

### IR9.3 Increased Support to Selected Vulnerable Groups

Every SO in the Mission could contribute to the results of this SO--including SO5, 6 and 7. It will be important to assess the lessons learned from ongoing programs and the new C-Safe emergency program. Of particular importance will be the identification of effective and efficient targeting strategies and mechanisms in order to allocate resources to the most vulnerable children and households without stigmatizing orphans or households affected by HIV/AIDS. Programs also should combine livelihood activities for sustainable income generation along with targeted food assistance where needed. (Please see the discussion under PL 480 resources).

#### 4.6 Synergies among SOs to enhance food security and nutrition

##### *Advocacy for Nutrition and Diversification of Diet*

This is the time to increase the awareness of policy makers across sectors that malnutrition is a very serious problem in Zambia--that fifty percent of children are stunted, which will have irreversible consequences throughout their life. This national problem will only get worse without immediate attention.

There is a need for a strategy across sectors to promote the importance of a more diversified diet. The Ministry of Agriculture should be assisting farmers with crop diversification and providing education to households about the nutritional value of certain crops. The Ministry of Education should be teaching about the need for diversification of crops and diet and the Ministry of Health should be reinforcing this effort with training materials and promotion through their own health services. A major mass media component should be launched. The National Food and Nutrition Commission could play a coordination role in promoting this strategy.

These same synergies can be achieved through USAID project implementors. CARE, CRS and WV for example, have extensive experience in improved agriculture production and income strategies, as well as direct feeding, improved nutrition and health interventions. Through C-SAFE or other projects these implementors can play a dual role of linking food security with better health and nutrition.

In the area of HIV/AIDS, the Mission's strategy clearly has this theme woven through each of its Strategic Objectives. The mitigation/prevention strategies and feeding programs embedded in every project will maximize the beneficial returns of our investments across all sectors.

## **SECTION 5. ROLE OF FOOD AID IN MISSION STRATEGIC PLAN**

**Recommendation:** USAID should integrate available PL 480 resources into its relief and development programs in order to meet the extensive food security needs of vulnerable groups throughout Zambia. A combination of food and monetized resources would enable USAID to considerably expand the capacity of its DA portfolio to address both nutrition and food security issues. **There is a critical need in Zambia for a stronger and wider safety net to capture the most vulnerable groups living in food insecure households.** Food aid resources can be used both for safety net activities involving direct distribution of food and also to support longer-term agricultural and other livelihood activities that develop sustainable income flows.

## 5.1 Emergency Program (C-SAFE)

Presently, the C-SAFE PL 480 emergency program is operational in Zambia and offers USAID with its partners a critical opportunity to design, monitor and evaluate a variety of approaches to improving food security, nutrition and health of vulnerable groups. Illustrative activities that can be pursued under C-SAFE include targeted feeding to vulnerable groups-- young children, pregnant and lactating women, PLWHA and orphans and vulnerable children. Beyond direct feeding, more longer-term development activities can be supported. For example, improved agricultural practices under SO5 might include: conservation farming, agroforestry, small irrigation improvements (water catchments, boreholes, treddle pumps, ditch/canal construction), livestock and dairy. These are all areas of development in which C-SAFE implementors -- CARE, CRS and WV -- have extensive experience. Using emergency funding over the next two years, development assistance proposals can be prepared under the project to undertake a variety of agricultural development, food security and nutrition/health activities. Food commodities can be monetized to provide the necessary resources to implement these programs. In addition, food commodities can be used directly in Food for Work activities to do land reclamation, cultivation and planting on smallholder farms. The linkage of nutrition with food production activities can offer a comprehensive approach to supporting food security in vulnerable communities.

## 5.2 Development Program (DP)

This second Title II program provides commodities in support of *longer-term development* activities. Projects funded under this program typically range up to 5 years in duration. Monetization<sup>6</sup> and direct distribution of commodities characterize these programs. As an example of this program, Land O' Lakes, working through the Mission, has submitted a smallholder dairy and production storage proposal to DCHA/FFP for funding.

