

Zimbabwe



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WFP delivers food to a cross section of people in need

WFP is reaching nearly one million people this month with food rations, through various targeted programmes including: school feeding (235,000 pre and primary school children), home based care for people with AIDS (148,000 people), orphans and vulnerable children (80,000 children), vulnerable group feeding (estimated 500,000 people). The number of beneficiaries will increase in November.

While most of these activities run year-round, the vulnerable group feeding programme has started and will run until April, with an aim to provide an estimated 3 million people with food support in light of the poor maize harvest in April 2005. On September 29th, the Government, through the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, officially authorized WFP to begin food distributions with its 11 NGO Cooperating Partners to the targeted vulnerable groups in 49 of the country's 57 rural districts.

WFP has also been supplying food to IOM for urban families affected by the Operation Restore Order/ Murambatsvina and for ex-farm workers.

Food basket, vulnerability assessment and trends

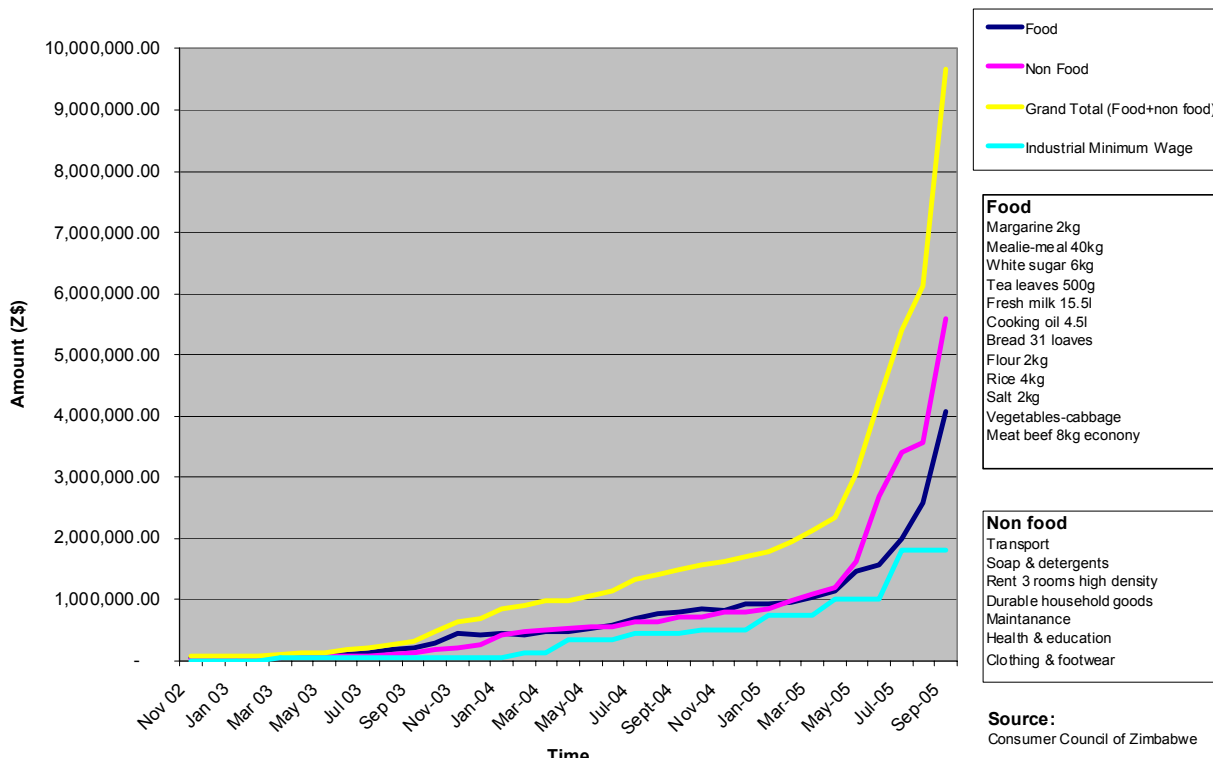
The cost of food commodities, like the general cost of living, are on an upward trend as shown by the analysis from the Consumer Council of Zimbabwe (CCZ) and the WFP vulnerability assessment below.

⇒ Urban low income earners' food basket soars, CCZ

A Consumer Council of Zimbabwe survey shows that the low-income urban earner monthly budget for a family of six soared by 38.8 percentage points to Z\$9,654,731 (US\$370) during the month of September from the August figure of \$6,957,852 (US\$268). This is the highest increase recorded for the basket in 2005.

The increase can be attributed to factors such as the fuel price increases at the beginning of September 2005, the effect of the 17,5 % Value Added Tax (VAT) and the escalation of both the formal and informal market prices for some basic goods. Major movers in the basket were bread, up by about 134 %, transport, up by 96.4 %, in addition to sugar and mealie-meal.

