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U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)

Zimbabwe – Drought and Complex Emergency

Situation Report #2, Fiscal Year (FY) 2007

September 28, 2007

Note: The last situation report was dated July 31, 2007.

BACKGROUND

Conditions for most Zimbabweans continue to deteriorate due to the country’s collapsing economy, declining access to basic social services and staple food items, and the effects of HIV/AIDS. Detrimental Government of Zimbabwe (GOZ) policies, corruption, and the poor 2006/2007 agricultural season have exacerbated 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, coupled with displacement due to the GOZ’s land redistribution policies, has resulted in widespread loss of housing and livelihoods, increasing Zimbabweans’ vulnerability and poverty.

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/DCHA provided nearly \$175 million for agriculture and food security, shelter, livelihoods, relief commodities, humanitarian coordination and information management, and water, sanitation, and hygiene programs, as well as emergency food assistance.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE		SOURCE
Population In Need of Food Assistance	4.1 million	FAO and WFP ¹ – June 2007

FY 2007 HUMANITARIAN FUNDING

USAID/OFDA Assistance to Zimbabwe	\$5,096,262
USAID/FFP ² Assistance to Zimbabwe	\$169,672,652
Total USAID/DCHA Humanitarian Assistance to Zimbabwe	\$174,768,914

CURRENT SITUATION

Food access and availability remain difficult for Zimbabweans as staple food items become increasingly scarce or non-existent in the market, particularly in urban areas. Most staple foods can only be found in the informal market at prices beyond levels the majority of the population can afford. As a result of the poor October 2006 to March 2007 agricultural season, families in the most drought-affected areas of western and southern Zimbabwe have depleted household food stocks and have limited access to the markets due to high staple food prices, according to USAID’s Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET). The economic and humanitarian crisis has led to increased migration both within Zimbabwe as well as into neighboring countries.

On September 19, Zimbabwe’s Central Statistical Office (CSO) reported that the country’s inflation in August was 6,592 percent. However, independent economists note

that Zimbabwe’s inflation is actually much higher, as the CSO’s figures are based on official, controlled prices, but Zimbabweans must pay far more on the informal market to obtain extremely scarce goods, according to international media reports.

The June 26 GOZ order forcing manufacturers and retailers to reduce the price of goods by 50 percent has resulted in widespread shortages of staple foods and basic commodities and has exacerbated inflation. Factories have halted production of basic goods and services, and retailers have been unwilling to restock items because the artificially low prices have eroded profit margins and made operations financially unsustainable. According to media reports, on August 22, the GOZ slightly eased the price controls, authorizing a price increase of up to 20 percent for farm goods and some basic goods, including sugar, cooking

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

²USAID’s Office of Food for Peace

oil, chicken, and soap. However, these price increases have not spurred the production of new goods.

Food Security and Agriculture

The June 5 joint FAO and WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission (CFSAM) report estimated that Zimbabwe's 2006/2007 crop production failed to meet national food requirements, leaving between one-third and one-half unmet. To reduce the food gap, the GOZ plans to import approximately 400,000 metric tons (MT) of maize from Malawi between May 2007 and February 2008. According to FEWS NET, by the end of August, Malawi had shipped approximately 158,000 MT to Zimbabwe. Although maize imports are ongoing, the capacity of the GOZ's Grain Marketing Board (GMB)—responsible for supplying maize at a subsidized rate—to transport and distribute available cereals remains a concern due to ongoing foreign currency and fuel deficits and deteriorating transportation infrastructure.

As a result of the critical cereal shortages and distribution difficulties, maize prices are extremely high, limiting households' market access, according to FEWS NET. Prices are highest in urban areas and in the provinces of Matabeleland South and Matabeleland North, where cereal shortages are most severe. Most households in drought-affected areas have exhausted food reserves and are employing negative coping strategies, including poor food diversity and decreased number of meals per day, as well as migration to South Africa and other neighboring countries.

FEWS NET reported that the 2007 winter wheat crop forecast is significantly less than last year's harvest of 128,000 MT, which covered less than 35 percent of the annual national wheat requirements. According to the GOZ's Department of Agricultural Research and Extension Services, the area planted for winter wheat in 2007 was 50,000 hectares, compared to a target of 76,000 hectares. FEWS NET attributed the wheat harvest failure to frequent power outages that affected irrigation machinery, a quelea bird infestation, and fuel shortages.

The CFSAM report estimates 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. On August 1, WFP launched an appeal for \$118 million to provide food assistance to 3.3 million people until the next harvest in April 2008. USAID partner Consortium for Southern Africa Food Security Emergency (C-SAFE), an emergency food assistance program that comprises several non-governmental organizations (NGOs), will support 800,000 people facing food insecurity, mostly in southern Zimbabwe, the most drought-affected and food insecure area.

In FY 2007, USAID/OFDA has contributed more than \$2.6 million through multiple NGOs to provide agriculture and food security assistance. The programs

aim to improve the food security of more than 63,000 drought-affected individuals through the construction and rehabilitation of water catchment structures, training on conservation farming, improvement of livestock health, and the establishment of goat production for income generation.