Since Zambia is a LIFDC country, LOL's proposal has appeal because it has a strong food security component which increases food availability and contributes to food utilization. It also targets food insecure households in drought-affected regions, such as Southern Province. However, given the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the rural sector, we would recommend that this proposal be revised to include direct feeding and livelihood components for HIV/AIDS-affected households. This would provide more comprehensive support to the beneficiary communities. Also, the addition of direct feeding would help to lower the unacceptably high 100 percent monetization rate. One redesign approach would be to submit the proposal for 2004 funding with the year 1 program consisting of wheat monetization and the start of the smallholder dairy and warehouse storage activities. Years 2-5 would then continue with further expansion of these activities, and then start the direct feeding and livelihood activities for HIV/AIDS-affected households. This part of the program could be implemented by a sub-contracted PVO with experience in these programs, such as CARE or CRS. However, to be considered for approval this year, the proposal would have to be revised to include an addendum, where a sub-grantee would present an acceptable direct feeding and HIV/AIDS support program.

Because Zambia is a LIFDC country and has a chronic food security problem with the majority of its urban and rural populations living under the poverty line, it makes sense for the Mission to include the FFP/DP program in its country strategic plan. In the future, the

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<sup>6</sup> Food commodities sold for cash in recipient or neighboring third countries. The cash generated is then used for implementing projects.

Mission is encouraged to work with its PVOs to produce other Development Assistance Proposals that could be linked to its SOs in the areas of food security, health, nutrition and HIV/AIDS support.

### 5.3 Food Aid Issues for Consideration

- **Genetically Modified Food (GMO):** This is the most serious issue obstructing any large Title II emergency or development program. The GRZ has categorically precluded the importation of any food commodities that are not certified GMO-free. This affects US corn, corn meal, corn-soya blend (CSB), soymeal, and corn/soy oils. As a result, it is difficult to supply attractive and inexpensive food commodities for Zambia's vulnerable populations. It is our opinion that the GRZ decision will not be changed. The Government has stated it lacks the technical expertise to evaluate the safety of GMO food and it is not taking any steps to develop that expertise. Despite this handicap, FFP has shipped alternative food commodities to Zambia under the C-SAFE Program. These are bulgar wheat, beans and pulses. Other acceptable commodities are sorghum, rice, wheat, non-fat dry milk (NFDN), and sesame/sunflower oil. We believe that a strong food aid program can be developed with these non-GMO commodities.
- **Commodity Import:** DCHA/FFP is aware of the potential impacts of food aid on the prices and supplies of local food markets. Bellmon Determinations are done in all cases to ensure that no significant pricing or market impacts will result from any food aid programs. In addition, agreement would be required from the ZNFU for the import and monetization of any commodities.
- **Monetization:** Commodities are sold in the local markets (urban or rural) or in third countries in order to generate foreign exchange or local currency to fund development activities. Due consideration is taken not to cause distortions in local prices and market supplies. Before monetization is approved, a Bellmon Determination is done to rule out potential price/market distortions. In Zambia, commodity selection for monetization must be closely studied. In the LOL plan, wheat (30,000 mt) has been proposed as an appropriate commodity for monetization. This has appeal for several reasons. First, the domestic price of wheat this year makes it one of the least expensive commodities on a MT basis. Wheat is certified GMO-free. There is strong demand in urban markets for bread, especially among the more vulnerable households. Zambia imports more than 50,000 MT of wheat annually to feed its urban sectors. This year, the local wheat crop was half of normal production levels and the private sector has been unable to source enough wheat regionally for import. This has produced a favorable situation for monetizing wheat in the Lusaka market. LOL proposes to sell the product in several tranches to minimize impacts, while storing the residual supply in bonded warehouses. The ZNFU has approved this monetization. Given the large annual deficit in wheat production and the appeal of this commodity in urban markets, it appears that there will be residual beyond the LOL monetization in the foreseeable future that would allow the C-SAFE cooperators (CARE, CRS, WV), to use wheat monetization to support additional DAPs. USAID should study this possibility further.

