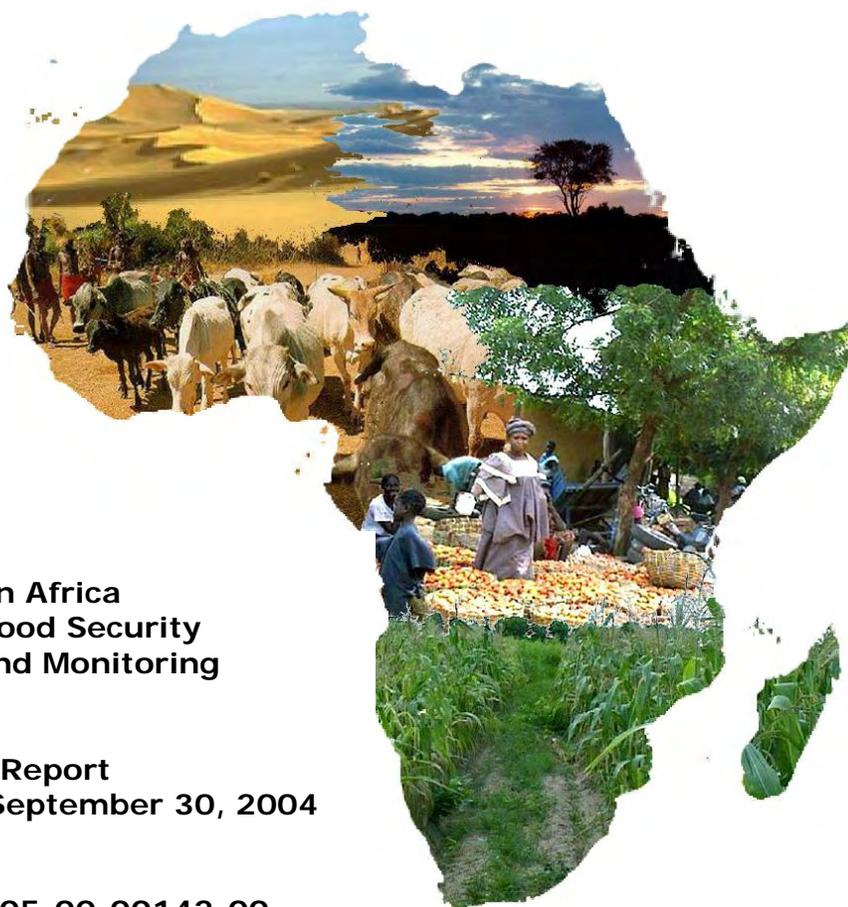




Famine Early Warning Systems Network



**Southern Africa
Emergency Food Security
Assessment and Monitoring**

**Annual Report
October 1, 2003 to September 30, 2004**

**Contract AOT-I-805-00-00142-00
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BLS – Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland

CFSAM – Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission (WFP and FAO)

DFID – Department for International Development (UK Government)

DMC – Drought Monitoring Center (SADC center, based in Harare)

DMU – Disaster Management Unit (former SADC unit, now referred to as a Disaster Management Mechanism)

FANR – Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (SADC directorate)

FANRPAN – Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network

FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization (UN)

FEG – Food Economy Group (FEWS NET Chemonics Sub-Contractor)

FRA – Food Reserve Agency (Zambia)

IITA – International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (CGIR network)

MACO – Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Zambia MSU – Michigan State University

NEWU – National Early Warning Units (exist in all SADC countries, usually based in Ministries of Agriculture, supported by REWU)

NVAC – National Vulnerability Assessment Committees (exist in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Lesotho)

OCHA – Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN)

RATIN – Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network (REDSO supported, implemented by FEWS NET, RATES and IITA/FoodNet)

REWU – Regional Early Warning Unit (former SADC unit, now function within SADC secretariat)

RRSU – Regional Remote Sensing Unit (SADC unit, currently based in Harare but expected to move to Botswana in late 2004)

RVAC – Regional Vulnerability Assessment Committee (SADC + partners)

SADC – Southern Africa Development Community

SC-UK – Save the Children - UK

ST TA – short term technical assistance

UNDP – United Nations Development Program

USGS – US Geological Survey (part of FEWS NETWORK)

VAC – Vulnerability Assessment Committees

WFP – World Food Program (UN)

WRSI – Water Requirement Satisfaction Index

WSCU – Water Sector Coordinating Unit (former SADC unit based in Lesotho, now function within SADC secretariat in Botswana)

ZNFU – Zambia National Farmers' Union

Executive Summary

In response to the major regional drought affecting most of Southern Africa in 2002, the USAID Regional Center for Southern Africa (RCSA) established a new Task Order under the umbrella Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) activity. The new Task Order (TO805), called "Southern Africa Emergency Assessment and Monitoring" started on 15 August 2002, at a time of increasing concern about the potential magnitude of the regional drought.

