </ul>



## RIACSO REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY SITUATION REPORT: MOZAMBIQUE

Updated – 12 MARCH 2009

- Highlights**
- Potential production problems continue to prevail in the southern provinces.
  - Water levels in key river basins of Incomati and Pungue are at alert levels.
- Actions**
- WFP to circulate Urban Report and request an executive summary in English

Agriculture Situation	Food Availability	Food Access/Prices	Nutrition, Health and Food Utilization	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delayed onset of rains in central and southern parts affected crop planting and/or emergence.</li> <li>• According to the National Hydrological bulletin of 7 March 2009 the Incomati and Pungue river basins in the southern and central regions are at alert levels at Magude and Mafambisse respectively. The situation will continue to be monitored and recommendations provided on the situation. There has been a gradual increase in water levels of the principal dams in the country, Cahora Bassa (at 69.2% full) and Massingir (at 70.2% full).</li> <li>• Food crop prospects for the present agricultural season are, so far, favourable except in the southern parts of the country where dry conditions continued to prevail as is normally experienced.</li> <li>• Since Feb 23rd 2009, Red Locust outbreaks have been reported in 7 districts (Bizi Nhamatanda and Chibabava, Caia, Chemba, Gorongosa and Machanga) of Sofala province. These are being controlled through chemical sprays. Efforts are underway to secure more resources to cover Mozambique and other countries at risk e.g. Tanzania and Malawi.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The overall 2007/08 crop harvest for Mozambique was reported to be fairly good despite the poor crop performance in the drought affected southern provinces (Maputo, Gaza and Inhambane), and places affected by flooding in central region.</li> <li>• The food security situation is worsening in most of the country's drought affected areas and humanitarian assistance is needed to assist over 300,000 food insecure people. In a recent Food Security Cluster briefing WFP informed of having funds sufficient to address food needs for only 195,000 people in the coming 3 months.</li> <li>• A Food Security Monitoring activity was planned for February 2009 to be coordinated by SETSAN and MozVAC.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maize prices are still well above both the five year average (2003-07) and prices are still increasing, in the central provinces (more than 200% increase since last year).</li> <li>• An urban assessment was conducted in Maputo &amp; Matola cities in Sept / Oct 2008 with follow up in other areas planned for 2009. Report available in Portuguese.</li> <li>• WFP Mozambique will only meet 55% of the total food needs due to pipeline break down. As a result, food rations will be cut down and some districts such as Machaze, Maccossa, Tambara, Caia, Chibabava, Marromeu, Machanga, Changara, Cahora Bassa and Massingir will be removed from the beneficiary list.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In general, acute malnutrition levels are low.</li> <li>• However, the levels of stunting/chronic malnutrition in the Northern provinces are among the highest in the region (47%) which is ironic since it's the bread basket of the country. Under 5 mortality is also very high (132/1000 live births).</li> <li>• Between 1 Oct, 2008 to Jan 29, 2009, 4,132 cases of cholera with 52 associated deaths had been reported.</li> <li>• MICS survey has been completed and the preliminary results are expected in few months time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need to assess/evaluate the effects of high food prices on HIV.</li> <li>• National Budgetary allocation to Agriculture to be increased from the 4% in 2008 to 6%.</li> </ul>



## RIACSO REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY SITUATION REPORT: NAMIBIA

Updated – 12 MARCH 2009

- Highlights**
- Potential production problems in communal crop producing areas in the north due to heavy rains.
  - Government providing food assistance during the lean season to affected households and is lifting the 15% VAT off some basic food commodities.
- Actions**
- Get more information on the planned crop assessment mission and provide support if requested.

