

SOUTHERN AFRICA:

THAT THE PEOPLE MAY BE FED

Tocsin through Pledges and Paper to
Transportation and Distribution

When the great river dies
The end of the world is at hand.

- Limpopo Valley Proverb
(Gaza Province, Mozambique)

This really is the Apocalypse drought.

- UNDP Administrator
(Maputo, Mozambique)

The devil brings drought,
Men make hunger,
Foreigners force famine.

- Makonde Proverb
(Cabo Delgado Province, Mozambique)

Aye but a man's reach
Must exceed his grasp
Or what's a heaven for?

- Robert Browning

By Reginald Herbold Green

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Southern Africa and South Africa as regions are confronting their worst drought disaster of the century. In South Africa main crops are not over 30% of normal and in Southern under 60%. These out-turns are in regions already characterised by high levels of food insecurity and of absolute poverty. Unless massive national prioritisation and institutional response continues to be articulated domestically and regionally in Southern Africa and backed with massive, timeous support in food and cover for related transport, water and work for food project costs Southern Africa will be plunged into a massive famine catastrophe quite probably claiming at least 1,000,000 lives and quite possibly many more.
2. In Southern Africa at least 18,000,000 people are at risk of severe malnutrition and famine related deaths because they have lost their food production, crop sale or agricultural employment entitlements (income plus own food supplies). Of these up to half are international (but intra-regional) and domestic refugees from violence. Another 20,000,000 persons (largely urban and peri urban) residents can purchase food only if imports are available to replace the normal domestic supplies from rural areas as well as to continue (especially in Mozambique and Angola) to cover earlier gaps in domestic supplies.
3. The total grain import requirement is of the order of 6,200,000-6,500,000 tonnes plus over 500,000 tonnes of other staples (beans, legumes - e.g. groundnuts, vegetable oil, sugar). Fiscal and foreign exchange constraints preclude substantial commercial imports in most Southern African states. The food aid requirements are of the order of 4,200,000 tonnes to 4,600,000 tonnes of grain plus 225,000 tonnes of other staples. The division between Emergency (free or work for food) and Other (basically urban - peri urban - plantation monetised) aid is roughly equal.
4. Conditions in Southern Africa impose high domestic (and coast to landlocked state) transport and distribution costs. In addition the drought has threatened many hundreds of thousands of people with death from lack of water. Many are already on the move and will need camp facilities while additional moves and deaths can be averted only by

emergency water facility building or rehabilitation. Finally food for work or work for food programmes require skilled personnel, equipment and materials inputs. The likely total cost is of the order of \$570,000,000 of which at best \$135,000,000 odd could be met from local sources (including initial proceeds of monetisation). The balance requiring external finance is nearly \$440 million.

5. These estimates are congruent across three basic sources: an independent February/March 1992 estimation, the official FAO/WFP mission of March/April and updated official estimates from most Southern African states as of April/May 1992. The total costs (including grain and other staples) somewhat exceed \$1,000,000,000 for April 1992/March 1993. The UN appeal for \$850,000,000 is of the same order of magnitude, except for Angola whose horrendous past food deficit and the opportunities the peace process opens up for reducing it appear to have been underestimated.
6. Beyond pledges a series of obstacles intervene before people can be fed. First, negotiation and scheduling of quantities - routes - delivery dates (with as much shortcutting of normal donor and recipient procedural delays as possible). Second, procurement and shipment to meet these schedules (augmented by speeding up pre-drought crisis 1992/93 pledges and the un-arrived balance of 1991/92 commitments). Third, coordination of routes from the coast to landlocked parts - primarily by intra Southern and Southern/South African working groups. Fourth, in some cases, strengthening domestic transport capacity (especially by provision of spare parts). Fifth, broadening and strengthening both distributional capacity and its coordination, including emergency deliveries in several states which have not previously had such programmes on a large scale. Sixth, reduction of present and avoidance of potential levels of violence which would hold food hostage and kill those waiting for it.
7. 1992/93 programming needs to be followed by an early review of 1993/94 requirements. The drought's regional scope already means that seeds will be needed from outside the region on a much larger scale than previously. Recent cyclical patterns give cause for concern that 1992/93 rains (1993/94 consumption year) will also be subnormal. The late response to the 1991/92 harvest prospects (and consequential

1992/93 famine risk) both domestically and internationally despite a steady flow of increasingly emphatic early warnings requires review to learn from experience in order to avert its repetition.

