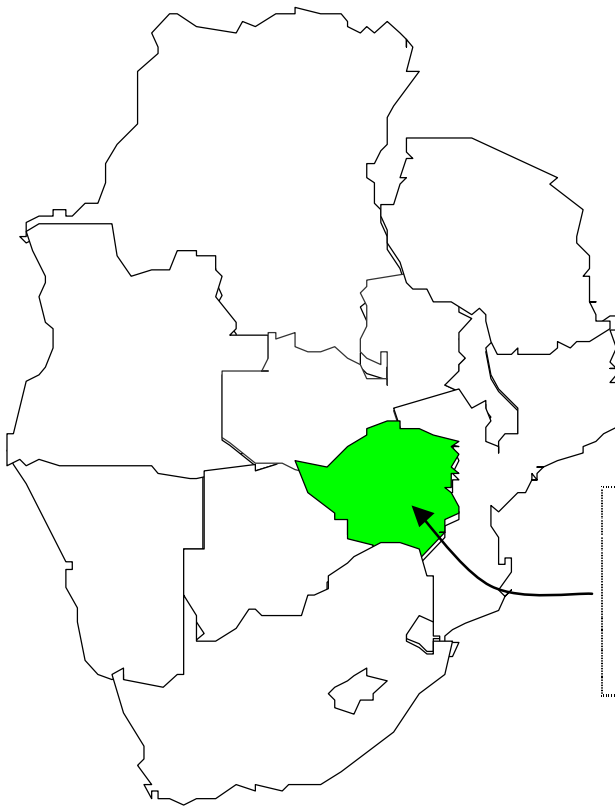




# Zimbabwe Emergency Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment - April 2003



Zimbabwe National Vulnerability Assessment Committee  
in collaboration with the SADC FANR Vulnerability Assessment Committee



**ZIMBABWE**  
Some 4,4 million rural people  
(56% of the population) will  
require an estimated 389 000  
MT of cereal food assistance  
through Jan 2004.

**Report No. 3  
April 2003  
Harare**

Prepared in collaboration with SIRDC – Food and Nutrition Programme, Ministry of Agriculture- National Early Warning Unit, Civil Protection Unit, CSO, MOHCW, Ministry of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare, WFP, Unicef, WHO, UNAIDS, FEWS NET, SC(UK)

With financial support from Government of Zimbabwe, DFID and SADC FANR VAC

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## **Preface**

This emergency food security assessment is regionally coordinated by the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Food, Agriculture, and Natural resources (FANR) Vulnerability Assessment Committee (VAC), in collaboration with international partners (WFP, FEWS NET, SC (UK), FAO, UNICEF and IFRC).

The Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC) – a subcommittee of the Social Services Cabinet Action Committee (SSCAC) composed of a consortium of government, NGO and UN Agencies, coordinated the assessments at national level. This is the third and last round of a series of rolling food security assessments which first started in August 2002 and were subsequently conducted in December 2002 in six SADC countries affected by the food crisis in the region.

The VAC assessment strategy has two principal axes. First, it uses a sequential process of ‘best practices’ in assessment and monitoring, drawn from the extensive and varied experience of the VAC partners, to meet a broad range of critical information needs at both the spatial and social targeting levels. The sequential nature of the approach not only provides richer details of the ‘access side’ of the food security equation, but adds the very important temporal dimension as well. From an operational (i.e. response) perspective, the latter is critical. Second, by approaching food security from a coordinated, collaborative process, the strategy integrates the most influential assessment and response players into the ongoing effort, thereby gaining privileged access to national and agency datasets and expert technicians and increases the likelihood of consensus between national governments, implementing partners, and major donors. This ‘partnering’ strategy linked the major players and stakeholders including regional institutions, national governments, response agencies, NGOs and donors in on-going, intensive ‘rolling’ assessment coverage of food security conditions on the ground.