Agriculture Situation	Food Availability	Food Access/Prices	Nutrition, Health and Food Utilization	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to agricultural inputs was generally reduced due to increased costs. A national subsidy programme was rolled out to a limited number of communal farmers to provide them with seed and fertilizer as well as ploughing/weeding facilities.</li> <li>• Heavy rainfall and some flooding hit parts of Northern and North-Eastern Namibia and may worsen in the next few days/weeks. This has raised concerns over prospects for this year's harvest, which was initially estimated by a recent Crop Assessment Mission to be better than last year.</li> <li>• A joint UN / Government of Namibia (GoN) rapid needs assessment is ongoing and is expected to provide more information on the scale and nature of damage caused.</li> <li>• NEWFIS is currently carrying out a crop assessment which will provide crop production forecasts for the current cropping season. The findings may, however, not include the impact of the recent rainfall and flooding.</li> <li>• Livestock conditions in the northern regions reported to be improving due to improved pastures following the onset of the rains. This too may have been impacted by the floods.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The country's aggregate 2007/08 cereal production is not significantly different from the 2006/07 harvest. NEWFIS estimates it at 121,309 tones, representing a 6% increase compared to the previous season, which was considered to be a poor one. The 2007/2008 harvest is about 1% percent above the past six-year average (i.e.2001/02 to 2006/07).</li> <li>• Namibia traditionally relies on the commercial food production sector for most of its' cereal needs and the gap is usually bridged through imports.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A post floods Emergency Food Security Assessment carried out in May-June 2008 by WFP and the Government estimated that some 142,000 people would be in need of food assistance from January to March 2009.</li> <li>• The Government of Namibia's comprehensive food distribution scheme across the entire country for affected communities has come to a halt due to heavy flooding in some parts of northern and north-eastern Namibia.</li> <li>• In order to mitigate the effects of the food price increases, a high level Government task force has introduced the lifting of a 15% VAT off some basic food commodities, namely beans, bread, cake flour, cooking oil and fat.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 2006-2007 Namibia Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) found that 29% of children under five are stunted, while 7.5% are wasted and 16.5% are underweight.</li> <li>• Although these findings are a good indicator of the nutritional status, they are not comparable to previous surveys carried out as they are using the new 2006 WHO standards.</li> <li>• The recent post-floods EFSA carried out in 6 northern regions of Namibia recorded a 8.3% GAM rate,</li> <li>• High national HIV prevalence rate (17.9%) in pregnant and lactating women.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chronic food insecurity (food access) compounded by transitory shocks – droughts/floods in the northern communal crop producing areas.</li> <li>• Namibia is a net cereal importing country, with good availability ensured through a strong commercial sector.</li> <li>• A repeat of the 2008 and 2007 floods may cause serious food insecurity particularly among the northern communities who are heavily reliant on subsistence farming.</li> </ul>



## RIACSO REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY SITUATION REPORT: SWAZILAND

Updated – 12 MARCH 2009

- Highlights**
- Rainfall patterns differ around the country, leaving pockets of agricultural areas with poor production potential.
  - Food inflation rates decreasing but prices still high for staple foods.

**Actions**

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Agriculture Situation	Food Availability	Food Access/Prices	Nutrition, Health and Food Utilization	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incessant rains continued to be experienced in most parts of the country making weeding difficult. If the rains continue into March/April the mature drying crop could become spoiled.</li> <li>• There are indications that fertilizer application was low due to poor accessibility by households as a result of the high costs. The constant rains are likely to worsen the situation by causing leaching of soil nutrients and making them unavailable for uptake by crops.</li> <li>• Most of the maize crop is at the grain formation stage for most parts of the country but some households are already consuming green mealies.</li> <li>• There was an outbreak of armyworms in the Lubombo region of the country but was quickly controlled by the Ministry of Agriculture.</li> <li>• In the Shiselweni heavy rains eroded farmed lands and swept away the planted crops. Other crops that were planted nearby the flooded streams were also swept away. An assessment on the extent of damage is being conducted by MOAC.</li> </ul> <p>There has been no livestock diseases reported to date and grazing pastures are in excellent condition as well as the livestock.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total production for 2007/08 was estimated at 64,000 MT by the CFSAM.</li> <li>• Official reports on planted areas and production forecasts are still being expected from the National Early Warning Unit (NEWU).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to the Swazi VAC, it is expected that about 287,000 people amongst the rural population will face a food shortage of 30,259 MT or an expenditure deficit of SZL 85,666, 624 during the 2008/09 lean season. This number might increase due to a number of factors including the effects of the HIV and AIDS pandemic and the rising food prices.</li> <li>• Food inflation rates decreasing from 18.17% in November to 17.54% in December 2008 (in line with declines in maize prices on SAFEX and globally from October to December 2008).</li> <li>• An Urban vulnerability report is available for circulation and is being printed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Swaziland National Nutrition Council (SNNC) in collaboration with the Ministry of Health &amp; Social Welfare (MoHSW), UNICEF, WFP, and other stakeholders carried out a national nutrition survey. The results of this survey indicate very low levels of acute malnutrition.</li> <li>• The situation is very fragile due to the high rates of HIV and increasingly reported TB cases but acute malnutrition is stable and underweight has tended to fluctuate in children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nationally, Swaziland relies on food imports from South Africa</li> <li>• At the household level, many rely on remittances from family members which may decrease in light of the global financial crisis.</li> </ul>



## RIACSO REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY SITUATION REPORT: ZAMBIA

Updated – 12 MARCH 2009

- Highlights**
- The impact of high food prices had been most felt by the rural and urban poor households who are dependent on market supplies during the lean period.
  - Maize grain and maize meal stocks need to be closely monitored.

