



MALAWI HUMANITARIAN SITUATION REPORT 9 DECEMBER 2005

Prepared by the UN Disaster Management Technical Working Group

HUMANITARIAN UPDATE

On 2 December 2005, the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) released its final figures pertaining to the second food assessment, which was conducted in the period 25-30 October 2005. The MVAC findings show an increase in the number of vulnerable areas in the country and consequently in the population at risk. If looking at the whole consumption year, discounting any humanitarian interventions carried out in this period, there has been an increase in the population at risk from 4.2 million as identified in scenario one of the MVAC June Report to 5 million people. However, taking into account the various interventions, including food aid¹ that have already taken place to alleviate the situation, the population currently at risk of not meeting their food entitlements is 4.8 million. This is an increase from scenario one of 629,400 people at risk. The maize equivalent required to cover the missing food entitlements in the period of October 2005 to March 2006 has also increased by 51,500 MT to 253,300 MT, as compared to scenario one. Three more districts were included in the November MVAC assessment, e.g. Nkhata Bay, Likoma Island and Mzimba. While Nkhata Bay and Likoma were considered food secure, the population at risk in Mzimba was estimated at 177,696. The World Food Programme (WFP) has agreed to assume responsibility for Mzimba district.

The food security situation in the North continues to deteriorate with sales in ADMARC markets generally very high and maize prices in local markets also on the rise. Average price of maize in most markets in the North is at MK25/kg. In the South the price of maize in local markets has been stable for the past two weeks at an average price ranging from MK 35/kg to MK41/kg depending on the specific market location. Due to delays in the arrival of imported maize, most ADMARC markets continue to have scarce and erratic supplies. Two Malawian youths were shot and wounded after police opened fire on a hungry crowd fighting to buy government-subsidized maize amid worsening food shortages in the country. The shooting late on Tuesday marked the first confirmed incidence of violence.

According to UNICEF the admissions of severely malnourished children to Nutrition Rehabilitation Units (NRUs) for the month of October show a 4% increase in admissions nationwide from previous year with the highest increase recorded in the southern region at 14.5%. The increase in admissions from the month of September 2005 to October 2005 nationwide was 5 %. 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

WFP and the Government Voucher Scheme continue their food aid distribution at a 100% level of the missing food entitlements identified by MVAC. WFP is responsible for distribution in 7 of the 12 districts in the southern region and for Mzimba in the northern region. The affected districts in the central region, and the remaining northern and southern districts are being covered by the DFID supported

¹ Food aid distributed up to 30 September 2005

Government of Malawi voucher scheme. Planned distribution for the month of December 2005 by WFP and the Government Voucher Scheme is 33,324 MT of maize, 6,664 MT of Pulses and 642 MT of oil. Confirmed food aid pledges by end of October were approximately 230,000 MT of cereals, including 32,000MT advances from WFP, which will need to be recovered through new donor contributions. Presently, the main concern is the slow rate at which the maize is moving into the country for both the humanitarian and the commercial pipeline. With the general food crisis in the Southern African Region, the lack of transport and blockages of the transport corridors is providing major challenges in getting the food commodities into Malawi. The limited maize presently available in country is presently making it impossible for WFP and the Government Voucher Scheme to preposition food in the remote areas prior to the rain coming.

HEALTH

Cholera

Dedza district this week reported on nine suspected cases of cholera of which one was tested positive. The suspected cases are all in the area close to Mangochi district. UNICEF has provided 120 litres of Ringers Lactate and 30 drums of 50kg chlorine. Water tests to identify sources of contamination have been initiated. Since end of October, the total number of suspected cases reported amounts to 35 of which 29 cases have been reported from Mangochi district. In total, two cases have been tested positive as an outbreak of cholera.