## **Acknowledgements**

This report follows an assessment, which was made possible through the generous financial contributions made by the Government of Zimbabwe and DFID. The SADC VAC initiated the whole assessment process including the mobilization of resources from donors. WFP, GOAL, UNDP, UNICEF, FCTZ, FEWSNET, and GOZ provided vehicles and in-kind support. The Government, NGOs and UN organizations participated in the field research. Their names and organizations are listed in Appendix F.

The ZimVAC warmly acknowledges this invaluable support from these multiple organizations.

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## Acronyms

BEAM	Basic Education Assistance Module
CFSAM	Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission
CSO	Central Statistical Office
EA	Enumeration Area
EHHs	Elderly Headed Household
FCTZ	Farm Community Trust of Zimbabwe
FEZ	Food Economy Zone
FHHs	Female Headed Household
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMB	Grain Marketing Board
GOZ	Government of Zimbabwe
HHs	Households
LBVA	Livelihoods Based Vulnerability Analysis
MHHS	Male Headed Households
NERP	National Economic Recovery Programme
PDAAs	Personal Digital Assistants
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SEG	Social Economic Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VAC	Vulnerability Assessment Committee
WFP	World Food Programme
ZDHS	Zimbabwe Demographic Health Survey
ZimVAC	Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee

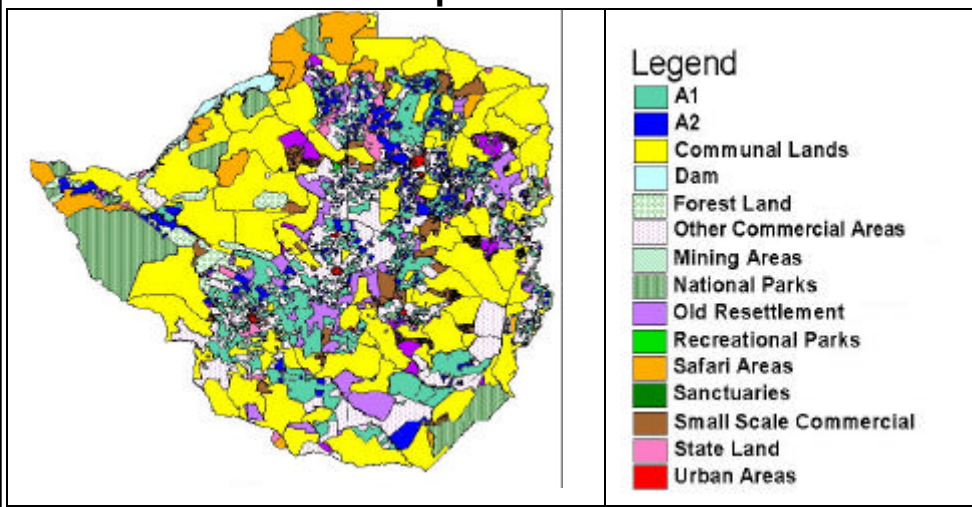


## Zimbabwe Emergency Food Security Highlights for 2003/04

**1.** The VAC assessment confirms the need for continued food aid for 4.4 million rural population lower than the 5.2 million people who benefited from food aid programs last year.

**2.** There is need for Government and the NGOs to import about 754,800 MT of cereals in 2003/04 marketing year to fill in the food gap, which excludes the Strategic Grain Reserve. This is much lower than about 1.323 million MT imported last year.

**Zimbabwe Land Use Map**



**3.** During the peak period of need, a total of 4.4 million people in rural areas (56% of the rural population) will require 388,600 MT of food aid between April 2003 and March 2004. The areas requiring initial food aid are those in the southwestern and western districts of the country, spreading to almost the whole country.

**4.** From April to June a total of 792,000 people would require food aid mainly in the southwestern and western districts of the country and a total of 28,000 MT of maize has to be distributed. The number in need would increase to 2.2 million between July and September, covering almost the whole country except the prime grain producing areas of Mashonaland provinces, a total of 80,000 MT of maize is required for the period. From October through December 3.4 million people will require emergency food assistance, rising to 4.4 million people during the most critical months from January through March 2004.