8. These generalised summary points are presented in more detail on a regional basis in Chapters I-IV of the text with capsule national summaries of the Southern African states at Section IV. The main quantitative estimates are presented in Tables 1, 2 and 3 at pages 4, 7 and 13 respectively.
9. South Africa also has very severe drought and famine risk problems. Under 30% of a normal grain crop (perhaps as low as 10%) has been produced. Up to 7,000,000 persons are vulnerable because of drought related production, permanent job and seasonal employment losses. Import requirements are of the order of 5,500,000 to 6,000,000 tonnes for South African use. In principle both foreign exchange and budgetary resources could be made available. In practice the drought relief measures concentrate on commercial farmer economic, not small farmer and farm worker human, survival; government distribution capacity is low and obstacles to even main line NGOs actually receiving nominally available state funds virtually insurmountable; proposals to abandon universal (even if at uneven rates by ethnic group) old age pensions are - at the least - untimely. Therefore, South African domestic NGOs with distribution capacity - main line, church, trade union and community based - have a valid case for seeking international support. The victims of drought vulnerable to famine are overwhelmingly among the most severely affected victims of apartheid. Turning away from their needs can hardly contribute to reducing levels of violence or promoting negotiated reconciliation.

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I.

EARLY WARNING TO TOCSIN

From November on the early warning systems of South Africa and the SADCC member States linked national systems began to flash amber lights. The rains were not right - late in starting and interrupted. By the end of December the lights were amber and red - improbable luck on rainfall amounts and timing by then was needed to avert a very poor harvest. By the end of January the lights were red and by mid-February flashing disaster warnings - only a miracle could avert the worst drought in ten years and only good luck the worst in a century. Only Angola had reasonable prospects then, and in the event only Tanzania was vouchsafed a minor miracle - a 15% grain crop shortfall versus nearly 60% for South and Southern Africa and 65% for the 8 massively affected Southern African states of Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, Namibia Swaziland, Lesotho and Botswana.

Over this period the main regional and agency reports did mention the increasingly problematic outcome and the worsening outlook trend. But the mention was low key - and remained so until after the first famine and water shortage deaths had been recorded. A bitter observer remarked that the paragraphs seemed designed to be cited to avoid blame if famine erupted, to enable the recorders to say "We are not guilty of the blood of these just people; see ye to it" and sombrely noted that Pontius Pilate had never had a very good press in history.

That assessment is probably unfair - the drought disaster did creep up by degrees and until very late there was a dwindling chance of a less disastrous out-turn (as evidenced by Tanzania). Would-be donors did have "emergency fatigue" in respect to Southern Africa as evidenced by the very limited response to appeals for assistance in respect to the devastating 1990-91 drought which wiped out the harvest in several districts of

Mozambique's Manica province. Hunger in the CIS was to the media and politicians more interesting than the danger of mass death in Southern Africa - ironically partly because the Southern African states and their partners in emergency food distribution had since 1982 been just able to avert mass famine deaths so that the more evident African risk area as seen from the North Atlantic was in the Horn. Nonetheless, only in March and April did the warnings to the Northern headquarters become urgent and forceful saying that the chances of averting disaster were at best problematic, but history would not absolve those who did not make the attempt.

National preparations and publications were also - with the exception of Zimbabwe - rather low key or contradictory until March. In some cases this represented doing homework - getting the data to make reasoned quantitative statements articulated by region. In some it represented lack of data and the atrophication of district level reporting. For a few, a distinct unwillingness to admit any serious national food shortage, either to the world or to the citizenry, appeared to play a role.

NGOs (foreign and domestic) had data at a micro level and were alarmed but in general did not realise how general the crop debacle was. The SADCC Early Warning Unit - which issued the first Southern African quantitative perspective assessment ringing an alarm in February - was hampered by slow delivery of data from some of its suppliers.

From mid-February to mid-March the alarm bells grew to a tocsin ringing out the warning of the Apocalypse drought and of the Third Horseman (famine) riding within a few months unless extraordinary efforts were made.

