



SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY UPDATE

MARCH 18TH 2010

Countries updated and Highlights

• Lesotho	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moisture is adequate in most parts of the country and crops range from vegetative to flowering stages and in satisfactory condition. Estimated planned imports for the 2009/10 season amount to 147,000 MT of which 90,000 MT had already been delivered by mid-January.
• Madagascar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An interventions Impact Assessment Mission has started on 8 March in the drought prone southern districts by the “Food Security and Livelihood” Cluster, led by WFP and FAO, with NGO partners. Preliminary results should be available at the end of March On 10 March, A Moderate Tropical Storm “HUBERT” made a landfall in the southeastern region of Madagascar.
• Malawi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The prolonged dry spells have impacted 29% of farm families in the country. The average market price for maize is currently K47.27 (\$0.32) is below the Government’s set maximum selling price of maize, K60.00 (\$0.41) per kg. While food availability is expected to remain satisfactory countrywide with food from previous harvest, total production from the 2010 harvest is likely to be reduced in most districts in the southern region and some in the central region.
• Mozambique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RED ALERT IN THE CENTRAL REGION OF MOZAMBIQUE at institutional level was declared by Council of Ministers of Mozambique on 09 March 2010 in light of the current localized FLOODS mainly in central region. 13,000 people were already affected by floods in Zumbo, Tete, Chemba, Tambara, Mutarara, Caia, Mopeia, Morrumbala, Marromeu and Chinde and were resettled. National Emergency Operations Centre (CENOE) estimates the maximum of 130,000 people may be affected affected by floods in the worst case scenario.
• Namibia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All the river levels in the north are going down except the Zambezi. The Government completed the 1st Round Crop assessments in the north of the country in February. Results show a production increase of 25% over 2008/09; and 10 % above average.
• South Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preliminary crop production forecasts in South Africa point to yet another bumper harvest, potentially even better than that of last year.
• Swaziland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The country’s maize crop is mainly at the drying stage and will be ready for harvest in the next one to two months, and is in a good state in higher lying areas whilst in the dry parts there has been significant crop failure due to the dry period experienced in mid January. Imports of white maize from RSA have been very low this season, a sign that the local harvest was better than previous years. The Ministry of agriculture is currently working on early season crop estimates, which will be released within the month.
• Zimbabwe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cereal production will be lower than last years with a preliminary estimate of cereal deficit at around 800,000 MT The second round crop estimates exercise will update the first estimates which occurred at the height of the drought.



SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY UPDATE: LESOTHO

Updated – 16 March 2010

- Highlights**
- Moisture is adequate in most parts of the country and crops range from vegetative to flowering stages and in satisfactory condition.
 - Estimated planned imports for the 2009/10 season amount to 147,000 MT of which 90,000 MT had already been delivered by mid-January.

