

# UNICEF HUMANITARIAN ACTION ZIMBABWE - OPERATION MURAMBATSVINA DONOR UPDATE 24 NOVEMBER 2005

- **'Operation Murambatsvina' continues to affect thousands of children and women**
- **Fast approaching rains and food crisis will further deteriorate situation**
- **UNICEF urgently requires US\$4.5 million to support internally displaced orphans and vulnerable children and caregivers affected by the 'clean up' operation**

## 1. EMERGENCY OVERVIEW AND ISSUES FOR CHILDREN

### GENERAL

Zimbabwe is experiencing a complex humanitarian situation. The ongoing economic decline, high inflation, poor agricultural production, the effects of HIV/AIDS, policy constraints, limited donor support for development programmes, and depleted capacity in the social service sectors have severely compromised the well-being and livelihood of millions of children and their caregivers throughout the country. Additionally, 'Operation Murambatsvina' ('restore order') – launched by the government of Zimbabwe on the 18th May of 2005 – has resulted in an estimated 700,000 people losing their homes and/or livelihoods, with a further 2.4 million people indirectly affected by the Operation according to estimates by the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Human Settlement Issues in Zimbabwe.

The Government-UN Rapid Assessments on Urban Displacements in Harare, Bulawayo, Mutare, Kariba and Victoria Falls found a pattern of high mobility and vulnerability as a result of the operation. In 80 per cent of the plots one or more persons had left, and in 60 per cent one or more persons had joined the household as a result of the operation. In about 40 per cent of the sampled plots one or more persons relocated to the rural areas. Moreover, about a third of the families who remained in the affected areas were still living outside in the open. The assessment also found that households headed by women are disproportionately affected because female-headed households are more likely to earn their income in the informal-sector, which is severely affected by the operation. Female-headed households are also more likely to care for orphans, and the only way for many older women to make an income was to rent out rooms on their plots. Huge numbers of these were destroyed during the demolitions, and this income source of income is lost.

The situation continues to be fluid: GoZ authorities have officially closed transit camps (Caledonia Farm, Harare; Silver Spring, Bulawayo; and Sakubva, Mutare), relocating the populations to rural areas, nearby farms, and so-called alternative 'holding centers' such as homes for the elderly, Harare hospital, youth centres, etc. The majority of the affected families still remain in urban areas, many forced to stay in the open (more than five months after the operation's launch).



## FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

Food insecurity remains a significant problem in Zimbabwe. The June 2005 Vulnerability Assessment (conducted in rural districts) found that 2.9 million Zimbabweans will become food insecure in the next lean season (January-March 2006). Added to this, the Rapid Assessment on Urban Displacements found that significant numbers of families have moved back to their rural homes, adding further strain on this precarious food situation. This prolonged – and now exaggerated – food insecurity has led to steady decline in the nutritional status of children under five years of age. The most recent data from the nutrition sentinel surveillance system has found an increase in acute malnutrition in 7 out of the 10 sentinel districts. Continued monitoring and preparation for a quick response to address child malnutrition is one of UNICEF's priorities.



## HEALTH

The quality of health services and availability of medicines in Zimbabwe has been deteriorating as a result of under funding, emigration of health staff, and the impact of HIV and AIDS. Families displaced in malaria endemic areas of Victoria Falls and Kariba are in urgent need of protection. The 'clean-up' operation is likely to lead to a further increase in child mortality in Zimbabwe. The country already has the world's fastest increase in mortality rates among children under age five (Progress for Children; UNICEF, October 2004). The majority of those relocated as a result of the "Operation Murambatsvina" have poor access to basic health care services as many were allocated stands outside of local authority serviced areas. Additionally, health facilities adjacent to the resettlement areas are overburdened by the new influx of patients.