Trend analysis of lower income urban earners Nov 2002- Sept 2005



A loaf of bread now costs between \$25,000 (US\$1) and \$30,000 (US\$1.2), a price beyond the reach of many families.

This survey is conducted during the first and the last week of each month. The total cost of the food basket and the price of each commodity are arrived at by averaging prices gathered from retail outlets throughout the country. The basket is therefore, a fairly accurate depiction of the cost of living.



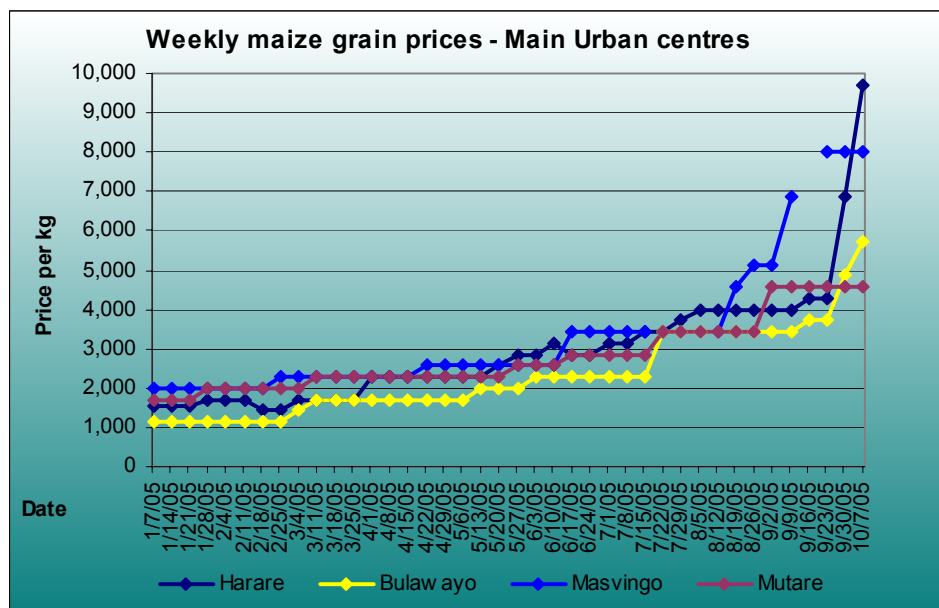
⇒ WFP Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping weekly grain price collection

The WFP Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping weekly maize grain price collection as of 10 October 2005 reports that Harare grain market shows the highest price at the moment with an increase of about 42% in one week from ZW\$6,857 to ZW \$9,714 per kg.

Reports indicate three main reasons for the current sharp increases in Harare urban market grain prices: a) the unavailability of mealie-meal during the last two weeks in most urban supermarkets that caused panic buying of maize by urban consumers; b) continued sharp devaluations of the currency in the parallel market, and c) constant rise of transportation costs due to fuel scarcity and exorbitant fuel prices on the parallel market.

The price of maize grain in Masvingo is still at about ZW\$8,000 per kg, second only to the Harare urban market.

In rural areas, prices have risen by more than 150% from the previous price recorded, to about ZW \$6,000 (Murewa, Mt Darwin, Murombedzi)