**5.** At the peak of the anticipated food shortages (from January 2004), 62% of the communal population (3,568,000 people), 37% of the old resettlement population (174,400 people) and the remainder of 618,800 people) from the A1 resettlement and commercial farm workers of which, 30 % of the A1 resettled farmers and 21% of the commercial farm workers population will be in need of food aid.

**6.** Limited availability of maize in the market was a major problem in the year from April 2002 to March 2003. However, although still inadequate, provinces were able to meet over 60% of their cereal requirements.

**7.** Food security in Zimbabwe will continue to be heavily affected by the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS (34% of population), high inflation rates (228% in March 2003), limited maize availability, high parallel market prices for maize, and unemployment which will undermine access to income.

**8.** The most food insecure communal households are the poor who are characterized by female headed households (of which 70% of these households require food aid compared to 58 % of the male headed households), households who lost the head through chronic illness, households under stress, including households headed by elderly females and large households with more than 7 people.

**9.** The HIV/AIDS pandemic will continue to undermine food security as an estimated 2 million adults were living with HIV/AIDS at the end of 2001. The HIV/AIDS prevalence increases food insecurity and on the other hand food insecurity increases the likelihood of HIV infection and accelerates the transition from HIV to AIDS.

# **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## **1.1. Zimbabwe Country Context**

Zimbabwe has an estimated population of 11.6 million people (Central Statistical Office August 2002 census). Of this, 33% is in urban areas, 4% in the old resettlement areas, 1% in the small-scale commercial sector, 49% communal sector and 13% in the A1 and A2 resettlement (including former commercial farming areas).

Zimbabwe's economy has performed poorly in this past year. The land reform exercise, coupled with three years of poor harvests and the decline in the general macroeconomic environment has led to a 24% decline in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) over the last three years. Unemployment levels continued to increase, inflation rate for the 12 months ending in March reached 228% and nominal interest rates were estimated at 60%. The year experienced shortages of foreign currency with the parallel exchange rate in November 2002 dropping to Z\$2,000 per US\$1, basic commodities such as sugar, cooking oil and maize meal, fuel and electricity. These factors contributed immensely to the hardships of both Government and the general public. In an attempt to address these problems the Government instituted a number of measures, such as;

- Devaluing the exchange rate from Z\$55 to the US\$1 to over Z\$824 per US\$1 in March 2003 for exporters as part of the Government's National Economic Recovery Programme (NERP),
- The Tripartite Forum brought captains of industry, labour unions and government to work out methods of reviving the economy and halt inflation.
- Price controls on basic commodities and agricultural inputs
- Public works programmes were instituted mostly in the rural areas and the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) program continued to support disadvantaged children in education.
- The World Food Programme (WFP) and other NGOs distributed food to over 5.2 million people at the peak of aid distributions in March 2003, and most of the people obtained their food through purchases from the Grain Marketing Board and the parallel markets.

However, despite the positive measures undertaken, the economy did not respond positively as the Government expects a further decline of 7.3 % in GDP this year and the budget deficit is estimated to be at 11% of GDP and the key export sectors continue to struggle.

## **1.2. Purpose of the Assessment**

The objectives of the April 2003 Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment were to;

- Review the food security situation and response in the 2002/03 marketing year.
- Understand the impact of coping strategies and food shortages on different socio – economic groups.
- Understand what is likely to happen during 2003/04 in terms of cereal production and cereal access.
- Assess rural food security situation by geographical area, time-period, and social groups for 2003/04 marketing year.
- Examine the linkages between food security and HIV/AIDS, education, child protection, and health.
- Identify possible food and non-food interventions and policy implications.

### **1.3. Overview of Methods used in the Assessment**

#### **1.3.1. Technique**

A “livelihoods-based vulnerability analysis” (LBVA) framework, based on household surveys and focus group discussions was used for the ZimVAC April 2003 assessment. The approach used is adapted from the LBVA adopted by the SADC Regional VAC in March 2003. LBVA covers a wide range of issues, including availability and access to food, water, shelter, health (including HIV/AIDS), education, protection etc.