## WATER AND SANITATION

Zimbabwe has experienced a dramatic decline in access to safe water supply and basic sanitation. The operational and maintenance systems of water and sanitation facilities have largely collapsed, resulting in 30 per cent (12,636) of water facilities not functioning (National Water and Sanitation Inventory, 2004). Consequently, about 2.5 million people living in the rural areas face acute shortages of safe water for drinking and other domestic purposes. The situation in the rural areas is compounded by the decline in access to sanitation from more than 30 per cent in 2001 to 25 per cent in 2004. The large numbers of families who have moved back to their rural homes will add further strain on the rural situation. The families who lost their homes and were displaced to camps and new settlement areas as a result of Operation Murambatsvina/Restore Order lack safe water and basic sanitation services. Harare alone has more than 10,000 poor families in urgent need of these basic services. In urban areas the situation is continually deteriorating in both availability and quality. Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second biggest centre, has had no water for the last two months and Harare's ability to provide safe, clean and uncontaminated water is diminishing by the day.

## CHILD PROTECTION

An estimated 30,000 households affected by the 'Clean-Up' operation care for orphans and are in need of assistance. The surveys have found that OVC are already disadvantaged in accessing basic materials, health and education, are more likely to live in food insecure households, and are more likely to be malnourished. Three percent of the affected households were taking care of one or more disabled persons. Hundreds of children were displaced from their family during the operation. Most of them have been placed in institutions, where resources and care facilities are grossly poor.

## EDUCATION

Education was interrupted for hundred of thousands of children. Many children were transferred to other schools in urban areas. The situation for children who moved to rural areas is unclear and is currently being assessed. Overall an estimated 30,000 children in the urban areas dropped out of school as a direct result of the operation. To this end, UNICEF is launching a Back to School Campaign in November. The campaign will seek to re-enrol all children who dropped up during Operation Murambatsvina and access those most vulnerable children who were not in school prior to the operation.

## 2. UNICEF RESPONSE: ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS

In the 2005 Humanitarian Action Report UNICEF made an appeal of US\$ 7,500,000 to support orphans and other vulnerable children in Zimbabwe. Only one donor, the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO), responded to that appeal, with a contribution of EUR 1,200,000(USD 1,442,304). In June 2005, UNICEF launched another appeal to specifically support the affected population by the displacement operation in Zimbabwe. To date, US\$ 2,882,782 has been received in response to that appeal. This has allowed UNICEF to respond quickly to

'Operation Murambatsvina", assisting tens of thousands of people. However, demand continues to outstrip supply. UNICEF's humanitarian efforts intensified as outlined below.

## **COORDINATION AND ASSESSMENT**

In the nutrition, education, water and sanitation and child protection sectors UNICEF is coordinating the response between partners through sector coordination working groups. UNICEF also facilitates and coordinates at sub-national level with provincial/district authorities and the UN, NGOs, etc. Staff was out-posted in Mutare and Bulawayo. The Government-UN Rapid Assessments (completed in July 2005) on Urban Displacements in Harare, Bulawayo, Mutare, Kariba and Victoria Falls were led by UNICEF. Data was collected from 2,000 households and analyzed with regard to relocation, health, education and safety and the results have been used by stakeholders as a tool for interventions across the country.

## **NON-FOOD ITEMS**

While IOM is taking the lead in the distribution of 'non-food' items, UNICEF has been distributing basic needs material among the most vulnerable populations, in close coordination with IOM. In total, more than 25,000 children and women were reached with blankets, soap, water containers, buckets, mugs, community cooking pots, etc. Furthermore, support was provided through plastic sheeting as ground covers and sanitation purposes.

## **HEALTH AND NUTRITION**

In late July 2005 UNICEF supported a nationwide "Child Health Days" campaign where all children between 0-59 months were provided with immunisations as well as vitamin A supplementation. As a result the vitamin A supplementation now stands at 80 per cent and EPI coverage raised by 30 per cent to 70 per cent nationwide. In order to increase the coverage, the second stage of the campaign is currently being planned for the beginning of December to coincide with the SADC malaria week.

Whilst awaiting a large-scale delivery of 300,000 long lasting bed nets, UNICEF has procured 10,000 traditional bed nets and re-treatment kits for people most affected by the displacements who are still living in the open, for those with semi-completed structures as well as for OVC and chronically ill in malaria-endemic areas.

