

Project Number: 200908 | **Project Category:** Emergency Preparedness Activity
Project Approval Date: November 09, 2015 | **Planned Start Date:** November 09, 2015
Actual Start Date: January 09, 2015 | **Project End Date:** February 08, 2016
Financial Closure Date: June 30, 2016

Contact Info
wfp.southafrica@wfp.org

Regional Director
Chris Nikoi

Further Information
<http://www.wfp.org/countries>
SPR Reading Guidance



EP-RBJ-REGIONAL EL NINO PREPAREDNESS FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA

Standard Project Report 2016

World Food Programme in South Africa, Republic of (ZA)



World Food Programme

Table Of Contents

Regional Context

Project Objectives and Results

Project Objectives

Project Activities

Operational Partnerships

Results/Outcomes

Figures and Indicators

Data Notes

Project Indicators

Regional Context

In late 2015, as predicted by the Southern Africa Regional Climate Outlook Forum (SARCOF), most of Southern Africa experienced normal to below-normal rainfall, while the northern half faced increased chances of normal to above-normal rainfall. With drier-than-average conditions affecting the most critical period of the growing season, the production of both cereals and other crops were negatively affected. As a result of El Nino conditions, the start of the planting season was erratic and in most cases delayed across much of southern Africa. These conditions came against a backdrop of a poor 2014-2015 agricultural season which had resulted in a food deficit situation in countries across the region, including Madagascar, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Lesotho, Mozambique, and Zambia.

Following discussions with Regional Bureau Johannesburg's (RBJ) Country Directors in October 2015, as well as donors in Pretoria, RBJ worked to refine its overall regional preparedness plan, by looking at analyses that needed to be in place to inform both programmatic and supply chain decisions in expectation of decreased regional production levels and the impact that this would have on the 2016-2017 lean season. RBJ, therefore, put in place preparedness mechanisms to enhance the response capacity of the Regional Bureau as well as Country Offices.

Project Objectives and Results

Project Objectives

Following mid-October 2015 discussions with key stakeholders, the Regional Bureau in Johannesburg (RBJ) prepared IR-PREP 200908, which served to support RBJ by providing the information required to monitor the progression of the season as well as enhance RBJ and country offices preparedness for the anticipated effects of the 2016-2017 lean season. The Regional Emergency Preparedness Protocol, as well as country-specific Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans (EPRP's), were augmented by this IR-PREP. This falls under WFP Strategic Objective 3: *Reduce risk and enable people, communities, and countries to meet their own food and nutrition needs.*



Approved Budget for Project Duration (USD)

Cost Category	
Capacity Dev.t and Augmentation	49,168
Direct Support Costs	217,456
Indirect Support Costs	18,664
Total	285,288

Project Activities

The expected outcome of this IR-PREP 200908 was to ensure an enhanced state of preparedness at both Country Office and Regional Bureau levels should droughts and/or flooding affect crop production across much of the Southern Africa Region.

The activities under this project consisted of:

- Enhanced Commodity Price Monitoring using the mVAM Platform:** Mobile vulnerability, analysis, and mapping (mVAM) was slated to be initiated in Madagascar during this period to allow for the rapid collection of food security data via short mobile phone surveys, live telephone interviews, text messages (SMS), and interactive voice response (IVR).

As part of this IR-PREP, a feasibility study to assess potential mobile network service providers, evaluate possible data collection modalities and ascertain an understanding of the regulatory environment was conducted in Madagascar. No suitable service providers were identified during the initial feasibility study, start-up was deferred to 2016, and the office decided in the end to work with GeoPoll, an external service provider, who sent the SMS surveys. This process did, however, delay initial start-up and thus did not take place during the IR-PREP period.
- Cereal/Maize Border Crossing Monitoring:** As the risk of drought became likely, RBJ feared that maize supplies across the region might be constrained, with only South Africa and Zambia producing maize surpluses thereby leading to widespread informal trade. This activity thus prioritized monitoring of informal commodity flows via key border points to gather vital information on maize stock levels as well as trade flows. WFP collaborated with the Famine Early Warning Network System (FEWSNET) to provide technical support to the Alliance for Commodity Trade in East and Southern Africa (ACTESA) for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of timely border data.