Quantifying Horror

The process seems to have started largely in Harare and Maputo. The SADCC early Warning Unit and the Ministry of Agriculture together with the Ministry of Transport focused both on the impending crop failure and the immediate food gap caused by the 1991 sale of the basic carry-over stock (as well as the drought reserve) to secure foreign exchange to try (unsuccessfully) to halt the devaluation/inflation spiral set off by the way the currency and import liberalisation portion of the Structural Adjustment Programme was articulated. In Maputo the National Directorate of Planning on reviewing the Food Security Directorate's preliminary data

and the WFP report perceived a chasm directly - and not very far - ahead and moved to focus attention to it. In mid-March a summary of the WFP and SADCC data together with some national and media material appeared under the title "Sound The Tocsin: The Third Horseman Mounts To Ride - Drought In Southern And South Africa 1991-1993".

The projections of "Tocsin" (summarised in Table 1) showed a regional food deficit measured in additional imports of grain and other staples (beans, pulses, vegetable oil, sugar) of the order of 9,725,000 to 11,175,000 tonnes of which 3,725,000 to 5,175,000 tonnes for Southern Africa. Because of the disappearance (reversal) of the South African, Zimbabwean and Malawian export surpluses, the additional requirement for imports from outside the region would be of the order of 500,000 tonnes more than the total import requirement escalation.

Entitlement losers - persons at risk of very serious malnutrition and substantial risk of famine (or famine related disease) deaths were estimated at 20,000,000 to 26,000,000 - 16,000,000 to 20,000,000 in Southern African and 4,000,000 to 7,000,000 in South Africa. These include persons losing jobs as a direct or indirect result of the drought as well as rural producers whose harvest was destroyed.

Given the very weak external balance position of all of the states except Botswana and South Africa the additional food aid requirement was estimated at 3,275,000 to 3,600,000 tonnes for Southern Africa. Added to a 1990/91 base level of 950,000 odd tonnes food aid that gave a total of 4,225,000 to 4,550,000 tonnes. A South African food aid requirement estimate of 800,000 to 1,400,000 tonnes was in one sense nominal and in another an estimate of the requirements of civil society groups and other NGOs to avert famine by food distribution. That need was unlikely - for political (non) priority, institutional non-coordination and bureaucratic inertia reasons - to be met by the present South African regime out of its budgetary resources.

Meanwhile the Limpopo died and for over 200 miles cracked mud flats alone remained with family farming households scrabbling up to three metres down to seek water to keep their crops, their livestock and/or themselves alive - seeking but not always finding. In both Zimbabwe and Mozambique famine death reports began to trickle in at what should have been the beginning of the main harvest and the tail end of the main rains.

Table 1
Summary Regional Data
 (February Projection)

	Drought Deficit ¹ (tonnes)	Loss of Regional Sources ⁷ (tonnes)	Additional Extra Regional Import Need (tonnes)	Entitlement Losers ⁹ (persons)	Additional Basic Food Aid Need ¹³ (tonnes)
South Africa	6,000,000	-	6,000,000	4,000,000-7,000,000 ¹⁰	800,000-1,400,000 ¹⁴
Zimbabwe	1,250,000-2,000,000 ²	-	1,250,000-2,000,000	4,000,000-5,000,000	750,000
Mozambique	875,000 ³	150,000 ⁸	1,025,000	4,500,000 ¹¹	875,000 ³
Malawi	400,000	-	400,000	3,000,000	400,000
Zambia	500,000-750,000 ⁴	100,000-150,000	600,000-900,000	2,000,000-3,000,000 ⁴	500,000
Tanzania	250,000-500,000 ⁵	-	250,000-500,000	500,000-2,000,000 ⁵	250,000-500,000
Lesotho	100,000	-	100,000	250,000	100,000
Swaziland	100,000	50,000	150,000	100,000	75,000-100,000
Botswana	100,000-150,000	25,000-100,000	125,000-250,000	300,000	50,000
Namibia	50,000	50,000-100,000	100,000-150,000	15,000-50,000 ¹²	25,000
Angola	100,000-150,000 ⁶	-	100,000-150,000	1,500,000 ⁶	200,000-250,000 ¹⁵
Total	9,725,000	375,000	10,100,000	20,165,000	4,025,000
	11,175,000	550,000	11,725,000	26,700,000	4,950,000
1991/92 Base	-	-	1,600,000	-	950,000

From: R. H. Green, 'Sound The Tocsin: The Third Horseman Mounts To Ride'

Notes

Table derived from text based on mosaic of WFP, UNICEF, SADCC, National Government and press reports.