Funds from RCSA directly supported the activities of an unprecedented multi-agency alliance of technical units from the SADC Food, Agricultural and Natural Resources (FANR) directorate, NGOs, UN agencies and governments operating under the coordination of the SADC Regional and National Vulnerability Assessment Committees (VAC) and funded through donor support. In a 12 month period, the alliance conducted a series of three rolling food security assessments with comparable results in each of the six most-affected countries¹. The resulting broad consensus on the number, location and socio-economic circumstances of those most at risk of starvation strengthened the humanitarian response, which helped to mitigate the threat of a massive food crisis in the region. The impact of the VAC process in Zimbabwe was particularly important as it provided a consolidated and legitimate voice to NGOs as they participated in the assessment process alongside government, major UN agencies and donors.

By the end of the first year of TO805, the nature of the southern Africa emergency had changed. Although the drought continued on a reduced scale, the focus of the assessments began to shift away from the acute emergency phase toward a more holistic assessment of the reasons behind increasing levels of vulnerability in the region. In response, RCSA modified TO805 on 30 September 2003. The new phase of TO805 (from 30 September 2003-31 August 2004) included a stronger focus on rural livelihoods analysis and shifted regional activities to Botswana. Additional modifications of the contract in September 2004 have extended the activity through 31 May 2005 (the end of this phase of the umbrella FEWS NET contract).

For the current reporting period (Fiscal Year 2004 from October 1, 2003 to September 30, 2004), Task Order 805 has been working toward the following objectives:

- Objective 1. Improve information on food availability, food access and rural livelihoods
- Objective 2. Facilitate private-sector and donor responses to food insecurity
- Objective 3. Institutionalize regional disaster assessment, disaster management and mitigation

RCSA further refined the TO objectives in September 2004, to coincide with the new Mission strategy and specifically with Strategy Objective 15: Rural Livelihoods Diversified in Southern Africa. These changes are detailed in the "Next Steps" section at the end of this report.

The major accomplishments during the reporting year, elaborated in the Results section below, have been:

- Botswana-Lesotho-Swaziland advisor hired and orientation underway

¹ The six "food crisis" countries were Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

- Zambia food balance study completed
- Malawi, Zambia and Lesotho yield modeling improvements carried out
- Zambia livelihoods zoning and profiling completed
- Regional Mid-Season Disaster Preparedness meeting held
- Regional cross border trade initiative launched

Context and Challenges

The period covered by the current Annual Report was one of multiple transitions. These transitions provide the context for TO805 activities during the period and also represent some of the challenges.

Shift from drought focus to focus on multiple causes of food insecurity. Technically, there was a widespread shift of opinion about the cause of food insecurity in southern Africa, away from short-term focus on drought toward a holistic assessment of the multitude of factors increasing vulnerability to food insecurity. According to some partners, food insecurity in southern Africa is caused by the 'triple threat' from climatic factors, HIV/AIDS and poor governance. The shift in focus was reflected in TO805, as it changed from solely supporting regional emergency needs assessments toward supporting livelihoods analysis, improving crop and trade data, and enhancing disaster risk reduction activities.

Shift from single regional food security hub to dispersed regional bases. Administratively, the transitions were both external and internal. For many years, strong regional partnerships on food security issues had been coordinated out of Harare, Zimbabwe. All of the SADC technical units related with food security (the Regional Vulnerability Assessment Committee, the Regional Early Warning Unit, the Regional Remote Sensing Unit, the Regional Drought Monitoring Center, etc.) were based in Harare. FEWS NET's regional activities had been operating side-by-side with these SADC technical units for a decade. Other regional food security actors were also based in Harare (WFP, FAO, CARE, etc.) The restructuring of SADC led to the decision to centralize all SADC institutions at the Secretariat in Gaborone. The technical units began to depart Harare in June 2003, leaving a major gap for organizations that had been their primary partners, including FEWS NET. Some partners chose to move to Gaborone (Save the Children/UK), some to Johannesburg (WFP, UNDP, UNICEF) – where a regional interagency coordination center (RIACSO) had been set up to respond to the crisis, while others split their regional food security staff between Harare and Johannesburg (FAO). FEWS NET's regional representative position remained vacant for six months, from May 2003 when the former representative left (Bruce Isaacson) until November 2003 when the new regional representative started (Phumzile Mdladla). USAID/Washington, which funds the regional representative under the main FEWS NET Task Order (TO1), decided that the new FEWS NET regional representative would be based in Pretoria, effectively creating a fourth regional 'hub' for food security partners.

Weak collaboration with SADC due to restructuring and political issues. Historically, SADC has been a primary partner of FEWS NET at the regional level. As mentioned above, FEWS NET sat within the SADC offices in Harare for many years and carried out a number of joint activities including bulletins, assessments, capacity building and others. This collaboration has weakened over the last few years. A major reason for the weakened collaboration has been the restructuring of SADC and the resultant redefinition of roles, responsibilities and partnerships. Although FEWS NET has continued to work closely with the RVAC and the RRSU, this has been possible because both groups have not yet been fully integrated into SADC Secretariat structures. US-SADC relations have also been constrained by political factors, especially related to Zimbabwe.

