



SADC FANR
Vulnerability
Assessment Committee

SOUTHERN AFRICA DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources

VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

**The Current State of Livelihoods and
Vulnerability in the Southern African
Region**

April 2003 – May 2004

Johannesburg

June 11th 2004

SADC FANR Regional Vulnerability Assessment Committee (RVAC)

- Established in 1999 by FANR
- Comprised of a multi-agency group of technical experts working to enhance food security and livelihood conditions within SADC region.
- Specifically, to :
 - Promote VAs in the region.
 - Harmonize VA methodology in the region.
 - Provide technical, institutional and financial support to National Vulnerability Committees.



SADC FANR
Vulnerability Assessment Committee



Members of the SADC-FANR VAC include ...

- SADC-FANR
 - OCHA
 - WFP
- FEWS-NET
 - SC-UK
 - UNICEF
 - FAO

Associated agencies include ...

- RIACSO
- UNAIDS
 - WHO
 - UNDP
 - USAID

With financial support from (Assessments)...

- DFID

National Vulnerability Assessment Committees (NVAC)

- Like the Regional VAC, National VACs are consortiums of government, NGO, UN agencies and other partners concerned with people's livelihoods and their vulnerability.
- National VACs receive technical, institutional, and financial support from the Regional SADC FANR VAC, based in Gaborone, Botswana
- National VACs led the Emergency Assessments in the six countries, 2002-03



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Synopsis of VAC Process

Since 1999 to present	Developing longer term capacity building plans for VA in the SADC region
June 2002	Initiated a series of rolling assessments in six worst affected countries (EMOP)
August 2002	Focused on emergency food aid and updated CFSAM estimates and assumptions
December 2002	Incorporated more multi-sectoral issues, especially impacts of HIV/AIDS
May 2003	More livelihoods-based assessments, in line with longer term vision of the VACs
May 2004	Progress towards establishing National Vulnerability Monitoring Systems and Annual Assessments

Main Features of Livelihoods Based Vulnerability Approaches

Broadening our understanding of populations facing food & Income Deficits: who are the affected, where they are, how they are affected and what can be done about it, by answering questions such as ...

- What is the net food & income deficit effect at household level, for different livelihood zones and wealth groups?
- What are the vulnerabilities of population groups in various livelihoods, such as small-scale farmers, farm workers and the urban poor in terms of access to food and cash?
- What coping strategies and capacities are available to people (food, income, and expenditure strategies)?
- How can agencies respond this year in a way that saves lives and supports livelihoods?

Regional Synthesis

Summary of Households with Food/Income Deficits

ZAMBIA

At least 39,277 households affected by the floods rural people (36% of the population in 6 districts of (Lukulu, Mongu, Senanga, Chavuma, and Zambezi) A total of 9,547MT of cereal food assistance is required from July to October 2005.

MALAWI

Between 1.3 million rural people (12% of the rural population) will require an estimated 49,970 MT of cereal food assistance through March 2005 depending on the prevailing price of maize, the need could increase.

MOZAMBIQUE

Some 219,000 rural people and these require emergency assistance

LESOTHO

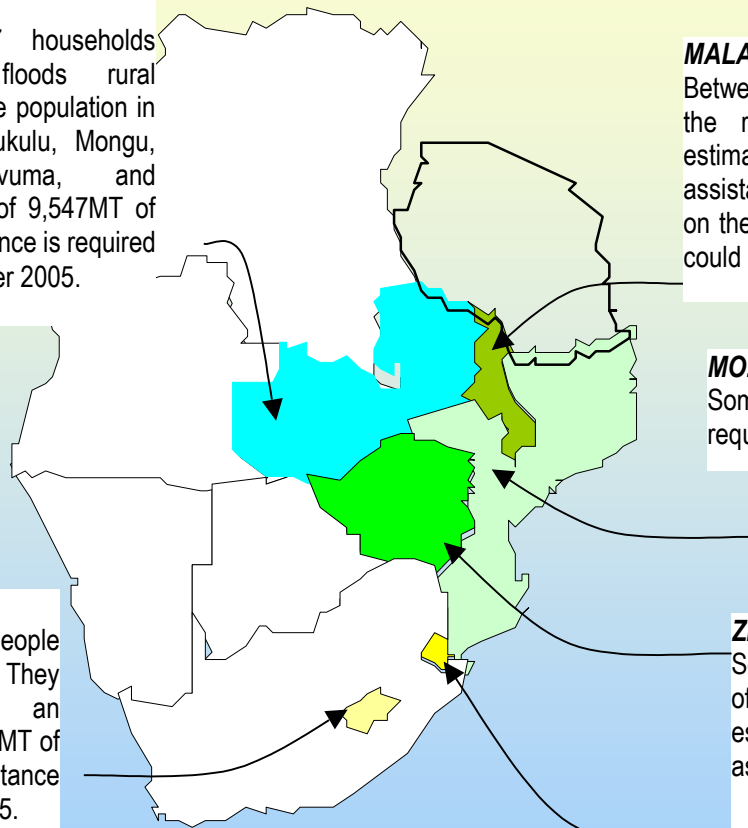
Some 948,310 people have a deficit. They would require an estimated 27,470 MT of cereal food assistance through March 2005.