#### **1.3.2. Data Collection**

The sampling frame for the April 2003 survey was determined by the Central Statistical Office (CSO), using a random sampling technique based on “enumeration areas” (EAs). The August 2002 population census data was used for drawing out a sample proportional to population size by province and by rural sector. Urban areas were not part of the survey and will therefore be discussed in this report.

A total of 150 sites (villages) were randomly sampled across the country, covering 116 communal sites, 17 commercial farming sector sites, including fast track resettlement areas, 14 old resettlement areas and 3 small-scale commercial farming areas. A total of 2,400 households were randomly surveyed and 2,257 questionnaires were analyzed. In addition 152 community questionnaires were administered and analyzed.

Secondary data on maize prices, stocks and production from Government was not available to support the analysis in this report; hence the results are likely to change if new information on stocks and production are made available.

#### **1.3.3. Survey Logistics**

The survey was conducted from 5 to 21 April 2003. The survey was conducted with the help of resources from the SADC FANR VAC, NGOs, UN and Government. A total of 65 researchers organized into teams of 4 people (2 from Government, one from an NGO and one from the UN) carried out the research. To facilitate data capture, researchers used 40 Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs, or hand computers) supplied by the World Food Programme.

#### **1.3.4. Data Analysis**

Data analysis was undertaken using SPSS software. To determine food security conditions for 2002/03 and 2003/04 consumption years, data was analyzed by province, agricultural sector and livelihood zone<sup>1</sup>. Linkages between food security and health, education and HIV/AIDS were also explored, with technical support from UNAIDS, UNICEF, WHO and the SADC FANR VAC. Extrapolation of the results to district and national level was then done by linking Livelihood Zone data with CSO August 2002 ward-level census data.

### **1.4. Summary of Key Findings**

#### **1.4.1. Review on National and Sub-national Food Security Situation for last year (2002/03)**

##### **1.4.1.1. National Food Security Situation Last Year**

A number of factors affected food security in 2002/03, including;

- Very poor cereal production in 2001/02, which was among the worst in the 1990s, hence resulting in a cereal gap of 1.374 million MT.

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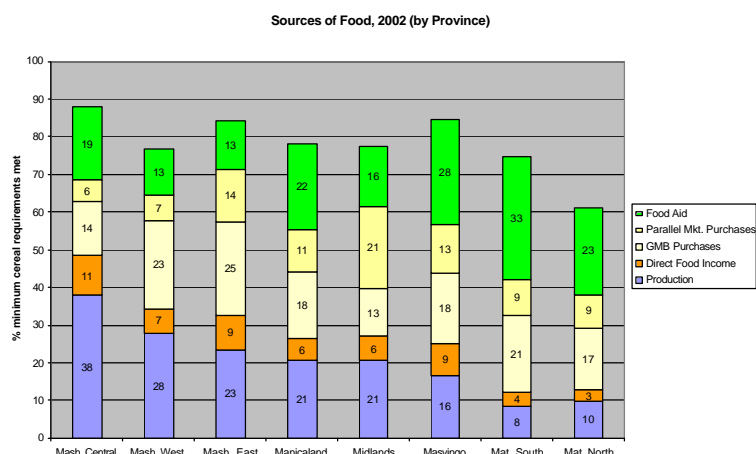
<sup>1</sup> A livelihood can be defined as the sum of ways in which people make a living

- Limited maize availability in the market increased the parallel market prices from 270% to 916%, thereby reducing access to maize.
- High inflation during the year (rising to 228% as in March 2003), substantially affected purchasing power.
- Rising unemployment undermined access to income
- High prevalence of HIV/AIDS estimated at 34% affected households ability to cope and enhanced the negative impact of food shortages

