

Food and Nutrition

MAGAZINE 2014

AN ANNUAL UPDATE

1ST
EDITION

INSIDE:

SORGHUM AND MILLET:
A 'game changer' in
tackling poverty and
hunger in Zimbabwe

**US\$100million Food
and Nutrition Security
programmes
launched**

**Cushioning the blow:
Insurance pay-outs for
smallholder farmers**

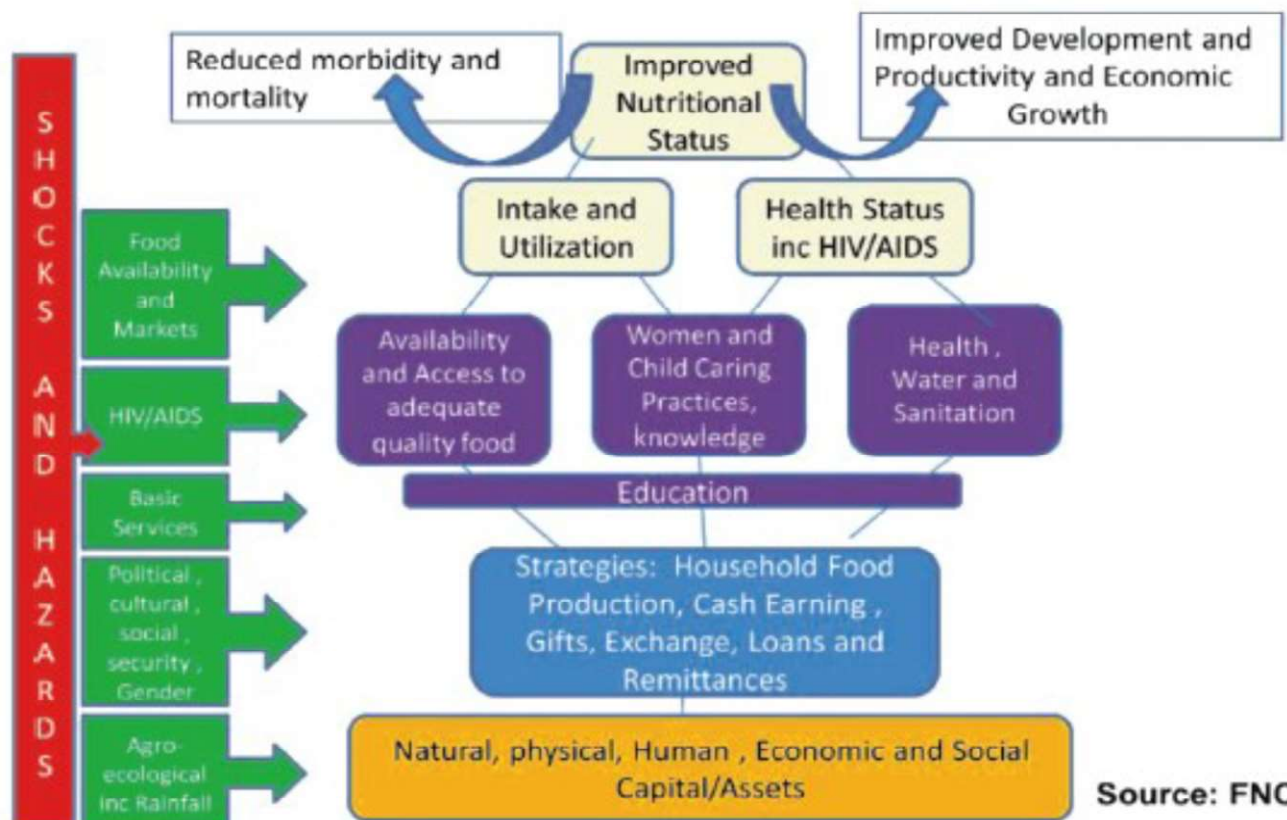
**Further training for Food
and Nutrition Security
Committees**





Food and Nutrition Council (FNC) Mandate:
“Promoting food and nutrition security in Zimbabwe in the context of economic growth and development.”

FIGURE 1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY IN ZIMBABWE



Source: FNC

EDITOR'S NOTE

The Food and Nutrition Council (FNC) is responsible for promoting cohesion in the national response to food and nutrition insecurity and malnutrition. This is done through co-ordinating the actions of multiple stakeholders from various sectors including agriculture, health and nutrition, social protection, policy and legislation, research and academia, among many others.

A Food and Nutrition Security Policy developed by the Council and launched 2 years ago, has been the guiding document, regulating national action. This policy makes 7 key commitments to achieving national food and nutrition security, spanning multiple sectors: **Policy Analysis and Advice; Agriculture and Food Security; Social Assistance and Social Protection; Food Safety and Standards; Nutrition Security; Food and Nutrition Information: Assessment, Analysis and Early Warning; and Enhancing and Strengthening National Capacity for Food and Nutrition Security.**

The nation has further committed to achieving and maintaining food security through ZimASSET, a 5 year economic blueprint, for sustainable development. ZimASSET places **Food and Nutrition Security** as the first of 4 key clusters that development efforts will be channelled to. The other cluster areas are **Social Services and Poverty Eradication; Infrastructure and Utilities; and Value Addition and Beneficiation.**

The Food and Nutrition Council (FNC), through this inaugural annual magazine hope to present a snapshot of how these two policies are serving our people. Stories have been gathered from across our network of partners within government, development agencies, and from among the people on whom the impact of these two documents is greatest. These articles document progress and lessons and even highlight challenges being faced, but all are celebrations of the small victories being won in the battle against food insecurity and malnutrition.

We at FNC provide a continuous stream of information and updates available via periodic newsletters, quarterly bulletins and our website. Please feel free to contact us year-round, to give feedback and make your contributions to this growing body of information.

Enjoy your reading!

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Indigenous crop production on the rise



HIGHLIGHTS BY COMMITMENT

1. ICN2 ROME AND SUN GLOBAL GATHERING

A New Declaration

2. CONSERVATION AGRICULTURE

Sustaining Livelihoods in Mutoko

3. CUSHIONING THE BLOW

*Droughts cause poor harvests;
Zimbabwean smallholder farmers
receive insurance payouts*

4. FOOD SAFETY AND STANDARDS

Exposing the truth about our veggies

5. MAKING IN-ROADS, BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

*ENSURE engages Apostolic and Zionist
Church Sects on Nutrition Issues*

6. CLIMATE CHANGE

*Strengthening Weather and Climate
Change Information Systems in
Zimbabwe*

7. TRAINING ON ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION

*Helps smallholder livestock farmers
generate higher income*

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

ZimASSET and FNSP unpacked

Page 4

Co-ordination challenges in the food safety and standards sector

COMMITMENT 1

Government crafts nutrition strategies

ICN2: A new declaration

CAADP process

Page 5-8

COMMITMENT 5

Page 27-34

The advent of technology in nutrition promotion

ENSURE engages Apostolic and Zionist sects on nutrition issues

SUN Zimbabwe Movement: Progress Update

Using locally available foods to boost nutrition

Minister Chombo launches US\$100million food and nutrition security projects

Nutrition Gardens with CCBICA

COMMITMENT 2

Page 9-18

Family Farmers

Conservation agriculture sustaining livelihoods in Mutoko district

Phiri Award for farm and food innovators

Women making a difference through community gardens

Sorghum and millet: A 'game changer' in tackling poverty and hunger in Zimbabwe

Irrigation scheme rehabilitation restores hope in Bikita

Smallholder farmers gain from the "Business of Farming"

Agro-biodiversity in the face of climate change in Zimbabwe

Forest Forces: Showcasing beekeeping at the APIEXPO 2014

World Food Day 2014 Commemorations

DuPont-Pioneer ZIMBABWE MAIZE GROWER COMPETITION

COMMITMENT 6

Page 35-38

ZimVAC pilots

Household Economy Approach (HEA) in two provinces

Strengthening Weather and Climate Change Information

Dissemination Systems in Zimbabwe

ZimVAC 2014 results show 76% improvement of Food Security Situation

COMMITMENT 3

Page 19-23

Making a Difference in the Lives of Orphans and Vulnerable Children

Stakeholder platform for oil seed industry in Zimbabwe

Relief to ART clients in Hwange

Cushioning the blow

A lifeline to vulnerable families

COMMITMENT 7

Page 39-43

Empowering Women through Community-based Development and Innovation

Training on Artificial Insemination boosts smallholder farmer incomes

Expanding opportunities for women and worker innovators in Zimbabwe

Input and Marketing Programme Elevates Widow from Petty Trading to Agro-dealership

Provincial Food and Nutrition Security Committee ToT Workshops

COMMITMENT 4

Page 24-26

Exposing the truth about our vegetables

Traditional Foods Recipe Ideas

Page 44

Wordsearch



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge the contribution of the following organisations in generating content for this first edition of the magazine:

Ministries responsible for the following:

Agriculture, Mechanisation and Irrigation Development

Health and Child Care

Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare

United Nations Agencies:

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)

Development partners:

World Vision-ENSURE

Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture (CNFA)-AMALIMA

OXFAM

SNV Netherlands Development Organization

Organisation of Rural Associations for Progress (ORAP)

Local Community Development organizations:

The Phiri Award for Farm and Food Innovators Trust

Cluster Agriculture Development Services (CADS)

Community Capacity Building Initiative Center for Africa (CCBICA)



Image source: UNICEF

INTRODUCTION:

UNPACKING ZIMASSET AND THE FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY POLICY



The Food and Nutrition Security Policy

Zimbabwe's high-level commitment to food and nutrition security dates back to 1995. The Government established an Inter-sectoral Taskforce to recommend sustainable solutions to the persistent and growing problem of hunger and malnutrition in Zimbabwe.

In 1998, Cabinet further recommended the development of a Food and Nutrition Security Policy framework, which was developed and eventually transformed into a Policy and launched on 16 May 2013.

The goal of the Policy is 'to promote and ensure adequate food and nutrition security for all people at all times in Zimbabwe particularly amongst the most vulnerable, and in line with our cultural norms and values and the concept of rebuilding family dignity'. From its inception to its implementation plan, the policy emphasizes that a multi-sectoral approach, inclusive of all the necessary players both from within and outside of official government structures is essential to the successful implementation of the policy.

ZimASSET

Not long after the launch of the policy, the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZimASSET), was set into motion, by the government. The 5 year economic

blueprint runs between the years 2013 to 2018. The vision of ZIMASSET is 'towards an empowered society and a growing economy'.

The economic plan comprises of the following clusters:

1. **Food Security and Nutrition**
2. Social Services and Poverty Eradication
3. Infrastructure and Utilities
4. Value addition and Beneficiation

ZimASSET, like the policy, reflects "the strong need to fully exploit the internal relationships and linkages that exist between the various facets of the economy" as well as among multiple sectors and stakeholders. The policy environment created by ZimASSET and the Food and Nutrition Security Policy demonstrates a paradigm shift, where nutrition now has equal footing with food security, in relation to national development priorities.

This magazine highlights just a handful of the success stories recorded through the work of Government and non-Government implementing partners in a collective effort towards achieving the goals set in the policy and in ZimASSET. Stories capture the lives of Zimbabweans at grassroots level, the impact that policy implementation has had in their lives over the past year. It is organized around the 7 policy commitment areas mentioned below.

Food and Nutrition Security Policy Commitments

The Food and Nutrition Security Policy makes 7 key commitments to action that highlight areas central to achieving the goal of successfully restoring and maintaining food and nutrition security in Zimbabwe. These commitment areas are:

1. *Policy analysis and advice*
2. *Agriculture and food security*
3. *Social assistance and social protection*
4. *Food Safety and standards*
5. *Nutrition security*
6. *Food and nutrition security information, assessment and early warning*
7. *Enhancing and strengthening national capacity for food and nutrition security.*

ZimASSET Food Security and Nutrition Cluster Key Result Areas

The Food Security and Nutrition Cluster aims to create a self sufficient and food surplus nation and spearhead the re-emergence of Zimbabwe as the 'Bread-basket of Southern Africa', by addressing the following key result areas:

1. *Crop Production and Marketing*
2. *Livestock Production and Development*
3. *Infrastructure Development*
4. *Environmental Management*
5. *Protection and Conservation*
6. *Nutrition*
7. *Policy and Legislation*

Strategic Objectives:

Policies promoting fully functional local, national and regional markets, with clearly defined roles of the private sector in free food movement, allowances for market demand forces to reflect in food pricing and avoid long-term large-scale storage of food stocks

Policies on expenditure of the national budget on the social sectors, particularly health and education, as well as agriculture increased

Policies avoiding generalized subsidies for food consumers that have high fiscal costs and divert public resources from support of the poor

Policies promoting and ensuring that Nutrition Security is integrated and owned by multiple sectors as reflected in their policies and strategies

Lead Ministry: Office of the President and Cabinet

Supporting Ministries: Health and Child Care, Agriculture, Labour and Social Services, Gender, Local Government, Transport, Water, Environment, Industry, science and technology, information.

COMMITMENT 1:

POLICY ANALYSIS AND ADVICE



The Government of Zimbabwe is committed to:

“Ensuring that policy instruments that protect and enhance food and nutrition security, particularly amongst the most vulnerable, are formulated and inform Government and non-Government decision-making and action.”

Food and Nutrition Security Policy, 2012

Government Crafts Nutrition Strategies

A policy is a deliberate system of principles to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes. It is a statement of intent, and is implemented as a procedure or protocol. In an endeavour to promote food and nutrition security on the broader national economic and development agenda the Ministry of Health & Child Care in collaboration with the Food and Nutrition Council and other development partners led the consultative process of developing the National Nutrition and Fortification strategies in 2014.

“The Government of Zimbabwe is committed to ensuring that policy instruments that protect and enhance

nutrition and food security, particularly amongst the most vulnerable, are formulated and inform government and non-government decision-making and action”, (FNSP, 2012).

This happened after it was realized that progress in Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) would be easier if the country had a national strategy to address nutrition, with clear priorities, strong rationale, produced through an inclusive consultative process.

The National Nutrition Strategy (2014–2018) was developed, with two objectives; to operationalize Commitment 5 of the Food and Nutrition Security Policy and; to contribute towards making further progress in achieving Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) targets. The vision of the NNS is “a Zimbabwe free from hunger and



Chief Secretary in the Office of the President and Cabinet, Dr. M. J. M. Sibanda
During Policy consultation with Heads of Ministries, November 2011

Government Crafts Nutrition Strategy

Continued from page 4...

malnutrition and the mission is to “implement evidence-based nutrition interventions that are integrated within a broad multi-sectoral collaboration framework” that emphasises investment in prevention of malnutrition. Whilst the National Nutrition Strategy assumes a special focus on addressing stunting (the first 1,000 days), it has a broader mandate to address nutrition-related challenges affecting the other age-groups of children (2 years and above), adolescents and adults, both females and males, rural and urban, poor and wealthier.

This five-year costed strategy has six key result areas (KRAs) and nineteen goals which are aligned to the 2025 World Health Assembly (WHA) targets.

In terms of the strategy, priority focus in the short term is on children under the age of two years. This will be achieved through strengthening adolescent and maternal nutrition and Community Infant and Young Child Feeding (CIYFC) services. Other key areas identified include development and dissemination of information, education and communication materials, effective delivery of Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition (IMAM) services, micronutrient supplements to adolescent girls, de-worming; micronutrient supplementation to women aged 15 - 49 years, pregnant women and women post-partum and supplementary feeding for pregnant and lactating women with acute malnutrition.

In the long term, the strategy focuses on strengthening the multi-sectoral approach including development of nutrition social marketing tools for the school environment, strengthening the integration of nutrition into education, social protection, agriculture and health among other key areas. It is envisaged that the Strategy will be launched some time in 2015.

In the fight against micronutrient deficiencies in the country, the Government of Zimbabwe has developed a comprehensive National Food Fortification Strategy. Zimbabweans, especially our children, are deficient in these micronutrients and as a consequence more than 5 million Zimbabweans are prevented from realizing their full potential as students, workers, parents and citizens.

The Strategy provides a comprehensive fortification program in which several staple food products – maize flour, wheat flour, cooking oil, and sugar are fortified with key micronutrients necessary for adequate health and proper growth. The Strategy has been aligned to the National Nutrition Strategy for Zimbabwe that aims to address all issues of nutrition on a wider scale and will serve as a guide at both policy and implementation levels to prevent micronutrient deficiencies.

As the Ministry of Health and Child Care is finalizing its approval processes, the implementation plan for the strategy is being formulated in consultation with relevant stakeholders. Findings from the National Micronutrient Survey provided the context for the main recommendations of the Food Fortification Strategy with the objective of agreeing on the most urgent practical actions that need to take place in order to reduce micronutrient malnutrition.

Some of the most urgent problems identified include anaemia and vitamin A deficiency in children under five, adolescents and women of child bearing age. Key players in the private sector involved in food processing and production have also been engaged in order to encourage them to begin implementation as soon as possible on a voluntary basis while legislation is still being put in place for mandatory fortification.

Source: FNC



Deputy Chief Secretary in the Office of the President and Cabinet, Retired Colonel Katsande (left) during Policy consultation with Heads of Ministry, November 2011

NEW Draft Policies and strategies to look out for in 2015!

- Livestock
- Agriculture
- Community Development
- Infant and Young Child Feeding
- Social Protection
- National Fortification Strategy
- National Nutrition Strategy

ICN2 Rome: Global Fight Against Malnutrition

The Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) was held in Rome, from the 19th to the 21st of November 2014, twenty two years after the first edition of ICN. The conference was held to address the multiple challenges of malnutrition in all its many forms and identify opportunities for addressing them in the decades to come.

The high-level conference was a platform to review progress made since the 1992 edition of the ICN, propose flexible policy frameworks and identify priorities for enhanced international cooperation on nutrition.

Attendees included senior government officials and national policymakers from agriculture, health and other relevant ministries, leaders of United Nations agencies, other inter-governmental organizations and civil society (non-governmental organizations, researchers, the private sector), representing over 60 countries.