Shift toward new RCSA rural livelihoods strategy. From the beginning of this reporting period, RCSA notified FEWS NET that the context of RCSA-supported activities would change as RCSA developed its new Strategy. FEWS NET participated in a number of discussions with RCSA and other partners where the new strategy was defined. Most of the RCSA staff who had been managing the TO805 activities under the Agriculture and Natural Resources Management office (SO13) left RCSA by December 2003, leading to a number of staffing transitions that impacted the Task Order.

Despite all of these transitions, progress was made toward each of the TO objectives. By the end of the current reporting period, the transitions have been completed, new staff is in place and significant progress is expected to occur under in the remaining months of this Task Order (through May 2005). The next sections highlights the results for the reporting period, by objective, and the final section lays out the next steps for TO805 between now and May 31, 2005.

Results

This section is organized according to the three objectives and 10 major tasks that were included in the work plan operational during this period. The objectives and major tasks are summarized below:

Objective	Major Tasks
Objective 1. Improve information on food availability, food access and rural livelihoods	1.1. Create/Update rural livelihood profiles 1.2. Improve crop production data for local levels 1.3. Improve data on food needs 1.4. Improve availability of food security monitoring information in "non-presence" countries
Objective 2. Facilitate private-sector and donor responses to food insecurity	2.1. Support emergency assessments of the food security situation. 2.2. Improve information on regional food trade and regional price trends to better assess regional food security 2.3. Disseminate cross-border food flow and price information
Objective 3. Institutionalize regional disaster assessment, disaster management and mitigation	3.1. Strengthen regional disaster management and contingency planning structures 3.2. Assess current season's conditions and outlook for disaster preparedness 3.3. Improve regional (RVAC) and national (NVAC) vulnerability assessment committee processes

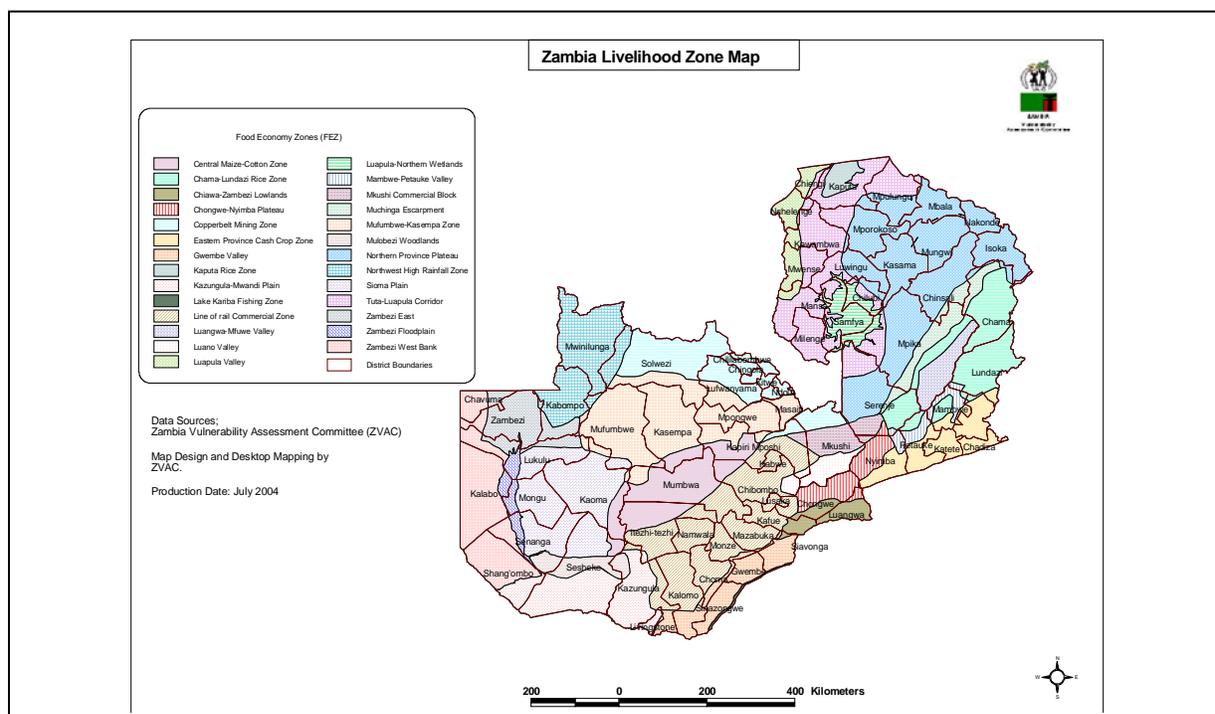
Objective 1. Improve information on food availability, food access and rural livelihoods

Objective 1 was aimed at improving some of the basic information and data needed to better monitor food security and rural livelihoods. The RCSA-supported rolling emergency assessments of 2002/03 showed that there were major gaps in information; this objective sought to fill some of those key gaps in close collaboration with partners.