To fill in the cereal gap, at least 1.323 million MT of maize of which 1.253 million MT was for human consumption was imported between April 2002 and March 2003. Of the maize imports meant for human consumption, at least 72% was through the Government's Grain Marketing Board, 25% through World Food Programme and 3% through other parallel pipelines. Due to logistical problems all imports purchased in 2002/03 were not delivered into the country. There are still outstanding stocks of about 276,500 MT of cereals of which 241,500 MT are maize that were yet to be delivered, by the time of writing this report. The Government, WFP and NGOs distributed a total of 1.165 million MT over the period. Of the amount distributed at least 75% was by Government, 22% by WFP and 3% by NGOs parallel pipeline. The number which benefited from food aid distributions increased from 1 million in September 2002, to 2 million by December 2002, to 3.9 million by January 2003 and was at its peak of 5.2 million in February/March 2003. A total of about 290,400 MT of cereal food aid was distributed by WFP and NGOs during the period. However, the quantity distributed was not adequate hence consumption was generally below requirements during the year.

#### 1.4.1.2. Sub-National Food Security Situation Last Year

The analysis indicates that all provinces met more than 60% of their cereal requirements, except for Matabeleland North. The household source of the cereals varied across provinces as shown by the graph. For example, in Mashonaland Central province, 38% came from production, 11% from direct income sources<sup>2</sup>, 14% from GMB purchases, 6% from parallel market purchases and 19% was food aid.



#### 1.4.1.3. Impact of HIV/AIDS on Food Security

An estimated 2 million adults lived with HIV/AIDS at the end of 2001, accounting for 34% of the adult population. About 780,000 children have been orphaned due to AIDS and 200,000 AIDS related deaths were reported in 2001. The HIV/AIDS prevalence increases food insecurity and on the other hand food insecurity increases the likelihood of HIV infection and accelerates the transition from HIV to AIDS. The assessment indicates that;

- Income among households with chronically ill adults was 31% lower than among households with no chronically ill members.
- Last August 2002, 54% of the sampled households without active adults were planning to plant less area during this season (versus 33% among households with active adults).
- Households with a high dependency ratio were twice as likely to remove a child from school than households with a low dependency ratio.

<sup>2</sup> Food obtained through labouring or gifts



## 1.4.2. Food Security Prospects for 2003/04 Marketing Year (1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004)

### 1.4.2.1. National Food Security Prospects

Food security conditions in 2003/04 has been affected by a general poor rainfall season, which saw a poor start to the season in November 2002, followed by heavy rainfall during the later part of the season resulting in doubling of cereal production compared to last year. However, the anticipated production of around 800,000 MT for maize is far below average resulting in a food gap of over 1 million MT of cereals (see table below) To fill in the cereal gap, a total of 753,400 MT of maize need to be imported in 2003/04 marketing year. If carry over imports from last year of 276,500 MT are moved into the country of which 241,500 MT are maize then additional 754,800 MT of cereals are required of which 607,700 MT is maize. Availability of cereals at affordable prices and continued high inflation rates would affect food security in 2003/04 marketing year.

	Maize	Millets	Wheat	Rice	All Grain
A. Potential Domestic Availability	920,775	65,760	178,400	7,566	1,172,501
B. Annual Requirements	1,674,265	176,562	341,353	11,653	2,203,833
<b>C. Domestic Balance (DB) (A minus B)</b>	<b>(753,490)</b>	<b>(110,802)</b>	<b>(162,953)</b>	<b>(4,087)</b>	<b>(1,031,332)</b>
Carryover Food Aid Imports outstanding (Estimate)	80,037	15,000	-	-	95,037
Carryover Commercial Imports outstanding (Estimate)	161,500	-	20,000	-	181,500
<b>D. Total Imports outstanding</b>	<b>241,537</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>276,537</b>
E. Cross substitution maize for millet	(95,802)	95,802	-	-	-
<b>F. Forecasted Deficit (Closing Stocks) after Imports (March 2004)</b>	<b>(607,755)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(142,953)</b>	<b>(4,087)</b>	<b>(754,795)</b>
<b>Assumptions</b>					
Est. mid-year population	11,770,789	11,770,789	11,770,789	11,770,789	11,770,789
Est. Human Annual Consumption Requirement. (Kgs/Person)	121	15	29	1	166
<b>Implications for Imports</b>					
Estimated Additional Commercial Imports Required (MT)	219,155	-	142,953	4,087	366,195
Estimated Additional Food Aid Imports Required (MT)	388,600	0	0	0	388,600
<b>Total Estimated Additional Imports (MT)</b>	<b>607,755</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>142,953</b>	<b>4,087</b>	<b>754,795</b>

