



## MALAWI HUMANITARIAN SITUATION REPORT 24 NOVEMBER 2005

Prepared by the UN Disaster Management Technical Working Group

### **HUMANITARIAN UPDATE**

In the period 1st to 9th of November 2005 FEWSnet and WFP conducted a joint field visit to assess the food security conditions in the southern region, Lakeshore Areas and parts of the northern region. The mission concluded that the household food security situation in the southern region remains serious. The number of households running out of food from own production is on the increase, and many households are now solely depending on the markets and various coping mechanisms to obtain food<sup>1</sup>. Maize is available in the local markets, but it is very expensive ranging from MK35.00/kg to MK40.00/kg, well into MVAC scenario 2.

Despite improvements in supplies in the southern region in terms of frequency most of the ADMARC markets maize supplies do not last long, as the demand continues to be very high. In some districts ADMARC markets have had to place restrictions on the ration to between 10-20 kg maize per person.

From October, agencies began distributing food aid based on 100% (maize only) of the MVAC identified needs as per scenario 1. The food aid distributions continued at 100% in November, and included also pulses and oil, to all affected districts in the southern region. However, reports from most of the districts indicate that the food aid being distributed is not enough, as evidenced in the number of non-registered vulnerable households increasingly overcrowding the food aid distribution points hoping to be included in the distributions. Also, in some areas the food aid distributions has come when some of the livelihood zones are into scenario 2, and hence there is a need for a further scaling up of the food aid distributions.

The Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) is expected to release the final figures of the second food assessment, which was conducted in the period 25-30 October 2005, on Friday 25 November 2005.

According to UNICEF the admissions of severely malnourished children to 76 reporting Nutrition Rehabilitation Units (NRUs) for the month of October show a 5% increase in admissions nationwide from previous month with the highest increase recorded in the Central Region at 22%. According to the October Nutrition Surveillance Report, the rate of moderate and severe acute malnutrition for children < 5 went down to 6.4%.

### **UPDATE ON HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE**

#### **FOOD SECTOR**

The volume of food aid distribution through the Joint Emergency Food Assistance Programme (JEFAP) and the logistics unit of DFID/EU continues to increase. The number of districts receiving food assistance increased from 17 districts in October to 23 districts in November reaching 100 percent of those in need (2,573,720 people) as per the planning figures of the first MVAC assessment report of

<sup>1</sup> Coping mechanisms include charcoal and firewood sales, selling of livestock, green maize and vegetable sales, beer brewing and ganyu in exchange for cash or food.

June 2005. WFP is responsible for distribution in 7 of the 12 districts in the southern region, namely: Nsanje, Chikwawa, Mulanje, Phalombe, Chiradzulu, Zomba and Machinga. The affected districts in the northern and central regions, and the remaining southern districts are being covered by the DFID supported Government of Malawi voucher scheme. While the WFP has expanded the food ration to include oil and pulses in all their assigned districts, there is presently a shortfall of pulses and oil under the voucher scheme, and only two districts are receiving the full ration of maize, oil and pulses.

Confirmed food aid pledges by end of October were approximately 230,000 MT of cereals, including 32,000MT advances from WFP, which has to be recovered from new donations. The bulk of this maize is yet to arrive in the country and this is a cause for concern for both the humanitarian pipeline and commercial requirements. It is clear that the various stakeholders are putting considerable effort into averting an even worse food crisis. However, time is of the essence, especially considering that maize can sometimes take long to arrive in country, due to various logistical problems and competition from other countries in the region. Both WFP and the Government Voucher Scheme will need to preposition food in the remote areas prior to the rain coming, as poor infrastructure will make these areas inaccessible.

## **HEALTH**

### **Cholera**

According to the District Health Officer (DHO) in Mangochi, a total of 15 suspected cases of Cholera were reported from 20 to 31 October. Only one of the specimens collected from the suspected cases turned out positive as an outbreak of cholera. Last week 4 cases of suspected Cholera were also reported in Lilongwe, of which three were found negative and one case is awaiting final results. Supplies have been dispatched to Mangochi for treatment and management of the cases. Preventive and control activities have also been undertaken by the DHO team in the affected communities. Water quality tests and sanitary surveys to prevent cholera outbreaks is presently ongoing in twelve districts.

### **Measles and Vitamin A campaign:**

The final results of the Measles and Vitamin A Supplementation Campaign that took place in September were published first week of November. Of a target population of 1,851,176 amongst children under five (9-59 months), 2,130,750 children were vaccinated against measles (115%) and 2,041,832 children were supplemented with Vitamin A (110%).