WFP, in collaboration with FEWSNET, engaged with ACTESA to assess its current data collection approach and operational challenges it faced in managing the informal cross-border trade. ACTESA had recently developed a customized data collection system, which was maintenance intensive and contained many inconsistencies (tablets did not synchronize properly with the server, there was incompatibility amongst units of measurement, etc.). To assist, RBJ's VAM Unit provided technical support to re-work the system and establish a new platform using Open Data Kit (ODK). The WFP and FEWSNET team also visited selected border posts to

better understand the working context in which data is collected and determine whether the monitors adhered to monitoring protocols. Three trainings, bringing together 30 ACTESA cross-border monitors from five countries, were then conducted by WFP and FEWSNET staff in February-March 2016 in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe to familiarise them with the ODK tool and refresh them on the data collection methodology. The next step was to forge a written agreement between WFP, the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA), and ACTESA (which functions as a semi-autonomous agency within COMESA). Through the agreement, WFP would continue to support ACTESA's monitors during initial start-up by covering field expenses. Due to lengthy negotiations between COMESA and WFP, this activity did not come to fruition as planned.

3. Information Management and Hazard Mapping in Selected Countries: Geo-referenced data was to be collected in hazard prone areas of Madagascar, Malawi, and Mozambique to enable timely response planning, particularly for sudden shocks.

RBJ elected to conduct hazard analysis not only in the aforementioned countries but across the entire Southern Africa region to determine the potential populations who risked being affected by El Nino. To do this, RBJ and Country Office colleagues reviewed 30 years of historical data to determine the areas that had been affected in the past and would likely be affected again in 2016. The analysis concluded that some 40.6 million people were likely to be at risk due to drought. This research culminated in the publishing of an in-depth report entitled, *Implications of El Nino in Southern Africa from a Food and Nutrition Security Perspective*, which was published in February 2016. The report was first issued as a key reference resource at the regional Southern African Development Community (SADC) meeting on El Nino, which was held on February 25th-26th, 2016. In addition to hazard analysis, the research included country-specific profiles detailing the macro-economic overview, food and nutrition security trends, government preparedness, and social protection programs.

4. Development of Regional Supply Chain Capacity Assessment: The goal of this activity was to commission a joint team of supply chain experts to conduct an updated regional supply chain capacity assessment to identify bottlenecks, propose solutions, and recommend follow-up actions. Expected outputs included: a review of country-specific Logistics Capacity Assessments (LCAs); development of a specialized nutritious product sourcing strategy; and completion of a regional milling capacity assessment.

Several assessments were conducted in anticipation of a potential RBJ ramp up should drought escalate to emergency level. A *Supply Chain Corridor Assessment in Southern Africa* was completed in December 2015 to map all corridors in the region and detail anticipated challenges with each. Regional milling capacity assessments were carried out in roughly 45 milling facilities in 11 countries (including South Africa). In addition, 20 suppliers producing Specialised Nutritious Foods (SNF) and blended foods (Super Cereal and potentially Super Cereal+) and Ready to Use Foods (RUSF)/ Ready-to-use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) in the region (7 countries) were assessed out of which 10 were audited. The outcome of this work allowed adjusting the regional sourcing strategy for SNF, High Energy Biscuits (HEB) (pilot in Malawi), and blended foods. A desk review of existing LCAs coupled with a rapid assessment of major corridors in the region was conducted by a WFP staff member on temporary duty in Johannesburg from December 1st, 2015, to January 16th, 2016. Corridors assessed included Lusaka, Chipata, Lilongwe, Maputo, Beira, Nacala, Dar-es-Salaam, and Antananarivo, coupled with a quick review of the situation in Comoros, with a final report circulated in January 2016. The above-mentioned work served as the pre-cursor to a Regional Supply Chain Capacity Assessment Mission, which was conducted from February 1th-26th, 2016. This analysis culminated in the preparation and dissemination of the Southern Africa Supply Chain Assessment Issues Paper, published in March 2016. The paper was shared with a wide audience of both internal and external stakeholders in the public, private, and commercial sectors. All Logistics activities were coordinated by a senior expert/Team Leader, who engaged in high level consultations with a range of internal and external stakeholders including COMESA, SADC, and select member states.