Leading up to the Conference, meetings were held and consultative processes activated, from as far back as mid-2011. These brought together experts and stakeholders in the fields of health and agriculture to prepare technical papers and case studies to identify best practices and lessons learned for improving nutrition. These included seven regional and sub-regional preparatory meetings from May 2011 through March 2013, and a Preparatory Technical Meeting at FAO headquarters from 13-15 November, 2013.

In addition to reaffirming commitments made in the inaugural ICN of 1992, as well as in other complementary agreements such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), a key output of the Conference was the **Rome Declaration On Nutrition**. Deliberations on the declaration centred on the following three specific thematic processes:

1. *Multiple challenges of malnutrition to be inclusive of sustainable development and health;*
2. *A common vision for global action to end all forms of malnutrition; and*
3. *Commitment to action*

Zimbabwe is among the countries that have maintained the momentum created by the 1992 ICN conference, through

policy formulation, strategy and multi-sectoral interventions.

Leading the Zimbabwe Delegation, Honourable Minister of Health and Child Care, Dr. David Parirenyatwa began his address with highlights of Zimbabwe's current economic and food and nutrition security situation. Also part of the delegation were Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Mechanisation and Irrigation Development, Cde. Joseph Made, along with a multi-sectoral team from both ministries, the Food and Nutrition Council and Civil Society.



"Hunger and malnutrition are unacceptable in a world that has both the knowledge and the resources to end this human catastrophe.... We recognize that globally there is enough food for all and... pledge to act in solidarity to ensure that freedom from hunger becomes a reality."

**WORLD
DECLARATION
ON NUTRITION, 1992**

Minister Parirenyatwa reaffirmed Zimbabwe's dedication by saying, "As a country, Zimbabwe upholds all the commitments it has made to both global and regional initiatives linked to nutrition. It is with no doubt, that the country can benefit further, from both financial and technical support from both WHO and FAO in implementing strategies outlined in its ZimASSET economic blueprint, Food and Nutrition Security Policy and National Nutrition Strategy in which addressing Food and Nutrition challenges is first priority, "

Since 1992, Zimbabwe has also aligned national policies at regional level, to the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement at global level.

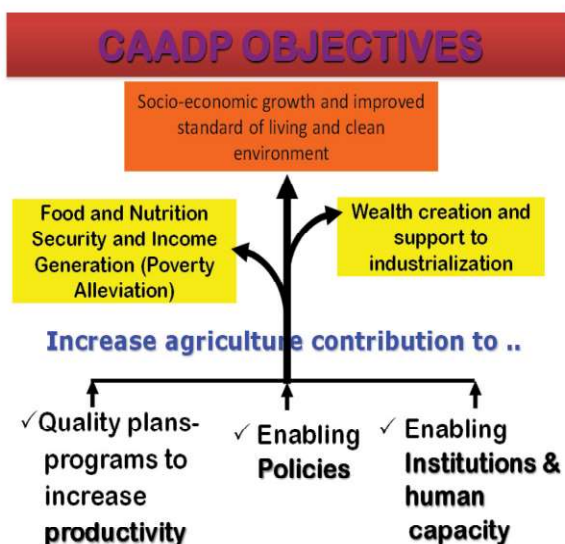
Looking ahead, Zimbabwe is committed to the following actions:

- Continued work within the Zimbabwe United Nations Development Framework (ZUNDAF) and through various sectors to improve nutrition in all districts in Zimbabwe;
- Extensively use the 'Investment Opportunities under the Food and Nutrition Security Programme' as a resource mobilisation tool to improve agricultural production of diverse and adequate food, in recognition of broad-based agricultural development, as a means of reducing poverty and accelerating economic growth;
- Invest in extensive water, sanitation and hygiene programmes to ensure attainment of universal access to safe drinking water by its entire people;
- Continue to ensure provision of an appropriate regulatory environment to guide the local, regional and international food supply chain and to safeguard against potential conflicts of interest.

Source: FNC

Zimbabwe Signs CAADP Compact

The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) is an initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) within the African Union. CAADP aims to accelerate growth and eliminate poverty and malnutrition among African countries through agriculture.



This programme is fully owned and led by African governments and with its continental scope, it is an integral part of national efforts to promote agricultural sector growth and economic development. CAADP seeks to guide country strategies and investment programs, allow regional peer learning and review, and facilitate greater alignment and harmonization of development efforts. In cementing all these efforts the Zimbabwe CAADP Compact was signed on 22 November 2013.

The Compact is a strategic agreement on collaborative action on agriculture which specifies key areas for investment and states the extents of commitment from governments, partners, clearly defining all stakeholder roles and responsibilities. It's content also addresses political and technical facets of the implementation of national plans.

The CAADP programme provides strategic functions through regional economic communities such as the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and national roundtables focusing on the following four pillars:

- **Pillar 1:** Land and water management - Extending the area under sustainable land management
- **Pillar 2:** Market access - Improving rural infrastructure and trade-related capacities for market access.

- **Pillar 3:** Food supply and hunger - Increasing nutrient rich food supply and reducing hunger.
- **Pillar 4:** Demand Driven Agricultural Research, technology dissemination and adoption to improve agricultural practice.

The Zimbabwe Compact repositions the agricultural sector as the mainstay of the economy, as outlined in ZimASSET. To this end, the government has already liberalised the sector to enhance competition and efficiency. It is hoped that implementation of coordinated investment programmes will lead to increase in productivity and production in the sector.

In COMESA countries, CAADP is being spearheaded by the COMESA secretariat. In 2005 a stakeholder retreat in Pretoria, South Africa developed and agreed that country level implementation processes of CAADP should primarily be aligned with national level sector policies and frameworks with the above CAADP principles and targets as guides.

Furthermore, the CAADP process at country level is supposed to build on ongoing country efforts and be led by national governments and other stakeholders. Already, key policies such as the Comprehensive Agriculture Policy Draft, Food and Nutrition Security Policy and ZimASSET, provide a suitable policy environment within which the CAADP processes can work.

The CAADP implementation process includes the following stages:

1. Launch of the CAADP implementation Process
2. Stock-taking, Growth and Investment Analysis Exercise
3. Validation of the Stock-Taking Report
4. Stakeholder Awareness Campaigns
5. Compact Round table and Compact Signing
6. National Agricultural Investment Plan
7. Validation of the National Agriculture Investment Plan
8. Independent Technical Review of the National Investment Plan
9. High level Business Meeting

Of these stages Zimbabwe has gone through 1-7 and the Zimbabwe Agriculture Investment Plan has been officially submitted to COMESA and the African Union Commission. Following this submission, The Independent Technical Review (ITR) will be carried out by experts from COMESA and African Union Commission in February 2015.

Source: FNC

Strategic Objectives:

Food security defined to include availability, access and utilization of food resources.

Diversification, post-harvest management and household storage

Functioning markets

Implementing Sustainable food production strategies that promote enhanced production in the context of managing risks as a result of climate change

Equipping farmers with the technology and approaches that help mitigate the adverse effects of unreliable rainfall patterns in Zimbabwe and the broader effects of climate change.

Lead Agency: Ministry responsible for Agriculture

Supporting Ministries: Health and Child Care, Labour and Social Services, Finance and Economic Planning, Education, Industry and Commerce, Gender, Local Government, Transport, Water, Environment and Science and Technology, Information.

COMMITMENT 2:

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY



The Government of Zimbabwe is committed to:

"Ensuring food security for all, including access to adequate, diverse and nutritious food by all people, at all times."

Food and Nutrition Security Policy, 2012

Family Farmers

Feeding Zimbabwe, caring for the earth

"Family farming" is a means of organising agricultural, forestry, fisheries, pastoral and aquaculture production which is operated by a family and usually reliant on their own labour. Family farming accounts for 50 percent of the food that is produced worldwide.

Globally, great strides were made in improving nutrition, food security, and protection of the environment and management of natural resources. However, closer to home, sub-Saharan Africa has not kept pace and the figures regarding reduction of cases of hunger are much lower compared to the global statistics.

This brings to the fore the role of "Family Farming" in raising the figures in developing countries and as such 2014 was declared the

International Year of Family Farming and the flagship World Food Day marked under the theme: "Family Farming – Feeding the World, caring for the earth."

The 2014 theme aptly captured the need to make sure that the world is fed in a sustainable way and at the same time recognised the role Family Farming plays in meeting this objective.

Some of the challenges faced include the need to improve people's nutrition everywhere, especially in developing countries, reduce the prevalence of undernourishment, stunting and wasting as well as micronutrient deficiencies also known as "hidden hunger".

These challenges have severe public health consequences, which becomes a burden to governments and societies especially in poorer developing countries.

Continues page 12...



Maximizing food production at household level

Conservation Agriculture Sustaining Livelihoods in Mutoko District

“As you can see I am reaping the benefits of this programme. Because of the time and dedication we as a family put into farming we managed to grow 1.5 hectares of maize, 0.5 hectares of groundnuts, 0.3 hectares of cowpeas and 0.2 hectares of amaranth. It was not easy; it was hard work all the way. We harvested 2 tonnes of maize this season”, said Agnes Mbofana, one of the CA project beneficiaries supported by Cluster Agricultural Development Services (CADS) in Mtoko.

Quite a sizable number of families and farmers in Mtoko are practising conservation agriculture and the Mbofana family of Nyamhanza B ward in Pawandiwa village under chief Chimoyo is no exception. The large family comprises of 11 members and is headed by Agnes Mbofana who is a widow.

The family has a land holding of 4 hectares and benefited from the inputs support programme from CADS by receiving the voucher worth US\$110. The family then used the voucher to purchase 1 x 50kg of Compound D and 2 x 50kg of Ammonium Nitrate fertilizers. CADS trained the farmers including the Mbofana family on conservation agriculture, where farmers practised minimum soil disturbance, permanent soil cover, crop rotation and high crop management standards.

“Before the season started we had no inputs at all, in fact we had no money to buy the seeds and fertilizers. In the

rural areas it's very difficult to get money and sometimes we resort to casual labour. This program came to our rescue by training on conservation agriculture and giving us vouchers for inputs,” narrated Mrs Mbofana. She was very thankful to the extension officers for constantly monitoring and encouraging them to continue working hard to get good yields.

It is very interesting to note that the family was conversant with the principles of conservation agriculture and could easily explain them to this writer with much gusto and confidence. “This method of farming helps conserve soil moisture and improves soil fertility. We were assured during trainings that with this method one will always get good yields,” she added.

As a family they have discovered the benefits of using this method and they are grateful for the continued support they are getting from the program even though there were signs of an imminent drought. “Our yield could have been better if it was not for the long dry spells followed by late incessant rains which caused leaching of nutrients during the season”, she said. However, due to good timing of distribution of the vouchers they managed to sail through and not much of their crop was damaged.

Mrs. Mbofana further commented that this season they were not going to buy any maize as they had enough to feed the family. The family even managed to sell 1 tonne of maize. “The money was used to buy material for our 2 roomed house that we are constructing”, she said.

Source: CADS



Mrs. Mbofana in her amaranth field

“This method of farming helps conserve soil moisture and improves soil fertility. We were assured during trainings that with this method one will always get good yields.”

*Agnes Mbofana,
Project beneficiary*

The Phiri Award for Farmers and Innovators

Recognising the achievements of farm and food innovators and their contributions to food sovereignty

Named in honour of Zephaniah Phiri (pictured below), a renowned water harvester and ecological farmer from Zvishavane District whose innovations in vleis farming over a fifty year period earned him first arrest, and later national and international recognition, the Phiri Award for Farm and Food Innovators will open a new chapter in advancing indigenous innovation in Zimbabwe.

Phiri discovered new ways to produce food abundantly and sustainably through detailed study and active management of the soils and hydrology of his land. Other dedicated Zimbabwean farmers are also making quiet breakthroughs that advance food sovereignty in their communities. Just as Mr. Phiri shared his innovations with thousands of visitors from across the country, Africa and the world, so too can other local innovators be recognised and assisted to disseminate their innovations, technologies and sustainable farming practices. Mr. Phiri's innovations such as water infiltration pits in contour ridges and clay-lined ponds in vleis are now adopted by tens of thousands of dry land farmers. In the same manner, other innovations not yet recognised can contribute nationally and beyond to the advancement of agro-ecological approaches to sustainable food systems.

Increasing recognition for local innovation and the creative capacity of food producers to solve deep-rooted problems and find new opportunities can help advance a partnership approach to agricultural development in which all knowledge is valued. This has great potential to uphold the central place of the women and men who meet the food needs of their communities and therefore, the country.

The award is a new programme introduced by a new organisation, *The Phiri Award for Farm and Food Innovators Trust*, whose trustees are drawn from leading

Zimbabwean institutions in this field. Working with national networks, local government and grass roots groups the Trust gathered nominations from across the country in the last quarter of 2013; coordinated visits to selected farmers during their growing and harvesting seasons in early 2014 and documented their innovations; and organised the first Award in June 2014 at a nationally publicised event. The Trust will work with recognised innovators and development partners to spread their good ideas to other communities in support of the new annual event.



Zephaniah Phiri

Winners of the Zephaniah Phiri Award will be men and women who have developed and implemented, over many years, new and exciting ways of producing, processing or distributing food that advance the principles of food sovereignty, including social justice and environmental sustainability. The winners will be innovators in their own right, and not “adopters” of good ideas promoted by organisations, researchers or projects. These innovators will usually have relied on their own resources and energies to develop their practices, and will often have

struggled for many years to gain recognition for their work. They will come from small-scale farming communities or marginalised backgrounds in urban settings.

From creativity in the face of hardship, they will have developed proven new approaches that others have now begun to adopt and adapt. Through the publicity associated with the Award these innovators and their innovations will increase the opportunity to improve the lives of Zimbabweans.

Individuals and organisations are being invited to join this exciting process by sending nominations of local innovators whose work contributed to the development of food systems around the country.

Nominations for upcoming awards can be made by writing to either phiriaward@gmail.com or The Phiri Award, Box 3272, Harare to receive and submit official nomination forms.

Source: The Phiri Award for Farm and Food Innovators Trust

Women Making a Difference Through Community Gardens



Sales of produce from Dangarendove community garden

It is a wet windy day in Dangarendove, Chirumanzu. The skies open - albeit reluctantly - to release the last drizzles of what has certainly been a good rainy season. Florence Chihota Muzorori, a mother of five, makes her way quickly to a nearby community vegetable garden. Her husband is not far behind as he and three other men recently joined their wives in what has become a very successful enterprise.

Gardens are generally celebrated for their contribution to improved food and nutrition security, income generation and more recently as a source of gainful employment along the entire value chain including input suppliers, farmers, transporters and vendors. Before they were recognized as sources of income, gardening activities were considered work reserved for women. However, as the socio-economic environment has changed, so too have such perceptions.

Interest in supporting the gardens increased even more as the drastic effects of HIV/AIDS ravaged the nation thereby increasing the need to mitigate the impact by supplementing diets with nutrient-rich vegetables. "When we started, we all asked our husbands to join, but they refused. Even as we cleared and dug our garden spaces, they just watched. It wasn't easy to do all the physical work", said Mrs Muzorori. "But after one year of hard work, when we were able to buy a diesel powered pump and a small lorry to transport goods to the market, the men eventually joined us. They now even help with ploughing and transporting the vegetables to the markets," she added.

In recognition of the role played by community gardens and as a direct response to a request from the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development, FAO provided garden inputs in the form of seeds and fertilisers to 42 698 farmers (90 percent women), covering 826 community gardens spread across the country.

The inputs complemented the support that the Ministry had been providing to the community gardens over the past few years "FAO takes into account the wishes and priorities of government when implementing projects. This was a 'quick win' project, where FAO partnered with the farmers and the Government, based on the needs and priorities as outlined in the ZimASSET's Food Security and Nutrition cluster," said David Phiri, FAO Sub-regional Coordinator for Southern Africa and Representative in Zimbabwe.

The group is now producing about 200 crates of tomatoes per week, allowing them to earn approximately USD \$3,000. "Our only problem is meeting the demand. Traders come from as far as Masvingo town - 130 Km away - and wait in line for our tomatoes. We do not have to go out to look for the markets, they come to us", said Mrs Muzorori. "You see with horticulture, you can get cash on a daily basis. When I joined my wife in the group, some of the men laughed at me because I was doing "women's" work. But when I started reaping the profits from the gardens, they began showing an interest in joining the group", said Mr Zachariah Muzorori a group member who is also the truck driver of the group.

Sithembile Dube is the Provincial Development Officer in the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development for the Midlands Province. She credits this project with promoting family harmony. "We have found that poverty is the primary cause of gender based violence in families. When there is no money and food supplies dwindle, people fight. But when they are economically empowered, such as when they do agricultural business - like this group, they can buy food, buy clothes and pay school fees for their children. They also then have time to spend together as families and communities. They have time to be happy".

Source: FAO

Family Farmers

...From page 9

For example, the cost of dealing with the effects of malnutrition - whether in fiscal, economic or human terms - is high compared to the cost of prevention.

Governments are seized with these challenges and have crafted policies to alleviate them and in most cases, it is family farmers who are the hub on which the success of the policies revolves.

Zimbabwe commemorated the 2014 World Food Day (WFD) on October 16 at a colourful ceremony that was held at *Chitora Irrigation Scheme* - run by 41 smallholder family farmers - in Mutoko district (SEE STORY PAGE 17).

Source: FAO

Sorghum and Millet: A 'Game Changer' in Tackling Poverty and Hunger in Zimbabwe

Growing water-thirsty crops like maize in drought-prone areas is risky yet many smallholder farmers in Zimbabwe are doing precisely that - and thus, increasing chances of poor yields, lost income and hunger.

Smallholder farmers prefer growing maize to small grains such as millet and sorghum due to a number of reasons including a readily available markets, the availability of advanced technology as well as the high yield of improved maize varieties. Consumers on the other hand generally prefer the taste and colour of the maize meal – “Sadza” as opposed to that from sorghum and millet.

