



Zimbabwe Election Period: Weekly Situation Report

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I. SITUATION ANALYSIS

It is expected that on 27 June 2008, Zimbabweans will go back to the polls to elect a President. However, the MDC President, Mr Morgan Tsvangirai announced on 22 June 2008 that he has withdrawn from the presidential race citing that the election was no longer credible and could not be considered to be free and fair. On the other hand, ZANU PF is pressing for the elections to go ahead and dismiss all allegations the MDC is labelling against them.

A number of scenarios are therefore possible and they all have humanitarian consequences. The most likely scenario, for example, is that the elections may proceed, with or without MDC involvement and ZANU PF may win. A ZANU PF win, unless followed by a formation of a government of national unity, may result in further isolation from the international community and further worsen the humanitarian situation in the country. After the Ministry of Social Welfare completes investigations of alleged political activity by some NGOs, they may be required to close operations or re-register, while others may be given conditional permission to resume part or all of their field operations. ZANU PF may adopt a security posture for a period of time to ensure that they manage their victory.

Meanwhile, the suspension on the operations of PVOs / NGOs is still in force, and NGOs have complied with the temporary suspension based on the belief that they will be permitted to resume activities soon after the investigations are completed. Some activities such as those involving HIV / AIDS support and supplementary school feeding have been exempt from the suspension. Nonetheless, movement of humanitarian materials and staff has been highly constrained as the order to suspend field operations has been interpreted and enforced differently by security forces, youths and war veterans mobilized during the election campaign.

After the elections, the government and law enforcement agents would need to manage the elections spirit that has gripped the youths from both parties, especially the unemployed youths. They may continue to use political activism to justify criminal activities. Meanwhile, the week has seen the ZANU PF campaign reaching unprecedented heights, and they have greatly increased their presence in the cities, especially Harare.

Observed impacts

- Enforced stoppage of PVO / NGO operations, resulting in many NGOs sending their staff on leave.
- Increased demands to attend rallies distorting daily livelihood routines.
- Punishment / beatings for those that do not know some party slogans.
- More protection concerns.
- Increased road blocks and stoppage of humanitarian and development organisations vehicles, sometimes resulting in them being impounded.

Foreseen impacts

- Investigations into NGO operations will be concluded. Some NGOs will be allowed to resume work while others will not.
- More displacements, increased incidences of violence, injuries and fatal casualties in the run-up to and directly after the run-off election.
- Increased vulnerabilities as all NGOs / PVOs have been asked to suspend their operations until further notice.
- If ZANU PF wins, an intensification of sanctions is expected as well as a deteriorating inflationary environment and security posture limiting NGO activities.
- If MDC wins, more isolation of NGOs / PVOs as competition for resources for reconstruction programmes begin.

II. UPDATE ON HUMANITARIAN ACTIVITIES

Food Security

- The GoZ imposed suspension on all NGO field operations (issued 4 June) has seriously impacted the delivery of relief assistance including food assistance. Approximately 43 percent of the beneficiaries (135,000) only have been reached. This has been managed by using carry over stocks and early dispatches, primarily reaching beneficiaries in institutions, such as orphanages and schools. WFP's Safety-net activities seek to provide reliable and constant food assistance to the most food insecure groups, such as the bed-ridden HIV-AIDS affected, accessed through HBC programmes, and patients receiving HIV-AIDS and/or TB treatment who are accessed through the Nutritional Support to Anti-Retroviral Therapy programme. The risk to these people's health status will likely be seriously affected by the disruption of both the medical and food assistance components.
- The joint WFP/FAO Crop and Food Supply Assessment, which was released 18 June 2008, estimates that about 2 million people will be food insecure in the third quarter of this year. This is expected to rise to some 3.8 million in the fourth quarter and once again in the first quarter of 2009, to about 5.1 million people. The report assessed national production of maize at 575,000 Mt - 28 percent lower than production in 2007. Assessment findings estimate total domestic cereal availability for

the April 2008 to March 2009 marketing year at 840,000 MT. This is 40 percent below last year's domestic supply. The CFSAM also estimates food assistance requirements at some 395,000 Mt from July 2008 to March 2009.

