



UN MALAWI HUMANITARIAN SITUATION REPORT

Prepared by the UN Disaster Management Technical Working Group

9th November 2006

Issue No. 20

HUMANITARIAN UPDATE

FOOD SECURITY

Despite a good harvest this year, a total of **833,000 people**¹ will have little or no food at some point before end of March 2007 according to the estimates of the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC). In addition, 147,800 people are at risk of not meeting their food entitlements if the household economy deteriorates further as a result of high maize prices.

A total of **32,497 MT** of different food commodities will be required to meet the missing food entitlements in the period October 2006 to March 2007. This is the actual food deficit discounting other on-going WFP interventions such as school feeding, supplementary feeding, food for assets, and support to people affected or infected by HIV/AIDS at community level. It also excludes food related interventions by World Vision, Plan International, Malawi Red Cross Society, Salvation Army, I-Life, Concern Worldwide², and GTZ's School Feeding Programme in Emergency Areas.

The Government of Malawi has requested WFP's assistance in

¹ There are localized hotspots in Malawi, where the harvest has failed due to dry spells and floods. Among the worst affected areas are Kasungu District and parts of Ntchisi, Dowa, Mzimba, Nsanje and Chikwawa Districts.

² Concern Worldwide will be implementing a cash transfer project funded by DFID in Dowa District beginning December 2006.

providing an initial food aid response and has made a commitment to contribute **10,000 MT** of maize. While WFP has stock to cover food distributions in October and November, 4,539 MT of the 10,000 MT will be drawn directly from the Strategic Grain Reserves to cover a pipeline break in December.

Given this is a maize production surplus year WFP is appealing for cash to purchase maize and pulses locally, whereas vegetable oil will have to be purchased internationally or provided in kind. EU has confirmed a contribution of 1 million Euro for local purchase and may provide additional financial support. DFID, USAID, CIDA and Iceland have also indicated willingness to provide assistance but contributions are still to be announced.

STRATEGIC GRAIN RESERVES AND MAIZE MARKET

The Government, DFID and EU are in the process of replenishing the Strategic Grain Reserves following last seasons draw down of 60,000 MT of maize during the food security crisis. By end of September 2006 DFID had repaid in full their pledge of 22,000 MT, while Government have delivered 25,101 MT of their pledged 40,000 MT as of November 3, 2006. The delivery of the remaining maize is expected to be complete by late November 2006. EU expects to have repaid their pledge of 15,000 MT by end of November. In total the Strategic Grain reserves should hold a total of **77,000 MT** of maize at the end of the purchasing period.

In the third week of October, WFP Food Aid Monitors established maize prices in six districts³ as ranging from 19 MK/Kg to 25 MK/Kg in local markets with highest prices found in Zomba district.

UPDATE ON HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

FOOD SECTOR

In October WFP provided assistance to some 12,000 households in Kasungu District through their Food for Assets Programme. Targeted food distribution also began in the district reaching some 4,600 households with a total of 262 MT of maize. WFP plan to reach 81,266 households in eight districts in November distributing 4,620 MT of maize through targeted food distributions.

NUTRITION

According to the latest Malawi Integrated Nutrition and Food Security Surveillance System Data Report, the Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rate for children under 5 years of age is registered at around 6.5 per cent for the month of August 2006, which is a decrease compared to 7.4 per cent last month.

Compared to August 2005 the national wasting rates have also improved from 7.6 percent to 6.1 per cent this year. The highest rates of wasting are registered in the Southern Region with an average of 7.2 percent.

³ Balaka, Zomba, Machinga, Chikwawa, Chiradzulu and Phalompe.

The admissions of severely malnourished children to 67 NRUs reached 655 in September 2006. Admissions are expected to increase in the coming months reaching a peak in January and February 2007. UNICEF is currently supporting the Ministry of Health (MoH) in strengthening the supervision of NRUs to ensure improved quality of case management and reduction in case fatality. The reduction of case fatality in NRUs has been accepted as one of the milestones in the health sector SWAP.

SUPPLEMENTARY FEEDING

A joint Ministry of Health WFP/UNICEF field mission to prepare for the scale up of the supplementary feeding programme (SFP) has been completed in Kasungu, Mzimba, Dowa and Ntchisi districts. The expanded SFP, in which WFP will target approximately 42,336 moderately malnourished children and 53,449 pregnant and lactating women will begin in mid-November. WFP will also provide supplementary feeding to 17,000 children and 6,550 women monthly under its regular programme.

SOCIAL PROTECTION

On 8th November, the Cabinet under leadership of H.E. President Mutharika endorsed the Mchinji social cash transfer pilot scheme and requested a scale up of the pilot in 2007 to an additional six districts namely Salima Machinga, Mangochi, Likoma, Chitipa and Phalombe. The Malawi social cash transfer pilot scheme, which is funded by UNICEF and implemented by the District Assembly in Mchinji, targets the ultra-poor and labour constrained households, such as the elderly headed households, persons with disabilities, chronically ill, child- and female headed households. Presently, 800 households in Mchinji are

receiving a cash transfer of an average of MK 1,700 per month. By February 2007, the pilot scheme will be scaled up further to reach a total of 3,000 households in the district.

CHOLERA

Two districts are currently affected by Cholera. In the week beginning 7th August 2006 to the week ending 29th October 2006 a total number of 44 cases of cholera were reported in Machinga District. During the week ending 22 October 2006 a case also emerged in Chiradzulu District. No deaths have been reported in the two districts.

AVIAN INFLUENZA

According to the latest ECTAD HPAI Situation Update of November 3rd 2006, the following countries in the African Region have confirmed outbreaks of HPAI: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Niger, Nigeria, and Sudan. In total 16 human cases have been reported and 7 deaths (Djibouti 1/0 and Egypt 15/7). The latest fatality was reported in Egypt on 30 October 2006.

Multi-sectoral AHI Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) are now established in Malawi and have been trained on avian influenza surveillance and response. RRT kits funded by FAO and USAID were handed over to Government in September. Quick test kits are available in country for identifying H5N1 virus in poultry, and two regional test laboratories have been identified in respectively South Africa and Kenya. Further test and laboratory equipment will arrive shortly. The Government of Malawi with technical support from FAO have developed a detailed response manual which has

been distributed to relevant stakeholders. Surveillance in hot spot areas, e.g. wetlands has taken place twice, but no H5N1 strain has been identified in Malawi to date.

With funding provided by USAID, UNICEF and Population Services International (PSI) are presently working on the implementation of the National Communications Plan. A soft campaign has been launched on selected radio networks and in mid-October printed materials on avian influenza were distributed. Save the Children US and the National Initiative for Civic Education (NICE) are contributing to the awareness campaign by supporting community mobilisation through the training of community leaders.

AGRICULTURE

The Government of Malawi is providing subsidized fertilizer and seeds to approximately 1.5 million smallholder farmers in the country. A total of 150,000 MT of fertilisers is being purchased. According to the cumulative delivery schedule, 106,628 MT of fertilisers should have been delivered to the SFFRFM depots by November 6. As of November 5, close to 40 per cent had been delivered as per below table.

Table 1: Cumulative fertiliser delivery to SFFRFM Depots by November 5, 2006

Location	Planned	Actual
Lilongwe	54,149	25,278
Mzuzu	21,444	12,092
Chirimba	31,035	15,152
Totals	106,628	52,522