



Southern Africa Regional Food Security Update: MALAWI Updated – August 2013

Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The final round of crop estimates published in August 2013 does not foresee a production surplus. If this assumption remains correct, the food security situation could become even more critical than expected by MVAC, and more people will be food insecure towards the lean season. The inflation rate in the country is currently standing at 25.2 percent and the market prices for basic food commodities are continuing to increase. Most of the humanitarian interventions in the upcoming emergency response are recommended to be in-kind based, however about 22 Traditional Authorities out of 100 were identified as suitable for cash intervention. Despite that, further macro level analysis is still under process since there is the concern that the low availability of maize and the continuing increase of market prices in the country can be serious limitations for the cash based response.
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Agriculture Situation	Food Availability	Food Access/Prices	Nutrition, Health and Food Utilization	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The final round of crop estimates published in August 2013 does not foresee a production surplus, especially for the rain fed maize plantation. If this assumption remains correct, the food security situation could become even more critical than expected by MVAC, and more people will be food insecure towards the lean season. Most people in the country have already started preparing their fields for the next agricultural season 2013/14. The main agricultural practices are tilling, weeding and manure applications. The 2013 Malawi tobacco market has finally closed with earning from the green gold hitting a record of US\$ 360 million. Tobacco production and selling remain the highest source of revenues for the country. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many households in the country are still relying on food from their own production. However, poor households in areas where the harvest was affected by floods, prolonged dry spells and early cessation of rainfalls are expected to run out of their stock by the end of the month. The Northern and Central regions have been hardest hit by drought and poor production this year. Considering that these regions are usually the food basket of Malawi; there might be implications for the country in terms of food availability. The amount of maize stocked inside the Strategic Grain Reserve of the Government is not enough to support the emergency operation in the country which intends to assist 1.46 million of people starting from October. The necessary procurement failed due to low availability of maize in the country, as well as in the region and unexpected rise of food prices. Also ADMARC stocks, intended to be used for selling of subsidized maize, are very limited. Only 7,369 MT was secured so far. If the situation remains unchanged more people will rely on local markets to purchase their staple food. Prices of food commodities will be much higher compared to ADMARC's fixed prices (80 MK/kg) and will cause problem of food accessibility for many poor households. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although current inflation rate stands at 25.2 percent in the country indicating a reduction by 2.7 percent from the previous month, the market prices for basic food commodities are continuing to increase in the country. In the second week of August 2013, the national average maize price was 113.12 MK (0.33US\$) per kg compared to 55.94 MK (0.16US\$) per kg same time last year, showing an increase of 102 percent. Based on FEWS NET's integrated analysis approach, abnormally high prices in the country are expected to continue throughout the outlook period of August to December 2013 and eventually reach the peak in January and February 2014. High food prices include high production costs associated with the current crop being transferred to consumers, limited supplies due to low production in localized areas, and much higher demand. Low national grain stock holdings may also be contributing to higher than normal prices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although at the moment levels of acute malnutrition seem to be stable in the country due to recent crop harvest, the level of acute malnutrition is expected to increase again during the coming months when food insecurity will become widespread. Due to this situation, it is very important that MVAC, with the support of UNICEF, plan a nutrition survey update towards the beginning of the lean season in order to assess whether the nutrition situation has deteriorated compared to the last survey conducted at the end of May 2013. WFP has finalized capacity assessments in all affected districts for the scale-up of the Supplementary Feeding Program (SFP) in the upcoming humanitarian response. The aim of the assessments was to identify existing gaps related to the implementation of the program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preliminary results from the Market Assessment conducted by MVAC in collaboration with WFP and OXFAM have been released. Most of the humanitarian interventions in the upcoming emergency response are recommended to be in-kind based, however about 22 Traditional Authorities out of 100 were identified as suitable for cash intervention. Despite that, further macro level analysis is still under process since there is the concern that the low availability of maize in the country and continuing increase in market prices can be serious limitations for the cash based response. WFP Malawi has managed to secure about 30 percent of the funding needed to implement the 2013/14 response operation. The total amount pledged to donors is US\$ 90 million, which is also including the contingency plan (US\$ 30 million).