1.1. Create/Update rural livelihood profiles

The work plan had proposed to carry out livelihood profiling in Zambia and Zimbabwe, but RCSA only approved funding for Zambia. (The Zimbabwe work is proceeding with other financing.) In Zambia, TO805 supported three consultants from the FEWS NET sub-contractor Food Economy Group (FEG) to support the Zambia Vulnerability Assessment Committee (VAC) in the creation of updated livelihood zones for Zambia and in carrying out in-depth livelihood profiles in four zones. The field work took place in June-July 2004 and included major capacity development exercises for the VAC. The TO805 funding was complemented by funding from DFID through the RVAC, as well as field support from WFP, FAO, UNICEF, and CARE.

Significant achievements were made during the consultancy. More than 20 members of the VAC have now received in-depth training and field exposure to livelihoods assessment. Before this consultancy, only five VAC members had been exposed to the techniques. In addition, more than 40 people representing over 20 different institutions (central and provincial government, donors, UN, NGOs, university) participated in the two-day national zoning workshop. The resulting livelihoods map has been developed based on this broad consensus.



More in-depth training was provided to the 20 VAC members who carried out the field research in the four target livelihood zones. Before going to the field, these 20 people from

14 institutions received four days of in-depth training on how to conduct a food economy baseline assessment and how to use baseline assessments for future monitoring and analysis of shocks. The workshop participants were divided into four teams for fieldwork in four livelihood zones: Sioma Plains (in Western Province), Zambezi West Bank (in Northwest Province), Chongwe-Nyimba Plateau (in Eastern Province) and Gwembe Valley (in Southern Province). The three consultants funded by TO805 led three of the four teams for the fieldwork, analysis and report writing. The fourth team was led by two participants who had taken part in a similar exercise in 2003 and who were confident with the approach.

The profiles that have been produced for the four zones cover the following topics: zone description, markets, seasonal calendar, wealth breakdown, sources of food, sources of cash income, expenditure patterns, hazards, bad year response strategies, indicators of imminent crisis, a bad year scenario and implications for programming. See Annex 1 for detailed report.

Summary of results for Task 1.1

- A national livelihood zone map was produced and endorsed by key institutions.
- Twenty VAC members were trained in livelihood assessment both theoretical training and applied training through field work. This has provided the VAC with a greater appreciation of household coping strategies, scenario planning, and enhanced skills in assessing factors such as HIV/AIDS, health and nutrition.
- Relevant software was provided to enable VAC members to conduct refresher courses or even train new VAC members.
- Four of Zambia's 27 livelihoods zones now have complete baseline profiles. The VAC has included plans to extend the zoning to the remaining 23 zones as part of its 5-year work plan.

1.2. Improve crop production data for local levels

Two specific activities were carried out – one aimed at improvements in crop yield data and the other aimed at improvements of crop area data. Crop production is a function of yield and area, so improvements in both yield and area estimates will help produce better estimates of total crop production. Activities to improve crop yield data included training of national level partners in Zambia, Malawi and Lesotho on ways to improve crop yield estimates and forecasts. This activity was carried out by the FEWS NET/USGS regional representative in collaboration with the SADC Regional Remote Sensing Unit (RRSU). A total of 25 participants attended the three courses (Lesotho – 9; Malawi – 6; Zambia – 10) held in July and August 2004. See Annex 2 for detailed report.

Participants were introduced to a variety of yield models used around the world and in the SADC region. They were introduced to the concept of crop specific water-balance modeling, and how this can be applied to crop-yield modeling. They were trained in the use of two computer programs for running crop-specific water balance models, namely the FAO AgroMetShell, which is run using rainfall station data, and the Geospatial WRSI, which is run using gridded datasets, available from the USGS. The station data for the participants' countries was reformatted to fit the format required by the AgroMetShell. Practical sessions were held in which the participants were given hands-on experience in running the AgroMetShell using their own station data and in running the Geospatial WRSI using the data provided by USGS. Water balance models runs were done for all the years in which climate information was available. Participants were introduced to techniques for calculating regressions between predictors (various water balance parameters) and yield, and for

building yield-regression models in Microsoft Excel. Participants practiced building yield-regression models for various administrative units in their countries. These yield-regression models allow the participants to forecast and estimate crop yield from year to year using rainfall data that they collect and archive operationally.

In Lesotho, additional training was given on the use of satellite image products for seasonal monitoring for early warning, based on a request from the Agromet Department of the Lesotho Meteorological Services.

To improve estimates of cropped area data, field work was undertaken in Malawi to collect field data for identification and verification of cropped area. The data collected was used for calibrating a model that USGS/FEWSNET is developing for estimating cropped area from satellite imagery. Development of the model is on-going.