### **Malaria prevention and control**

UNICEF is presently preparing for a national re-treatment campaign of Insecticide Treated Nets (ITNs). The campaign is scheduled to take place in the period 28 November to 2 December. Approximately 2.8 million bed nets are expected to be re-treated (80% of the total nets distributed), thereby providing increased protection against malaria during the crisis period.

## **NUTRITION SITUATION**

### **Treatment of severely malnourished children**

UNICEF currently supports 62 Nutrition Rehabilitation Units (NRUs) in the country through technical assistance; training and provision of specialized nutrition supplies. In addition, UNICEF has also provided items such as blankets, kitchen utensils, plastic buckets and basins, weighing scales, bed nets, drug kits, soap.

### **Supplementary feeding**

WFP and UNICEF have developed a draft concept paper on the modalities to increase the coverage of the Supplementary Feeding Programme (SFP) among moderately malnourished children under five, lactating women (0-6 months post partum), and moderately malnourished pregnant women. Based on

an estimated Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rate of 8% the target of WFP/UNICEF would be to reach 70% of the approximately 148,094 moderately malnourished children under five and 44,428 pregnant women with moderate malnutrition with supplementary feeding according to those priority districts that were pointed out by the revised MVAC assessment (*see table below*). Changes in the prevalence of GAM would require revision of these planning figures accordingly.

**Table 2: The number of children and women in need of either therapeutic or supplementary feeding**

Population Groups	Population Affected (%)	Total Expected Beneficiaries
A Populations (12,341,170*)	40	4,215,000
B Children Under 5s	20	2,468,234
C Severe malnourished under 5s	2	49,365
<b>Sub-total for therapeutic feeding</b>		<b>49,365</b>
D Moderately malnourished under 5s	6**	148,094
E Pregnant women (2.4% of total pop) ***	15	44,428
F Lactating women (2.6% of total pop) ****	25	80,218
<b>Sub-total (D+E+F) for supplementary feeding</b>		<b>272,740</b>

NSO 2004 \*\* Projected Global Acute Malnutrition of 8% (2% severe and 6% moderate) \*\*\* Only those moderately malnourished around 15% prevalence \*\*\*\* Breastfeeding mothers (0-6 months postpartum)

### **Nutrition Survey:**

UNICEF is preparing to conduct a Nutrition Survey. The training of 54 districts trainers on the methodology for the upcoming nutrition survey was completed on 9 November. Data collection is scheduled to take place in the period 5-10 of December, following which the final report will be released by end of December.

### **Nutritional support to children living with HIV/AIDS:**

The training of 25 trainers for the scale up of nutritional support to severely and moderately malnourished children, adolescents and adults on antiretroviral treatment was completed on 7 November. These trainers will further train two health staff members at each Anti-Retroviral Treatment (ART) clinic (in total 120 health staff). Currently, some 25,000 people are on antiretroviral treatment in 60 ART clinics.

### **Nutrition and food security surveillance:**

A project agreement between UNICEF and Action against Hunger has been prepared to improve the timelines of information dissemination of nutrition and food security surveillance data in the context of the food crisis. The objective is to reduce the risk of morbidity and mortality due to malnutrition and nutrition-related diseases through early detection of malnutrition and food insecurity. Beneficiaries will include 350 households in each district who will have their children's growth monitored monthly and 50 household in each district who will have their food security situation assessed monthly.

## **EDUCATION**

### **School Feeding Programme**

WFP has decided to increase the number of schools for the school feeding programme from the existing 249 to a total of 582 schools. A joint WFP/UNICEF/GoM field mission has identified and

selected an additional 233 schools that will be included in the WFP-supported programme in the period January 2005 to April 2006. UNICEF has agreed with GTZ, who is currently carrying out a school feeding programme targeting 91 primary schools and four early learning centres, and with WFP to support the two programmes with provision of water and sanitation facilities and iron sheets for the storerooms (approximately 410,000 children will benefit from the expanded WFP-supported programme).

## **PROTECTION**

### **Street Children:**

UNICEF continues to receive reports on increased number of street children. According to the District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO) in Blantyre the number of children on the streets has gone up by more than 50 percent over the past months. Most of children are coming from Chikwawa, Nsanje and Thyolo districts – some of the most affected districts by the food crisis.

Reports indicate that juveniles in detentions are increasing as well as a result of the food crisis. Efforts are underway to extrapolate and quantify in percentage terms the increase based on the same data last year.