ZIMBABWE

Some 4.4 million rural people (29.5% of the rural population) will require an estimated 177,000 MT of cereal food assistance through March 2005.

SWAZILAND

Some 600,400 people (72% of population). They would require an estimated 28,335 MT of cereal food assistance through March 2005.



Regional Synthesis :

Common Findings

Economics and Poverty Issues

- Increasing poverty is partly due to poor macro economic performance, leading to the decrease and loss of incomes at the household level
- Very low levels of incomes has resulted in the inability of households to recover lost assets, thus reducing their capacity to mitigate against current and future shocks
- Availability/affordability of basic services (health, education, water, etc) remains a major constraint for the majority of the rural poor.
- Additionally, increasing illness and death of household members (HIV/AIDS related) continues to have a significant negative impact on household incomes.

Regional Synthesis :

Common Findings

Improved Agriculture Production

- Cereal production, acreage and yields have been in decline over the past decade,
- Ability to access affordable agriculture inputs is cited as major constraint
- Increasing food (and especially maize) prices across the region
- Un-diversified livelihood and cropping patterns around maize production remains unsustainably high
- Poor Infrastructure: Access to markets

Regional Synthesis

HIV/AIDS Pandemic

- On top of the economic difficulties already described, HIV and AIDS remains high priority:
- The virus has increased morbidity and mortality rates throughout the region, reducing the viability of already weakened livelihood strategies.
- Orphan numbers and chronically vulnerable households are growing at exponential rates
- Across the region health services are struggling with greater levels of morbidity, resulting in weakened and under-capacitated health system in many areas.

Regional Synthesis

Common Recommendations

HIV and AIDs Pandemic

- Further economic studies are required on the impact of HIV and AIDs on livelihoods
- Government and civil society need to strengthen HIV and AIDs policies and programmes and ensure they are widely disbursed, fully understood and implemented in all sectors.
- General food distributions and supplementary feeding programmes must take into account of providing foods with high protein and micronutrient content

Regional Synthesis

Common Recommendations

Improved Agriculture Production

- Improving and increasing agricultural production is intricately linked to the accessibility and affordability of agricultural inputs, especially for the rural poor.
- Diversification of crop production needs to be intensified to include short-season sorghum and millet varieties, sweet potatoes, cassava and legumes
- As part of a livelihoods rehabilitation initiative, there is a scope for the development of a livestock restocking programme across the region

Regional Synthesis

Common Recommendations

Economics and Poverty Issues

- Reduction of vulnerability must be closely linked with poverty mitigation programmes.
- Creation of appropriate employment opportunities need to be central within all Government plans
- Targeted measures should be taken to address the availability/affordability of basic services (education, health, safe drinking water, etc) for the rural poor. Given the acute levels of vulnerability and chronic poverty, there is strong evidence for a centralized and integrated social and economic safety nets.
- Additionally, there is strong need to remain focused on comprehensive emergency preparedness programmes and disaster response strategies

Regional Synthesis :

Conclusions

- The re-current crisis's in southern Africa are largely an outcome of growing poverty, resulting in increasing vulnerability and failing livelihoods.
- The erosion of household assets, reduced crop production and opportunities for off farm employment, exacerbated by the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS across the region, has lowered household capacity to withstand natural/climatic and policy-related shocks