Agriculture Situation	Food Availability	Food Access/Prices	Nutrition, Health and Food Utilization	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to a report by the Lesotho Disaster Management Authority, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS) estimated area planted for the 2009/10 season at 123,051 ha. The estimates also project maize production for 2010 to be 72,398 MT (16% increase over 2009 production). • Moisture is adequate in most parts of the country and crops range from vegetative to late reproductive stages and in satisfactory condition. Harvesting of beans is ongoing. • A crop assessment is underway under which should provide more information on the areas planted as well as the crop situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It appears that Lesotho was the only country in the region with reduced production in 2009 and this could be the result of the impact of the financial crisis where households could not afford inputs for better production as well as repeated poor rainfall performance • Estimated planned imports for the 2009/10 season amount to 147,000 MT, of which, 90,000 MT had been delivered by mid-January. • According to the Lesotho Disaster Management Authority, the price of maize has been fairly stable over the past 6 months. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In June 2009, the LVAC estimated that around 450,000 people would need humanitarian assistance in 2009/10 • WFP pipeline for vulnerable group feeding in Lesotho is under resourced. A shortfall of 3595 MT is indicated between February and July 2010. • Food inflation remains low, having declined steadily from a high of 14.2 % in January 2009 to % in January 2010. • According to the price monitoring report produced by WFP, on average in January 2010 urban maize prices increased by 8% from December 2009 prices, while rural prices increased by only 0.2% in the same period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOHSW with technical support of UNICEF is working to identify causes of chronic undernutrition and to develop strategies on how to reduce the high levels of stunting. The nutrition expert from UNICEF has recommended that a Task Force be formed to implement the Landscape Analysis to identify the gaps, constraints and opportunities that could help to scale up high impact nutrition interventions. • The Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office (FNCO) and WFP in partnership with Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (Family Health Division), Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (Nutrition Extension Division), National University of Lesotho (Nutrition Department), and UNICEF, have been undertaking a food consumption study in the Mountain Livelihood zone and analysis is ongoing and preliminary results will be shared on the 17th March. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Government is experiencing the reduction in the Southern Africa Customs Union revenue and this has negative impact on the government budget. This figure declined from 35% in 2009/10, and will further reduce to 17% in 2010/2011, putting much pressure on the Government. • The annual inflation rate was estimated at 4.1 percent in January 2010. While the food inflation rate decreased from 18.5 percent in January 2008 to 3.1 percent in J • According to the 2010 budget speech, the preliminary estimate for economic growth in 2009 is 2.1 percent compared to 4.4 percent in 2008, which represents a decline of over 50 percent. It is expected that the mining, manufacturing and telecommunications will boost the economy and increase the growth to 3.6 percent.



SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY UPDATE: MADAGASCAR

Updated – 16 March 2010

Highlights

- An interventions Impact Assessment Mission has started on 8 March in the drought prone southern districts by the “Food Security and Livelihood” Cluster, led by WFP and FAO, with NGO partners. Preliminary results should be available at the end of March
- On 10 March, A Moderate Tropical Storm “HUBERT” made a landfall in the southeastern region of Madagascar.

Agriculture Situation	Food Availability	Food Access/Prices	Nutrition, Health and Food Utilization	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dry South did not benefit from the Tropical Depression FAMI. The rainfall was not sufficient enough for agricultural activities. The Early Warning System SAP reports rainfall level to very low to low within the area since January 2010. • The cyclone season began in December 2009 and the island will remain under climate threat until April 2010. The IASC Contingency Plan has been finalized along with a National Contingency Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rice supplies are adequate and market arrivals remained high. The abundance of rice in the market, due to the good harvest, accounts for the low market prices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Price of sugar, flour remain high following the increase in February • As of 17 February the price of gasoline increased by 10 percent. • Following the suspension of Madagascar from the AGOA initiative, more textile export processing zone factories stopped their activities and laid-off their employees. Since January 2010, about 20,000 people had lost their jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Madagascar consistently has the highest levels of acute malnutrition (15%) and chronic malnutrition (53%) in Southern Africa. • The results of the third round of McRAM nutrition and health surveillance in Tana urban areas revealed that the food insecurity situation of the population in the surveyed areas in the Capital city had not deteriorated as compared to November 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MTS “HUBERT” made landfall in the southern vicinity of Mananjary town (southeast of Madagascar). Preliminary information received from the National Office for Disaster and Risk Management (BNGRC) report 14 dead; 37,000 affected or displaced • Some crop fields were damaged but not yet well defined.



SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY UPDATE: MALAWI

Updated – 16 March 2010

Highlights

- The prolonged dry spells have impacted 29% of farm families in the country.
- The current maize price K47.27 (\$0.31) is below the Government's set maximum selling price of maize, K60.00 (\$0.41) per kg.
- While food availability is expected to remain satisfactory countrywide with food from previous harvest, total production from the 2010 harvest is likely to be reduced in most districts in the southern region and some in the central region.