**Actions**

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Agriculture Situation	Food Availability	Food Access/Prices	Nutrition, Health and Food Utilization	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced rainfall activity was recorded across most parts of the country during the last dekad of February. However this is not expected to have any significant impact on crop performance as there was adequate residual moisture in the soil due to good rains received earlier</li> <li>• Performance of the maize crop in the major maize producing areas has been generally favorable. The early planted crop is expected to reach maturity in the coming few weeks. The Zambia National farmers Union has estimated that Commercial farmers with drying facilities would offload 100,000 MT of this early crop on the Zambian market during March.</li> <li>• On February 25, 2009 the Conservation Agriculture up scaling for increased productivity and production (CASPP) project was officially launched by the Zambian Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MACO). This project aims to scale up Conservation Agriculture in Zambia, targeting 58,800 small scale farmers.</li> <li>• No major livestock disease outbreaks have been reported</li> <li>• Government commenced the comprehensive review of the implementation of the Fertilizers Support Programme (FSP) in preparation for the coming season.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to a report by the Food Reserve Agency (FRA) of Zambia, by Dec 2008 and Jan 2009, the total stock available in Zambia was about 190,000 metric tonnes, and it is expected that maize availability will cover the needs up to March, 2009.</li> <li>• According to the Dec 2008 ZamVAC report, an estimated 112,411 vulnerable households in 29 districts of Zambia are food insecure due to 2007/08 season flood induced crop damage and the effects of the international economic crisis and are in need food assistance amounting to 16,854 tone for a period of three months starting January, 2009.</li> <li>• Significant number of people in the main maize belt have already started consuming green maize and pumpkins from own production and these are normally eaten as snacks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The FAO/MACO crop and livestock monitoring report for January, 2009 indicates that despite reduction of maize meal prices by millers across the country, the price of maize grain both in rural and urban areas continue to rise.</li> <li>• CSO price data for January, 2009 shows between December, 2008 and January, 2009, on average, the price of roller meal decreased by 3%, breakfast by 2% whilst maize grain price per 18 kg increased by 7%</li> <li>• The high food prices and the low price of copper is likely playing a role in food and nutrition security in the country.</li> <li>• An urban vulnerability study was conducted by WFP; the report is yet to be endorsed by the VAC committee. It will be released by government after endorsement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was a sudden increase of number of Under 5 children with Severely Acute Malnutrition admitted at the University Teaching Hospital in Lusaka. An increase has also been noted at Outpatient Therapeutic Programme (OTP) sites – likely due to the economic crisis.</li> <li>• However, results of a recent FNC assessment did not indicate high rates of acute malnutrition.</li> <li>• UNICEF country office is working with stakeholders to improve early case and to introduce SFP to reduce the number of children becoming severely malnourished.</li> <li>• According to the Ministry of Health, the country has had a cumulative total of 4,633 cholera cases since 10/09/08 with mortality of 109 (CFR: 1.23%). The cholera situation in Zambia has continued to rise with 793 more cases recorded in the last week. Of the 793 new cases, five died while receiving treatment and three were BID</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is wide dissatisfaction by donors on the way the fertiliser support programme has been handled by Government and this will affect future donor commitment</li> <li>• Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit and Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives have been advised on the possible invasion of locust along the borders with Tanzania and plan of action is in place.</li> </ul>



## RIACSO REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY SITUATION REPORT: ZIMBABWE

Updated – 12 MARCH 2009

- Highlights**
- Food prices continue to go down, as availability improves.
  - Liberalization of cereal imports have resulted in improved food availability in the markets. Payment of civil servants in foreign currency is expected to have a positive effect.
  - Crop production likely to improve compared to 2007/08, but still below national requirements.
  - Urban food insecurity at 33% of households interviewed (24% in 2006, but lower than 2008 CFSAM projection)