FAO and NGOs to provide agricultural inputs to 310,000 households

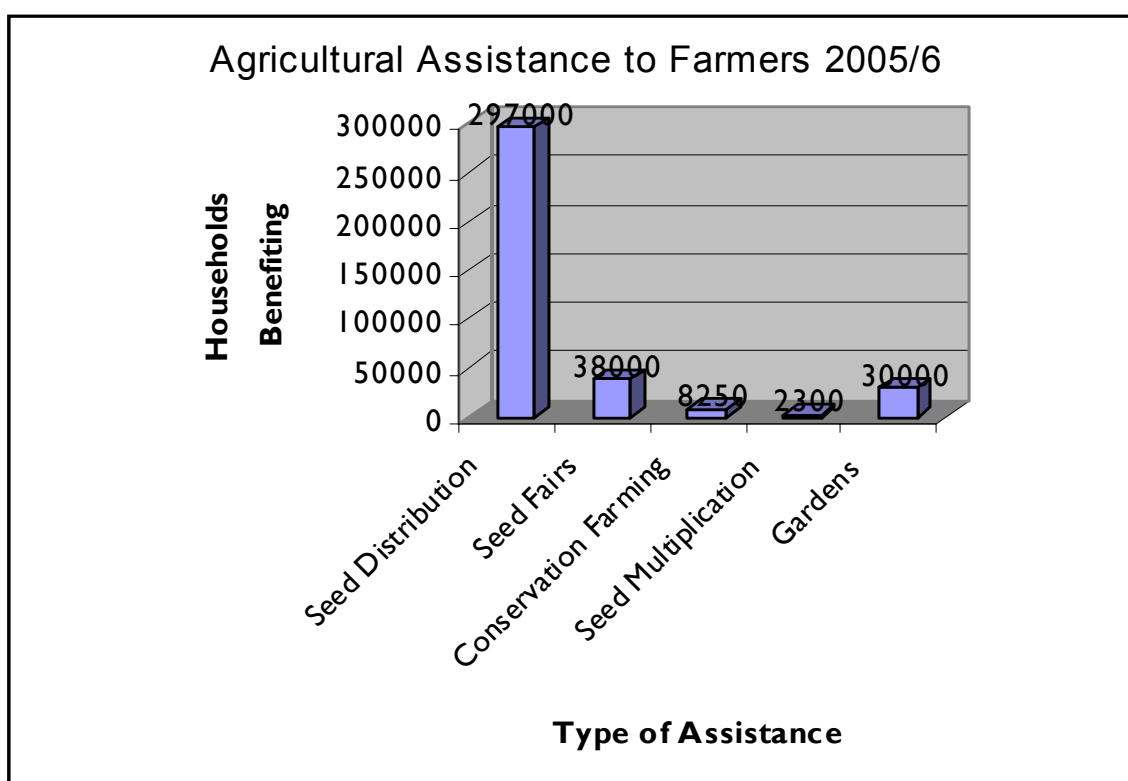
Maize seed ($\pm 26,000$ MT) is now available in the distribution networks after the announcement of the new prices by the government. However, the prices (at ZW\$500,000 or US\$19 per 50kg) are likely to prove prohibitive for most farmers.

Preliminary information collected from NGOs and donors indicates that approximately 310,000 households (50% of the households which were identified by the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee as food insecure during the 2005/06 marketing year) will receive support in the form of seed or/and fertilizer for the 2005/06 agricultural season.

The agricultural inputs will be distributed through direct distribution, seed fairs and seed voucher schemes. Seed fairs and seed voucher schemes are meant to provide farmers with an opportunity to purchase inputs of their choice and to support the retail network in the rural areas.

FAO will directly support 77,000 households of the total 310 000, and the remainder will be supported by the NGOs involved in agricultural interventions.

Assistance being delivered by NGOs in the agricultural sector and the number of households benefiting is illustrated below:



Rapid disease notification and surveillance from the Ministry of Health

Highlights of the Ministry of Health report on epidemic prone diseases, deaths and public health for week ending September 25th:

Cholera

No new cholera cases were reported from Nyanga district after a recent outbreak. Current cumulative cholera outbreak figures for Nyanga district stand at 18 cases and one death (Cases Fatality Rate – CFR = 6%). National cumulative figures for cholera stand at 227 cases and 15 deaths (CFR = 6 %). Manicaland province continues to carry out cholera surveillance.

Clinical Malaria

During the week, 9,070 clinical malaria cases and 7 deaths were reported (CFR = 0.07%). Of the total cases reported, 2,095 cases were under the age of five years. The deaths were reported from the following places: Rushinga (1), Murehwa (1) Mutoko (2), Lupane (1), and Gokwe South (2). Cumulative figures for clinical malaria now stand at 530,383 cases and 507 deaths (CFR = 0.09%). Anti-malaria spraying is ongoing in the following districts: Mudzi, Kariba, Chiredzi, and Beit Bridge. Binga has stopped spraying because of fuel problems. Provinces are advised to report spraying activities the government malaria control unit every week.

Common Diarrhoea

Reported diarrhoea figures are 4,413 cases and 13 deaths (CFR = 0.29 %). Of the reported cases (40%), 1,749 cases and 9 deaths were under the age of five years. Most cases were reported from Mashonaland East (701) and Manicaland (686). The 13 deaths were reported from the following places, Chitungwiza Central (1), Harare Central (7), Bindura (1), Mazoe (3) and Bulawayo (1). Cumulative figures for diarrhoea now stand at 158,832 cases and 448 deaths (CFR = 0.28%).

Dysentery

A total of 818 clinical cases and one death were reported during the week. Mashonaland West and Manicaland reported the largest numbers of dysentery cases, 157 and 116, respectively. Cumulative figures for clinical dysentery are now 25,669 cases and 37 deaths (CFR = 0.14%).

Update on the Red Cross humanitarian response in Zimbabwe

The Zimbabwe Red Cross Society has distributed non-food items to 1,000 families affected by the Operation Restore Order/Murambatsvina with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to meet the immediate and short-term humanitarian needs of the people. A total of 3,000 blankets, 4,000 cooking sets, and 475 jerry cans were distributed across ten provinces and 14 tents were provided at transit camps.