5. Comoros Preparedness: Although there is no WFP Country Office in Comoros, RBJ plays a support role in the event of an emergency, with the Madagascar Country Office designated with oversight.

Given the heightened risk of cyclones that often affect the island and as part of RBJ's preparedness measures, a mission to Comoros to assess the Government's preparedness level and launch an emergency staging area on Anjoan Island was undertaken. Emergency equipment was also provided to enhance the state's National Disaster Management Authority's (NDMA) preparedness capacity. As a follow-up to this mission and as part of this IR-PREP, a mission led by an RBJ consultant with additional HR support from the Madagascar Country Office, was undertaken from January 11th-15th, 2016. Following the mission, an emergency response plan was prepared and shared with key government and external actors.

6. Regional Support for Preparedness Actions in other RBJ Countries: This IR-PREP also included overarching emergency preparedness support to Country Offices, specifically targeting priority countries including Lesotho, Namibia, and Swaziland.

In Swaziland, an Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR)/Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) consultant was hired from January 20th to February 8th, 2016, to support the NDMA with the preparation of its emergency response plan. Technical assistance was also provided to the Madagascar Country Offices from January

11th-16th, 2016, to prepare and finalize the 2016 Concept of Operations (CONOPS) in preparation for cyclones and flooding in the north-west part of the country. Remote support from RBJ was also provided to Country Offices on an as-needed basis.

Operational Partnerships

As part of its emergency preparedness measures, RBJ collaborated with a number of regional and international organisations as well as host country governments to complete the aforementioned activities executed under IR-PREP 200908. *Activity 2: cereal/maize cross-border monitoring* included information collaboration between WFP and FEWSNET to train ACTESA cross-border monitors. For this activity, WFP also worked closely with COMESA and ACTESA to establish a longer-term agreement for continued technical support. This process was, however, stalled due to lengthy negotiations and administrative procedures.

Through EPRP missions to Comoros, Madagascar, and Lesotho as well as the mVAM technical missions to Madagascar, WFP staff engaged with government authorities most notably within the NDMAs and private sector entities (telecommunications companies, call centers, etc.). Significant time was dedicated to evaluating potential collaboration points and supporting governments with the strengthening of their emergency preparations.

Finally, WFP's report on *Implications of El Nino in Southern Africa from a Food and Nutrition Security Perspective* was used by SADC to inform discussions during its first El Nino meeting in late February 2016. This report established WFP as a key player in the El Nino response going forward.

Results/Outcomes

The strategic objective of this project was to reduce risk and enable people, communities, and countries to meet their own food and nutrition needs. Through project activities, national systems for monitoring food security and nutrition were strengthened. Key activities that contributed to achieving this objective included the training of ACTESA staff; establishment of mVAM systems in Country Offices; emergency preparedness support; and production of food security and other reports to inform program and policy decisions.

A total of five reports were produced using resources from this IR-PREP on supply chain corridors, challenges, and solutions; emergency preparedness and response plans; and hazard mapping and potential impact analysis. The publication of "El Nino Undermining Resilience in Southern Africa" changed the perception of organisations such as the World Bank, African Development Bank and the Southern Africa Development Community. As a result of this analytical work, these partners now engage WFP on policy and strategic issues and look at WFP as an agency to collaborate with. This is an important opening for WFP for further cooperation towards Zero Hunger in Southern Africa.

In addition, a total of 30 ACTESA cross-border monitors were trained on how to use ODK to collect data and how to analyse the results. The products of these preparations and analyses were used to better prepare RBJ and Country Offices for the impending L-3, which was declared in June 2016.

Figures and Indicators

Data Notes

Cover page photo © WFP/ Abdoulaye Balde

A young woman looking for water in Chigubo District, Mozambique

Project Indicators

Output Indicators

Output	Unit	Planned	Actual	% Actual vs. Planned
EP-RBJ-REGIONAL EL NINO PREPAREDNESS ACT				
SO3: Capacity Development - Emergency Preparedness and Capacity Development - Strengthening National Capacities				
Number of food security and nutrition monitoring/surveillance reports produced with WFP support	report	6	5	83.3%
Number of government counterparts trained in data collection and analysis on food and nutrition security	individual	30	30	100.0%