### Actions

Agriculture Situation	Food Availability	Food Access/Prices	Nutrition, Health and Food Utilization	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rainfall distribution is better this season compared to last season. Forecast for the rest of the season is in the “normal to above normal” range. However, a dry spell is affecting some parts of the country (particularly the Eastern districts).</li> <li>• The 1<sup>st</sup> Round Crop Assessment (MoA, co-funded by FAO and WFP) is complete. Although area planted is slightly lower compared to previous season, the bulk of crop is in fair/good condition.</li> <li>• Maize production is likely to be higher than in 2007/08. If rainfall continues, a considerable improvement is expected. This despite the fact that large parts of area under maize was planted using grain and food aid (which have a lower yield potential than certified seed).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early indications are that cereal production will be once again below national requirements (but likely higher than the 575,000 MT achieved in 2007/08).</li> <li>• WFP intends to reach 4,591,661 e-VGF beneficiaries and a further 629,953 beneficiaries under the safety-net programs during the month of March. C-SAFE is also assisting significant beneficiary caseload under both the e-VGF and safety-net programs. (<i>WFP Output Monitoring</i>)</li> <li>• Cereal availability is likely to improve during the month of February going into March as households will be drying their early planted maturing crops notably from the gardens and or wetlands/ crop fields as they try to cope with the cereal deficit. (<i>WFP FSM</i>)</li> <li>• By the end of the marketing year, the Government of Zimbabwe is expected to have imported more than 400,000MT (or 66% of CFSAM recommendations), while food aid pipelines 283,000 MT (or 75% of CFSAM).</li> <li>• Food availability on the open markets and growth points has considerably improved due to imported maize meal from neighbouring countries and lifting of the trade controls on the commodity by the Government.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The steady inflows of maize meal brands from neighbouring countries, notably South Africa, have witnessed a significant decrease in prices, which of late have stabilized across the country. Nonetheless the prices remain higher in absolute terms in comparison to the region and more-so given the limited access to foreign currency by the majority of the population. Hence bartering remains the main mode of transacting. The negative terms of trade imply a low purchasing power for the majority of the households. (<i>WFP Weekly brief, FSM</i>)</li> <li>• Results from the urban assessment (ZimVAC) shows that the proportion of the food insecure population in urban areas has increased to 33% since 2006, amid calls for urban social protection programs to alleviate poverty.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The November 2008 Nutrition Surveillance survey report indicates that nationally the prevalence of malnutrition has remained static over the past 3 years.</li> <li>• Global acute malnutrition was 4.8% which is below national emergency cut-off points (using national and international standards)</li> <li>• Households where adults consume one meal per day increased from 16% in 2007 to 47% in 2008.</li> <li>• The health system has been authorised to charge for services in foreign currency making it inaccessible to the general majority.</li> <li>• Cholera infections since the outbreak of cholera in August 2008 are over 81,000 cases of cases and over 3,800 deaths (February 21<sup>st</sup>). The epidemic seems to have slowed. Multifaceted programmes are being implemented by both government and partners to curb the outbreak</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liberalisation of cereal import has created favourable conditions for traders. There are significant improvements in food available on markets but access is still limited for many poor households due to the relative high prices</li> <li>• Government has started paying civil servants in foreign currency and this is expected to improve accessibility to food by households.</li> </ul>





## Other Countries:

### Comoros:

With Stunting rate of 47% and underweight of 25% Comoros is one the most food insecure countries in ESARO. Thus has been selected to participate in the Landscape Analysis exercise which is expected to take place in end of February early March, 2009.<sup>1</sup>

**South Africa** (information obtained from <http://www.sagis.org.za>) as at 24 Feb 2009

The revised estimate area planted under maize is 2,450 million hectares (ha), a 12.48% decrease from last year's estimate of 2,799 million ha. The planted area estimate for white maize is 1,497 million ha, which represents a decrease of 13.8% or 239,700 ha compared to the 1,737 million ha planted last season. The estimated are for yellow maize, at 952,500 ha, is 10.3% lower than the 1,062 million ha planted last season. The production forecast of white maize is 6,528 million tons and is estimated to be 12.7% lower that last year. The production forecast for sorghum is 268,100 tons, representing a 5.14% higher than last season. The area estimated for sorghum is 3.8% higher than that of last year's 86,800 ha.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to the respective country teams from the various Agencies in providing contributions to this report. Information for countries such as South Africa is obtained from relevant websites as reflected in the main body of the report where applicable.

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<sup>1</sup> The landscape analysis was developed as part of WHO-led interagency efforts in strengthening the contribution to the achievement of the MDGs in particular MDG 1, 4, and 5. 36 countries where 90% of the stunted children live have been selected for the Landscape Analysis.