Over the years, different stakeholders have looked into the factors hindering the expansion of small grain farming. Findings in almost all cases indicate high production costs, poor harvests due to scarcity of good quality seeds and intensive labour required for processing to be the most prohibitive factors.

So if farmers are not attracted, and buyers have other preferences, why even bother talking about small grains? It is fairly simple; evidence shows that they play a vital role in food and nutrition security and can be a game changer in tackling poverty and hunger in Zimbabwe.

Growing small grains, has not been easy for farmers in Zimbabwe's drier areas, even though the crops are better suited to the environment and are excellent sources of protein, energy, vitamins and minerals. The missing ingredient has been research and technical support to enable smallholder farmers in Zimbabwe to harness the full potential of small grains.

Working alongside the Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanization and Irrigation Development, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) recently concluded a two-year pilot project aimed at boosting the production, processing and marketing of small grains in three of the country's drier provinces. The project trained several farmers as well as officials from the Department of Agricultural Technical and Extension Services (AGRITEX) in seed multiplication to ensure that farmers have a reliable source of high-yielding, improved sorghum and millet seed varieties. Farmers also learned by seeing and doing through the use of demonstration plots, exchange visits and field days.

The sustainability of seed and grain production hinges on assured markets, without which farmers have little incentive to produce. The exchange visits and field days provided an ideal setting for farmers to engage in seed trade linked with other farmers and stakeholders. The project also linked farmers to niche markets such as brewing companies - a big consumer of sorghum - as well as non-governmental organizations involved in seed distribution programmes. The introduction of small motorized grain threshers by the project not only saved farmers time during harvesting, but reduced the amount of



Finger Millet

foreign particles found in the grain, helping farmers fetch a better price. As production increases, more threshers should be made available to farmers as they have tackled the fears associated with the laborious small grain processing.

Small grains have excellent potential not only to improve the diet and income of farmers in Zimbabwe's marginal areas, but also national food security. Introducing better seed varieties and expanding the markets for the small grains have to go hand in hand with an enabling policy environment. Given the frequency of drought, small grain production should not only be scaled up in the country's marginal areas, but farmers in maize-producing regions should reserve part of their land for small grains as a way to mitigate disaster risk. Government policy on the supply side would mean including sorghum and millet in input supply programmes, something the country is now doing in its drier regions. And it would mean supporting more research and extension services on small grain production.

But then again, we have the issue of taste preferences. We are already seeing the private sector taking a lead in this area and we have witnessed notable success with flavouring of traditional foods such as “mahewu”. We can learn from this and experiment with flavouring and blending in a wider array of small grain products. Finally, we have to do more to get the word out to the public on the nutritional value of sorghum and millets.

Source: FAO



Sorghum

Irrigation Scheme Rehabilitation Restores Hope in Bikita

Mutikizizi Communal Lands Ward 6 in Bikita District, Masvingo Province is a drought prone area with a population largely dependent on small grain production. Over the years, irrigation schemes established in the area have collapsed due to lack of sustainability planning, infrastructural damage and neglect over years of economic stagnation. The community were excited as they began work with Enhancing Nutrition, Stepping Up Resilience and Enterprise (ENSURE), under the Food For Assets (FFA) component, on their Muhoma Weir and Small Irrigation Scheme rehabilitation.

64 year old Severia Kunyenya who has lived in the communal lands from birth, showed particular joy when interviewed about the benefits of the weir and irrigation rehabilitation to the community. Severia is care-giver to 2 grandchildren and a daughter-in-law. She supports her family unit through casual labor during the agriculture season and by growing vegetables in the 10 beds allocated to her via a previous program implemented by ENSURE implementation partner, CARE.

"Although I have another plot in the CARE garden, production is limited in that area as water supply is limited. This bigger project gives us excitement because it has the potential to increase my livelihood security through year round water supply for crops" Severia shared with us. She said, "I have a strong belief that, with this historic dam which will be the only of its kind in this area, food production and access to drinking water will significantly be increased since we have very few boreholes in the area. Our livestock will also benefit from the water source as it will be available and accessible to the animals too. It is also my wish that for the increased agricultural outputs we expect after the dam is complete, we will be able to get more external buyers through intensive value chain linkages. This will surely enable me to send my grandchildren to school and help them to look after me as I am getting older."

Through her commitment and hard work this agricultural season, Severia managed to harvest 5 bags of maize, 6 bags of roundnuts, and 1 bag of groundnuts for her families' consumption. The sorghum she received for her involvement in the FFA work will add to the ability of her household to remain food secure over the months of this year.

Source: World Vision-ENSURE



Smallholder Farmers Gain from the "Business of Farming"

Gideon Mutapurwa, a farmer of ward 2 in Chimene, Chiredzi district of Masvingo Province, is a shining example of a courageous smallholder farmer who has managed to attain food security and improve his income through small scale dry land farming.

The journey to success started in October 2013 when SNV Netherlands Development Organization and Sidella Trust partnered in an ongoing project to commercialize smallholder farming. He opted to grow sesame seed, which he planted on a single hectare. Since the crop was still new to the farming community, the planting, thinning, weed control, pest control and harvesting processes were closely monitored by AGRITEX, the government's agricultural extension arm, who partnered in the project to build up local farmers' capacity.

Through this guidance, Mutapurwa harvested 0,75t/ha sesame, a record still to be broken by many farmers within his community. Additionally, he has also managed to grow crops

such as maize, sorghum, and groundnuts. The Sidella-SNV partnership provided combined training with AGRITEX, that focused on commercialising of smallholder farming. The training encompassed good sesame agronomy, group marketing, contract farming, budgeting and cash flows. "It is this new knowledge which I utilised in my crop production," said the farmer. This intervention is part of the SNV's Rural Agricultural Revitalisation Project-Commercialisation of Smallholder Farming.

"I am planning to build my residential stand in Chiredzi which I had just acquired with proceeds from my production from the Shine Plus Housing Co-operative, in the previous years it had been hard as we could sell our cotton at very low prices and buy maize for food. This has been the routine year in year out but this year we are happy with this sesame crop which gives us ample time to concentrate on other crops and is also better paying. Most of my neighbours were not interested in growing sesame but now they are appreciating my decision to grow sesame. They are now all planning to participate in sesame production next year," said a smiling Mutapurwa.

Continues page 15...

Agro-Biodiversity in the Face of Climate Change in Zimbabwe

Climate change characterized by the increased occurrence of droughts is posing a lot of challenges to farmers. Other risks faced by farmers which include rapidly changing markets; socio-political disruption, pest problems and the inappropriate use of agro-chemicals are a threat to farmer livelihoods. Agro-biodiversity has played an important role in improving resilience in the wake of these risks. However, consumer preference for the traditional crop varieties has not kept pace with the supply of these crops resulting in an erosion of agro-biodiversity and associated knowledge systems. To counter this, CADS has promoted the production and mass marketing of traditional varieties, conducted conferences and workshops and promoted research into the nutritional values of traditional crops including amaranth, sorghum and millet.

CADS has developed products such as puddings and yoghurts out of crops such as amaranth and baobab, and biscuits out of millet and sorghum. These products taste as good as or better than current products on the market, based on consumer assessments. Consumption and demand for value-added traditional and organic products is increasing. Farmers are now willing to grow traditional varieties thus leading to improved agro-biodiversity.

CADS has developed recipes of different foods which can be made out of the diverse range of traditional crop varieties. This has resulted in an increase in the consumption of traditional foods as evidenced by an increase in the sales of traditional crop products. In addition, resource materials have been developed by CADS to promote diversified production of traditional foods and consumer perception and acceptance of these. Mass media awareness through food fairs on the ecological, social, nutritional, medicinal and economic benefits of traditional foods has resulted in consumers being sensitized to the many benefits of these crops and foods. Different forms of media particularly social media and the Web have ensured the swift flow of information to a wide audience.

The integrated farming approach that CADS promoted has resulted in crop production systems supporting livestock production. This has resulted in an increase in the number of crops grown by the farmers either for fodder production or for food consumption. Natural pest management using crop residues has also been promoted resulting in an increased number of diverse crop systems. CADS has worked with farmers for many years to create resilient agro-diverse farming systems and promoted increased consumption and therefore demand for traditional crops by both consumers in the farming communities and urban communities. This is reversing the erosion of agro-biodiversity and the associated knowledge systems.

Source: CADS



Agro-biodiversity—Amaranth field

Smallholder Farmers Gain From the "Business of Farming"

...From page 14

"There is nothing as good as growing a crop with an assured market, years back our production was curtailed by lack of markets as I could grow lots of sorghum and no buyers could come except the *makorokoza* who come and offer 'peanuts' for our crops, can you imagine these buyers would offer between US\$ 1, 50 and \$2, 00 for a 20kg bucket and you will have a paltry \$120 for a tonne after the whole season's toiling and suffering".

In addition to his new skills in sesame production, budgeting, management and marketing, Mutapurwa is very optimistic that all members of his community are going to work towards their families' food self sufficiency. "I have adopted many new ideas which I intend to pass to my friends and neighbours which will go a long way in upgrading our society".

"True to the philosophy of SNV of discouraging the dependency syndrome in our societies we are working towards a situation whereby smallholder farmers will be now be able to commercially do their farming business without external support," he said.

Source: SNV

Forest Forces: Showcasing Beekeeping at the APIEXPO 2014

Zimbabwe hosted the 2014 APIEXPO, a biannual fair that brings together processors, exporters and producers so as to improve market linkages for honey and its products and which was held under the theme “Beekeeping for Economic Empowerment in Africa”.

Apiexpo is championed by Apitrade Africa a regional non-profit organization that promotes African honey / bee products internationally and the 2014 edition was facilitated by Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanisation and Irrigation Development working in partnership with the Beekeepers Association of Zimbabwe. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) participated at the 2014 Apiexpo through its Forest Forces programme working jointly with Environment Africa.

The objectives of Apiexpo tie in with those of Forest Forces programme which is to; “improve food security of vulnerable rural communities through participatory sustainable forest management and valorization of forest products, diversified livelihoods strategies and enhanced capacity to deal with shocks”. This would be achieved by unlocking the livelihood potential of forest through increasing and diversifying the sources of food and income of rural populations through better forest management and development of sustainable income generating activities based on forest products.

Forest forces managed to send delegates from participating communities and they bear testimony that this was an eye opener as their interaction with other producers equipped them with more information on beekeeping.

Products on display included an assortment of hives, honey harvesting and processing equipment, packaged processed and

unprocessed honey, propolis, bees wax and wax products such as candles, confectionary made from honey and stock feed made from honey comb.

Source: FAO

Key Issues Emerging from the Expo

- Bee pest and disease control in view of climate change should be enhanced.
- Beekeeping associations need to be strengthened and encouraged to establish community bulking centres. Development of the value chain can then be supported to allow for specialization amongst the players, i.e. producers, processors and equipment suppliers.
- Value chain players should be linked to research and appropriate technology development with a view of influencing curriculum development in the apiculture sector.
- Marketing of honey and other hive products should be supported with a strong consumer awareness drive to create the much needed demand and a stable market.
- There is need for continuous improvement on packaging and labelling of products to meet international standards.
- More government support and coordination of the apiculture sector is needed to enable Zimbabwe to feature competitively on the African and international markets.



Hon. Minister Dr. J. Made, Hon. Tongoona and Hon. A. Damasane at the Environment Africa stand (left). Mr. C. Maunze (right) of Environment Africa receives a Certificate of Recognition on behalf of the organisation .

World Food Day 2014 Commemorations

World Food Day was celebrated on the 16th of October 2014 at Chitora Irrigation Scheme in Mutoko. The event was attended by various stakeholders including SEEDCO, PIONEER, CADS, FAO, WFP AGRITEX, Windmill and Nyaradzo Funeral Services (Friends of the Environment). The celebration was commemorated under the theme “**Family Farming; Feeding the World, Caring for the Earth**”.



Honourable Marapira addressing the crowd

In his speech, the guest of honour, Deputy Minister of Agriculture Mechanisation and Irrigation Development, Hon Davis Marapira said that the diversity in horticultural crops at Chitora Irrigation Scheme reflects farmers’ commitment to ensure households and national food and nutrition security. In addition to that he talked about the presidential well-wishers input programme and explained how it contributed to the success of the scheme.

Chitora 3-phase irrigation scheme produces various horticultural crops that include carrots, green beans, rape, cucumber, groundnuts, and butternuts. The scheme is also said to be among the major suppliers of green mealies at Mbare Musika in Harare. Delegates were given an opportunity to tour the scheme during the event.

Minister of State for Provincial Affairs Cde. S. Mudarikwa encouraged the people to continue working hard. To ensure the success of local farmers, he said that imports of agricultural products must be restricted. He also expressed concern about the low use and sharing of information and communication technology amongst extension workers in the Ministry of Agriculture and suggested that, extension workers should be trained to meet the demands of the changing technological environment.

Mr Sory Quane the WFP Country Representative spoke at length on poverty eradication and explained the effect poverty has in derailing economic development. He appreciated family farming and acknowledged the input made by small holder farmers in achieving food and Nutrition Security in Zimbabwe.

FAO country representative Mr David Phiri highlighted the importance of family farming in achieving targets outlined in ZimASSET, the government’s economic and developmental blueprint. Raising concerns about the challenge of immobility of extension personnel across the country, Cde David Chapfika, the Member of Parliament for Mutoko South, suggested that AGRITEX should seek financial assistance from organizations like FAO to acquire motorbikes for their staff.

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanisation and Irrigation Development



World Food Day Commemorations are held annually on the 16th of October. They are among a series of United Nations (UN) appointed commemorations days drawing attention to key global health and livelihoods issues.

Other UN Commemoration days relating to food and nutrition security to look out for are:

- International Women’s Day—8 March
- International Water Day— 22 March
- World Health Day—7 April
- International Day of Rural Women—15 October
- World Diabetes Day—14 November
- Human Rights Day—10 December

DuPont-Pioneer Zimbabwe Maize Grower Competition

In line with the ZimASSET which works “Towards an Empowered Society and a Growing Economy”, DuPont-Pioneer has introduced strategies to complement government efforts to achieve the national maize target of 1.95MT through provision of quality hybrid seed and technical back-up to farmers, as well as motorization of government AGRITEX Extension workers.

Additionally, DuPont-Pioneer sponsors the Zimbabwe Maize Grower Competition which aims to promote and reward excellence in crop and livestock production and the provision of extension service provision practices.

The department of Agricultural Extension Services (AGRITEX) in

the ministry responsible for agriculture, coordinates the competition through its extension structures, while farmers are the adopters and implementers of new maize production technologies/innovations.

The competition is open to all Small scale and Communal farmers, and AGRITEX Extension workers only. Farmers and the Agricultural Extension workers will be assessed from Ward level up to provincial and National level by judging teams which are coordinated by AGRITEX.

The competition, which is held annually, sets out to provide incentives to farmers, to adopt and implement current agricultural innovations and hybrid seeds brought in by DuPont -Pioneer, AGRITEX and other extension agents that are suitable for their respective agro-ecological regions. It also aims to increase maize yields per hectare, so as to improve household and national food and nutrition security in accordance with ZimASSET and the Food and Nutrition Security Policy. Overall, the competition promotes good extension service provision for small scale farmers.

Categories of the competition include:

Crop production (rotation practices, weed and pest management and nutrition gardening)

Livestock (composition, herd size, handling facilities and feeding systems)

Farm records

Homestead

Farm equipment handling and storage facilities

Health and safety

Food security

Conservation works

The Winners



Nyanga District Extension Officer Mrs. Rwambiwa with the winner (centre)

Having satisfied this assessment criteria, Mrs. Nyakwava of Nyanga district, Manicaland province. Her Agriculture Extension Worker Ms. Bessy Masiyanhise were declared the national winners for the DuPont-Pioneer Maize Grower Competition 2013-14 growing season.

Position	Name of Farmer	Province
1st	Mrs. F. Nyakwava	Manicaland
2nd	Mrs. L. Muzondo	Masvingo
3rd	Mrs M. Mpahliwa	Mashonaland East
4th	Mr. M. Ndaba	Mashonaland Central
5th	Mr. S. Murombedzi	Mashonaland West
6th	Mr. S. Mutodza	Midlands
7th	Mr. K. Ntini	Matabeleland South
8th	Mrs. C. Moyo	Matabeleland North

The competition also uncovered areas in which farmers and extension workers need to work towards improving. These included:

- Timely land preparation, especially in winter
- Staggering the dates of planting and growing different crops which are tolerant to low moisture levels
- Selection of maize crop varieties recommended for the regions
- An integrated weed management approach through the use of herbicides and cultivators
- Post harvest loss management
- Timely harvesting
- Control of weevils
- Farming as a business through correct use and management of records
- Proper storage facilities (modern brick and metal silos and hermetic grain bags).

Source: AGRITEX



The Audience

Strategic Objectives:

Recognizing minimum standards for all types of safety nets including food assistance, cash/food for assets, school feeding for enhancing food and nutrition security and strengthening resilience in the longer terms

Recognizing mitigation of negative coping strategies

Recognizing the role played by women and girls in caring for the vulnerable and include strategies to empower women

Ensuring that all social assistance programmes are aligned with the relevant social protection policy frameworks and have an integral component that enhances food and nutrition security

Lead Ministry: Ministry responsible for Labour and Social Services

Supporting Ministries: Agriculture, Health, Finance and Economic Development, Gender, Local Government, Transport, Water, Environment, Industry and Commerce, Information, Small to Medium Enterprises and Science and Technology.

COMMITMENT 3:

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE AND SOCIAL PROTECTION



The Government of Zimbabwe is committed to:

“Ensuring that where social protection, including social assistance programmes, is implemented, it must contribute and enhance food and nutrition security of the most vulnerable in the short to medium term.”