### **CBCCCs:**

The situation for Community-Based Child Care Centres (CBCCCs) who depend on community support is becoming precarious. There are reports of many closing down due to food shortage. Consequently, the attendance of children in some places has dropped to almost 50% of the normal intake. A joint UNICEF/WFP/GoM field mission visited the most affected districts by the food crisis with a view to exploring possibilities to support the local CBCCCs with food commodities. Currently, there are 1,107 CBCCCs in areas affected by the food crisis serving some 75,712 children. The findings of the mission are yet to be released.

## **AGRICULTURE**

The Government of Malawi is providing subsidized (70% subsidy) fertilizer and seed, to 2 million smallholder farmers in the country reducing the fertilizer price from about MK 2,500- 3,500 per 50 kg bag to MK 950 per bag. Of the 147,000 MT of fertilizer being procured by Government, the Smallholders Farmers Fertilizer Revolving Fund of Malawi (SFFRFM) had received 51,726 MT of fertilizers in their three main depots from suppliers by 26 October 2005 (21,198 MT of NPK and 15,510 MT of UREA). 36,707 MT has been drawn by ADMARC, and 2,089 MT by SFFRFM for their outlets. UNDP is providing logistical support to the Government on the fertiliser importation subsidy scheme, and assisting Government in agricultural extension public messaging.

With the support of UNDP, the subsidies have also been extended to include 6,000 MT of maize seed. As of date 3,700 MT of the 6,000 MT have been distributed successfully. The distribution of seeds in the southern region has now been completed, 70% of the distribution in Lilongwe has been finalised, while distribution is just starting in the northern region.

In support to recovery of agriculture production systems and crop diversification, FAO is providing planting materials for cassava, sweet potatoes, seed for improved and recommended varieties of soya beans, *phaseolus* beans and ground nuts to 6,000 small holder farmers to multiply and redistribute to other households in their locality. Each beneficiary household will receive 6 bundles of cassava or three 50kg bags of sweet potato vines and 1 kg each of groundnuts, soy bean and phaseolus beans. It is expected that the project will benefit a total of 30,000 vulnerable farming households once the planting

materials have been redistributed. The project is being carried out in the seven districts of Mangochi, Balaka, Zomba, Phalombe, Nsanje, Chikwawa and Mwanza.

## **UPDATE ON UN FLASH APPEAL**

On Tuesday 30 August, The UN system in Malawi issued a Flash Appeal. The overall purpose of the Appeal was to alert the wider international community of the seriousness of the food insecurity in Malawi and raise funds for a comprehensive approach to address the situation. Thus far, the UN system and Government of Malawi have received approximately US\$32 million against the originally required US\$88 million. However, since the launch of the Flash Appeal, the situation has shown a serious deterioration, especially in the health, nutrition and food security sectors. In response, the UN system in Malawi began the process of revising the requirements in some sectors of the Appeal to address the deteriorating situation. A further revision may be necessary, depending on the final outcome of the MVAC assessment. Meanwhile, UNICEF has revised its Appeal budget upwards from \$2.5 million to \$13 million, of which US\$ 10.7 million will go to support nutrition interventions and measures to prevent and control outbreaks of cholera and other communicable diseases. UNFPA has also entered the Appeal seeking US\$ 3,050,000 for reproductive health activities in emergencies. However, UNDP has withdrawn the agricultural inputs project, as the planting season has begun and the window of opportunity has passed. Collectively, the UN revised requests now total approximately **US\$ 73 million**. The lower figure is a result of the removal of the Agricultural Inputs Project, and should not be misconstrued as a decrease in humanitarian needs.

<b>Sector Name</b>	<b>Original Requirements (US\$)</b>	<b>Revised requirements (US\$)</b>	<b>Commitments, contributions &amp; uncommitted pledges (US\$)</b>
AGRICULTURE	36,455,000	8,971,878	7,520,658
EDUCATION	450,000	500,000	285,000
FOOD	48,805,869	48,955,869	20,781,552*
HEALTH / NUTRITION	1,750,000	13,400,000	1,797,053
PROTECTION	300,000	300,000	228,010
WATER / SANITATION	0	1,700,000	100,000
(Recipient agency & sector not yet specified)			1,117,858
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>87,760,869</b>	<b>73,827,747</b>	<b>31,830,131</b>

*\*A portion of these funds will be used to buy maize options*

For full official updates on humanitarian funding for Malawi, including the Flash Appeal, visit [www.reliefweb.int/fts](http://www.reliefweb.int/fts).