Summary of results for Task 1.2

In Lesotho, Malawi and Zambia, 25 technicians learned how to run water balance models and yield regression models. Models were developed in all three countries, although these were considered preliminary models in most cases because the input datasets need to be refined before the models could be finalized. All of the agencies agreed to follow-up to improve input data, so that the models would be operational by the 2004/05 season. The participants were enthusiastic about implementing and refining the models. Participants recommended that similar training be conducted in other SADC countries.

Such models can help the SADC region improve crop yield estimates. As long as data on planted area is available, better crop forecasts and estimates will result. The RRSU and FEWS NET are working with a European consortium on pilot projects to determine area under cultivation using high resolution satellite data. These models can potentially complement national field-based efforts in area estimation.

1.3. Improve data on food needs

The specific activity included on the work plan was a study to identify ways to improve food balance sheet estimations in Zambia, through the inclusion of important non-cereal crops like roots and tubers. RCSA also supported the participation of the FEWS NET Regional Representative at a WFP/FAO meeting in Rome, where global improvements to food needs assessments were discussed.

Zambia food balance improvements

Since market liberalization started in 1991, stakeholders in Zambia (and in many other countries in the region) recognize that national estimates of food supply and demand are growing increasingly weak. Many more actors are involved in the grain markets, making it difficult for decision-makers to assess whether aggregate food supplies are sufficient to meet needs. In addition, there is some evidence that dietary patterns are changing in some countries, again making supply and demand difficult to assess. In Zambia, various agencies expressed the need to try to improve food balance sheets, which are used to summarize all of the components of food supply and demand.

FEWS NET/Zambia coordinated effort to improve the food balance sheet, carrying out field assessments with the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MACO); Zambia National Farmers' Union (ZNFU) and Food Reserve Agency (FRA) in November and December 2003.

Because the problem of weak food balance sheets has been recognized throughout the region, the Zambia work is expected to have regional utility.

The Zambia study was reviewed at a stakeholders meeting in February and approved. FEWS NET has been working with the Ministry of Agriculture to follow-up on some of the recommendations made in the study. A Food Balance Sheet National Committee has been established with sub committees feeding the main committee responsible for updating of the food balance sheet periodically. See Annex 3 for full report.

1.3.2. Rome meeting on needs assessments

RCSA funds supported the participation of the FEWS NET regional representative at a joint FAO/WFP Technical Meeting held on 6–7 July 2004 in Rome. FAO's Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS), jointly with WFP's Emergency Needs Assessment Unit (OEN), conduct Crop and Food Supply Assessment Missions (CFSAM) for countries facing widespread and serious food emergencies at the request of national governments. The primary purpose of CFSAMs is to provide accurate, timely and credible information on imminent food security problems in a country or a region so that appropriate actions can be taken by the governments, the international community and others to minimize the impact of man-made or natural disasters on the affected populations. The final reports present an integrated picture of National Food Balance and Emergency Food Needs.

The importance of credible CFSAM results, and needs assessments has been emphasized by many stakeholders including donors, and NGOs. Some have expressed concern over their quality, whereby areas of concern included overestimation of food aid needs, accuracy of targeting, food aid as automatic response to any food crisis, lack of inclusiveness and transparency of assessments, etc. In response, WFP and FAO have taken steps to address these and other CFSAM methodological concerns through stakeholder consultations and review meetings with donors.

The objective of the July meeting in Rome was to continue the review process of the CFSAM approach and thereby improve the quality of this assessment type. Particular focus will be on critical methodological and process aspects that had been identified in previous consultations with the main stakeholders (including DFID, EC and USAID) in January and February 2004.

The meeting provided a forum through which other stakeholders could engage with WFP and FAO to bring about the desired improvements in the needs assessment and CFSAM processes. In the past year, attempts have been made (at least in southern Africa) to broaden participation and formalize linkages with existing information networks so as to improve the quality and credibility of data generated. Throughout the review process of the CFSAM approach, FEWS NET has been actively involved and has provided useful comments and suggestions. See Annex 4 for trip report.

Summary of results for Task 1.3

The Zambia study resulted in explicit changes to components of the food balance sheet, such as new figures to include for feed, seed and brewing use and ways to deal with complicated tuber crops like cassava, sweet potato and Irish potato. The study also recommended institutional changes to improve the accuracy of future food balances, such as the formal linkages between the committees and private sector groups. These changes should help the Government make more timely decisions about imports and exports arising

out of a surplus or deficit. If the Government communicates its intervention plans early enough, the private sector will also be more confident in its response.

FEWS NET participation in the Rome meeting helped ensure that technicians working in the field such as FEWS NET and its partners have a voice in determining the methodologies used by WFP and FAO in their Crop and Food Supply Assessment Missions. This collaboration should lead to more credible CFSAMs and less confusion about different estimates of needs.