Water quality tests and sanitary surveys to prevent cholera outbreaks have now been completed. The testing and surveys which targeted NRUs, school feeding centres, health centres and CBCCCs were carried out in twelve districts. Analysis of 1,028 water samples from 778 communities, 250 institutions (i.e. NRUs, schools, health centres and CBCCCs) and 730 water samples drawn from stored drinking water in clay pots and buckets in 12 districts indicate that 42% of institutional water points and 54% of household water sources are contaminated. UNICEF has distributed 25 drums (50kg each) of chlorine to five districts; Mangochi, Zomba, Thyolo, Chikwawa and Lilongwe. An additional 460 drums of chlorine will be distributed to all health centres in 15 districts prone to cholera. In addition, another 460 drums (50 kg each) of chlorine have arrived from South Africa and will next week be distributed to all health centres in the 15 districts prone to cholera with priority to Mangochi district.

Malaria prevention and control

The national re-treatment campaign of Insecticide Treated Nets (ITNs) has been completed. Some 3 million bed nets were re-treated 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. Preparations are presently underway to increase this number to a total of 97 NRU's supported by UNICEF. Health Workers from 35 NRU's will thus be trained on the use of the new guidelines for the treatment of severely malnourished children.

Supplementary feeding

Based on the final figures from the revised MVAC assessment, WFP and UNICEF have identified 17 priority districts for the first phase of the expanded Supplementary Feeding Programme (SFP) targeting 134,000 moderately malnourished children, and pregnant and lactating women (49 percent of some 272,740 moderately malnourished women and children in total– *please see Table 1*). These include all 13 districts in the South, three districts in the central region and one district in the North.

Table 1: 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
Sub-total for therapeutic feeding		49,365
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
Sub-total (D+E+F) for supplementary feeding		272,740

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:

The data collection for the nutrition survey started on 5 December in 26 districts and will be completed over the next coming days. Preliminary results of the survey are expected to be ready the week after and final report is expected end of December.

EDUCATION

School Feeding Programme

WFP School Feeding Programme has been expanded from targeting 249 schools to now benefiting 482 schools and approximately 410,000 children. UNICEF will contribute to the WFP-supported school feeding activities through the construction of storage rooms for 179 school kitchens and the provision of safe water and sanitation. Also, basic support to girls' education which includes provision of learning materials and school furniture, teachers training; life skills education for HIV prevention among young and support to community school committees will be carried out.

In addition, GTZ will support 138 schools benefiting approximately 88,985 children. UNICEF supports this programme with feeding materials, construction of storage rooms and kitchens and provision of safe water and sanitation.

PROTECTION

Children in Detention:

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. A preliminary compilation shows that the number of children in detention either convicted of a crime or on remand awaiting trial has increased by 15% from 244 to 394 since September, as of 21 November 2005.

CBCCCs:

The situation for Community-Based Child Care Centres (CBCCCs) who depend on community support is becoming precarious. Currently, there are 1,107 CBCCCs in areas affected by the food crisis serving some 75,712 children. Following reports of many CBCCCs closing down due to food shortage, a joint UNICEF/WFP/GoM field mission visiting the most affected districts by the food crisis was undertaken with a view to exploring possibilities to support the local CBCCCs with food commodities. As a result WFP now plan to provide supplementary food commodities to 128 Community Based Child Care Centres (CBCCCs) in seven of the most affected districts in the South; Thyolo (17), Chiradzulu (13), Mulanje (44), Phalombe (17), Zomba (10), Nsanje (11) and Chikwawa (16). In addition, WFP will provide eating and cooking utensils to the nearby primary schools included in the school feeding programme. In support, UNICEF plans to provide eating and cooking utensils for the selected CBCCCs. Some 8,000 children, including 1,200 orphans are expected to benefit from the WFP/UNICEF support.

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. 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\$ 74 million**. The lower figure is a result of the removal of the Agricultural Inputs Project, and not a decrease in humanitarian needs. This month the UN will complete a consolidated update of the Flash Appeal reflecting the above mentioned changes.

Sector Name	Original Requirements (US\$)	Revised requirements (US\$)	Commitments, contributions & uncommitted pledges (US\$)
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	1,997,053
PROTECTION	300,000	300,000	228,010
WATER / SANITATION	0	1,700,000	100,000
(Recipient agency & sector not yet specified)			1,169,077
Grand Total	87,760,869	73,827,747	32,081,350

**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.