- WFP is in the process of consulting government, donors and NGOs to review CFSAM report findings and develop operational plans. A budget revision is to follow for an expanded Vulnerable Group Feeding programme.

The WV situation indicates that:

- No new food dispatches to any activity under World Vision. Field visits by World Vision staff are still on hold.
- No field monitoring activities are taking place for ECHO chronically ill programmes; ECHO safety net programmes; CSAFE supported programmes.
- Recent developments indicate that key government stakeholders are clearing the resumption of some urban feeding programmes - especially the institutional feeding and community kitchens. Plans are underway to resume feeding of 1,968 beneficiaries in institutions, 2,443 beneficiaries of community kitchens and 541 beneficiaries through a partnership with some churches in Bulawayo.
- The Market Assistance Program (MAP) which distributes subsidized sorghum meal through targeted retail outlets in urban Bulawayo, which helps meet the cereal gap of around 200,000 individuals monthly, remains suspended and the distribution of 20,000 agricultural tools in various districts is also still on hold.

Protection

- Unconfirmed reports of violence and displacement continue to be received. Although specific information remains limited mainly due to the suspension of field activities, these reports suggest that the levels of violence have not decreased. Reports of family separations and missing children as a consequence of displacements continue to be received.
- A number of UN and NGO staff members have also been affected by the violence and intimidation, further compounding the limited access to the most vulnerable populations in need of humanitarian assistance.
- No unusual movements were observed at the border posts during the reporting period.
- UNICEF, together with the Save the Children Alliance, conducted a second three-day training with the participation of NGOs, FBOs and children on Child Protection in Emergencies covering topics such as family separation, violence affecting children, psychosocial impact on children, child protection mainstreaming in humanitarian response and the IASC code of conduct for humanitarian workers.
- CARE Zimbabwe reports that a total of 65 vulnerable adolescents and youth supported by UNICEF through CARE were expelled from the vocational training centre in Masvingo province where they were studying as boarders. These OVCs had been supported as part of the national Programme of Support for OVC, implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, 26 NGOs and more than 150 other smaller organizations. The programme has been halted by the government's suspension of NGOs field operations. UNICEF and CARE have sought to reintegrate all 65 children back into their families/homes.

Health

- World Vision reports that no field monitoring activities are taking place for ECHO chronically ill programmes.
- From various provincial facilities it was recorded that IV fluids are available at provincial stores but district and rural health facilities are not accessing them. UNICEF is currently following up with MoHCW on this issue and the way forward.
- As the essential and vital medicines programme continues, the consignments of medicines for rural health clinics have been distributed to 6 provincial branches. The biggest constraint hampering distribution is the availability of fuel resulting in non-deliveries from the provincial branches to the district levels.

Mobile and Vulnerable Populations

- The last MVP working group meeting has established that although the clarification letter from government stated that HIV and AIDS programs should continue, the situation on the ground does not permit many agencies with HIV and AIDS programmes to resume their activities as restrictions remain. IOM continues to provide health services through its mobile clinic in Harare. Together with its partners, IOM has so far been able to assist 6576 mobile and vulnerable people countrywide.

Nutrition

- As part of preparations for a potentially deteriorating nutritional situation in the country in the coming months, training of trainers was conducted in Harare (16 – 20 June 08) on integrated management of severe acute malnutrition. Ten provinces sent 46 participants (from Health Promotion, Environmental Health, Senior Nursing Officers and Nutritionists). This is part of the large scale increase of the national capacity to manage cases of severe acute malnutrition through revitalizing in-patient hospital therapeutic feeding care and expanding the community based management of acute malnutrition.
- Supplementary feeding programme in Chimanimani district have been suspended beginning 1 June 2008. This is affecting some 49 725 children (under fives as well as OVCs) in all 23 wards.