1. Additional imports required for pre drought importers and total imports required for pre drought exporters. Tonnages are grain equivalent of estimated national food deficits caused by drought.
2. See text. 1,250,000 appears more likely.
3. Midpoint of range. See Annex.
4. Uncertainty as to Western Zambia affects estimate.
5. Possible late rain impact significant.
6. Very tentative. Assumes limited drought losses outside Southeast quadrant.
7. Previous South African or Zimbabwe sourced imports unlikely to be available in 1992-93.
8. Includes 75,000-100,000 triangular food aid from Zimbabwe; 50,000-75,000 parallel market imports from South Africa and Zimbabwe.
9. Loss of household self provisioning food, agricultural cash sales, agricultural cash ('casual' or wage) employment plus loss of wage and self employment income from commercial and other urban sectors affected by drought damage to rural purchasing power. Estimate is of households whose entitlements are severely reduced and pushed well below absolute poverty line. Largely excludes second round effects of higher food prices.
10. Rural component 2,000,000-3,000,000; dorp (small town) 750,000-1,250,000; urban and peri-urban 1,250,000-2,750,000. Last figure highly approximate because urban drift and general economic stagnation trend effects almost impossible to separate fully from drought impact.
11. Includes afectados (war displaced persons not receiving food relief) and other severely war affected rural sector familial households whose limited output will be severely drought damaged as well as more stable sector familial farming households and commercial agriculture employee households.
12. Caprivian farming households plus commercial farm/ranch and related commercial sector employees and households only.
13. Excludes import requirement other than for human consumption and - where plausible - financeable additional commercial imports.
14. Capacity constraint problem severe given unsuitability of Government channels. See text.
15. Higher than strict drought relief estimate because Angola has in the past received disproportionately low food aid and because additional flows to a UNITA controlled area without parallel expansion of flows through Government channels would appear politically impracticable (as well as undesirable).

II.

TRUMPET BLAST AND RESPONSE

From March the context in which the South and Southern African drought was viewed has changed rapidly, cumulatively and radically - except for its still very limited coverage in Northern media. National expressions of alarm - initially from Zimbabwe and Mozambique soon followed by Zambia, Namibia and Botswana, the data and analysis of the SADCC Survey and of Tocsin and the information seen or heard directly by bilateral donor and international institutional offices had an impact at least in the crucial area of speeding up assessment.

The key note in the trumpet blast is the report of the March-April FAO/WFP (with assistance from other UN agencies including UNICEF in several countries) Mission which visited all ten countries to collect data for its report. The study - both in preliminary national government and donor/agency representative meetings in Southern Africa and in its final version released from Rome in late April - has stood up well to querying and paints a picture so appalling as to have produced a vigorous response.

The FAO/WFP Mission estimate (Table 2) grain crop losses at 4,625,000 tonnes for Southern Africa and 8,500,000 tonnes for South Africa (44% and 70% shortfalls respectively) for a total of 13,125,000 tonnes (58%). From this it estimates a grain import requirement of 6,213,000 tonnes for Southern and 5,550,000 tonnes for South Africa totally 11,713,000 tonnes of grain.

The food aid requirement for Southern Africa is projected at 4,138,000 tonnes of grain and 225,000 tonnes of other basic food (legumes, beans, vegetable oil and milk powder). This represents an increase of the order of 3,350,000 tonnes over the 1991/92 levels of food aid receipts which appear to be mirrored by pre-drought tocsin 1992/93 probable delivery of pledged transfers. The number of entitlement losers (at risk of death from starvation, disease and lack of water) is put at 18,000,000.

Some of the data - especially at country level - are open to question. The picture of impending catastrophe and the broad orders of magnitude (except for Angola where they appear to be too low because of the 1991/92 baseline

TABLE 2
FAO/WFP MISSION ESTIMATES
(April Assessment)