A second commodity discussed for potential monetization in the future was NFDN. The ZNFU opposes this commodity because of potential impacts on the local whole milk market. However, ZNFU has accepted in principle an alternative proposal for PVOs to trade NFDN to HEPS manufacturers in return for complete HEPS packages to feed HIV/AIDS households and other vulnerable groups. C-SAFE cooperators should study this alternative with DCHA/FFP/EP because it would enhance the value of the targeted HIV/AIDS feeding that they are now doing. Any other commodities that are proposed for monetization in the future should be submitted to the ZNFU for comments and approval.

#### **5.4 SO 5 Increased Competitiveness of the Private Sector**

**Recommendation: Improved Agriculture Programs:** CARE, CRS and WV should be encouraged to build on the experiences of the Food Security and Agroforestry Projects and develop new proposals under C-SAFE to extend these proven activities to vulnerable rural smallholders. The lessons developed over the past several years in these programs should be utilized to refocus activities on diversified production of both food and cash crops linked to local markets. These programs should also contain nutrition components to ensure that better food security and nutrition result from these activities.

#### **5.5 SO 6 Improved Quality of Basic Education**

**Recommendation: Community Sponsored School Feeding Programs:** NGOs in consultation with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Welfare and proper local administrative units could mobilize communities to determine if they want a school feeding program—particularly in poorer more food insecure geographic areas. If they do then communities would commit to managing and preparing food provided by USAID through NGOs. This approach would address the concerns of a number of people that the Ministry of Education is not the right organization to administer school feeding programs.

#### **5.6 SO 7 Improved Health Status of Zambians**

Currently the Ministry of Health has a policy to provide supplemental food to children under five who are malnourished. The IMCI and CBGP programs are used to refer malnourished or growth faltering children for supplementation. Some clinics do have HEPS for this purpose; many do not. Lessons learned in Zambia and most other countries show that a take home package of a product like HEPS is usually eaten by all members of a family—particularly in poorer households. To ensure that nutrient dense commodities like HEPS or CSB are eaten by the targeted child, additional rations for the family should be included. For emergency programs, ration packages should include HEPS and CSB or at least include good protein sources to ensure that young children are receiving a nutritionally balanced diet.

#### **Recommendation: Targeted MCH Programs:**

- 1) SO 7 representative should monitor nutritional status of children—particularly in food insecure regions, eg. Southern region and urban areas;
- 2) SO 7 should continue to play an active role in developing and implementing a nutritional surveillance system.
- 3) SO 7 representatives should be involved in government, NGO and Mission discussions about ration composition for all food programs.
- 4) In emergency food areas, SO 7 should ensure that HEPS and/or a similar product is part of the food aid package. This will be critically important if the drought continues in regions like the Southern province where consecutive years of drought have depleted household income and food stocks. It is particularly important for young children to have a high nutrient dense food and/or a diversity of foods include good protein sources.

## 5.7 SO 8 Government Held More Accountable

**Recommendation: Food for Vulnerable Urban Households through Gardens:** C-SAFE implementors should be encouraged to develop activities with the Ministries of Agriculture and Health to promote home gardening in peri-urban areas. Policy and health regulations will first have to be reviewed and revised to allow for such activities. However, if some headway can be made on this front then home gardens can provide a fast income and nutrition payback for a range of vulnerable households and might contribute to a reduction in emergency direct feeding programs through time.

## 5.8 SO 9 Reduced Impact of HIV/AIDS Through Multi-Sectoral Response

Focus groups with PLWHA and their care-takers indicate that “hunger” is a priority problem and food their greatest need. Many groups, including CRS and CARE are currently providing some food as part of their home-based care package for PLWHA. Program managers indicate that food is not available in the quantities that are needed to support PLWHA and their families.