Agriculture Situation	Food Availability	Food Access/Prices	Nutrition, Health and Food Utilization	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A total of 943,721 farm families representing 29% of total were reportedly impacted with an estimated 317,728 hectares of land affected. • The return of good rainfall in the country in the last 3-4 weeks boosted growth of some crops while it might be too late for other crops. • MVAC is conducting food security assessments to determine the number of people affected in the country. • Official National Crop production estimates for 2nd Round 2009 and First Round 2010 were released by the Government recently. The First Round 2009/2010 season estimates are found below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Total maize area = 1,692,671 ha ○ Total maize production = 2,943,407 MT ○ Total projected cereal area = 1,885,560 ha ○ Projected total cereal production = 3,106,364 MT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food security situation of the country remains favourable. The food security situation for some households in Chikwawa, Nsanje, Balaka, and Zomba districts has improved following the Government led food assistance programme that is being implemented in collaboration with WFP. • In general, food is available for most households from own production or procurement from the market. • Small and medium size traders and ADMARC have adequate stocks of maize which is sold at various markets throughout the country. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of the markets are recording slight increase in maize price. The average selling price of maize in February 2010 at local market was \$0.31 per kg. However, when compared with the previous year same month, maize price for February 2009 was at \$0.43 per kg. This shows that the price decreased in February 2010 by 28% compared to February 2009. • The current maize price is lower than that of the previous year therefore affordable and accessible to people in the country. • The new ADMARC price approved by the government in 2010 is MK60. As a result many ADMARC depots are not selling because the local maize vendors are selling maize at between MK45-MK52 this year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CFSVA study conducted by the MVAC with WFP support found lower levels of wasting in the North (2.6%) compared to Central (3.9%) and South (3.6%) similar pattern were observed for underweight (9.6%). Prevalence of underweight was highest in the South (12.2%) followed by Central (10.7%) regions. The prevalence of stunting, however, was highest in the North (65.3%) compared to the Central (57.6%) and Southern (59.1%) regions. • For women, 9.2% had a BMI of less than 18.5 kg/m², 9% were underweight (< 45 kgs) and 4% were stunted (< 145 cms). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More families are relying on food purchases from the market. The availability of maize in ADMARC and local markets confirms adequate national availability. However household access depends on individual household purchasing power. • The food security situation is expected to remain until harvest time in April/May • While food availability is expected to remain satisfactory countrywide total production from the 2010 harvest is likely to be reduced in the southern region and some in the central region. The affected households will require food assistance later in the year.



SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY UPDATE: MOZAMBIQUE

Updated – 16 March 2010

Highlights

- RED ALERT IN THE CENTRAL REGION OF MOZAMBIQUE at institutional level was declared by Council of Ministers of Mozambique on 09 March 2010 in light of the current localized FLOODS mainly in central region.
- 13,000 people were already affected by floods in Zumbo, Tete, Chemba, Tambara, Mutarara, Caia, Mopeia, Morrumbala, Marromeu and Chinde and were resettled. National Emergency Operations Centre (CENOE) estimates the maximum of 130,000 people may be affected by floods in the worst case scenario.