1.4. Improve availability of food security monitoring information in BLS

The TO805 modification effective 1 September 2003 called for FEWS NET to hire a “Regional Livelihood/Food Policy Advisor” to be based in Botswana and to work throughout the region. FEWS NET attempted to hire the advisor named in the contract (Chada Koketso) but given that there was less than a year left in the Task Order at the time, she decided not to leave her job with the Government of Botswana. When the new CTO for TO805 arrived in Botswana in December 2004, he instructed FEWS NET not to hire the regional livelihoods advisor. In late February 2004, RCSA asked FEWS NET to hire an advisor for Botswana-Lesotho-Swaziland (BLS). The post was initially advertised in March, but few responses were received. A regional re-advertisement was completed and 34 applications were received. A short list was developed and interviews were held in May. No candidate met all of the criteria, so alternatives were sought including direct recruitment, short-term consultants, the creation of a fellowship position, etc. Finally, it was decided to hire Motena Mapesela, from Lesotho. Ms. Mapesela began work in September 2004.

Summary of results for Task 1.3

The new BLS advisor started working at the end of the reporting period. After her introductions to RCSA and Botswana-based partners in September, she began orientation visits around the region. She visited the regional FEWS NET office in Pretoria and the FEWS NET country office in Zambia. Her initial visits to Swaziland and Lesotho will be completed by early November, in time for the beginning of the new agricultural season. At the completion of those visits, she will begin to produce monthly food security information on the non-presence countries. Relevant food security information on BLS countries will be included in the FEWS NET regional reporting.

Objective 2. Facilitate private-sector and donor responses to food insecurity

From the beginning of TO805 in 2002, there was a focus on private sector responses to food insecurity. During the acute emergency phase, little could be done to assess the potential contribution of the private sector, but by late 2003, it was clear that commercial trade – especially informal commercial trade – had played a significant role in mitigating the worst effects of the major drought. Anecdotally, informal trade into Malawi and Zambia had filled much of the deficit even before governments and donors had agreed on the magnitude of the problem. The eventual over-supply of commercial imports and food aid into both countries can be attributed largely to the lack of awareness of informal trade.

2.1. Support emergency assessments of the food security situation

FEWS NET continued to support VAC assessments of the food security situation during this period. This included financial support from TO805 to the Zimbabwe VAC and the Regional

VAC. Other VAC activities were supported by various partners. In Zimbabwe, the VAC assessment in April 2004 was especially critical because the FAO/WFP Food and Crop Assessment Mission was halted by the Government before it could complete its work.

TO805 funded a Zimbabwean economist to work with a DFID funded statistician to clean the ZimVAC April 2004 Rural Food Security and Vulnerability assessment data, to develop data analysis protocols for the assessment using SPSS, and to generate analysis tables used in writing the draft report. She also contributed to writing sections of the draft report.

Summary of results for Task 2.1

The report has been reviewed by the Cabinet of the Zimbabwe Government and although it has not been officially released yet, the Government has already started using it in designing their social protection program that started in September.

2.2. Improve information on cross-border food trade and prices

FEWS NET worked with WFP to establish a system for collecting data on informal cross border trade during this period. An initial meeting was held in South Africa in December 2003, with USAID/REDSO, IITA, MSU, FEWS NET East Africa, and other partners to discuss the experiences in East Africa with monitoring trade for food security analysis. FEWS NET staff decided that filling the major data gap on the amount of food that crosses borders informally would be a major contribution to food security analysis in the region. Working with WFP, funding was obtained and the initial design phase of the activity ran from March-June 2004. Data collection started in July. USAID/Malawi directly funded FEWS NET Malawi to monitor Malawi's borders as part of the regional initiative.

By the end of the reporting period, 24 borders were being monitored on a continuous basis. The first report on the initiative appeared in October 2004. See Annex 5 for full report.

In addition, regional FEWS NET has been strengthened to include a comparative analysis of maize prices throughout the region. Because of the different currencies used, it is difficult to compare prices. For the FEWS NET regional analysis, all prices are expressed in US dollars.

Summary of results for Tasks 2.2 and 2.3

Although the cross border trade initiative is still in its early stages, it has already managed to quantify the amount of food moving into Malawi in response to the country's current deficit. It is hoped that the Government, private traders and donors will reduce their import plans accordingly, in order to avoid a repeat of 2002/03 when excessive imports arrived, depressing prices and production incentives.

Objective 3. Institutionalize regional disaster assessment, disaster management and mitigation

This objective sought to strengthen regional structures involved in assessments, management and mitigation. Progress on some of these activities was limited by continued weaknesses at SADC, particularly in the area of disaster management.

3.1. Strengthen regional disaster management and contingency planning structures

A number of meetings were held with the team of SADC units that coordinate disaster related activities within SADC (including the former Disaster Management unit) about potential collaboration over the period, but little concrete output was obtained. SADC has placed DM under the political/military affairs "organ" which results in little transparency and little interest in natural disasters, risk reduction, etc. FEWS NET has been actively engaged with other regional partners working on disaster management issues (especially the German government and UNDP) and has participated in regional fora but without strong regional leadership, these initiatives will be difficult to maintain.