Food and Nutrition Security Policy, 2012

Making a Difference in the Lives of Orphans and Vulnerable Children

Zimbabwe has not been spared by the HIV scourge, with 14% of the population reported to be HIV positive. In the current under-performing economy, numerous deaths can be attributed to poverty and resulting, malnutrition and AIDS. It is therefore no wonder that most rural villagers have numerous orphans and vulnerable children – A fact that continues to put extreme pressure on the ability of rural households to provide for their basic needs. The Village Savings and Loans (VSL) concept addresses those pressures, assisting households to increase their income through increased opportunity to access and

manage funds. Where lack of access to credit adds to challenges of transitioning livelihoods, the approach is proving an increasingly viable way of developing accessible funding and accountability for vulnerable rural populations. Under the ENSURE VSL program, increased income from the groups is re-invested into sustainable agricultural and other diversified income generating activities.

Rujeko VSL is a group of 12 women. Formed in October 2013, the women came together to help each other deal with the issues posed by the local economic difficulties and HIV plight. The group aims to improve the livelihoods of less privileged and orphaned children in the community by sending them to school.



Some members of Rujeko Village Savings and Loans group with some beneficiaries of their school fees project

Making a Difference...

Continued from page 19

“Chinangwa chedu seboka ndechekusimudzirana semadzimai nekubatsira nherera” (As a group, we want to improve each other’s lives and to help orphaned children.”), said one group member.

The group has US\$1,250 in their VSL fund to date. In addition to their profit making project loans, they continue to provide children orphaned by HIV/AIDS with school uniforms. This small contribution boosted their motivation to go to school as they felt they could now fit in with the other pupils. The impact continues to be felt at household and community level!

This group was adopted by ENSURE, trained and strengthened by an ADP Village Agent on the Record Keeping and Constitution Development training modules

Source: ENSURE-World Vision



Oil and seeds



Stakeholder Platform for Oil Seed Industry in Zimbabwe

The Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV) has identified Oil seeds as a means of contributing towards Zimbabwe’s improved economic performance through agriculture. With financial assistance from the Danish International Development (DANIDA), the organisation is, through its *Rural Agriculture and Revitalization Programme on Commercialising Small-holder Farming*, facilitating the process of multi stakeholder engagements using a value chain approach. A Multi Stakeholder Platform for oil seeds in Zimbabwe was set up to enable the coming together of different stakeholders who perceive the same resource management challenges and, above all, realise their interdependence and are willing to craft collective strategies for solving issues identified.

Stakeholders cover the full oil seeds value chains from pre-production to post-processing of agricultural production. These include: - farmers, their commodity associations and unions, inputs suppliers of fertiliser, chemicals and seed, finance institutions, buyers, contract facilitators and the manufacturing industry, Regulatory and Revenue Authorities, Government departments in Agricultural policy, Economics and Markets, Irrigation, Research and extension services, NGOs, academia, press and consumers.

Achievements To Date

Stakeholders on the platform have since April 2014 held six round table meetings where the common challenges identified include; high cost of inputs, low production volumes and productivity per hectare, poor access to finance and other related factors that negatively affect performance of the industry.

The platform crafted an agreed vision and elected a council of 11 stakeholders which is spearheading operations. Membership stands at 200 individuals, with ongoing projects linking more than 4000 growers to inputs and outputs markets set up in five provinces.

Source: SNV

Relief to ART clients in Hwange

Since 2009 the Organisation of Rural Associations for Progress (ORAP) has partnered with the World Food Programme (WFP) to bring relief to health service clients on anti-retro viral therapy (ART) and their households.

Targeting close to 2,000 households the project was instrumental in achieving consistent treatment adherence rates



VSL group meeting, Hwange District

of over 95% and malnutrition recovery rates of close to 80%. This set the foundation for some ground breaking food security and social protection activities that were initiated by the communities.

ORAP's partnership with WFP and the community had a direct impact on incomes which improved food security and nutrition and malnutrition recovery for ART patients. Support group members also pride themselves on now having social support systems through improved access to cash, thus improving their resilience against daily shocks and trials.

The groups are made up of a significant proportion of women, highlighting that these gains are managed by empowered women, contributing significantly to improved nutrition, education, hygiene, health, leadership, and overall poverty alleviation.

Lack of access to capital, markets and logistics for their income generating activities, inadequate disaster risk reduction and civil protection mechanisms e.g. response to droughts, access to water and appropriate agricultural inputs, and education and other capacity building resources are some of the challenges faced by the groups.

Source: Organisation of Rural Associations for Progress (ORAP)

Table 1: Summary of the project's activities

COMMUNITY MOBILISATION AND DEVELOPMENT DIALOGUES	FORMATION OF SUPPORT GROUPS	INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES
Community members were brought together to identify their priorities, resources, needs, and solutions.	These are well organised groups of ART clients of between 10 and 20 people.	The groups identified feasible activities and diversified depending on demand and their ability to supply. Activities include: poultry rearing, garment making, beadwork, retailing of vegetables, groceries, and other household goods. Community saving and lending.
ORAP believes creating solutions works best in amalima/ nhimbe: groups with common interest working towards a common goal.	They implement diverse and flexible income generating activities together. They create a platform for women to participate economically in their communities.	Groups are well trained in business management and administration.

Cushioning the Blow

Droughts cause poor harvests, Zimbabwean smallholder farmers receive payout

Smallholder farmers in Africa have long borne the brunt of the adverse effects of global climate change. They are perpetually at the mercy of unpredictable weather patterns and fear total losses in the event of drought, as they rarely have alternative plans to fall back on.



One of four automatic weather stations purchased for the project

Smallholder farmers often suffer the full impact of poor weather on their crops because, unlike commercial farmers, they are unlikely to take out insurance to mitigate such risks.

However, with the implementation of the *Weather Index Insurance Project* by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) working with a private firm - ZimNat Insurance Company - farmers in three districts of Zimbabwe now have the option to cushion themselves against the vagaries of the weather.

The project was piloted during the 2012-2013 agriculture season and was continued in the following season in Goromonzi, Kariba and Uzumba-Maramba-Pfungwe districts.

"Smallholder farmers' uptake of agriculture insurance is very low in Zimbabwe and at the same time, there is limited investment towards the provision of market-based insurance services for this sector", said Mr David Phiri, FAO Sub-regional Coordinator for Southern Africa and FAO Representative in Zimbabwe. As such, this project encourages both the provision and uptake of insurance coverage for smallholder farmers. In the partnership, FAO was responsible for coordinating and supervising project activities while ZimNat raised awareness on insurance coverage and sold premiums to interested farmers.

In Goromonzi District, located just over 50 kilometres from the capital city of Harare, Anatoria Rusike was one of the 82 farmers who insured her crop against drought during the 2013-2014 farming season.

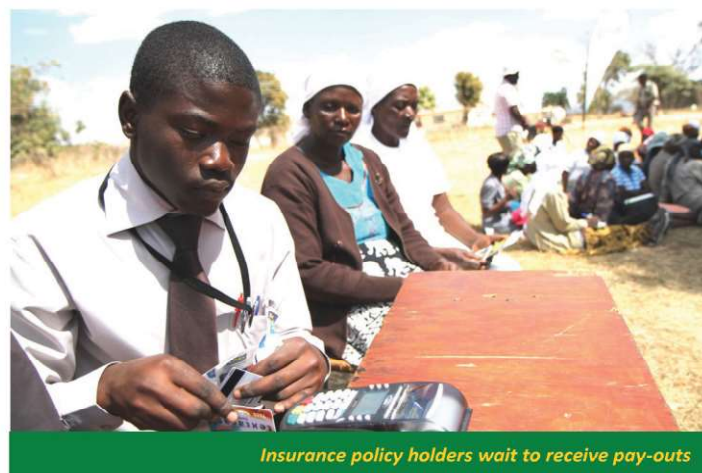
Rainfall data forms the basis of the farmers' payout; and as there was a 24-day dry spell during the last farming season,

participating farmers were entitled to a claim payout.

"I received a payout from Zimnat," said Mrs Rusike. "I joined in December last year after the benefits were explained to me." She decided to join because of her experiences in the past few seasons.

"At times we would have a good season, but there were times when we were hit by drought and this affected us as we would not have enough to eat and would struggle to raise adequate money to buy inputs for the following season," said Mrs Rusike, who is a mother of nine children. Each farmer contributed half of the premium, with FAO providing the other 50 percent.

"This project has shown us that we can insure our crops and make claims in the event of a loss as a result of long dry spells. I am sure that other farmers who did not join last year will do so this coming season as they lost a lot as a result of the long dry spell we experienced," said Mrs Rusike.



Insurance policy holders wait to receive pay-outs

The smallholder farmers' payouts were conducted by means of a debit card provided by the Central African Building Society (CABS), the financial institution that worked with ZimNat. Farmers had the choice of whether to cash out the entire amount insured or keep some savings in the account.

This meant that participating farmers automatically opened bank accounts, a commendable side-effect of the project in a country where 40 percent of the population is not banked, according to a 2012 Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency report.

"I am excited that I now have a bank account. I can now receive money through this account. I never thought that I would be able to hold a bank card of my own. I am very happy that this has become a reality, thanks to this project," said Mrs Rusike.

In addition, the project also purchased four new automatic weather stations, to increase the reliability of the rainfall data collected and supplement the few existing weather stations. FAO provided logistical support to ensure the weather stations were installed in ideal locations within the participating districts.

Source: FAO

A Lifeline to Vulnerable Families

The impact of the Harmonised Social Cash Transfer Scheme on families in Chivi District

“I used cry and pray to God to spare my life, for my grandchildren’s sake.”

MBUYA CHINODA, CHIVI DISTRICT

Mbuya Chinoda lives in Bati Village, Chivi District. The 67 year old widow gradually lost all her children to HIV/AIDS and is now left with 7 orphans to care for.

She says she survived through part-time menial labour in order to stave off hunger, but this was by no means a reliable means of sustaining the family.

Even though she would attempt to send her grandchildren to school, they would be sent away for not paying their fees, leaving her stranded again. She would eventually find other part-time work to find money for fees, books and other school needs. Often, she would have to take some of the children with her to help find work and food.

Thankfully, this is no longer the case for Mbuya Chinoda and her grandchildren, who are now beneficiaries of the Harmonised Social Cash Transfer Scheme. The scheme was developed under the second phase of the National Action-Plan for Orphans and Vulnerable Children, launched by the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare in 2011.

The Harmonised Social Cash Transfer Scheme provides non-conditional cash injections into extremely food insecure and labour constrained households. The amounts of cash transferred depends on the number of family members in a household and is intended to lift them above the food poverty line.

Child Protection Committees (CPC) are critical to the smooth flow of the scheme. They consist of trained Case Care Workers who spread out across wards to identify, refer for support, and verify if beneficiary households listed are legitimate so that the rightful families benefit from the scheme. They work within the Case Management System introduced by government to improve the identification and referral for support of vulnerable children.

Ednah Tapera is the chairperson of the CPC in Ward 6, Chivi District where Mbuya Chinoda lives. She recounts times when Mbuya Chinoda was always in tears when she visited.

“Once equipped with the necessary training from Social Services, we were empowered to go to schools, where we would produce village registers and case files on the vulnerable children,” said Ednah. Once they were aware of this background information, headmasters began co-operating with us by registering the children identified on Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM), much to the relief of Mbuya Chinoda and many like her.

The case worker even helped to facilitate getting birth certificates for some of the Chinoda grandchildren who were now old enough to join their siblings at school, with financial

assistance through the Cash Transfer Scheme.

“A low moment is when Mbuya Chinoda lost one grandchild who was on ART, due to inconsistent intake of medication, often due to lack of adequate food, as the family would often have just one meal a day,” recalls Ednah. Case workers like Ednah also monitor adherence to Anti-Retroviral Therapy. The community is so grateful to this programme because even HIV positive children who had dropped out of school due to ill health are now back at school, healthy and strong.

Now things have clearly changed for the better. Mbuya Chinoda used to withdraw from society, but now her self-esteem has been restored. Ednah teases that Mbuya (which translates to Grandmother) is now called Sisi (translating to Sister), referring to her younger, happier appearance.

Mbuya Chinoda has even joined the local community garden using money from the scheme, where she grows vegetables year-round for her family. She has even bought goats, which are also now reproducing. Now the family have 3 meals a day and Mbuya boasts that each of the children now eat in their own plates!

“Even though I worry that the money will one day stop coming, at least the goats will give use a start! I can sell some for the children’s school needs or use them for food,” added Mbuya Chinoda.

Mbuya Chinoda is one in a long list of beneficiaries of the programme in Chivi District which supports 3,827 households with a total of 19,626 persons. Other beneficiaries hope that the scheme continues for a long time to lift people out of poverty, leaving them in better positions and restoring hope to communities.

On the day of cash delivery, crowds gather at collection points, patiently waiting for the arrival of cash transfer teams, all with heart-warming stories of the impact of the programme on their once desperate lives.

Even local business have come to anticipate the brisk business they receive after cash transfers distribution days. Shop-owners are now also able to better stock their stores to respond to demands. This has reduced the need for community members to travel long distances to larger shops to buy their groceries.

Care workers also assist elderly beneficiaries to plan and purchase their groceries and make sure they get their correct change and that the money is used efficiently and effectively.

As Mbuya Chinoda was handed her envelope, she already knew what this payment would be used for.

Although a lot more could improve, beneficiaries’ lives have already significantly improved. To date, over 55,000 households across 20 districts benefit from the scheme.

Source: Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare

Strategic Objectives:

Reinforcing multi-sectoral nature of food safety

“Farm to fork” approach

Highlighting the need to protect most vulnerable i.e. infants and young children

Ensuring that all food imports comply with relevant national food safety regulations

Establishing structures for public awareness and consumer education on food safety measures.

Ensuring household hygiene, safe sanitation and waste management

Lead Agency: Authority responsible for food safety and quality with the Ministries responsible for Health, Agriculture and Food Standards (SAZ, GAL) and Local Authorities.

Supporting Ministries: Import/Exports, Border Control, Agriculture, Labour and Social Services, Education, Gender, Local Government, Transport, Water, Environment, Industry and Commerce, Small to Medium Enterprises, Finance and Economic Development and Science and Technology.

COMMITMENT 4:

FOOD SAFETY AND STANDARDS



The Government of Zimbabwe is committed to:

“Providing safe and wholesome food to all. Consequently, all food whether imported or locally produced shall meet national public health legislation and international standards for quality and safety.”

Food and Nutrition Security Policy, 2012

Exposing the Truth About Our Vegetables

Consumers the world over are becoming concerned about the quality and safety of food that they eat. The world has seen a growing awareness about health and environmental issues leading to people becoming more uneasy about the excessive use of chemicals in food production and processing.

Despite these concerns, the general public finds it difficult to follow serious issues that relate to topics like food and nutrition, food quality, food prices, food and emerging technology. Equally, many journalists find it challenging to report on topics of food and nutrition, given either the lack of available information, or complexity of interrelated topics.

On 26 March 2014 the Humanitarian Information Facilitation Centre facilitated a Media Workshop which ran on the theme **“Exposing the truth about our food and exploring the role of the media in promoting a healthy Zimbabwe”**.

The basis of the workshop was the growing awareness and concerns about health, environmental issues and the quality and safety of food being consumed. The concern was mainly around the effects of the excessive use of pesticides, fertilizers, and veterinary drugs on people’s health.

Attending the workshop were journalists, representatives from, Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Zimbabwe Organic Producers and Promoters Association (ZOPPA), organic farmers, Food and Nutrition Council (FNC) and the Consumer Council of Zimbabwe (CCZ).



Research and analysis are central to the creation and maintenance of food safety and standards

Exposing the Truth About Our Vegetables

Continued from page 24

A study was carried out among farmers, retailers and vendors in Bulawayo with the overall objective of assessing the safety of food available on the market in the city by the Health Services Department (HSD) of Bulawayo City with support from FAO. Vegetables in the city were said to be irrigated using industrial and sewage effluent. As a result, there were suspicions that vegetables being sent to the market had high levels of pesticide residues.



Street vegetable vendors (Source: <http://dailyagric.realinfozones.com/>)

From the study it was established that the vegetables, though generally safe in terms of pesticides residues, had undesirable levels of heavy metals and the presence of pathogens in poultry was undesirable. There were also drug residues in the vegetables though within acceptable levels, (HSD, 2012). "Despite the fact that there are minimum acceptable levels, no amount of pesticide residues should be tolerated in our vegetables, said Mr. Nyamandi, the Deputy Director Food Safety and Port Health Management, in one of his presentations at the workshop. "The persistence of a pesticide in the ecosystem, the dose or rate of application will determine how much pesticide remains in food at the time of harvesting or point of sale. These traces of pesticides, which remain in food at the time of sale, are referred to as pesticide residues", he said.

The study revealed that farms visited were not keeping spraying records thus exposing consumers to vegetables with high pesticide residues as the person who sprayed might forget when he/she last sprayed or if he/she is absent others might unknowingly harvest the sprayed vegetables.

Generally pesticide residues affect the central nervous system, disrupt hormonal functions and it has been reported that unborn babies and young children seem to have greater susceptibility to the effects of pesticides than adults do.

In Zimbabwe, there is no policy or legislation which requires agricultural imports to be certified as having pesticide residues within the acceptable levels according to Mr Nyamandi. Given

this scenario there is need to develop a policy on pesticide use and strengthen food analysis entities. Consumers and farmers also need to be educated on the use of pesticides.

"The best way to avoid the adverse effects of pesticides on human health is to farm the organic way", said Fortunate Nyakanda, the Director of ZOPPA, which is a national movement of organic agriculture development. ZOPPA has 3 682 farmers to date mostly in Mashonaland East and Manicaland.

Use of organic manure, as opposed to chemical fertilisers, produces safe and quality vegetables according to organic farmers who were present at the workshop.

Although they were facing a number of challenges in marketing their products, the issue of unaffordability of organic products still remains a barrier in the fight against unsafe vegetables on our markets. It was also noted that the uptake of organic farming in the country is still low and a lot of effort needs to be put to change people's mind-set. Resources should be availed for community trainings on organic farming. The media should also play a strong advocacy role for people to take on organic farming.