In addition, in FY 2007, USAID/FFP provided 175,460 MT of P.L. 480 Title II emergency food assistance, valued at nearly \$170 million, through WFP and C-SAFE. The food commodities include cereals, pulses, and vegetable oil. This tonnage is sufficient to feed more than 2 million people for six months.

Vulnerable Populations

From August 6 to 10, a USAID team, including USAID/OFDA and USAID/FFP representatives, traveled to the cities of Harare and Mutare to assess humanitarian conditions and monitor programs. The team found that Operation Murambatsvina and more recent evictions have generated widespread displacement and increased Zimbabweans' vulnerability. Shelter, livelihood generation, and emergency relief supplies remain important humanitarian needs, according to the USAID team.

To address the needs of vulnerable populations, in FY 2007, USAID/OFDA has provided nearly \$1.2 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 addition, in FY 2006 and 2007, USAID/OFDA has also contributed more than \$720,000 to support, together with other international donors, a consortium of seven NGOs to provide livelihood support, improve economic capacity, and reduce food insecurity for 12,000 urban and peri-urban households in five provinces.

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

Water, sanitation, and hygiene conditions remain a critical challenge throughout Zimbabwe, particularly in Bulawayo, the country's second largest city. Bulawayo's 1 million residents have faced increasing water shortages since April 2007, largely due to the country's drought and problems of maintaining necessary infrastructure. Beginning in early October, city authorities plan to limit water supply to residents to once every 11 days, according to media reports. Bulawayo authorities reported that the city is only pumping 69,000 cubic meters of water per day, compared to an estimated need of 150,000 cubic meters. City authorities decommissioned three of the city's water dams in July due to insufficient water. The city plans to decommission another dam in late October, leaving only one dam and some boreholes throughout the city to supply residents. As water rationing becomes more severe, Bulawayo's residents are increasingly resorting to unprotected wells and other unsafe sources to obtain water.

Many Harare residents are also experiencing water shortages due to aging infrastructure, lack of foreign currency to import spare parts, fuel shortages, and poor management from the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA), responsible for the provision of water and sewerage services.

Sanitation conditions are deteriorating as soap and other basic hygiene supplies become luxury items for many poor Zimbabweans. Reduced access to safe water and adequate sanitation, coupled with the collapse of the health system, makes Zimbabweans susceptible to water-related diseases. According to media reports, an outbreak of diarrhea and dysentery left more than 400 people in Bulawayo hospitalized during the week of September 17. In Harare, persistent water shortages and failing sewer systems triggered a diarrhea outbreak in August, with local health centers treating a reported 900 cases per day, according to local media reports. To mitigate the disease's spread, Harare health authorities ordered the centers to treat diarrhea patients for free.

In FY 2007, USAID/OFDA has contributed more than \$800,000 to reduce vulnerability to water and sanitation-related diseases for more than 270,000 people in Bulawayo, Harare, and drought-affected districts in Midlands Province. The program is providing basic hygiene items and conducting public health promotion

activities. As part of multi-sectoral initiatives in FY 2006 and 2007, USAID/OFDA is also supporting increased access to potable water and sanitation facilities and the management of solid waste disposal for vulnerable populations throughout the country.

Health

The complex emergency in Zimbabwe has led to the rapid deterioration of the country's health care services. As a result of economic conditions and GOZ policies, public services experience chronic under-funding, critical shortages of essential supplies and drugs, equipment breakdowns, and the loss of skilled professionals. HIV/AIDS-related deaths and the emigration of professionals have exacerbated this situation. Access to and quality of health care have declined for all Zimbabweans, and hyperinflation has made health care unaffordable for vulnerable populations in rural and urban areas. Worker strikes in the health care sector throughout 2007 further disrupted basic services, restricting access to health professionals.

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.

USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO ZIMBABWE

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE¹			
Multiple	Agriculture and Food Security	Mashonaland East, Masvingo, Matabeleland South provinces	\$2,337,445
Multiple	Agriculture and Food Security; Emergency Relief Supplies; Shelter and Settlements	Countrywide	\$1,175,000
Multiple	Agriculture and Food Security; Risk Reduction	Matabeleland North	\$329,750
Multiple	Emergency Relief Supplies; Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene	Bulawayo, Harare, Midlands provinces	\$802,399
Multiple	Livelihood Assistance to Vulnerable Urban Populations	Bulawayo, Harare, Manicaland, Masvingo, Midlands provinces	\$351,668
OCHA	Humanitarian Coordination and Information Management	Countrywide	\$100,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA			\$5,096,262
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE²			
C-SAFE	88,920 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Countrywide	\$95,800,600
WFP	86,540 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Countrywide	\$73,872,052
TOTAL USAID/FFP			\$169,672,652
TOTAL USAID/DCHA HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO ZIMBABWE IN FY 2007			\$174,768,914

¹ USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of September 28, 2007.² Estimated value of food assistance.


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