Summary of results for Task 3.1

Little progress has been made due to the inactivity of SADC disaster management structures. This activity has been dropped in the 2004/05 work plan.

3.2. Assess current season's conditions and outlook for disaster preparedness

TO805 jointly financed a "Mid-Season Strategic Assessment and Disaster Preparedness Meeting" in Maputo in February 2004, with the Government of Germany. The meeting was chaired by the SADC Disaster Management Unit, along with the Permanent Secretary for Defense from Lesotho. The German Ambassador to Mozambique opened the meeting along with the USAID/Mozambique Deputy Director.

The meeting was held at a critical stage of the season. The first half of the rainy season had been extremely poor in parts of the region, raising fears of a third consecutive year of drought in Malawi, southern Mozambique, Swaziland, Lesotho and part of South Africa. The meeting achieved a consensus about the serious situation, and developed a number of contingencies in case the situation did not improve during the second half of the season. Fortunately, the second half of the season improved markedly for Mozambique and South Africa, but to a lesser extent for Malawi, Lesotho and Swaziland.

Summary of results for Task 3.2

The Maputo meeting in February 2004 brought government, donors, UN agencies and NGOs together at a critical point in the season. The participants were able to reach consensus about the very poor performance of the first half of the season, and develop plans to act in the event of a poor second half of the season. See Annex 6 for workshop statement and assessment of progress. In past years, no regional consensus about the season had been developed until well after the end of the season (April) so this early agreement allowed for coordinated focus on the problem areas. Assessments were clearly planned and carried out in the areas most at-risk.

3.3. Improve regional and national vulnerability assessment processes

FEWS NET continued to be an active member of the RVAC, and FEWS NET representatives in Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe are heavily involved with the respective NVACs. TO805 resources were used to hire a consultant to assist the RVAC with the consolidation/ synthesis of the six emergency assessments carried out in April-June 2004 (in Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia (flooding in Western Zambia) and Zimbabwe). USAID, the European Union and other donors placed great emphasis on improving the linkages between the VAC and WFP/FAO Crop and Food Supply Assessment

Mission (CFSAM) processes this year. As part of this coordination effort, the TO805 funded consultant assisted with the joint dissemination of the VAC/CFSAM results at a Stakeholders Forum on June 11, 2004 in Johannesburg. See Annex 7 for consolidated report.

Summary of results for Task 3.3

The regional and national VAC processes, to which RCSA and TO805 provided major support starting in 2002, have continued to be extremely important for food security analysis in southern Africa. The VACs have managed to forge and maintain an alliance that includes governments, donors, UN agencies, and NGOs. This has resulted in a clear and consistent picture of the food security situation in the participating countries and at the regional level. In other regions, different organizations produce different assessments of food insecurity, which often results in confusion and duplication. Further improvements in the VAC process are still necessary, especially in terms of broadening away from a food focus and in terms of methodological improvements.

Next Steps

As the period of acute food emergency passes, and as RCSA enters its new strategy period, RCSA support to FEWS NET will change. As part of RCSA's new Strategy Objective 15: Rural Livelihoods Diversified in Southern Africa, RCSA will support FEWS NET efforts in the area of disaster management and mitigation. FEWS NET activities will contribute directly to IR 15.3: Regional policy coordination improved.

Under SO15, FEWS NET TO805 activities will have three specific objectives:

Objective 1: Improve early warning information and food security analysis in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland

Objective 2: Improve analysis of cross-border food trade throughout the region

Objective 3: Improve capacity and information needed to assess and manage food security risks

Objective 1 focuses on improving food security analysis in three Southern Africa countries without bilateral USAID missions: Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. This will complement current FEWS NET activities in Angola, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe and will allow FEWS NET to provide more comprehensive regional analyses. This coverage will be coordinated by the new Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (BLS) advisor to be placed in Gaborone. The BLS advisor will be supported by the Regional Task Order 805 Manager based in Maputo and the Southern Africa Regional Representative based in Pretoria.

Objective 2 concentrates on implementing a system to document and analyze cross border food trade to improve assessments of regional food security. This will build on the pilot activity undertaken by FEWS NET in collaboration with the World Food Program. Under TO805, FEWS NET has hired a short term market economist to fully capture, analyze and disseminate the data collected.

Objective 3 emphasizes developing the capacity to produce better crop production data, to forecast impending food shortages and to improve analytical models used to assess food insecurity, including food balances and needs assessments. These partners may include national and regional units dealing with early warning, drought monitoring, remote sensing, disaster management, poverty analysis, vulnerability assessment, etc. as well as other organizations and universities. Special emphasis will be placed on support to the non-presence countries.