WASH

- For the prevailing week, WASH sector reported that all WASH NGO partners have suspended field operations. In addition, many organisations and individuals reported that they are on leave.
- The contractor drilling boreholes in Mabvuku / Tafara departed from the drilling sites on Monday due to interference from youth militia. He has suspended the drilling process until after the 27th June 2008 elections provided the situation allows. Five boreholes have now been sunk. Nevertheless, daily water trucking continues to these two areas as city water supplies are even more erratic in these two suburbs which also led schools to request additional tanks for storage. That will be attended to as soon as schools re-open.
- The WASH Cluster held a special meeting for the purposes of contingency planning. A smaller "crisis task force" was formed consisting of six Cluster member organisations. The Cluster is currently gathering information on Cluster wide Emergency resources and pre-positioned stock available immediately, as well as planned stocks.

Education

- All schools have been closed until 2 July 2008 due to the upcoming run-off elections on July 27, 2008. However many schools still report that the youths militia are still using the schools as basis.
- UNICEF is aware of children who have been displaced due to political violence but does not have figures.

Refugees

- UNHCR's refugee programme in Zimbabwe continued to function without being affected by the reported post-election violence. UNHCR has been working closely with the Government in order to re-establish the refugee status determination procedure disrupted earlier this year. Zimbabwe Refugee Committee (ZRC – Government eligibility body) held its first session at Tongogara camp during the previous week.
- UNHCR and Government commemorated World Refugee Day on 20 June through a number of activities held and performed by refugees at Tongogara refugee camp.
- UNHCR continues to monitor the situation and liaises with UN (within IASC and UNCT mechanisms), international and other organizations concerning the reported instances of political violence and stands ready to respond to the needs of the affected population within the broader UN led response and in accordance with its mandate and resources.

III. PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS

The following arrangements continue to be in place, to facilitate effective humanitarian coordination and in anticipation of resource mobilization:

1. The suggested contingency planning alert window is now extended, 15 March to 31 August 2008. It covers in space and time all possible outcomes of the electoral process, including the impacts of the presidential elections re-run. OCHA has a collocation agreement with WFP during the period, including essential NGO Staff.
2. OCHA is maintaining an Emergency Relief Supply and Capacity Matrix for Zimbabwe, with the excellent cooperation of humanitarian partner organizations.
The emergency stockpiles list is posted on <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/dbc.nsf/doc108?OpenForm&emid=ACOS-635PHU&RC=1> and <http://ochaonline.un.org/zimbabwe>
3. Possible gap areas in coordination support have been identified, as well as needs for surge capacity from HQ and the regional level.
4. Humanitarian analysis, monitoring and advocacy are being strengthened in view of the increased pressure on ongoing programmes.
5. Weekly situation reports will be issued throughout the entire expanded alert period until 31 August 2008.
6. Daily meetings by the UNCT Crisis Group have strengthened UN security arrangements for the country although there are serious telecommunications issues which WFP has offered support through provision of VHF radios.
7. Emergency Focal points contact list updated. *Posted on <http://ochaonline.un.org/zimbabwe>*
8. Capacity mapping of the key humanitarian agencies/NGOs in Zimbabwe.
9. Strengthening of the IASC and cluster implementation.
10. Enhancement of information sharing mechanisms and information management tools where OCHA has stepped up the production of information support tools including situation reports, maps, humanitarian updates and contact lists on a 24-hour basis. Weekly Technical Coordination Meetings are taking place every Monday at 2:30, at UNICEF. They provide a broad forum where humanitarian actors can build consensus on humanitarian analysis, operational challenges and best practices on how to operate in a context of restricted humanitarian access, including violence and intimidation.
11. Mapping and monitoring high-risk geographical areas.

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