For many people living with AIDS access to ARVs and TB drugs has been interrupted as a result of operation Murambatsvina coupled with the worsening economic crisis. In order to ease drug access of some 17,000 people with advanced HIV, UNICEF is currently exploring innovative ways of importing these drugs.

UNICEF provides technical and financial support to the National Food & Nutrition Council in the implementation of its Nutrition Surveillance system. Two rounds have been completed during last 12 months. A third round is scheduled at the end of November in 25 districts and will include five urban areas affected by the 'clean-up' operation.

## **WATER AND SANITATION**

From the onset of the 'clean-up operation' UNICEF has provided intensive support in the water and sanitation sector, not only through the nationwide coordination of activities and response but also through the on-going distribution of safe water to affected populations in various 'holding camps' through water trucking, provision of water tanks and water pumps. Additionally, UNICEF has provided direct support through its partners for the rehabilitation of 600 boreholes and construction of 1,800 latrines.

As a result, UNICEF is currently distributing approximately 230,000 litres of safe water per day to holding/resettlement camps at Hopley farm and Hatcliffe area. In addition, more than 140 mobile toilets have been provided in various locations as well as water purification tablets and chloride of lime to ensure hygienic conditions and safe drinking water. Hygiene promotion is ongoing in five different urban areas in partnership with different implementing partners as well as the development and production of IEC materials.

## **CHILD PROTECTION**

UNICEF is currently reaching 100,000 OVC through its partners within the framework of the National Plan of Action. As direct support relating to operation Murambatsvina, UNICEF is supporting 334 children with disabilities and their caregivers through Community Based Rehabilitation Program in Emergency situation and emergency relief (temporary accommodation in urban areas, transportation support to rural areas, agricultural inputs, and basic materials for shelter). For 100 extremely vulnerable child-headed households affected by the operation, support is being provided to rebuild their houses in appropriate areas. In order to reunify children with their families or re-integrate them into communities, UNICEF has developed a tracing/reunification system, provides reintegration packages, and is continuously facilitating the placement of NGO counsellors in institutions to assist children counselling, reunification, and enrolment in vocational skills training.

Training of humanitarian workers on sexual exploitation is currently under way with over 200 humanitarian staff already trained. A plan to train all humanitarian staff of UN and implementing partners is currently being developed.

## EDUCATION

UNICEF is collaborating with its implementing partners to carry out the “Back to School” campaign that aims to directly benefit 40,000 – 50,000 children in 18 districts across the country. The goal of the campaign is to identify and track children out of school and those at risk of dropping out in order to enrol and retain them and to reach 99 per cent national enrolment in January 2006. Rapid education assessment to establish the location of the schools in need of support in most affected areas has been carried out and as a result procurement and distribution of core textbooks and stationary for up to 20,000 children most affected have been on-going. Additionally, play materials have been distributed to children affected by the operation.

### 3. APPEAL RECEIPTS

Donor Name	Funds received (USD)
German National Committee	241,254
Irish National Committee	265,000
Netherlands National Committee	200,000
UK National Committee	180,505
Swedish National Committee	149,421
Government of Australia	757,850
Government of Canada	243,903
European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO)	65,000*
Government of New Zealand	310,657
DFID	217,470
USA / OFDA	239,440
Government of South Africa	12,282
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,882,782</b>

\*Received as part of a larger contribution (USD 1,442,304) to broader humanitarian response in Zimbabwe

### 4. CURRENT PRIORITIES AND REQUIRMENTS

A total of US \$4.5 million is needed in order to continue to provide necessary assistance and relief to IDPs, especially girls, orphans, unaccompanied children and women, affected by the current internal displacement in Zimbabwe.

Sector	USD
Water and Sanitation	2,150,000
Health and Nutrition	550,000
HIV/AIDS	220,000
Child protection	450,000
Education	500,000
Non-food items and logistical support	630,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,500,000</b>

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