	Grain Production (tonnes)			Import Requirements ^a (tonnes)		Food Aid Requirements (tonnes)			Commercial Imports (tonnes)	
	1987/1991 Aug. ¹	1992	% Normal	Grain	Other ^b	Grain ⁷	Other	Of Which Emergency ⁸	Grain ¹⁰	Other ⁴
<u>Southern Africa</u>										
Zimbabwe	2,335,000	608,000	26	1,410,000	(75,000)	660,000	38,200	509,000	750,000	(36,800)
Mozambique	550,000 ²	226,000	41	1,381,000	(150,000)	1,303,000	101,000	688,000	78,000	(49,000)
Malawi	1,485,000	683,000	46	876,000	(75,000)	740,000	38,000	438,000	136,000	(37,000)
Zambia	1,600,000	572,000	36	970,000	(30,000)	820,000	15,000	109,000 ⁹	150,000	(15,000)
Tanzania	3,825,000	3,250,000	85	500,000	(10,000)	280,000	1,500	16,000 ⁹	220,000	(8,500)
Lesotho	172,500	81,000	47	297,000	(20,000)	75,000	3,000	78,000	222,000	(17,000)
Swaziland	140,000	53,000	38	129,000	(15,000)	60,000	5,500	47,000	69,000	(9,500)
Botswana	59,000	15,000	24	240,000	(50,000)	15,000	1,700	17,000 ⁹	225,000	(48,300)
Namibia	110,000	33,000	30	125,000	(35,000)	60,000	1,350	61,000	65,000	(33,650)
Angola	317,000 ²	454,000	143	285,000 ⁴	(70,000)	125,000 ⁴	20,000	136,000	160,000	(50,000)
(Sub Total)	10,600,000 ³	5,975,000	56 ³	6,213,000	(530,000)	4,138,000	225,000	1,967,000	2,075,000	(305,000)
South Africa	12,150,000	3,650,000	30	5,500,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	22,750,000³	9,625,000	42³	11,713,000	(530,000)	4,138,000	225,000	1,967,000	2,075,000	(305,000)

Source: Adapted from FAO/WFP March-April 1992, Mission To Southern Africa.

Notes:

1. In general 1986/87, 1987/88 and 1988/89 were good crop years with 1989/90 and 1990/91 poor. However, there has been substantial inter and intra country divergence within this trend. Country figures computed from Mission 1992 crop and % of normal data.
2. War has both depressed output and hampered estimation of volume grown. Total production estimates appear to be too low but changes may be less so.
3. Sum total of country data from, or computed from, Mission Report. Mission implicit regional total crop figures are higher and, therefore, % of normal presented in report is lower than the total of their country data.
4. Implausibly low. Angola's recent past crop levels like Mozambique have been war (and insurgent tactics) devastated. Institutional and transport barriers - as well as financial - have limited past emergency assistance distribution to very low levels and imposed severe hunger constraints on isolated inland cities and towns. With the relaxation of the war, transport and to a degree institutional constraints the needed (for minimally adequate nutrition) imports required are probably on the order of 450,000 to 500,000 tonnes of food aid 275,000 to 350,000 tonnes and of emergency programme distribution 125,000 to 175,000 tonnes.
5. Net national territorial requirement (including resident refugees) excluding imports to replace regional exports (South Africa) and transit traffic to landlocked states (Tanzania, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa).
6. Rough estimate. Only direct emergency food aid requirement directly available from Mission Report.
7. In principle includes all amounts already pledged. In practice appears to exclude wheat imports which are de facto aid financed in Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe totalling perhaps 250,000 tonnes and up to 25,000 tonnes similarly financed rice imports in Tanzania.
8. For free ration, food for work, work for food and/or special project distribution. Includes grain and other.
9. Implausibly low. At least in cases of Tanzania and Botswana appears to exclude nationally organised free food ration distribution to severely drought (or flood) affected districts. Given the number of displaced persons in Angola a more plausible estimate would be of the order of 150,000 tonnes.
10. By subtraction Food Aid Requirement from Import Requirement. Inadequate estimates of local cross border imports and exports except for Zambia to Zaire.

position rather than the 1992/93 changes which are mildly positive) are unimpeachable. For what it is worth they correlate very closely with those of the SADCC Food Security Unit, of Tocsin and of several revised national estimates.

Since the Mission what changes there have been have fallen into two categories - firmer main 1992 harvest estimates and 1992 short rains performance. The first have on balance been negative. South Africa had officially estimated out-turn at 22% of normal by mid-April and has revised that to 16% as of late May. If that is correct, and on a basis comparable to the 30% out-turn expected by the Mission, the shortfall rises by over 1,500,000 tonnes. Zimbabwe's harvest estimates have worsened slightly, but the main reason it projects almost 200,000 tonnes more imports in 1992/93 than the Mission turns on targeted minimum carry-over (bridging) stock level. Tanzania output could still be worse than projected because while the southern crop is both safe and above average (and the central drought hit but not totally devastated) the northern was dependent on April/May rains which have been intermittent (not non-existent) so that whether the shortfall is 15% or 25% may not be known until July.