The funds were made available through the Federation Disaster Response Emergency Funds. The Red Cross is continuing mobilizing resources for the reconstruction phase. With current resources only 10 household housing units can be provided.

Zimbabwe Red Cross Society has strong home based care (HBC) projects in 27 districts. The HBC projects are providing care and support to 16,100 clients and material, educational and psychological support to 52,841 orphans and vulnerable people (OVC).

The Society intends to extend targeted food distribution, and to integrate the livelihood food security approach within the existing programmes. It seeks to scale up its livelihood assistance to an additional 8,000 households in already existing HBC project areas.

Depending on the gravity of the food situation during the peak months of January and February 2006, and taking into account the other activities underway, the national society plans to conduct targeted food distribution to the most vulnerable people.

Save the Children Norway-Zimbabwe humanitarian interventions

Save the Children Norway-Zimbabwe (SCN-Z), in response to the effects of Operation Restore Order/Murambatsvina, has provided to 798 children in Marondera, 4158 children in Hatcliffe extension and 168 children in Hupenyu Hutsva, a food basket comprising of kapenta, beans, mealie-meal and cooking oil. There are plans to distribute the same food basket to 1,743 children in Muzarabani and 290 children in Mberengwa and to also provide the affected children with blankets.

SCN-Z has been offering assistance to children in Chimanimani and Kadoma Districts under its emergency programme since 2002. The targeted groups were out of school children under the age of five as well as children in primary and pre-schools. The objectives were to prevent malnutrition and to ensure retention in schools.

The main constraints in delivering these interventions have been difficulties in securing the commodities in the market, especially maize. Shortage of fuel also impacts negatively on the timeliness of delivery of the commodities when they are found.

Media Highlights ... for detailed articles please visit the website: - <http://www.zimrelief.info/>

Zimbabwe to receive paediatric anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs) - Anti-retroviral treatment (ART) for children is set to get a major boost following indications by the United States-based Clinton Foundation that it will supply Zimbabwe with the essential drugs in paediatric formulations - *Herald, 24 October.*

Teachers urge free ARVs as AIDS thins their ranks - Teachers in Zimbabwe have urged the government to provide free AIDS treatment after a survey revealed the profession was struggling with the highest infection rates in the country. According to a report by the Progressive Teachers Union of Zimbabwe (PTUZ), the country lost 566 teachers to AIDS-related illnesses last year. In the first six months of 2005, the death toll had already hit 362. - *IRIN, 14 October.*

Hungry residents consume 'contaminated' beans - As food shortages continue to haunt urban dwellers, hundreds of Chitungwiza residents consumed beans suspected to be contaminated that were dumped on the outskirts of the town last week, *The Standard* has established. - *The Standard, 23 October.*

Court fends off second eviction of Harare families - Some 250 Zimbabwean families facing forced removal from their makeshift homes for the second time in three months have been granted a last-minute reprieve after a High Court ruling nullified their eviction notice. - *IRIN, 11 October.*

Gono relaxes forex market - The Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe has liberalised the foreign exchange market, replacing the auction system with the Tradable Foreign Currency Balances System under which the exchange rate will be determined by market forces. - *Herald, 21 October*

Foreign exchange parallel market to be swallowed up - New policy measures announced in yesterday's Third Quarter Monetary Policy review statement will practically swallow up the foreign exchange parallel market, analysts have said. - *Herald, 21 October*

State set to audit farms in Masvingo East - Government plans to embark on a meticulous audit of farms in the Masvingo East farming region amid reports of a large extent of under-utilisation of farms in the area. - *Herald, 21 October.*

Calendar of remaining coordination meetings for the month of October 2005

MEETING	CHAIR/CONTACT	DAY/TIME
Agricultural Co-ordination Working Group	FAO - douglas.magunda@fao.org	27/10, 9-11am at UNICEF
Donors Meeting with HC	HST—vincent.lelei@undp.org	27/10, 3-4pm at UN Takura Hse
Water and Sanitation Working Group	UNICEF—mjonga@unicef.org	28/10, 9-11am at UNICEF
Matebeleland NGO Forum Coordination meeting	OXFAM - oxcan@mweb.co.zw	28/10, 930am-1200pm at CADEC
Inter-Agency Coordination Committee on Health	MoHCW / WHO—khupeS@whoafr.org	31/10, 2:30pmat MoH 4 th Flr, Kaguvi

Contributions:

We kindly welcome information contributions and comments from all readers, especially UN agencies and partners to be able to profile the humanitarian issues in their different dimensions. Information inputs may be e-mailed to clever.maputseni@undp.org

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