Source: FNC

"Despite the fact that there are minimum acceptable levels, no amount of pesticide residues should be tolerated in our vegetables, said Mr. Nyamandi, the Deputy Director Food Safety and Port Health Management, in one of his presentations at the workshop. "The persistence of a pesticide in the ecosystem, the dose or rate of application will determine how much pesticide remains in food at the time of harvesting or point of sale. These traces of pesticides, which remain in food at the time of sale, are referred to as pesticide residues", he said.



Organically grown vegetables exhibited at the workshop

Co-ordination Challenges in the Food Safety and Standards Sector

The area of food safety and standards is an important aspect of ensuring food and nutrition security in accordance with Commitment 4 of the food and nutrition security policy. An effective national food control system is essential to protect the health and safety of Zimbabweans. Potential hazards in the food supply can result in short-lived and long-lasting illnesses that have an impact on public health and ultimately, the economy.

Food Safety and Food Quality

	Indonesia	Ghana	Tanzania	Zimbabwe
Clear objectives	Clearly stated	Clearly stated	Clearly stated	Clearly stated
Quantifiable indicators	Present	Absent	Present	Absent
Orderly, well defined processes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sufficient funding to implement	Insufficient	Sufficient	Insufficient	Insufficient
Stakeholder Recognition and cooperation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Defined expectations	Not well defined	Well defined	Well defined	Not well defined
Monitoring and Evaluation process	Yes for periodical monitoring	Yes, evaluation planned but not yet carried out	Yes-ongoing	Yes -ongoing



Source: <http://www.slideshare.net/SophiaAmenyah/healthy-behaviour-food-safety-and-quality-policy-comparison-fin>

Food safety and standards are also critical in enabling Zimbabwe to assure the safety and quality of foods entering its borders as well as those products being exported on international markets conform to national and international requirements. Currently, food safety and standards in Zimbabwe are largely compromised due to incoherent and disjointed legislation and weaknesses in surveillance, monitoring and enforcement.

In 2013, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations conducted a review to assess the current food safety systems and institutional, legal and regulatory framework of the food control system in Zimbabwe. The aim of the study was to identify needs and challenges in the area, and make recommendations to strengthen current system.

The study revealed an absence of legislative authority for the formulation and implementation of preventive safety measures. There is currently no clear national food safety policy, nor has a national food control strategy been developed, resulting in a lack of a cohesive, coordinated system of food control in the country. Existing legislation and standards governing food in Zimbabwe are outdated, some dating back as far as 1924, with periodic amendments that fail to take into account and incorporate contemporary and international principles of food safety. Additional challenges include

insufficient knowledge and application of preventive food safety approaches; an inadequately trained and equipped inspection staff; insufficient or obsolete laboratory infrastructure and equipment; inadequate public health and food hazard surveillance; lack of collaboration and coordination among the various food control agencies; and limited financial resources. These deficiencies leave severe gaps in food safety control in the country.

Despite the grim picture painted here, there is still hope yet. The draft Food Control Bill, 2011, which would establish the Food Control Authority of Zimbabwe is a good starting point.

Following the 2013 FAO situational analysis of the food control system in Zimbabwe, the organization has entered into a 2 year Technical Co-operation Programme with the Government of Zimbabwe, that runs until the year 2016. The partnership will address the issues raised in the report and strengthen the food control system in Zimbabwe.

The programme, funded to the tune of just over US\$450,000 will utilize a participatory approach by actively involving the multiple stakeholders in the analysis of issues and in making decisions on the solutions to ensure collective ownership of the process.

Specifically, the project aims to assess and rationalize the institutional and regulatory framework to operate an effective and sustainable food control system. Training will be developed to fill key capacity and competency gaps.

The Zimbabwe Food Control System will therefore be strengthened through an enhanced regulatory/institutional framework, developed capacities in food safety management, inspection, surveillance and a more effective coordination mechanism. This will contribute to public health protection and market opportunities through an improved food control system.

Source: FNC

*“Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient **safe** and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”*

WORLD FOOD SUMMIT, ROME 1996

Strategic Objectives:

Ensuring that behavior change communication and nutrition education strategies which explicitly reflect a demonstrated understanding of the social and cultural aspects of the Zimbabwean society are in place, and are an integral part of all nutrition interventions, including those in other sectors such as water and sanitation and agriculture.

Role of nutrition in health and also in other sectors

Addressing all types of malnutrition including obesity

Diversity and quality of diet a priority

Lead Agency: Ministry responsible for Health

Supporting Ministries: Agriculture, Labour and Social Services, Education, Gender, Local Government, Transport, Water, Environment, Industry and Commerce, Information and Communication, Public Service, Lands, Small to Medium Enterprises, Science and Technology and all Local Authorities.

COMMITMENT 5:

NUTRITION SECURITY



The Government of Zimbabwe is committed to:

“Ensuring nutrition security for all through the implementation of evidence-based nutrition interventions that are integrated within a broad public health framework, including health services, water and sanitation”

Food and Nutrition Security Policy, 2012

The Advent of Technology in Nutrition Promotion

Successful World Breastfeeding Week commemorations using Whatsapp

Traditional media such as television or radio, can no longer be the only means relied upon to transmit important messages to wide audiences. Mobile social media is fast becoming an effective means of communicating to vast audiences in real-time. In Zimbabwe, Facebook and Whatsapp appear to be dominant social media platforms connecting varied segments of society. Whether it be a church forum, women's group, or a quick chat among friends, thousands of Zimbabweans are remaining connected through these vital channels.

Recently, the Ministry of Health and Child Care took advantage of the Whatsapp messaging platform in promoting World

Breastfeeding Week, as well as to stimulate and facilitate discussions among hundreds on the important practice.

Various edutainment activities were also conducted across Harare, to raise awareness on and engage in discussions around breastfeeding with the public.

World Breastfeeding Week is a campaign that was launched by the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) 23 years ago, to focus and facilitate actions that protect, promote and support breastfeeding. It is a campaign that is commemorated all over the World during the first week of August (1 – 7 August) every year.

The 2014 theme, **“Breastfeeding: a winning goal for life!”** responded to the current Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) countdown and the post-2015 agenda, involving different groups of people and of various ages.



Youth volunteers performing during the breastfeeding street campaign in Harare

The Advent of Technology in Nutrition Promotion

Continued from page 27

The 2014 Agenda of the breastfeeding commemorations showed how breastfeeding is linked to each of the eight MDGs and by protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding one can contribute immensely to the fight against poverty and promote healthy and sustainable development.

In most circles, breastfeeding is viewed as a simple custom that all mammals use to feed their young ones, and generally people take this for granted. However scientists and health care professionals have shown through studies that breastfeeding saves lives of infants and young children. Exclusive breastfeeding and adequate complementary feeding are key interventions for improving child survival, potentially saving the lives of about 20% of children under five.

In Zimbabwe almost every woman who has a new born baby breastfeeds their child at some point before the child reaches two years. According to the recent Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) conducted in 2014, about 98.1% of women breastfeed their child at some point in life. But what is worrying is that only 41 out of a 100 women are able to exclusively breastfeed their babies in the initial six months. These figures reflect the mammoth task that the Ministry of Health and Child Care has in improving breastfeeding practices especially among difficult to reach groups such as young mothers and young adult parents.

During this breastfeeding campaign, the National Nutrition Department (NND) worked together with a Youth organization called Nutri@ctive to raise awareness on breastfeeding and infant and young child feeding. Groups targeted included young mothers, young adult parents, the youth, working mothers and men.

Whatsapp Breastfeeding Promotion Campaign

The commemorations started with a training workshop on Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) for a group of young people involved in spearheading the World Breastfeeding Day Whatsapp campaign. Over 55 youths were trained and created a WhatsApp group, 'the breastfeeding warriors', where they would devise breastfeeding promoting messages to be forwarded to various individuals targeting mainly the youth and

young adult parents. About 1 900 people received breastfeeding promotion messages through WhatsApp during the week. Questions and people's misconceptions on breastfeeding were addressed on a Facebook page created and on the campaign website (www.nutriactive.org).

Breastfeeding Edutainment Along First Street, Harare

Following this was breastfeeding street awareness campaign that was held from the 21st – 23rd of August 2014 at corner First Street and George Silundika Avenue. Through music, dance and competitions, people were directed to the breastfeeding tent



Counselling services offered during the street campaign

where trained counsellors were available to advise and answer questions on infant and young child feeding. Counselling on breastfeeding was provided to pregnant and lactating mothers to promote exclusive breastfeeding. Misconceptions around infant and young child feeding were also addressed. The event enabled interaction among health workers, youth volunteers and the public. More than 7 000 people attended the Harare First street breastfeeding campaign.

A campaign van with youths performing various edutainment activities travelled around Harare raising awareness and disseminating information on breastfeeding during the campaign. The truck went to areas such as bus termini and downtown areas where there were large numbers of people, to increase outreach

efforts.

The 2014 edition of the commemorations were unique in that they involved the youth and targeted people in cities and communities. Provincial commemorations were also carried out around the country. In Zaka, Masvingo Province, it was hive of activity with local drama groups, school children and local Church groups in Chief Nhema's area entertaining communities and officials from various sectors. The multi-sectoral attendance indicated a commitment towards attainment of one of the key goals of improving maternal and child health. In Manicaland Province, the commemoration was held in Dora community of Mutare District.

Great appreciation is extended to the great work by everyone in making 2014 World Breastfeeding Week a success. It is hoped that this zeal will extend to 2015 commemorations whose theme is; '**Breastfeeding and Work - Let's Make it Work**'

Source: Ministry of Health and Child Care

Ensure Engages Apostolic and Zionist Sects on Nutrition Issues

“Hatimbodi kuona madzimai edu nevana vachienda pa Clinic! Kana, hazviite!” (“We do not ever want to see our wives and children going to clinics. Never! We will not allow this!”). These words were scribbled on a piece of paper by a high ranking member of the Johanne Masowe church at one of the initial ENSURE nutrition meetings.

It is often a common experience in humanitarian programming to encounter initial barriers that are related to community resistance to new concepts and/or a lack of full participation by the target participants. ENSURE was not exempted from this reality in the first year of its program as an estimated 12 percent of the resident population of Apostolic and Zionist women in the program areas in Chipinge decided not to participate. This emanated, in large part, from the religious doctrines of these denominations which forbid the use of any form of modern health services. This in turn posed significant challenges for ENSURE in meeting the nutrition component objectives and targets of the program. In the face of this challenge, the ENSURE team responded with determination and enthusiasm. The resulting story was perhaps one of the most significant accomplishments of the first year of the program’s implementation.

At the heart of the USAID-funded ENSURE food security program is the first strategic objective *to improve the nutritional status of children under 5 years of age through the First 1,000 Days of Life approach*. This intervention recognizes the critical importance of child nutrition from conception to 24 months of age and achieves its impact by combining the efforts of the formal health system with those of volunteers through the Care Group methodology to address poor nutritional practices within the communities.

ZIMSTAT and ICF International in 2012 reported that chronic malnutrition (low height for age, <-2 Z-score) is “high” in ENSURE districts—32 percent in Bikita, Chivi, and Zaka in Masvingo, 35 percent in Buhera and 37 percent in Chipinge in Manicaland. In both Manicaland and Masvingo, neither low body mass index (BMI, <18.5kg/m²) of women of reproductive age (WRA) nor low birth weight (LBW, <2500g), over 11 and 10 percent, respectively, are of severe public health significance. Within ENSURE’s focus areas, over 22 percent of women of reproductive age are anaemic and less than 35 percent of pregnant women consume iron or folate and have a protein deficient diet.

The UNICEF IYCF Formative Research Report notes that Manicaland has one of the highest rates of CU5 who are too short for their age (34 percent) with Masvingo also reporting almost one third of children (31 percent) being too short for their age. It is to this end that the nutrition team deemed it imperative to address the immediate issues of food access and quality for pregnant women, mothers of children under 6 months, and subsequently for children up to age 2 for **ALL** members of the targeted group, including those of the Apostolic and Zionist faith.

To this end, the ENSURE nutrition team decided to aggressively and intensively address this substantial barrier among Apostolics and Zionists by conducting sensitization meetings with the Union for the Development of Apostolic and Zionist Churches in Zimbabwe Africa (UDACIZA) members and bishops. These meetings also included representatives of various congregations under the auspices of the umbrella group, the Rural District Councils, District Administration offices, Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development as well as the Ministry of Health and Child Care, which served to



Apostolic and Zionist member register at an ENSURE sensitization meeting in Chipinge

ENSURE Engagement with UDACIZA

Union for the Development of Apostolic & Zionist Churches in Zimbabwe Africa (UDACIZA), is an umbrella body of the Apostolic and Zionist churches in Zimbabwe engaged by the ENSURE nutrition and health team with an aim to garner the support of these independent church leaders in a bid to increase the participation of Apostolic church women in nutrition activities.

UDACIZA Sect Statistics

- 33% of Christians in Zimbabwe are Apostolic & Zionist
- 38% of Women of child bearing age in Zimbabwe are Apostolic & Zionist
- 28% of the male population is Apostolic & Zionist

ENSURE Engages the Apostolic and Zionist Sects on Nutrition Issues

Continued from page 29

ensure complete buy-in at the district level. The ENSURE staff engaged the groups through various methods including:

- Group activities - discussing the perceived advantages and disadvantages of the program
- Full explanation of and dialogue about the health and nutrition program, the beneficiary screening criteria, the distributions and the food rations
- Highlighting the malnutrition issues in the region, the causes and the subsequent adverse effects
- Presenting and discussing biblical references to the issues of health, nutrition and sanitation; Luke 2 verse 40 and Deuteronomy 23 verses 13-14

The result of these meetings was a much clearer understanding of and support for the program by the UDACIZA and Apostolic and Zionists leaders.

These initial meetings were then followed up by continued and persistent engagement with the Apostolic and Zionist group leaders in order to create a greater openness on their part to having women and children in their congregations participate in ENSURE nutrition activities (food distribution and Care Groups). These engagements engendered many recommendations and requests from UDACIZA which the team immediately began to address, such as the:

- Use of neutral venues other than health facilities for both registrations and food distributions;
- Conduct of food distributions on days other than Fridays, Saturdays or Sundays, which are Apostolic and Zionist community worship days;

- Registration of Apostolic/Zionist members in the ENSURE program without requiring them to have Child Health Card or Ante-Natal Care cards from the health facilities;
- Conduct of regular visits to Apostolic and Zionist meeting sites to sensitize members to the benefits of the nutrition component of the ENSURE program.

In the end, the ENSURE team was willing and able to positively respond to all of these requests made by the Apostolics/Zionists, which when combined with other factors led to an immediate and dramatic increase in the number of women and children who registered for food distributions and Care Groups. From a low figure of only 10,840 women and children participating in the nutrition component in May, the program was able to climb to over 36,736 beneficiaries by the end of September 2014! While not all of that increase can be attributed to the UDACIZA engagement, we do know that this engagement made a significant contribution.

It is now a common sight to see many Apostolic and Zionist women participating in ENSURE food distributions. More importantly, a growing minority of our Care Group leaders are active members of Apostolic and Zionist congregations, which is a sign that they have gone beyond just participating to actually taking leadership roles in the nutrition component of the program.

In one focus group interview with Care Group leaders in Buhera, an Apostolic woman was asked about how she came to be a Care Group Leader. Her response surprised many of us when she said that her engagement in ENSURE was enthusiastically supported by her husband and that she has even gone on to register her children at the local health clinic and got them vaccinated. She said that this would not have been possible before she became involved in ENSURE.

Source: ENSURE-World Vision

SUN Zimbabwe Movement: Progress Update



In response to a global food crisis in 2008, representatives from a range of groups including governments, civil society, the United Nations, donors, businesses and academia came together in a collective action to improve nutrition. The Scaling up Nutrition (SUN) Movement was launched at Global level in September 2010. The reason for establishing the SUN Movement was the growing global concern with prevalence rates of malnutrition in some countries even in the face of economic growth. Zimbabwe joined the SUN movement in 2011.

SUN countries work through strategic processes summarized

by the following 4 SUN progress indicators:

1. *Bringing people together*
2. *Coherent policies and legal frameworks*
3. *Aligning programmes around a Common Results Framework*
4. *Financial tracking*

SUN Structures in Zimbabwe

Globally, there are now 47 countries that have joined the SUN movement. The focus is on effectively implementing a dual approach in which both nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive actions and strategies are applied within national development programmes. In each SUN country, there are at least 4 networks to support government efforts in scaling up nutrition. In Zimbabwe, these networks are as follows:

- 1) The **Donor Network** brings together agencies, foundations

and financial institutions, aligning financial and technical assistance to support SUN countries, and increase overall funding for nutrition.

- 2) The **Business Network** makes available the vast expertise and experience of responsible business enterprises in support of SUN countries.
- 3) The **United Nations (UN) Network** brings together the UN agencies that have a role in nutrition.
- 4) The **Civil Society Network** includes national and international organizations that work closely with communities.

In Zimbabwe, two out of these four supporting networks are functional: the UN Network and the Zimbabwe Civil Society Organisations for Scaling Up Nutrition Alliance (ZCSOUNA). The EU has agreed to be the Convener for the Donor Network while the Business Network is yet to be established.

SUN Media Workshop

Local media have also been engaged in a sensitization workshop aimed at raising awareness of national and global nutrition issues as they relate to national food and nutrition security efforts. Members of major print and electronic media outlets, attended the workshop on SUN in Zimbabwe, conducted by the Ministry of Health and Child Care, in conjunction with FNC and ZCSOSUNA, in Harare.

Aiming to raise awareness on national and global nutrition concerns and promote more nutrition security-sensitive and responsible reporting, the workshop covered basic nutrition concepts and the current policy environment; including the Food and Nutrition Security Policy and ZimASSET and other regional and international guidelines.