Agriculture Situation	Food Availability	Food Access/Prices	Nutrition, Health and Food Utilization	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heavy rainfall in the central region and upstream caused increase of rivers flow and floods. Consequently there are displaced people, flooded and isolated areas, crop losses and road cuts. Zambezi river can reach alert level in Zumbo district of Tete province depending on Kariba dam in Zambia. • Unofficial figures indicate that about 665,000 hectares of crops in the 7 drought affected provinces were lost - up to 60% in some districts. The Government will provide official figures. • Preliminary estimates by The SETSAN indicates that some 475,000 households in the seven provinces are suffering the effects of the drought • Some farmers in drought affected areas have done a 3rd planting in late January but maturity of these crops depends on rains continuing throughout March, • The northern provinces, which still have a surplus maize production from last year, are expected to have another good harvest as they were less affected by the dry spells • A first crop production forecast will be prepared at the end of March. SETSAN plans to prepare a first vulnerability assessment in April, when the final production figures are expected to be available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local maize is still available in the main markets (cities) and there is still flow of this product from centre to south provinces. • Although household food security is currently not critical, production losses and lack or reduced food reserves are signals of food security deterioration in the central and southern provinces, aggravated by the fact that the rainfall season is ending and there is lack of water for human and animal consumption. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to Agriculture Market Information System (SIMA), prices of local maize increased in some markets. The highest price of maize was observed in Mutarara- Tete (14.29 Mt/kg), Nhamatanda-Sofala province (11.43 Mt/kg) and Xaixai- Gaza province (8.10 Mt/kg). • The lowest price of 5.71 Mt/kg was observed in Manica where the price at producer level decreased in 25%. It was also observed that prices of local beans and groundnut varied between 9 and 25 Mt/kg and 23 to 47Mt/kg, respectively. (SIMA Bulletin No761) • WFP pipeline severely under resourced; only 175,000 of the 281,000 beneficiaries have so far received assistance in January 2010. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In general, acute malnutrition levels are low ranging from 8.9% (Nampula) to 1.4% (Gaza) according to the multiple indicator cluster surveys (MICS) of 2008. However, the levels of stunting/chronic malnutrition in the country are very high: 44% (MICS 2008) with seven provinces having rates above 40% (56% in Cabo Delgado and 41.5% in Sofala). • Child mortality is still high in the country although the 2008 MICS indicate a decline from 153/1000 live birth (DHS 2003) to 138/1000 live birth. This decline was found to be higher in rural areas than urban. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The other hydrographic basins are below alert level. However, there was a slight increase of water flow in the Messalo, Revubue and Pungue basins in the center and north of the country. • WFP, requested by INGC, is assisting CENOE in central region in logistics and information system WFP is prioritizing the ongoing relief response for March and April to areas affected with both drought and floods. Food is available until end of April (2000 Mt per Month for 177,000 beneficiaries). INGC has requested Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) to coordinate the partner responses via clusters. Government has not officially requested material support. • Cahora Bassa dam has decreased discharges from the previous 4,500 cubic meters per second to 3,500 cubic meters per second. This will help improve the situation in the lower Zambezi area.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A first crop production forecast will be prepared at the end of March. SETSAN will host a VAC planning retreat s to prepare a first vulnerability assessment in April, to develop plans for this year's annual VAC Assessments • The Crop and Early Warning Unit (DCAP) from the national Directorate of Agrarian Services (DNSA) from the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAG) is planning a preliminary country wide assessment of the 2009/10 harvest prospects starting mid March. It is expected that the results of the assessment will inform the CFSAM, which the government has requested from FAO/WFP for April/May. 				<p>Current level of Cahora Bassa dam is 324.54 meters against the maximum storage capacity level of 329,0 meters. Kariba dam has decreased discharges from 4,000 cubic meters per second to 2,000 cubic meters per second.</p>
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SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY UPDATE: NAMIBIA

Updated – 16 March 2010

Highlights

- All the river levels in the north are going down except Zambezi.
- The Government completed the 1st Round Crop assessments in the north of the country in February. Results show a production increase of 25% over 2008/09; and 10 % above average.