### **Recommendations: Food for Home-Based Care Programs:**

- 1) SO 9 should proactively work with the C-Safe NGO group to design, monitor and evaluate home-based care activities using food rations. These will provide valuable lessons for a PL 480 Development Assistance Program.
- 2) SO 9 should contact Food for Peace in Washington about the parameters of submitting a development assistance program, timing and possible funding levels. Based on this information and lessons learned from the C-Safe program, USAID should work with their NGOs to develop a PL 480 development assistance home-based care program.
- 3) Targeting should be both geographic— food insecure/poor rural and urban areas—and within communities, criteria developed to target the most vulnerable households. Communities and districts with the Ministry of Social Welfare need to be included in developing targeting criteria. Lessons learned indicate that food cannot be targeted only to the PLWHA but must be accompanied by a ration for the family.
- 4) Food aid programs should be linked as much as possible to income generating activities for both households caring for a PLWHA as well as food insecure communities. Monetized PL 480 resources can be used to support income generating activities.
- 5) HEPS is an excellent commodity for feeding PLWHA. Community processing of HEPS as an income generating activity and exchanging NFDm with the local manufacturer in exchange for the final product should be explored.

### **Indicators:**

- Number of vulnerable households with PLWHA receiving a full home-based care package that includes food aid.
- Number of PLWHA who receive a full home-based care package that includes food aid.

**Recommendation: Food for Infected Children:** As part of PMTCT and IMCI programs, USAID should consider adding food for growth and therapeutic feeding components when

needed for children with HIV/AIDS. HEPS appears to be an excellent food and the Lusaka University Teaching Hospital has an ongoing program that shows the recuperable results of HEPS and good nutrition. This program should be expanded out of the hospital and into the community.

**Recommendation: Food for Orphans and Vulnerable Children:** Many orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) are living in households that have few livelihood options. Because of this problem, some orphans and vulnerable children go out on the streets to fend for themselves. Food aid can be used to meet several important objectives including: 1) Keeping orphans and vulnerable children at home by providing vulnerable households with additional food so that children do not have to go out on the streets; 2) Improve the nutritional status of OVC; 3) Use food aid for food for work activities aimed at older OVC and heads of vulnerable households—activities can include livelihood training, developing assets for the community, better roads, or support volunteer work for caring for PLWHA etc; 4) support feeding at recreation centers, training centers aimed at OVC.

**Recommendations:**

- 1) USAID should learn lessons from ongoing OVC programs that include a food ration;
- 2) Based on lessons learned USAID with NGOs should develop this component of the C-Safe development assistance program. The needs are great; however USAID should assess the management capacity of its implementing partners to determine the size of the program and geographic scope of the project.
- 3) Targeting Strategies: USAID should host a forum for those partners providing support to OVC to discuss targeting strategies and mechanisms for implementation. Targeting strategies should first 1) identify food insecure and poor areas, e.g. peri-urban, and 2) identify households that are most vulnerable using criteria such as child-headed, grand-mother caring for many children, grand-father caring for many children, widow with children with no livelihood activities.
- 4) Household food rations should be combined with livelihood, training and educational opportunities. Household heads and OVC should be supported to take advantage of these activities. Monetized PL 480 resources can support this component.

## **SECTION 6. OTHER IMPORTANT NUTRITION TOPICS**

### **6.1 Nutrition Surveillance**

Nutrition Surveillance should be part of an overall food security surveillance system—where changes in nutritional status can be linked with other data on coping mechanisms, crop production, food prices, etc. Typically nutrition is considered a lagging indicator for early warning systems; however, nutrition status data is critical for programming decisions, targeting communities and deciding on the need for supplementary feeding as part of an emergency response. The Central Statistics Office has recently developed a proposal to revive the Food, Health and Nutrition Monitoring System (FHANIS) which began in 1993 and was discontinued in 1998 because of lack of funds. UNICEF, some NGOs and donors also have a proposal for a nutrition surveillance system to be housed in the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit (DMMU). It is critical that these groups work together and identify a system and institutional home that they all can support.

The objectives of the FHANIS proposal are: “1) to monitor food security objectives; 2) to monitor levels of malnutrition; 3) to monitor morbidity and mortality levels; 4) to monitor the impact of policies on food security, health and nutrition conditions of the population; 5) to