Work Plan for October 1, 2004 to May 31, 2005

Objective 1: Improve early warning information and food security analysis in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland

Major Activity	Specific Actions	Key Partners ¹	Lead	Expected Output and Expected Results
1.1. Improve availability of food security monitoring information in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (BLS).	Produce regular reporting and analysis of food security and early warning in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.	REWU, SC-UK, NEWUs, RVAC	Local hire BLS advisor	<u>Output:</u> FEWS NET southern Africa reporting includes information from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. <u>Results:</u> Decision-makers have better information on potential food security emergencies in 'non-presence' countries.
1.2. Assist national structures in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland to improve early warning and food security analysis capacity.	Assess gaps early warning and food security analysis systems for Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. FEWS NET and network partners assist in filling gaps in early warning and food security analysis systems, identified above.	Early warning and food security analysis networks in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland	Local hire BLS advisor	<u>Output:</u> National early warning units and food security analysis networks better equipped and better able to produce quality information. <u>Results:</u> Better information on food security conditions in BLS assists decision-makers.
1.3. Support VAC processes in Swaziland and Lesotho.	Assist national vulnerability assessment committees with livelihood zoning, analysis and profiling work.	NVAC, RVAC, FAO, WFP, SC-UK	FEG (sub-contractor)	<u>Output:</u> National VACs provide quality information on vulnerability to decision-makers. <u>Results:</u> Enhanced understanding of rural livelihoods by all VAC partners leads to better analysis of food security.
1.4. Support Botswana's assessment of needs to create a VAC to support national processes.	Evaluate national needs for a vulnerability assessment committee. Drawing on best practices from VACs in the region, develop plans to create a VAC in Botswana if stakeholders agree it is necessary.	Government of Botswana, RVAC, other NVACs	Local hire BLS advisor	<u>Output:</u> Botswana creates a national VAC, if need is identified. <u>Results:</u> Botswana VAC helps provide better analysis of food security.

Objective 2. Improve analysis of cross-border food trade throughout the region

Major Activity	Specific Actions	Key Partners	Lead	Expected Output and Expected Results
<p>2.1. Improve information on regional food trade and regional price trends to better assess regional food security.</p>	<p>Coordinate the informal trade monitoring system at key border points for the 2004 trading year, through the Technical Steering Committee.</p> <p>Participate in the synthesis and dissemination of trade data to stakeholders.</p> <p>Ensure integration of cross-border trade information for southern African into RATIN or similar system.</p>	<p>FEWS NET Southern Africa, WFP, MSU, FEWS NET East Africa, Ag and Trade ministries in Moz, Mal, Zam, Zim, EU, IMCS, FAO</p>	<p>FEWS NET Regional and ST consultant</p>	<p><u>Output:</u> Cross-border trade volumes quantified; southern Africa market and trade info forms part of regional network.</p> <p><u>Results:</u> Better understanding of the role of regional markets and trade in food security.</p>

Objective 3. Improve capacity and information needed to assess and manage food security risks

Major Activity	Specific Actions	Key Partners	Lead	Expected Output and Expected Results
3.1 Improve crop production data for local levels	<p>Incorporate local input into alternate crop production (condition and yield) estimation models.</p> <p>Develop area planted estimates using high resolution imagery at sub-district-level.</p>	RRSU, NEWUs, Met Depts.	FEWS NET regional (USGS)	<p><u>Output:</u> National capacity to carry out modeling of yield in place; area planted estimates generated for one country based on remotely sensed data.</p> <p><u>Results:</u> Crop production data improved.</p>
3.2. Improve local, national, regional needs assessment processes.	<p>Support improvements to needs assessment processes including the CFSAM and VACs.</p> <p>Carry out special studies to support improvements in VAC and other needs assessment processes.</p> <p>Assist countries with no NVAC structure in the creation of VACs, drawing on best practices from the region.</p>	RVAC, DfID, NVACs, WFP, FAO	ST TA; FEWS NET regional	<p><u>Outputs:</u> Special studies to improve VAC process and methodologies; continued FEWS NET support RVAC; plans for creating VACs in countries not currently covered.</p> <p><u>Results:</u> Regional and national VACs make greater contribution to meeting decision-makers' information needs.</p>
3.3. Support emergency assessments of the food security situation.	<p>Define essential support needs in countries facing a potential emergency in 2004/05.</p> <p>Provide technical assistance or other support to NVACs or other entities carrying out emergency assessments.</p>	RVAC, NVACs, WFP, FAO, SC-UK, FEG	FEWS NET Regional	<p><u>Output:</u> Emergency assessments completed as needed during period.</p> <p><u>Results:</u> Credible assessments of the emergency situation result in timely and appropriate interventions.</p>

Annexes (included as separate document)

1. Livelihood profiles in Zambia
2. Final report on yield modeling
3. Zambia food balance sheet study
4. Trip report to CFSAM meeting
5. Cross border trade bulletin for July-September 2004
6. Mid-season meeting statement and review of progress
7. RVAC consolidated report from VAC