Agriculture Situation	Food Availability	Food Access/Prices	Nutrition, Health and Food Utilization	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At Katima Mulilo, the flood wave is levelling off and is expected to peak in a few days at 7.25-7.30m. The floods have caused disruption of ground transport and have displaced a small number of people. The national authorities are reporting that the situation is under control. There were only light rains upstream in the catchment over the past days. • The water levels of Kavango River at Rundu are on the rise again after peaking at 7.31m, due to new rains in the catchment area. • The water flows in the Cuvelai Oshanas are subsiding. The situation in this delta is much better when compared to last year. • The recently completed crop assessment by the Ministry of Agriculture's Early Warning Unit (NEWFIU) suggests good harvest prospects for 2009/2010 crop season in the north central regions are highly likely, despite the general rainfall performance reported. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking into account the estimated grain production of about 139,000 MT in 2008/09, no planned stock draw-down by millers and virtually no household food stocks at the farm level due to a succession of disasters, as well as an estimated national utilization requirement of about 289,000 MT of grain, it is projected that the country will need to import 150,000 MT of grain during the 2009/10 marketing year (FAO/WFP). • However, according to the latest Namibia NEWFIU report (March 2010) shows that by the end of February, the country had imported grains (maize and wheat) totalling 140,000 MT), just 10,000MT short of the total import requirement that had been projected for the 2009/10 marketing season. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most households interviewed during the National Early Warning and Food Information System (NEWFIS) December 2009 agricultural inputs and household food security situation assessment indicated that they have depleted their harvest in August 2009 and are now dependent on the markets and/or government drought / flood relief foods to meet their food needs. • Nationally, food price increases have stabilized; food inflation has declined from a high 16 % in Jan 09 and was down to 5.3% in January 2010. The rates are declining further as maize prices drop internationally and in South Africa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2006 Demographic Health Survey (DHS) found that 29% of Namibia's children were stunted, 17% were underweight and 7.5% were acutely malnourished. • Approximately 77% of acutely malnourished children found in the north-eastern part of the country. • The National Alliance for Improved Nutrition in Namibia has developed a concept note for a food consumption and micronutrient deficiency survey and plan to move forward with the design of the survey tools with technical assistance from GAIN and DSM. • The 2008 DHS is currently being finalized while the 2010 DHS is being planned. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic food insecurity (food access) compounded by transitory shocks – droughts/floods in the northern communal crop producing areas. • Namibia is a net cereal importing country. A strong commercial sector assures good availability of staple cereals to cover effective demand. Vulnerable households' needs are usually addressed through Government intervention programmes.



Agriculture Situation	Food Availability	Food Access/Prices	Nutrition, Health and Food Utilization	Comments
<p>Crop production outlook for the north central regions, are much better by far than last season.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The country's aggregate coarse grain production (white maize, pearl millet, wheat and sorghum) is provisionally forecasted at 134,713 tonnes. This represents an increase in output of over 10 percent above average and nearly 25 percent higher compared to 2008/09 poor harvest. 				



SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY UPDATE: SOUTH AFRICA

Updated – 16 March 2010

- Highlights**
- Projections for the current 2009/10 maize marketing season indicate that South Africa will have a surplus of 1,701 million tons of maize at the end of April 2010.
 - Preliminary crop forecasts in South Africa point to a bumper harvest, which could be significantly higher than last year's if the good rains extend to March 2010. This is due to increased maize plantings compared to last year, while yields so far are, on average, slightly better or at the same level as last year

Agricultural Situation	Food Availability	Food Access/Prices	Nutrition, Health and Food Utilization	Comments
<p>According to the Crop Estimates Committee report of 23 Feb 2010 (www.daff.gov.za or www.sagis.org.za/CEC):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The area planted under commercial maize was estimated to be 2,756 million hectares, representing 13.55% or 328,900 ha more than the 2,428 million ha planted during the 2008/09 season. The total production projected was 12,876 million MT, which is 6.86% more than the 12,050 million MT of the previous season. • White maize: The area estimate for white maize is 1,720 million ha, which represents an increase of 15.49% or 230,700 ha compared to the 1,489 million ha planted last season. Forecasted total production, 7,803 million MT, is estimated to be 15.18% more than the 6,775 million MT of the 2008/09 season. • Yellow maize: Total area planted to yellow maize was approximately 1,037 million ha, or 10.46% (98,200 ha) more than the 938,500 ha planted in the 2008/09 season. A total production of 5,073 million MT has been projected and this represents 3.83% reduction from the 5,275 million MT of last season. The forecasted reduction in total production is due to the projected lower yields, 4.89 MT/ha compared to 5.62 MT/ha achieved last year. • Winter wheat: The final production estimate for the 2009 winter wheat was reduced by 26,500 MT to 1,920 million MT from the previous forecast of 1,946 million MT. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The February rains show a varied impact on crop production ranging from no effect in areas where permanent wilting had occurred to positive impact on the late and replanted crops still at vegetative stages • According to the FEWSNET March 2010 report, preliminary crop production forecasts in South Africa point to yet another bumper harvest, potentially even better than that of last year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Africa's food inflation is higher than that of most developed countries. • Although food commodity prices continued to decrease at a double digit rate, the prices of food remain higher in the rural areas than in the urban areas. In January 2009, people living in rural areas had to pay R9.75 more than people in urban areas for the food elementary foods staffs as monitored by NAMC and Stats SA. The price difference increased to R17.49 in January 2010 fuelled mainly by rice, maize meal and sugar. • Local white maize prices are expected to follow international prices, moving downwards in the short to medium term due to prospects of a large crop on hand and a stronger rand: US dollar exchange rate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The infant mortality rate was 49/1000 live births in 2009 (State of the World's Children report, 2009). The main cause of under-five mortality is AIDS, representing 35% of all deaths in that age group. • UNICEF has supported Vitamin A campaign. Food stables fortification with vitamin A & B, iron and Zinc. Vitamin A supplementation is provided in health facilities through doses targeting 90% of 6-11 months, 80% of 12-59 months and 90% postpartum women. 8,600 individuals living with HIV/AIDS are targeted with nutritional supplements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government is partnering with agriculture and health institutions such as FAO, ARC, UNICEF, and other stakeholders to improve the existing food security initiatives e.g. Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP), community seed production schemes and nutrition interventions e.g. national vitamin A campaign. • The electricity price hikes announced by Eskom are of big concern. So are the increases in minimum farm labourers wages and the fuel levy, that are expected to negatively affect the 2010/11 seasons.



SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY UPDATE: SWAZILAND

Updated – 16 March 2010

Highlights

- The country's maize crop is mainly at the drying stage and will be ready for harvest in the next one to two months, and is in a good state in higher lying areas whilst in the dry parts there has been significant crop failure due to the dry period experienced in mid January.
- Imports of white maize from RSA have been very low this season, a sign that the local harvest was better than previous years.
- The Ministry of agriculture is currently working on early season crop estimates, which will be released within the month.

Agriculture Situation	Food Availability	Food Access/Prices	Nutrition, Health and Food Utilization	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The country's maize crop is mainly at grain filling to maturing stages and is mainly in a good state in most parts of the country. • Water stressed crops in the Lowveld continues to suffer as some were affected at the most critical growth stages (flowering, cob and grain formation). Thus a reduced yield in the affected parts of the Lowveld is expected for this agricultural season. The maize crop shows no sign of recovering. • Area planted reduced in the Highveld, Middleveld and Lowveld this agriculture season. Reasons for this are not clear but could be because of water logging due to above normal rainfall, which affected agriculture activities in the first half of the season (October – December 2009). • Maize farmers are close to the harvest, which is expected to start in April for those that planted early 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Swaziland maize balance sheet shows an availability of 74,000 MT against requirement of 113,000 MT. It also shows planned imports of 40,000 MT. For total cereals (maize wheat, and rice) – the gap is 90,000 MT. • Imports of white maize from RSA have been very low this season, a sign that the local harvest was better than previous years. By the end of February, only 15,000 MT of white maize had been imported (against an estimated commercial import capacity of 30,000). On the other hand some 46,000 MT of yellow maize (used only in the feed industry had been imported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findings of the Swazi VAC indicate that 256,000 people are facing food deficit - 114,000 with acute food insecurity and 148,000 chronically food insecure. • Food price increases have also come down, as experienced by other BLNS – from food inflation rates as high as 15.7% in Jan 09, to a low 2.9% in January 2010. • Maize grain prices range from E150.00 to 200.00 per 50 kg maize bag in rural markets while in urban markets it is E115.00 (NMC). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malnutrition in young children (< 5 years) was most recently measured in the National Nutrition Survey which took place in 2008. Overall, only 1.1% of the children are wasted (low weight-for-height) and was slightly higher in rural areas compared to urban. • Stunting or chronic malnutrition was found to be around 40 percent and was also slightly higher in children from rural areas. • The Swazi VAC has found that, at least half of the women in their surveys are overweight or obese. This can be a reflection of the poor quality diet which consists mostly of cereals/carbohydrates with little diversity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Swaziland UNCT is in the process of completing and sharing its report with Government, which will include food security and nutrition as a core pillar for UN support to the Swaziland Government. • The Government announced a plan to subsidize agricultural inputs to boost food production, starting in the 2010/2011 season.



SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY SITUATION UPDATE: ZAMBIA

Updated – 18 March 2010

Highlights

- Between January and March, food security is expected to be generally stable, while an increasing number of households will become market dependent as their household stocks run out and meal prices marginally increase.
- The country still has relatively good stocks on hand and due to the uncompetitive price of Zambian maize, no more than 20,000MT of the 100,000 MT earmarked for exports is estimated to have been exported.

Agriculture Situation	Food Availability	Food Access/Prices	Nutrition, Health and Food Utilization	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally Zambia is headed for a good harvest despite prolonged dry spells in the middle of the season in southern parts of the country and excessive rains in parts of the season The stressed crops in most cases did recover when the rains resumed. The harvest may likely fall to levels slightly below last season due to possible slight reduced harvest in Southern Province. In most other areas the crop is doing well and damage is mostly in traditionally low producing areas and confined to low lying areas where crops were washed away. The harvest for maize is still likely to be above average though below last season. Possible deficit areas are likely to be the traditionally low producing areas such as valley areas which normally source grain from neighbouring districts most part of the year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are relatively large maize stocks in country, with the Food Reserve Agency (FRA) holding about 200,000MT, of which 98,000MT were purchases from the current marketing season while the rest were carryover stocks from the previous marketing season. The private sector also has appreciable amounts of maize stock on hand, having purchased much more maize from the market than the FRA did. Food availability at the household levels has improved as early crops such as legumes and green maize are mature and being consumed. There will be adequate maize to meet needs in country for the next marketing season, no imports will be required. There should be surplus for export and hopefully there will be a market for it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is increased likelihood that most households will increase their purchases of staple foods from the markets as their stocks at household level run out. The retail prices of some key food commodities have shown that there is been a reduction between December 2009 and January 2010. Inflation rates dropped from 11.5% in November to 9.9% in December. Food inflation on the other hand fell from a rate of 11.1% in November to 8.0% in December. This compares with rates of 16% (headline) and 21.3 % food in January 09 No calls for food assistance have been forthcoming and consequently, relief operations have been restricted to assisting a few displaced communities (e.g., as a result of moving some people out of Game Management Areas). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stunting rates for assessed under-five children in affected areas were found to be 45.5% while wasting and underweight were at 3.6% and 15.2% respectively. Acute malnutrition levels have remained within acceptable levels and are slightly lower than last season's VAC estimates. The Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection in Zambia has attributed high levels of child malnutrition in rural areas to food insecurity triggered by recurrent floods whilst in urban areas, the high levels of child malnutrition is attributed to poverty compounded by high food prices affecting low income households. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In December, the Disaster Management Unit pre-positioned food in some flood-prone areas in anticipation of possible flooding in targeted low-lying areas (e.g., valley areas). The Zambia National Farmers Union (ZNFU) has voiced concerns on the possible impact of prolonged dry spells on crop yields in the Southern Province. The country still has relatively good stocks on hand and due to the uncompetitive price of Zambian maize, no more than 20,000MT of the 100,000 MT earmarked for exports is estimated to have been exported. By the end of March, early maize from commercial farmers (harvested in March and machine dried) will be on the market, increasing supply even further. Grain prices are likely to fall from the current year's high levels partly due to the fact that there will be a large carryover of maize from this season and the fact that fertilizer prices dropped this year compared to the previous year.



SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY UPDATE: ZIMBABWE

Updated – 18 March 2010

Highlights

- The First Round Crop and Livestock Assessment was carried out from the 24th of January to the 10th of February 2010 and
- The results indicate that the total area planted to maize for the 2009/2010 season is estimated to be 1,723,990 Ha which represents a 14% increase compared to last season's (1,507,698 Ha) area.