Deputy Director of the National Nutrition Unit in the Ministry of Health and Child Care, Mrs. A. Chigumira, called on the media to use all available channels to advocate for nutrition issues by delivering accurate and evidence-based information. She also highlighted the often ignored value of nutrition in addressing several contemporary health challenges.



Mrs. Chigumira (right) and journalists at SUN workshop

A challenge raised by media practitioners in reporting on nutrition security issues was the limited availability of current statistical information needed in compiling compelling stories. Going forward, it was suggested that field visits be arranged for reporters at grassroots level. Food and nutrition stakeholders were also encouraged to be more responsive to the media in

order to foster better relations. Further workshops and knowledge briefs were also recommended.

SUN Business Breakfast

Similar to the workshop held with the media, this meeting focussed on helping the business community and industry to identify their role in achieving nutrition security in the country. Participants were urged to take charge and contribute to national discussions on food and nutrition issues, as these could have a direct bearing on their operations as well as national development aspirations.

The business sector was encouraged to establish their own SUN network which would regularly meet to discuss its contributions to national nutrition security. This formalized business network should then be represented in the Food and Nutrition Security Advisory Group, a high level multi-sectoral grouping that discusses and provides technical and policy advice to the Working Party of Permanent Secretaries on Food and Nutrition Security.

In conclusion it was agreed that there was need to identify who else to include in the network and to conceptualise its operational framework. Efforts should also be channelled towards identifying 'nutrition champions' within the business and industrial sector.

SUN Global Gathering, Rome

Zimbabwe was represented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Services, the Food and Nutrition Council and ZCSOSUNA at the platform convened for SUN countries to share experiences and learn from each other. Furthermore, the meeting deliberations were aimed at improving coordination among member countries. Discussions were guided by the four progress indicators summarized below:

Planning Costing, Implementing and Financing Multi-sectoral Actions for Improved Nutrition

- Efforts being made by governments and supporting partners to cost and mobilise resources for national plans.

Social Mobilisation, Advocacy and Communication for Scaling Up Nutrition

- Mobilizing societies to play their part in working together for improved nutrition through sharing evidence of best practices.

Reliable Monitoring of Progress, Evaluation of Outcomes and Demonstration of Nutrition Results

- Establishing information platforms at national and sub-national levels, to monitor progress and strengthen accountability.

Functional Capacities for Coordinated and Effective SUN Actions

- Building the capacity of multiple stakeholders to function effectively across sectors and between many levels of government.

Source: FNC

Using Locally Available Foods to Boost Nutrition

Women's singing can be heard from a distance. Approaching the homestead, the group of women and men dancing in circles comes into view, as the songs of joy and gratitude become more audible.

"We are happy that the programme has opened our eyes, and we need not look far for nutritious food. We have had it all along, right in front of our eyes, but we did not see it!" says Loice Marimo, a farmer in Murehwa, a communal farming area located about 80 kilometres out of Harare.

In the middle of the yard samples of dried vegetables, pastries, fruits and chips are on display. Loice takes the visitors around proudly giving them a detailed account of the produce.

Such are some of the results of the Agriculture Input Support Programme, funded by the European Union, the United Kingdom's Department for International Development and the Australian Government's Agency for International Development - that reached over 80 000 farmers like Loice. FAO worked with relevant Government departments, NGOs and the private sector in implementing the programme, which started in 2012 and stretched over two agricultural seasons to end in mid-2014.

"We have seen significant changes in our eating habits, thanks to this project. We used to buy oily foods, which we are told are dangerous for our health. Now we are using locally available foods, which are organically grown. Most of these foods are available for free in the forests around us," says Loice.

In the two years they have participated in the programme, they have learnt a lot regarding nutrition, a valuable outcome, in a country where one in every three children is estimated to be stunted. Stunting is when an infant is short for his or her age, and has been shown to have long-term effects on cognitive development, school achievement, economic productivity in adulthood and maternal reproductive outcomes.

Two years into starting a completely new way of farming and preparing food for the household, it is only a matter of time before they broaden their horizons and flourish.

"We would say we are at the 'crawling stage' because this is a new programme but I tell you, if you come after two years we will be up and running and we will be selling our products not only in Zimbabwe but in other countries," she says confidently, with the other women nodding in agreement.

Loice says a strong foundation was laid in the two years the programme was operational and they will build on it for future success.

"Even if the organisations which assisted us were to exit, I am confident that this project will continue running. There are very important lessons we have learnt which will make us work hard

to make the project a success. We feel we own this project as we played our part from the very beginning as we contributed US\$80 each," adds Loice who is also a lead farmer.

Participants contributed 50 percent while the programme paid the additional 50 percent. The money was used to purchase agriculture inputs through a voucher system at selected agro-dealer outlets.

"We have learnt that we should not always expect to get full assistance all the time. The contributions made us work hard for success of the programme because we own it since we also used our money," she concluded.

Source: FAO

“We have seen significant changes in our eating habits, thanks to this project. We used to buy oily foods, which we are told are dangerous for our health. Now we are using locally available foods, which are organically grown. Most of these foods are available for free in the forests around us.”

Loice Marimo, communal farmer, Murehwa.



Food preparation by local women

Minister Chombo Launches US\$100million Food and Nutrition Security Projects

"In the Food and Nutrition Security Policy we cherish the vision of 'every Zimbabwean free from hunger and malnutrition' and in our current economic and development blue print, ZimASSET we commit to work towards building an empowered society and growing economy", remarked the then acting Minister of Agriculture, Mechanisation and Irrigation Development in his key note address at the launch of the USAID funded ENSURE and Amalima projects.

In fulfilment of its Government-mandated coordination role as focal point of all action in the area of food and nutrition security in Zimbabwe, the Food and Nutrition Council (FNC) facilitated a broad and in-depth consultative process which led to the development and launch of the Enhancing Nutrition Stepping-Up Resilience and Enterprise (ENSURE) and Amalima projects.

The two projects, funded by the USAID to the tune of US\$100 million, were officially launched in Harare on the 19th of

February 2014 and are set to change the lives of over 800,000 of Zimbabwe's most vulnerable people by contributing to the ongoing fight against poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition, while improving child and maternal health and reducing mortality. The two projects are being implemented in four provinces and 10 districts.

The ENSURE project is being implemented in Manicaland province (Bhura, Chipinge, and Chimanimani) and in Masvingo (Bikita, Zaka and Chivi districts). In implementing the project World Vision is leading the consortium comprising of organisations such as Care International, SNV, SAFIRE (Southern Alliance for Indigenous Resources) with each playing a critical role in line with its strengths and experiences. The project centres on three thematic areas namely nutrition, agriculture and resilience building. The Chief of party for World Vision, Mr David Evans expressed great excitement at the synergy between his project and the Government's Food and Nutrition Security policy saying that the end results should contribute significantly to the policy's goal of 'promoting and ensuring food and nutrition security for all people at all times in Zimbabwe particularly amongst the most vulnerable..."

The CNFA consortium (ORAP, IMC, Africare, The Dabane Water Workshops and the Manoff Group), on the other hand is implementing the Amalima project whose goal is to ensure household food and nutrition security. The areas of operation

for Amalima are Bulilima, Gwanda, Mangwe and Tsholotsho. The project is engaged in activities to improve long term nutritional status of young children in the targeted districts by increasing access to adequate and appropriate foods through increasing household production and income, improving community assets and resilience to shocks and improving infant caring, feeding and hygiene practices.

Referring to the pre-launch consultations while speaking at the launch, the US Ambassador to Zimbabwe said that, "As Zimbabwe transitions towards greater food and nutrition security, USAID has tailored its programming accordingly." This cooperation from one of the largest international aid organizations has set the tone for engagement in the area of food and nutrition security for future partnerships. With the Food and Nutrition Council at the helm of the consultations, it is ensured that the two projects will be well aligned to Zimbabwe's Food and Nutrition Security Policy and the ZimASSET.

Speaking at the same occasion the Director of FNC, George Kembo, highlighted the poverty trends in Zimbabwe over a period of nearly 20 years which showed that while levels of extreme poverty had decreased, the overall levels

of poverty in the country still remained high and largely unchanged between the years of 1995 up to 2012, with rural areas being worse off than urban areas; this why both projects have a rural focus. He also highlighted stunting as one of the criteria used to influence the selection of districts of implementation of the both projects.

In addition to this foundation of centrally co-ordinated efforts, Honourable Chombo stated that Government (through FNC) would continue to take the lead in resuscitating and strengthening the relevant local structures that will work hand in hand with the programmes, such as the District Food and Nutrition Security Committees and would facilitate alignment of the projects' activities into government standards. The Minister of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development, Honourable Oppah Muchinguri and Dr. David Parirenyatwa, Minister of the Health and Child Care also expressed their excitement and willingness to work closely together in the implementation of the projects. Other speakers at the launch included Hon. Tongai Muzenda, Deputy Minister of Public Service and Social Welfare and David Brigham, the Chief of Party of the Amalima Project. The launch was attended by dignitaries from various government ministries and partner organisations.

Source: FNC



Minister Chombo making key note address at ENSURE/Amalima launch

Nutrition Gardens with CCBICA

The Community Capacity Building Initiative Center for Africa (CCBICA) established in 2011, works throughout Zimbabwe and Southern Africa towards conservation of the environment, increased nutrition and community capacity training. Among its many programme areas, CCBICA has coordinated the establishment of organic nutrition gardens to improve the health of urban and rural communities as well as further training on food processing and cooking. Below is a summary of the main nutrition garden projects undertaken by the organization in Mashonaland West.



KADOMA HOTEL:

CCBICA in partnership with Kadoma RTG Hotel first established a nutrition garden in 2012. The hotel which used to buy costly, non-organic vegetables now has the convenience of using the fresh organic vegetables grown on their premises. Guests and conference-goers are able to view the demo garden or even attend a nutritional education course now on offer. Now, several community groups, families and organic producers come to the Hotel for training on nutrition and organic food production on the demo plot.



ZIMBABWE PRISON SERVICES:

CCBICA established a nutrition garden at Kadoma Medium Security Prison, with the aim of training inmates, prison officers and the community on nutrition. Through this program the organization aimed to foster better relations between inmates and the community.



SCHOOLS:

The program for schools started in 2012 with the establishment of nutrition gardens at primary and secondary schools in Mhondoro and Sanyati districts. The programme also included value addition, hot compost making, conservation agriculture and tree planting.

KADOMA GENERAL HOSPITAL:



Commencing in 2013, the programme established a community garden to support those infected and affected by HIV and AIDS. CCBICA staff worked with trained members within the surrounding community. Cooking courses were conducted on food preparation for patients and nurses now appreciate the high nutritious value of traditional food in supplementing patients' health. The hospital has also managed to cut costs through the program by avoiding buying vegetables. This partnership has also led to the hospital receiving aid from organizations to support the garden, including a borehole drilled to support garden operations.

Source: Community Capacity Building Initiative Center for Africa (CCBICA)

Exclusive Breastfeeding Protects Newborns from HIV/AIDS



Exclusive breastfeeding recommended for the first 6 months

Chipo Tiripano is a 44 year old mother of six, lives in one of the areas in Zimbabwe worst afflicted by HIV/AIDS. It is estimated that one out of every four people in Marange village, in Manicaland, is HIV positive. Chipo herself found out she had the virus shortly before giving birth to her last-born, 3 year old Tapiwanashe.

After visiting Chipfatsura Rural Health Centre and getting advice from nurses there, Chipo says she made the “most important decision” of her life. “I decided to feed my child breast milk and nothing else. “I knew that if I did not, she could also get HIV,” she says. Exclusive breastfeeding means the babies are fed only breast milk - no solid foods or liquids, not even water, and this practice is recommended for at least the first 6 months of life.

Tendai Gapa, the District Nutrition Assistant with the Ministry of Health and Child Care in Chipinge, says research has proven that breast milk is best for babies, and that other methods to feed the youngsters should be considered ‘last resorts.’

Through a combination of antiretroviral drugs that Chipo took and exclusive breastfeeding, she saved Tapiwanashe from infection. Today, she’s HIV-free. Without her mother’s action, Tapiwanashe would probably be among the more than 30,000 Zimbabwean children born every year with HIV. Their infected mothers pass it on to them during birth, or through “mixed feeding”.

Family is the biggest challenge

One hundred per cent exclusive breastfeeding is “alien” to most cultures in Zimbabwe. “The grandmother will say, ‘Oh, it’s too hot today. Let’s give (the baby) some extra water.’ Somebody else will say, ‘Oh, the baby is too thin. Let’s give him/her some solid foods,’” says Shylet Njerere, a volunteer health worker in Chipinge.

Chipo Tiripano says family members tried to “force” her to give her daughter, solid food and water when he was a baby. But she refused. “HIV-positive mothers have to use their love for their children as motivation. They must not listen to people who tell them to feed their children anything else but

breast milk. Don’t give in to the pressure,” Chipo emphasizes.

But Mildred Chikukwa a nurse at Nzvenga Clinic in Marange in Mutare district says most HIV-infected mothers are not as strong as Chipo and often “surrender” to demands made by family regarding a baby’s diet. “The family is maybe the biggest challenge to correct breastfeeding practice in Zimbabwe,” she comments. Discrimination against HIV-infected mothers also plays a part in discouraging the practice of exclusive breastfeeding.

Chikukwa says men who are aware that their wives or partners are HIV-positive but are ignorant of the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding, demand – often with threats of

Nutrition gardens changing lives in Chipinge

As most traditional gardens in Zimbabwe go, Esinati Simamngo’s did not have much variety. Hers featured one type of vegetable – the traditional covo. Now, that same garden is producing a vibrant spread of vegetables, including tomatoes, carrots and beetroots, which provide healthy doses of essential vitamins and minerals.

This is because Esinati was trained in running a nutrition garden, as part of the ECHO funded nutrition program implemented by UNICEF and the Ministries of Health and Child Care and Women’s Affairs, Gender and Community Development.

Owing to the training programme, Esinati can now harvest, preserve and cook the variety of vegetables she now grows, in a manner that harnesses their nutritive qualities.

Furthermore, through the Food Security Nutrition Committees that were established in 2013, households in Chipinge, Manicaland Province received training on pest and disease control, post-harvest handling and nutrition.

Key among the benefits are vitamins and minerals from spinach, carrots, onions and other vegetables that help boost immunity and slow the progression to AIDS among HIV sufferers.

Under the ECHO programme which started in January 2013, garden activity has increased dramatically to include more than 500 households in Chipinge, over a year later.

Source: UNICEF

violence – that mothers not breastfeed, fearing transmission of the virus to the child.

But relatives who do not know that the mother is HIV-positive in turn demand that the woman breastfeed her infant. “So there’s a clash, and the woman is torn apart,” Chikukwa says. “A mother-in-law is saying, ‘I want you to give your baby the breast milk!’ And the father is saying, ‘No, you are going to give the virus to my child!’”

The nurse says the mothers “do not know which way to turn” and, in a bid to satisfy relatives, end up practicing a bit of both (mixed feeding) and, in so doing, endanger their babies.

Chikukwa works in a district in Mutare where most people are unemployed. She says poverty and lack of development often push in HIV-positive mothers practicing unsafe breastfeeding. “There is no electricity here. And even if there [was], people cannot afford fridges to cool the breast milk when the weather is hot. So they often end up giving unclean but cool water to their babies, to give the babies some relief from the heat,” says Chikukwa. “In this way, the babies are again in danger of infection.”

What’s being done to change perceptions? Thanks to the ECHO funded Infant and Young Child Feeding that is being implemented by UNICEF and the Ministries of Health and Child Care and that of Women, Gender and Community Development, Chipo and the other women in Zimbabwe are learning how exclusive breastfeeding can stop the lack of food from having a long-term effect on their children. Already they are signs that the program is having a positive effect with latest results from the Ministry of Health and Child Care showing that more than 53 per cent of mothers in Manicaland are exclusively breastfeeding their children for the first six months from a baseline of zero in 2010.

Chipo and the other mothers say that exclusive breastfeeding has played the most important role in making sure their children grow up healthy and also do not become malnourished.

Source: UNICEF

Zimbabwe community-based nutrition program helps reduce child malnutrition

A “lead mother” from Buwerimwe village in Zimbabwe’s Manicaland Province, Mindmore Muuyandiyani is 24 years old with two young children. Her first child was often sick and crying at night as an infant, but after learning about better feeding practices, Mindmore has changed the way she feeds her second baby, now seven months old and doing very well.

“Now with this child, I can sleep well because he is not sick,” Mindmore says. “I gave him colostrum immediately after birth and my breast within one hour of birth. I gave him no other foods for six months...Even when he is sick I will feed him because now I know it is important.”

This is in sharp contrast to Mindmore’s first experience with motherhood, when she fed her infant with fizzy drinks and porridge. “I often took him to the health centre, with abdominal cramping, diarrhea and vomiting,” she recalls.

This young mother is now an ambassador for better infant and child feeding practices in her village. Her husband also helps her to ensure that she has the right range of foods to feed their baby.

Significant nutritional improvements in a drought-prone district

Mindmore’s baby is among thousands of young children across Zimbabwe whose nutritional status is rapidly improving. Recent results from the Lot Quality Assessment in Manicaland show that overall child stunting rates in the province have declined from 38.1 per cent in 2010 to 36.8 per cent in December 2013 and Infant and Young Child Feeding practices have increased from 10.2 per cent in 2010 to 24.6 percent in 2013. Stunting is one of the common indicators of chronic malnutrition in Zimbabwe.

“This is significant progress in a drought-prone district with historically high rates of malnutrition,” said the Manicaland Ministry of Health and Child Care, Nutrition Assistant Pardon Binde. “It is a sign that Zimbabwe is making progress on reducing vulnerability among poor families, and enabling well-nourished children of today to help drive future economic growth and productivity as adults.”

Many factors could underpin the country’s recent progress: Greater resilience among low-income households thanks to better access to health, education, water and sanitation services, and programs targeted specifically at fighting malnutrition.