### 1.4.2.2. Rural Population Food Insecure in 2003/04

The assessment defined food insecure populations as those household that will not meet their minimum 166 kgs per person annual cereal requirements through production, purchase, direct and indirect sources. In the analysis it is assumed that about 25% of the livestock could be sold, leaving a minimum size of 5 cattle and 3 goats and a maximum of 80% of total household income will be spent on cereal purchases. The assessment indicates that a total of 4.4 million people would require food aid, or 56% of the rural population (see table below).

Total Population	Rural Population	Total Human Domestic Cereal Yearly Req in MT	Rural Human Domestic Cereal Yearly Req in MT	Cumulative Population with Cereal Deficit 2003/04				Max % of Rural Pop with cereal deficit	Total MT of Cereal Deficit Apr03-Mar04	% Cereal Deficit over domestic human req	
				Population Food Secure	Apr03 (100% req.)	Jul03 (75% req.)	Oct03 (50% of req.)				Jan04 (25% of req.)
11,770,789	7,851,832	1,953,951	1,303,404	3,482,000	792,000	2,223,000	3,419,000	4,362,000	56%	388,600	30%

**Rural Population Food Insecure**  
by District: *April/03 – Mar/02*



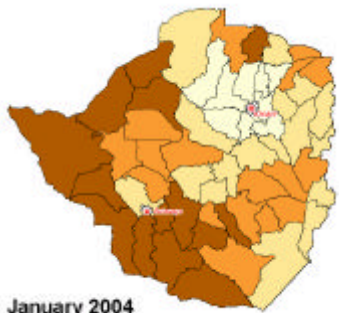
April 2003



July 2003



October 2003

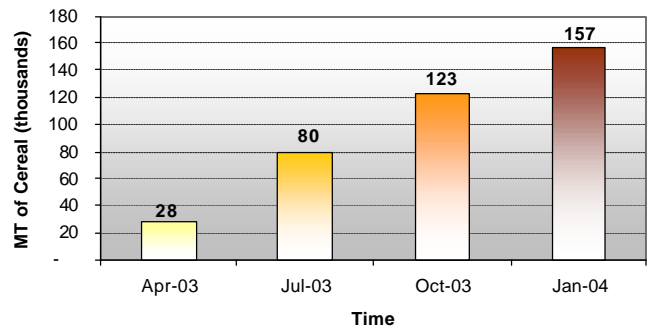


January 2004

**% Rural Pop with cereal deficit**



**Phasing up of the total Cereal Deficit (388,600MT)**



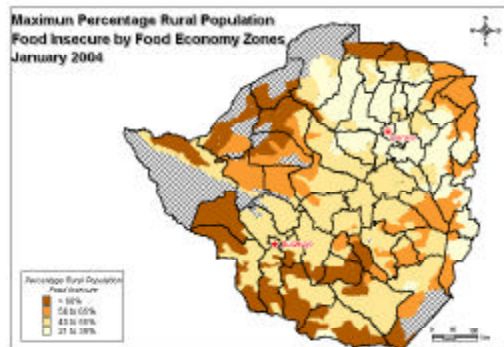
At least 28,000 MT would be required between 1 April and June 2003 and is likely to be supplied from the ongoing WFP EMOP programme. The amount distributed would need to be phased up to 157,000 MT between January and March 2004 (see graph below).

**1.4.2.3. Geographical Targeting in Rural Areas**

From April through June 2003, the 792,000 people requiring food aid is generally concentrated in the southwest and western districts of the country (see April 2003 map).

The food security situation will worsen in July 2003, when almost the entire country requires some form of food aid except for the major maize growing belt in the Mashonaland provinces (see July 2003 map).