Agriculture Situation	Food Availability	Food Access/Prices	Nutrition, Health and Food Utilization	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rainfall was well distributed until around mid-December 2009 when a dry spell in south and central regions seriously affected the maize crop. The dry spell was more severe in the north eastern districts of Mashonaland East and Central and as a result a considerable reduction in cereal production from last year in anticipated for 2010. • First Round Crop Assessment by the Ministry of Agriculture results for 2009/2010 cropping season indicate that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Total area planted to maize = 1,723,990 ha (14% increase compared to last season's 1,507,698 ha). ○ 49% of the area planted using carry over maize seed, retained grain, purchases and seed from other sources. ○ 926,357 ha (54%) planted by end of November 2009 ○ 664 756 ha (39%) in December 2009 ○ 132,857 ha (8%) in January 2010. ○ The area planted to small grains (515,480 ha) decreased by 19% this season from 635,927 ha last season. ○ 200,574 ha (11.6%) of area planted is written-off due to the prolonged dry spell December – January). • The second round crop assessment by AGRITEX and partners which is already underway, will provide cereal production estimates by mid-April. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Agriculture & Food Security Monitoring System by AGRITEX in 40 rural districts of the country indicates that though cereals are generally available, the proportion coming from own production is decreasing. • The 2009 October ZIMVAC results indicate that the majority of households in rural districts of the country are projected to be between 10 – 20% food insecure between January – March 2010 while the highest range of between 30 – 40% of the households will be in the chronically food insecure areas covering UMP, Mudzi, Rushinga, Binga, parts of Kariba, and Hwange. • Food aid distributions to vulnerable households reached a peak between January and February. • The most recent ZimVAC report estimated the number of food insecure people to be 2.17 million, 72 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Agriculture & Food Security Monitoring System by AGRITEX indicates that prices of grain have remained stable, with a slight decrease from those recorded in January. • Grain purchases contribution to household grain consumption continues to increase. • About 1.1 million rural people currently have insufficient means to access adequate food. • This number is projected to increase to 1.6 million people during the peak hunger period from January – March 2010. This represents about 18% of the total rural population and is 2 percentage points higher than the May 2009 Assessment projection of the peak hunger period of 1.4 million people (16% of rural population). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to the 2009 MIMS report, 35% of children < 5 years are stunted (37% rural, 30% in urban areas); 2% are wasted; Underweight is 12% in rural areas and 9% in the urban. • The Government, UNICEF and other partners are currently analysing the results of the 2010 National Nutrition Survey which was conducted in January 2010. This included around 40,000 children < 5 years of age and 29,000 households and will provide nutrition and food security information for 60 rural districts. • Fifty community deaths and 221 cumulative confirmed measles cases had been reported by 31 January 2010, in an outbreak that has affected 28 districts since October 2009. • Nearly 1,200 suspected measles cases were reported since the start of the outbreak. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cereal production will be lower than last years with a significant preliminary estimate of cereal deficit at around 800,000 MT • Grazing conditions and availability of water poor than last year and needs closer monitoring in the south • Some rural households continue to rely on barter trade for basic commodities as the amount of foreign currency in circulation is still limited. • Economic recovery has been slow with industrial capacity utilization improving slightly from 10% to around 20%. Critical challenges are still being faced in the provision of basic services and utilities such as power, health, and education.

	<p>percent of them in rural areas. However the major food aid pipelines (WFP and C-SAFE) appear adequate to meet assessed requirements at least until August 2010. In fact, in January 2010, the combined WFP and C-SAFE caseload of 3.5 million beneficiaries exceeded the ZimVac estimate of 2.17 million. The importation of both food and non-food commodities, has been favorable in most urban centres since January 2009 and this situation is expected to continue.</p>			
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Other Countries

Angola: (not updated)

Information released by the local authorities indicate that heavy rains falling since December 2009 in Kuando-Kubango Province have so far affected an estimated 2,191 people, destroyed (partially or fully) some 291 houses and flooded many streets in the city of Menongue and its surrounding municipalities. At present, affected populations have received no assistance from the local government who fears that numbers of affected might increase in the coming days. However, the provincial commission for civil protection has requested support and assistance from the central government in Luanda as they have no means to respond to the current situation.

Emancipate

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