Community-based nutrition program reaches over 78,000 children

Such programs include the community-based nutrition program that trained Mindmore and other mothers in Buwerimwe village. With funding from the European Commission Director-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO), UNICEF and the

Continues on the next page

Ministries of Health and Child Care and Women, Gender and Community Development (MoWGCD) have partnered to reach out to more than 80,000 children under the age of two.

The community-based nutrition program began in January 2013 and targets 10 food insecure districts of the country located in four provinces of Matebeleland North, Mashonaland Central, Manicaland and Masvingo. It is one of the major components of the Government of Zimbabwe's Food and Nutrition Security Policy.

With the program, fewer children are held back by poor nutrition

Julius Madhuweko, a voluntary community health worker in Marange where Buwerimwe is located has been regularly visiting sick or malnourished children in his community to see if they need higher-level medical care. Once a month, he has also been weighing children and counseling mothers on good practices related to child nutrition.

"Since I have been giving these messages, mothers have been practicing the actions and the weights [of children] have improved," 38-year-old Julius says.

An evaluation of the community based nutrition program undertaken by the Ministry of Health and Child Care in Manicaland, shows that the program, as of February 2014, has indeed contributed to improved feeding and child care and thus to lower rates of stunting than seen earlier in these communities.

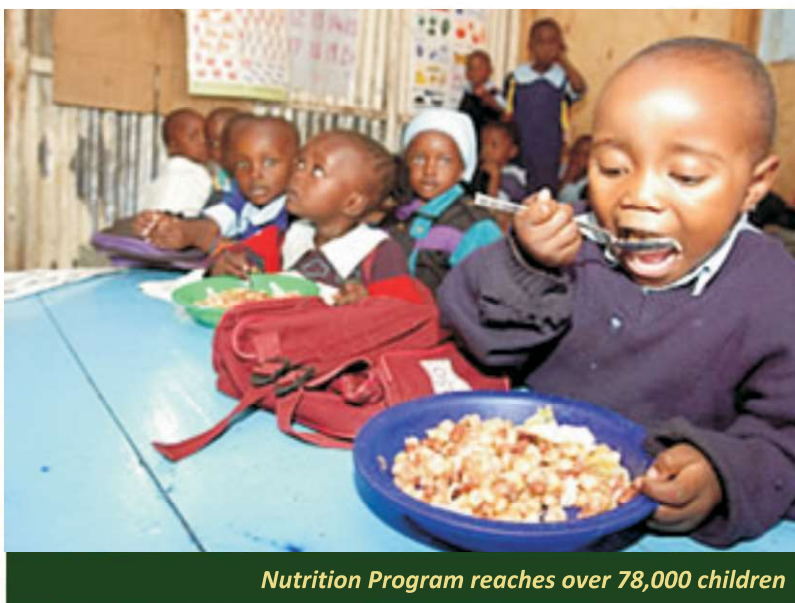
"The evaluation shows that the Zimbabwe program is working, and as we move forward, there are many things we can strengthen further," said MoWGCD Community Development Officer, Gabriel Jaji. "If the improvement in children's nutritional status continues at this pace, Zimbabwe will be among those countries in Africa that have tackled child nutrition problems head-on."

Partnering with NGOs at the community level

The community nutrition program has successfully partnered with NGOs that are able to work at the grassroots level. For example, Plan International, an NGO that has worked in Manicaland and Zimbabwe for many years, has been implementing a community-based approach to manage acute malnutrition and improve feeding practices. This work is financed by the Norwegian Refugee Council and ECHO.

"We have seen many successes and some failures and our projects continue to evolve," said Zvidzai Chidhakwa the Programme Support Manager for Plan International. "We

understand the need to work in partnership and with a multi-sectoral approach if we want to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable Zimbabwean households and see their lives changed in a sustainable way. We are seeing very positive developments in nutrition due to effective collaboration between NGOs and the government."



Working with NGOs, the program has helped to engage entire communities to foster social change. "There are big changes in the communities because almost all mothers are practicing better infant and young child feeding and care," said Julian Kahwema, a Voluntary Community Health Worker in Buwerimwe Village.

Because the community nutrition program works closely with mothers, infants and fathers, and emphasizes rigorous training for health workers, pregnant women are also benefiting.

Nutrition, a key target under the Millennium Development Goals

Community-based programs have been effectively implemented in Zimbabwe and elsewhere as a platform for delivering health and nutrition interventions.

"We know that malnourished children are more likely to die," said Kudakwashe Chiminya, UNICEF Nutrition Specialist. "By improving nutrition, children are more likely to survive, and achieving the Millennium Development Goal on reducing child mortality comes within reach, as is already the case in Zimbabwe

Strategic Objectives:

Need for an integrated food and nutrition security information system

Need to recognize role of multiple sectors and stakeholders

Decentralization of the information system

Platform for acting on information

Ensuring that all components of the food and nutrition information system reflects best practice methodologies

Ensuring the establishment of a central repository for the storage, retrieval, maintenance and update of information.

Lead Agency: ZIMSTATS & Food and Nutrition Council

Supporting Ministries: Agriculture, Labour and Social Services, Gender, Local Government, Education, Small and Medium Enterprises Transport, Water, Environment, Lands, Industry and Commerce, Tourism, Information and Communication, and Science and Technology.

COMMITMENT 6:

FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY INFORMATION: ASSESSMENT, ANALYSIS AND EARLY WARNING



The Government of Zimbabwe is committed to:

“Ensuring a national integrated food and nutrition information system that provides timely, reliable information on the food and nutrition security situation and the effectiveness of programmes and informs decision-making.”

Food and Nutrition Security Policy, 2012

ZimVAC pilots Household Economy Approach (HEA) in 2 Provinces

From the 23rd of June to the 4th of July 2014, The Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC) carried out an HEA

pilot, coordinated by the Food and Nutrition Council (FNC) and Fewsonet. Training was conducted from the 23rd to the 24th of June followed by data collection from the 25th of June to the 2nd of July in all rural districts of Masvingo and Matabeleland South provinces. Outcome analysis and report writing

were then conducted on the 3rd and 4th of July. A total of 24 participants were drawn from various government ministries, departments and partner organisations which included the Food and Nutrition Council, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare, Ministry of Health and ZIMSTAT.

The ZimVAC continues to function as an important forum that provides evidence to inform decision making by government and its development partners in fulfilment of Commitment number 6 of the Government of Zimbabwe's Food and Nutrition Security Policy (FNSP) as well as monitoring the implementation of the ZimASSET. The committee is a consortium of Government, UN agencies, NGOs and other International

Organizations with the mandate of generating information on the Zimbabwean population's livelihoods, in particular their vulnerability to food insecurity and other socio-economic factors.

The Household Economy Approach (HEA) is a Livelihoods-Based Vulnerability Approach (LBVA) used in the analysis of household vulnerability. This approach generates information and analysis that provide a foundation for better understanding the dynamics of change and vulnerability within households. Among other things, information generated from the HEA will be critical for providing relevant information and

analysis on food access and livelihoods to different Government Ministries, international organizations as well as civil society to inform early warning, rural development strategies, poverty reduction, safety nets programming, monitoring and evaluation of food security and livelihoods programmes and food security policy formulation. It will also contribute towards the building of an understanding of the nation by annually monitoring different parameters.

Members from Food and Nutrition Security Committees (FNSCs) at all levels were used as enumerators for the Pilot. This was an effort towards strengthening the establishment of an integrated information system on food and nutrition security and vulnerability



ZimVAC Pilots HEA in 2 Provinces

Continued from page 38

through creating a mechanism for information and data sharing and inter-agency coordination aimed at improving utilization of information for decision-making and action programmes at all levels. It is also a building block on providing guidance to the FNSCs at all levels on data management. When complete, it will serve as a tool for monitoring and will be integrated into the information systems of FNSCs

The training aimed at combining household economy baseline information with current year hazard information to make food and livelihood security projections and also to use the single zone spreadsheet and the livelihoods impact analysis spreadsheet (LIAS) for outcome/scenario analysis and interpret the results. Training was conducted by facilitators from different sectors, with Fewsnet providing overall coordination. Participants engaged in group exercises to familiarise themselves with the various concepts and tools of HEA. The training covered introduction to livelihoods, seasonal calendars, coping strategies, analytical framework, key parameters for

monitoring and problem specification.

In his opening remarks at the training, the ZimVAC chairperson, George Kembo highlighted that HEA is one of the many approaches that can be used to collect information on livelihoods and does not replace but complements other methodologies used by ZimVAC which include the household survey among others. These methodologies are a critical component of the robust food and nutrition security information system that ZimVAC is in the process of setting up in line with commitment 6 of the FNSP. He added that the HEA training was also critical as it was part of the capacity building for decentralised data collection by members of the Food and Nutrition Security Committees.

Following the training, Data collection was then conducted by 4 teams covering all the 14 districts of Matabeleland South and Masvingo provinces. Data collection methodology consisted of district key informant interviews, markets/ traders interviews and community focus group discussions. Analysis and report writing were then conducted. A full report is in place and available upon request at FNC.

Source: FNC

Strengthening Weather and Climate Change Information Dissemination Systems in Zimbabwe

In Zimbabwe, climate change is affecting rural communities more severely than had been anticipated or imagined. This phenomenon has come into being through a gradual process of changing temperatures and rainfall patterns over the years. The poorest rural farming communities especially marginalised women in the country have been at the mercy of escalating frequencies and intensity of natural hazards such as droughts and floods. These climate changes are increasingly affecting and threatening their livelihoods.

Zimbabwe's unemployment rate in the formal sector is largely due to the manufacturing industry, which is operating well below capacity and an economy growing at a rate which has been slow over the past decade. The current severe economic situation has resulted in poor rural communities having to become more dependent on climate related activities, such as rain-fed agriculture, for their livelihoods as there is no hope for support to come from anywhere else. Today many Zimbabweans find themselves living and earning a living in farming areas with poor soils, high temperatures and low and unreliable rainfall. Many of these communities are in a compromised position where they lack the human, financial and institutional capacity to respond to the impacts of climate change.

In these communities climate change has already begun to have a negative impact and is expected to pose an even greater challenge with regards to food production and food security. Rainfall patterns are changing and extreme weather events are set to increase. Available evidence suggests that the country is likely to experience a significant decline in rainfall by 2050.

For many of the rural farmers who obtain a livelihood from climate reliant activities, the situation is exacerbated by a lack of understanding and information on weather, climate variability and climate change making it difficult for them to make informed decisions over the most appropriate agricultural practices. Traditionally, the Department of Agricultural and Technical Extension (AGRITEX) is responsible for disseminating information to smallholder farmers on issues such as agronomy, marketing, technical issues as well as weather and climate. However, the extension services in the country have suffered from a lack of capacity on issues around weather and climate due to limited availability of weather and climate equipment as well as adequate training on recording, interpreting and communicating weather data to the smallholder farmers who need it most.

In response to the dire need for weather and climate information particularly in Chirumanzu, Zvishavane, and Gutu districts of Zimbabwe Oxfam in partnership with the Meteorological Services Department (MSD) and AGRITEX is currently implementing a

Continued on page 40...

Information Dissemination Systems in Zimbabwe

Continued from page 39

climate change adaptation project which is building up on a Food Security and livelihoods project that was implemented in the districts between April 2010 and March 2014.

The project is primarily aimed at addressing poor access to information on weather, agro-meteorology and climate change amongst smallholder farmers and agricultural extension service providers by enhancing their knowledge on weather, agro-meteorology and climate change adaptation. To enhance access to useable agro-meteorological information by the community, an ICT platform is being used to disseminate agro-meteorological information via mobile phones to extension workers, schools and smallholder farmers who in turn further cascade the information to other farmers that are not on the platform.

As a result of the project being implemented by Oxfam in Zimbabwe together with local partners, at least 900 farmer representatives, school representatives and extension service providers are regularly receiving 3 day agro-met information for the winter season and 10 day agro-met information for the summer season to inform their agricultural activities.

The agro-meteorology information being disseminated has effectively allowed farmers to:

- Efficiently use inputs and reduce the risk of inputs losses.
- Improve timing on activities such as adding manure in conservation agriculture basins, fertilizer application, and weeding of crops during the rainy season.
- Realize improved harvests of horticultural produce during the winter season as farmers were now able to protect their crops from frost whenever such was forecasted.
- Reduce livestock diseases and deaths as farmers ensured that their livestock was sheltered and dipped.
- Avoid uncontrolled fires among many other activities.

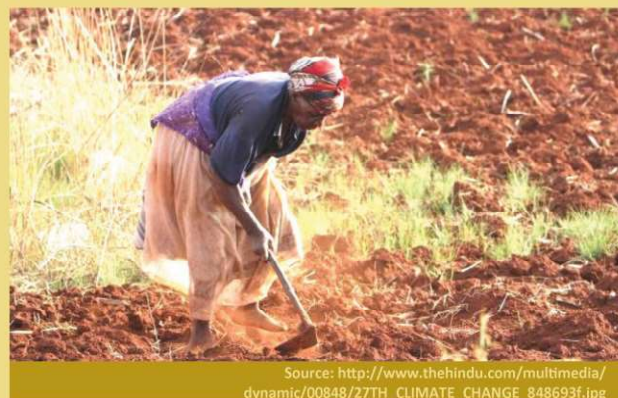
Giving a statement one of the beneficiaries Maidei Shoko, a 36 year old a female farmer from Takaendesa village in Zvishavane said “Nobody can take away the knowledge I have gained as a *Community Weather and Climate Club* member. This season, I have planted short season variety crops as advised in the agro-met information and i am expecting a good harvest.” Mrs Musara an Extension Worker from Gutu district also said, “The project has built my confidence in my work and I am able to guide the farmers in making farm management decisions”.

The project implementation is on track and Oxfam continues to work well with the Zimbabwe government through the technical partners AGRITEX and the Zimbabwe Meteorological Services Department. All the partners are optimistic about the project and what it sets to achieve as well as the different innovative approaches that the project is using in the dissemination of the weather/ agro-meteorological information to ensure that all smallholder farmers can be able to access the information whenever they require it. All partners involved are very keen to demonstrate impact as well as to learn from the project.

Source: Oxfam

“Nobody can take away the knowledge I have gained as a Community Weather and Climate Club Member. This season, I have planted short season variety crops as advised in the agro-met information, and I am expecting a good harvest.”

*Maidei Shoko—Farmer
Takaendesa village, Zvishavane*



“The project has built my confidence in my work and I am able to guide the farmers in making farm management decisions”.

*Mrs Musara—Extension Worker
Gutu*

What is ZimVAC?

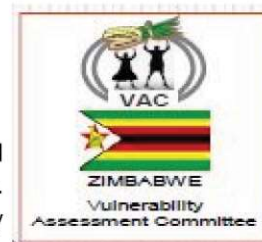
The Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC), led by the FNC, is a consortium of various arms of Governments and their relevant development partners whose mandates broadly fall within the scope of ZimASSET's Food Security and Nutrition cluster. Guided by the Food and Nutrition Security Policy and the Implementation Matrix.

ZimVAC has the mandate to generate information on the Zimbabwean population's livelihoods, in particular their vulnerability to food insecurity and other socio-economic factors. The information is used in planning, programming and decision making by Government and its Development Partners. ZimVAC works through and strengthens multi-stakeholder fora as well as decentralised structures which include Food and Nutrition Security Committees at the District and Provincial levels.

Rural Livelihoods Assessment (RLA)

Is part of a comprehensive information system which informs stakeholders on programming necessary for saving lives and strengthening rural livelihoods in Zimbabwe. It provides updates on pertinent rural households' livelihoods issues such as education, food and income sources, income levels, expenditure patterns, crop production, livestock production, food security, child nutrition, water and sanitation, crop post-harvest management among others. The RLA also collects and records rural communities' views on their livelihoods challenges as well as their development aspirations.

ZimVAC 2014 Results Show 76% Improvement of Food Security Situation



The Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC) released results of the 13th edition of the annual Rural Livelihoods Assessment. Highlights of the results show a drastic reduction in food insecurity across the rural provinces of the country.

Where over 2.2million rural Zimbabweans were estimated to be food insecure in the January to March peak hunger in 2013, these recent figures show a considerable reduction to 0.5million, a 76% decrease. Such a trend is encouraging, as the country works towards attaining its goals of zero hunger and malnutrition among all Zimbabweans.

YEAR	1 ST QUARTER (Apr-Jun)		2 ND QUARTER (Jul-Sept)		3 RD QUARTER (Oct-Dec)		4 TH QUARTER (Jan-Mar)	
2013	241,348	2.7%	802,603	9.1%	1,524,048	17.1%	2,206,924	24.9%
2014	48,672	0.5%	155,752	1.6%	330,972	3.4%	564,599	5.8%

Decrease in the proportion of food insecure households in all quarters over the past year.

Chief among the reasons for this improvement was the normal to above normal rainfall received in all provinces in the past season; even the southern-most parts of the country did not experience the usual prolonged dry spells. This, coupled with the timely distribution of inputs, mainly through the Government Input Distribution Scheme resulted in an estimated cereal harvest surplus of 253,174 MT in the 2014 - 2015 consumption year from a total cereal harvest of 1,680,293MT, (according to the Crop and Livestock Assessment Report coordinated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanisation and Irrigation Development for the same period).

On the other side of the spectrum, the cumulative energy deficit for rural households is estimated at an equivalent of about 21,000MT of maize, and districts projected to experience the highest levels of food insecurity prevalence are: Kariba (40%), Mudzi (18%), Umzingwane (17%), Nkayi (14%), Bulilima (14%), Tsholotsho (14%), Gokwe North (12%), Zvishavane (12%), Buhera (10%) and Mangwe (10%).

The month-long assessment process involved primary data collection from all 60 of Zimbabwe's rural districts, followed by data entry and processing, analysis and reporting. ZimVAC assessments form a vital part of information to determine the rural population likely to be food insecure in the consumption year, their geographical distribution and the severity of this projected food insecurity. This information assists Government and its development partners in planning for interventions towards the goal of food and nutrition security, as outlined in the ZimASSET and the Food and Nutrition Security Policy.