The spatial distribution of the food insecure rural population through time will worsen, notably by October 2003 in most southern, southeastern, southwestern and northern parts of the country. The numbers in need continue to rise (see October 2003 map).



From January 2004, the peak of the hungry period, the southwestern and northwestern parts of the country will be the worst affected. Even the grain producing areas of Mashonaland provinces will have at least 21 to 39 % of the population in need of assistance (see January 2004 map).

Needs were also studied by food economy zones and results indicate that parts of Guruve and Centenary districts which are found in the Zambezi Valley are far worse off than those areas in the prime highveld agricultural zone. Also, in much of the southern half of the country the population in communal zones is markedly less food secure than the population in commercial agricultural zones (see map above).

#### **1.4.2.4. Characteristics of Most Food Insecure Households**

The assessment indicated that poor households are the most vulnerable to food insecurity. The following are characteristics of the food insecure;

- About 70% of the female-headed households require food aid (versus 58% of male-headed households).
- In poor households, where the head of the household died of chronic illness 10% are more likely to be in need of food aid.
- Households caring for orphans are 10% more likely to require food aid.
- The already stressed households have a higher chance of having orphans, 34% of households headed by elderly female are looking after orphans from other households either than their immediate families (versus 17% of non-elderly headed households).
- Most of the households with large families (73% of the large households with more than 7 family members) are in need of food aid. This is almost 20% more than small households.

### **1.5. Implications for Response**

Government and the NGOs have a number of options suggested below to respond to the food insecurity conditions in the country;

#### **1.5.1. Short Term Emergency Interventions**

- Plans need to be put in place urgently for the procurement of 754,795 MT of cereals to fill in this cereal gap and to avoid logistical problems, such as those experienced last year.
- Maize availability was a major constraint on food security last year. Government needs to ensure that enough maize is available this year.
- The GMB needs to closely monitor the marketing of cereals in order to avoid profiteering and eventual shortages.
- Government should provide a conducive environment for the private sector in importing food and even consider the option of monetization of assistance.
- Government could increase the retail price of maize to about Z\$150 o without severely compromising people's access to maize and this move will reducing pressure on Government finances.

- At least 388,600 MT must be distributed as food aid, targeted to an estimated 4.4 million rural food insecure people.
- Support in the provision of inputs and infrastructure to A1 resettlement farmers should be strengthened to allow them to realize their full potential for the coming seasons.
- Emphasis should be put on appropriate targeting of food aid beneficiaries, such as HIV/AIDS affected households, poor households, female-headed households, through community-based approaches.
- Food for work should be encouraged for poor able-bodied individuals through NGOs.
- Public Works Programme should continue but an improved remuneration package commensurate with the price of maize should be considered.
- Provision of nutritious food to the chronically ill, through the community home - based care programme should be encouraged.

### **1.5.2. Recovery and Longer Term Intervention**

- Land should be identified for redistribution to landless families, in particular in cases where the head of the household is unemployed.
- The Government's current efforts to curb the economic decline should be enhanced with particular emphasis on reducing inflation and budget deficit.
- Interventions with longer-term impact, such as school and child supplementary feeding and agricultural recovery should be enhanced.
- Livestock destocking and/or restocking, depending on the situation, should be considered in the southern parts of the country, while measures are put in place to control diseases.
- Timely provision of seeds and other agricultural inputs should be planned for 2003/04 production season to enhance future food security.
- Response to households' non-food needs, in particular those affected by HIV/AIDS, should be put in place as they are an essential part of food security and community safety nets.
- Targeting under safety nets programmes, such as BEAM, should be extended to increase coverage of all targeted children.
- Basic services such as healthcare and HIV/AIDS testing should be made accessible to all communities at no or minimal cost.
- Monitoring studies coordinated by ZimVAC should be planned and carried out during the next few months to ensure that changes in livelihoods are captured.
- Urban vulnerability assessments coordinated by ZimVAC should be carried out urgently. There is a lack of current information on urban needs.