The 2014 Rural Livelihoods Assessment also provides updates on other pertinent rural household livelihoods issues such as education, food and income sources, income levels, expenditure patterns, crop production, livestock production, food security, child nutrition, water and sanitation, crop post-harvest management and issues associated with it. In addition to the summary report released, a full technical report will be made available in due course.

Source: FNC

Strategic Objectives:

Recognizing community role and responsibility in ensuring food and nutrition security

Ensuring that the social and cultural factors affecting food and nutrition security are systematically recognized and reflected in food and nutrition security strategies

National research used to promote context specific best practice and promote local approaches

Ensuring national capacity for multi-sectoral food and nutrition coordination structures

Lead Agency: Food and Nutrition Council

Supporting Ministries: Health, Agriculture, Labour and Social Services, Gender, Education, Local Government, Lands, Transport, Water, Environment, Small to Medium Enterprises, Information and Communication and Science and Technology.

COMMITMENT 7:

NATIONAL CAPACITY FOR FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY



The Government of Zimbabwe is committed to:

“Enhancing and strengthening national capacity in food and nutrition security primarily through supporting and reinforcing local community capacity and responsibility for food and nutrition security, applied context-specific research and learning and multi-sectoral professional training in food and nutrition security.”

Food and Nutrition Security Policy, 2012

Empowering Women through Community-Based Development and Innovation

‘Ebenezer’ is Savings and Credit Cooperative (SACCO) based at Juru growth point in Goromonzi District. The group started off as a savings club for nutrition, agricultural inputs procurement and income generating projects. It has showcased different products at food fairs that were organized in schools, hospitals, clinics and communities.

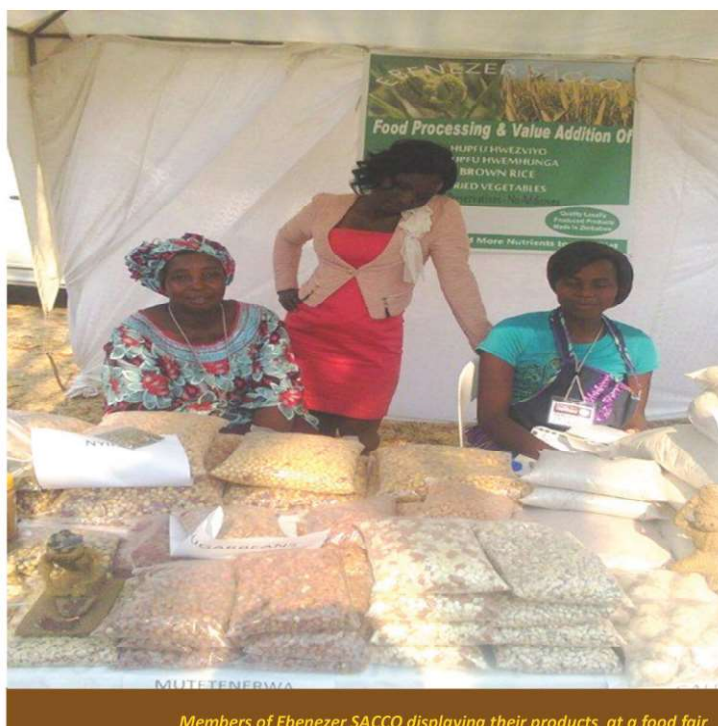
Having noted the increasing demand for value added indigenous products by various individuals and institutions, the group considered the idea of supplying such products to schools, hospitals, clinics and communities.

Ebenezer subsequently evolved into a reputable business support group and positioned itself to fulfil the demands of a growing traditional food niche market, celebrating Zimbabwean culture through delicious traditional recipes. This also provided a platform to spread messages on health and nutrition to communities. The group participated in various fairs and festivals showcasing a variety of value added products including small grains, legumes, fruits and vegetables.

Cluster Agricultural Development Services (CADS) and ILO facilitated the registration the SACCO with the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperative Development, after which it received an initial loan of US\$13,500 from ILO through SEDCO. The money was used to purchase a grinding mill and other machinery, raw produce for processing as well as to pay rentals for the business premises.

Since then, Ebenezer has established a thriving business enterprise involved in grain milling and value addition for other produce. They have secured a stand from the rural district council from which they plan to carry out a number of small scale business ventures.

Source: CADS



Members of Ebenezer SACCO displaying their products at a food fair

Training on Artificial Insemination boosts Smallholder Farmer Incomes

Phillip Sithole, his wife and four children live in Matabeleland South in Zimbabwe, an area characterized by low rainfall. Due to these arid conditions, land in this area is best suited to livestock production. The Sitholes raises cattle, goats, chickens and Guinea fowl on his small farm and sells at least one of his cattle every year through his membership to the Magaya Livestock Producers Association, to support his family. But in order to generate a profit, he needs new offspring to replace the cattle he sells.

Unfortunately, low calving rates and in-breeding hinder smallholder farmers like Sithole in their efforts to increase their livestock. To address these constraints, Amalima, a USAID-funded Food for Peace program, initiated a series of trainings on Artificial Insemination (AI). AI affords farmers an opportunity to introduce new genetic material of adaptable and desirable cattle breeds that are better suited for harsher physical environments. Amalima staff, in collaboration with the Department of Livestock Production and Development, Department of Vet Services, Agritex and local para-vets, facilitated the trainings to discuss the benefits of AI, the process, timing and post-pregnancy diagnosis.

When Sithole heard about the training opportunity, he gathered funds to pay for seven cows to be inseminated at the cost of \$30 USD each. "I am excited for an increase in my animals' impregnation rate and am looking forward to better income for my family," Sithole expressed. Like most farmers who attended the training, the average pregnancy rate using traditional methods is between 20-30%. The insemination, introduced by Amalima, crossed his cows with a more resilient breed to improve the quality of his herd. After

insemination, Amalima staff came back to inspect Sithole's cows and found that 100% of the inseminated animals were pregnant.

To date, Amalima has trained 314 farmers (211 male and 93 female) on AI throughout Amalima's four program areas. Because of these trainings, there is now a 68% success rate of pregnant cows as a result of AI and farmers are expecting their first generation of crosses in early March 2015. With this new technology and improvement in livestock production, families like the Sitholes are able to plan better for their future needs. Additionally, these farmers are able to predict how many of their animals will become pregnant as a result of a much higher pregnancy rate than using traditional breeding methods.

Amalima applies a set of innovative approaches by building on existing communal initiatives and solidarity to address food and nutrition insecurity and strengthen resilience to shocks. It is introducing new farming technologies like AI through its livestock component in addition to teaching beneficiaries to become better farmers in difficult physical environments.

CNFA leads a consortium of partners including Organization of Rural Associations for Progress (ORAP), Africare, Dabane Water Works, International Medical Corps (IMC), and the Manoff Group to increase productivity, improve drought resilience and adaptation, and enhance nutrition care practices in Matabeleland North and South, Zimbabwe.

Source: CNFA-Amalima



The Sitholes after the Artificial Insemination training in Matabeleland South

Using traditional methods, pregnancy rates in the region ranged between 20-30%.

After Amalima-led artificial insemination training programme, 100% of the Sitholes cows were pregnant.

The project has led to an expected 68% pregnancy success rate for participating farmers.

Expanding Opportunities for Women and Worker Innovators in Zimbabwe

“The knowledge of women and other workers has been given far lesser importance. In instances where they have tried to contribute, their contribution has been discounted as not being significant”

(Chris Reij, Anne Waters Bayer 2001:12).

Significant innovations and discoveries by women and local innovators in the areas of food production, processing and nutrition have long gone undocumented. Cluster Agricultural Development Services (CADS) has been involved in documenting and publishing local knowledge and techniques in the areas of water harvesting, land conservation, natural pest management and food processing. This has led to increased adoption of these techniques in communities who benefit from the cost-effectiveness of using innovations, customised suit to locally available resources.

CADS has collaborated with the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development in stepping up its efforts to economically empower women by training women of varying walks of life; teachers, nurses, ministry officials, rural smallholder farmers; in food processing and value-addition among other fields.

Innovations really shine through at events such as the food fairs, festivals and various commemoration days organised by CADS. These events provide much-needed platforms, as they gather captive audiences in the communities within which knowledge and innovations can be spread. The events also present participants with opportunities to create linkages with interested researchers and companies who can potentially expand.

Reward systems that acknowledge the role of local innovator workers and recognize the outstanding contribution to sustainable agriculture by local farmers include the *Phiri Award for Farm and Food Innovators Award (see full story page on 11)*. Such platforms have encouraged innovation and build up participants' confidence to showcase their technologies at higher levels.

CADS has successfully implemented its programs with a 'gender lens'. In particular, CADS facilitates the participation of women in food festivals, district and provincial shows, resulting in disadvantaged women being able to showcase their innovations from community to national level, at the same time, realizing income through marketing their products.

Extensive business management and marketing training has been carried out to help women farmers increase farm output by adopting conservation agriculture and good agronomic practices, selecting high-value crops for production and adopting high quality standards.

Women have also been mobilized into forming savings clubs, enabling them to start income generating initiatives. Some groups have even grown to form Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs) through the facilitation of CADS and other stakeholders including the Ministries of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development and Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperative Development. Savings and Credit Cooperatives have managed to secure start-up capital with local enterprise development associations and acquired equipment for processing, enabling them to generate income from food processing and marketing.

Source: CADS



Solar drying demonstration

“Building the Capacities of Smallholder Farmers’ Organisations for Sustainable Livelihoods...”

CADS
(Cluster Agricultural Development Services)

Input and Marketing Programme Elevates Widow from Petty Trading to Agro-dealership

The journey to Mashoko Business Center, 97km south of Nyika Growth Point in Bikita District, takes us to Joice Makovere, a 43 year old widow with 5 children who is also a registered Agro dealer under the ENSURE program. "After losing a hardworking husband, life was unbearable for me. It meant working extra hard to sustain the only shop and children left under my care", said Joice.

As a shop keeper, Joice followed the typical rural tradition of shop-stocking where available goods stocked for customers consisted of a few packets of sugar, sweets, bread and other small items. Bringing in an average income of \$200 per month, this practice made it difficult for her to raise school fees for her children and to sustain even these meagre supplies in the shop.

Joice was selected to partner with ENSURE in the *Input and Output Marketing Program* and suddenly things began to look up. Having been afforded the opportunity to undergo Agro dealer training at Glen Livet in Masvingo, a new business horizon

was opened for her. Joice was connected with input and output suppliers like SEEDCO, PANNAR, GMB, ZFC, NICORG and CBZ, expanding her network significantly. Subsequently, her business has improved immensely allowing farmers in her community and surrounding areas to acquire farming inputs from her, eliminating their previous need to travel the 97km trip to Nyika Growth Point. "My life will never be the same", she laughs.

Joice was also selected through ENSURE to attend the Harare Agricultural Show where she was able to buy her first stock of 20 mouldboard plough sheers and 10 plough wheels and a variety of additional agro- products. Purchasing products from reputable agro-marketing firms has made her products a favourite with local farmers as the demand for certified products rises.

Enjoying a profit margin of an average of \$400 per month, Joice not only has a thriving business, but has a vision to play a pivotal role in assisting farmers to market their produce and to enhance her business by bringing in more inputs and machinery to meet farmers' requirements.

Source: ENSURE-World Vision



Joice Makovere in her Agro-dealership

Provincial Food and Nutrition Security Committee Training of Trainers Workshops

In line with the Government of Zimbabwe's commitment to ensuring that every Zimbabwean is free from hunger and malnutrition, it was noted that the country needed a policy framework that facilitates the implementation of coordinated and multi-sectoral interventions to the country's food and nutrition situation. In this regard, the Government embarked on a programme led by the FNC to establish as well as to resuscitate Food and Nutrition Security Committees (FNSCs) at national and sub-national levels. These committees are responsible for coordinating food and nutrition security issues and prioritizing food and nutrition security responses in line with the Food and Nutrition Security Policy and its Implementation Matrix. These structures are also responsible for monitoring the allocation of resources, implementation of programmes and providing technical advice to lower level structures.

The membership of FNSCs includes representatives from the ministries responsible for agriculture, labour and social services, local government, education, water, gender, with participation of UN, NGOs and civil society. These food and nutrition security structures should therefore ensure that various stakeholders at all levels are held accountable for their role in achieving the desired outcomes.

Continues next page...

Provincial Food and Nutrition Security Committee ToT Workshops

Continued from page 45

To ensure that these FNSCs are fully functional, the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC) carried out training of trainers' (ToT) workshops from the 6th to the 17th of October 2014 in Manicaland, Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West, Matabeleland South and Midlands provinces. The basis for selecting the provinces as the centre for the trainings was upon the realization of the need to strengthen the reporting channels and accountability frameworks outlined in the Food and Nutrition Security Policy's institutional structure. In addition, Provincial FNSCs are well placed to collect, analyze, compile and consolidate key documents from their Districts and provide valuable feedback that is based on a stronger understanding of the local context.



The purpose of the workshops was to provide an overview and operational guidance for ensuring effective coordination for the full functionality of the FNSCs. This included institutional arrangements and accountability mechanisms based on sectoral mandates as well as the envisioned contribution to multi-sectoral food and nutrition security programming. The training packages were designed to facilitate the establishment of the Provincial FNSCs and to provide guidelines for the establishment of District and Ward FNSCs within the framework of Inter-sectoral collaboration as promoted and supported by the ZimASSET and the Food and Nutrition Security Policy. The training also focused on strengthening the role of the FNSCs in the establishment of a national integrated Food and Nutrition Security Information System (FNSIS) by highlighting the minimum information requirements which FNSCs will be responsible for collecting, analyzing and reporting on.

Based on the thematic areas that guided the workshop, the participants were taken through the conceptual framework for Food and Nutrition Security in Zimbabwe and the multi-sectoral nature that requires the active engagement of multiple sectors, analysis and interpretation. Most importantly, this session emphasized the role of the multi-sectoral FNSCs at the various levels and pillars of the conceptual frameworks. It was critical that participants understood their collective mandates, membership, roles and responsibilities and agree on roles and responsibilities of each and every member institution. Participants were also able to identify the types and sources of data from various sectors, had the opportunity of sharing the available information and got an appreciation on how it feeds into the conceptual framework.

They were taken through the basic concepts of data collection, analysis, reporting and practical components of bringing the Food and Nutrition Security Information System together. The principles of a national integrated FNSIS and creation of working documents in terms of Work plans, Profiles and Reports based on the templates provided were also attained by the participants. This enhanced their articulation of their sectoral and combined roles in providing food and nutrition security related information. The trainings also equipped members with the skills to synthesize and analyse data and to reach technical consensus in providing an outlook of the food and nutrition security situation in their Provinces and Districts.

Participants were also made aware of the importance of monitoring and evaluation of food and nutrition security policies, strategies and interventions. They were also equipped to create databases and atlases of food and nutrition security activities, partners and

beneficiaries.

From the training exercise in the Provinces, several outputs were produced with the primary one being the formalized Provincial Food and Nutrition Security Committees (PFNSCs) membership. Food and nutrition security situation reports from the Provinces which will be consolidated into a national document were also shared. Another key output from the trainings was a data base of food and nutrition security interventions in the provinces which will be consolidated to provide a national database.

Participants also recommended that the National Food Nutrition Security Committee should continue to provide supportive supervision to PFNSCs and that review and planning meetings for PFNSCs should be held on a regular basis. It was also recommended that a baseline inventory of the available human, material and infrastructural resources should be done as this allows for an evaluation of the capacity support and investment in the food and nutrition security arena at the various levels.

Following the trainings, the Manicaland Provincial team then went on to train the Mutasa District FNSC with technical support from trainers from the National Food Nutrition Security Committee. The Mutasa district training was done to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the training approaches and materials prior to the roll-out of the training in the districts.

Source: FNC

Matemba Cakes

Ingredients

- 1 cup dried matemba
- 3 large potatoes
- 1 small onion
- 1 small tomato
- Egg and crumbs
- 1 tablespoon oil
- Salt
- Pepper and curry powder



Image source: <http://www.zimbokitchen.com/coated-garlic-flavoured-matemba-kapenta/>

Instructions

1. Boil potatoes in jackets (with skin on)
2. Soak matemba in a little cold water for 30 minutes
3. Heat oil and stir-fry together the fish, chopped onion and tomato
4. Peel potato and mash carefully
5. Mix everything together potato, fish, seasoning, egg, and shape cakes
6. Roll in the egg and crumbs and fry in shallow fat until golden brown on both sides
7. Serves with vegetables and a sauce.

Mixed Offals Surprise

Ingredients

- 500g offal (tripe, intestines, heart)
- 2 tomatoes
- 1 onion
- Salt to taste
- 1 tablespoon flour for gravy



Image source: <http://www.zimbokitchen.com/traditional-maguru-stew-tripe/>

Instructions

1. Wash offals and cut into small pieces
2. Cook on low heat, until soft
3. Chop the onion and tomatoes and add to the cooked offals
4. Brown the flour and blend with cold water
5. Pour offals into saucepan with browned flour and allow to simmer for 10-15 minutes
6. Serve with sadza and vegetables.

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CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS



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Labelling and contact info

Begin by typing the full name and contact details of your organisation.
Follow this with the article title in bold, capital letters.
Please indicate which Food and Nutrition Security Policy Commitment the article is likely to fall under.

Formatting

Type the body of the article in 1.5 to double line spacing, using **size 12** lettering in either Times New Roman OR Arial font.
Pages should be clearly numbered and a text aligned to the left margin of the document.
Please submit ALL articles as **Microsoft Word** documents.

Article content

Articles can range from technical pieces to human interest stories, as long as they update readers on developments on food and nutrition security issues.
Articles should contain **no more than 1,500 words**, with short subheadings where necessary.
Please ensure that you have **properly proofread** your submissions.

Graphics

Relevant images, tables, graphs etc. are all welcome.
These should be clearly captioned.
Images should be submitted in **JPEG** format with a resolution of at least **300 dpi**.

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