The short rains on initial review appear to have been mixed but not a total failure over at least part of the South Africa-Malawi belt (in Tanzania they are several months in the future). They cannot salvage the lost main crop. Given very dry initial soil conditions they are unlikely to lead to even an average small crop (millet, sorghum, vegetables, root crops) but could yield something. In substantial areas they have improved pasture conditions and well water availability - giving some prospects of lower than feared livestock losses and water dearth caused migration (flight to water) and death (when not reached in time).

United Nations Response

The United Nations family of organisations has responded rapidly and forcefully to the challenge posed by the report leading to a major preparatory meeting in Geneva at the end of April and to the launching of an \$845,000,000 emergency appeal by Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali in May for an early June review and pledging meeting in early June. The speed and coordination of progress over March through May has been remarkable. Although the UN Headquarters initially took a rather overly platonic guardian and tabula rasa view underestimating both the existence

of emergency/calamity institutional structures and capacity in several (not all) of the SADCC Ten and, especially, the will and capacity of SADCC to act as a positive force in catalysing and coordinating initiatives by its member States, this echo of the standard "one off" approach to disasters, ignoring both history and context, appears to have been substantially diluted since. It was, in fact, not the position of several key agencies and country offices who had more experience with the region's "silent emergency" experience of the past decade.

National assessments in Southern Africa were completed - or revised and updated - over March/May, some with substantial assistance from the FAO/WFP Mission and resident UN institution offices (including WFP, UNDP and UNICEF). These have led to reactivation of standby calamity mitigation/famine prevention structures in Botswana and Zimbabwe; to strengthening ongoing emergency/calamity institutional structures and capacity in Mozambique, Angola and Lesotho; to programming the normal disaster district operation in Tanzania for higher levels; toward broad front emergency relief delivery institutional structures in Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia and Malawi where they had not existed (or at least not with more than very low capacity) as of March 1991.

The evolution in South Africa has been less satisfactory. The poverty relief funding allocations in the state budget had, as of May, remained largely undistributed while even main line/quasi-establishment NGOs serving large numbers of destitute households, who would otherwise have been starving, could not break through paper barriers to receive them. The draft Drought Relief bill gave massive attention to (white) commercial farmer losses, very little to their (black) employees and none to (black) seasonal workers not hired because of the absence of crops to harvest or to small family farm households (also black) who had lost a key portion of their incomes (up to all in cases in which the balance came largely from agricultural employment). The proposal to end universal old age pensions (perhaps surprisingly, a key income source for poor, rural, black households) was, to say the least, ill timed.

SADCC has responded to the data - especially that of its own Food Security Unit. In particular it has - under the auspices of its Transport and Communications Council (SATCC) - created four government/transport operator working groups to coordinate use of capacity at Maputo, Beira, Nacala and

Dar es Salaam and onward from them to the landlocked states. Similar liaison is being carried out with South Africa's Spoornet which have a special centre in respect to South African and transit grain movements to the Southern African Region with at least Zimbabwe's National Railways maintaining a permanent presence there. Other work has been done on assisting in national need assessments and in diplomatic initiatives (in Southern Africa, Europe and North America) to donors and international agencies.

Civil society and other Southern African NGOs also began both to organise and to mobilise to increase their own resource and delivery capacity. The most prominent were religious bodies and Red Cross Societies. Both have the advantages of national (or at least widespread) coverage and of international fraternal links and the former of mass membership and, in several countries, substantial political influence. The calamity and development units of the ten National Councils of Churches of Southern African (usually Protestant and Anglican but in at least one case also Catholic) met in late April to exchange information and ideas and explore possible coordination in actions including external support mobilisation. This action is a clear example of a growth in practical, practising regional consciousness beyond formal government circles since while SADCC is well disposed to parallel business, labour, NGO grouping it does not directly support and has rather limited interaction with them.

Northern Non-Governmental Organisations - especially in the EEC context - have responded rapidly, forcefully and on a coordinated basis. The February/March reports catalysed and broadened their response to the local tidings of impending disaster coming in from their field staff. To date their success seems to have been greatest in sensitizing and alerting donors, second in fund raising (an overlapping area as much of their finance is home governmental) and third in respect to Northern media.

For the Northern media the tocsin has gone largely unheard. There have been a handful of feature articles and more numerous short new items but the contrast with coverage of the 1983-85 drought cycle in the Sahel, the Horn and Southern Africa is stark. Editorial/leader attention has been even patchier with the strongest exception the June 2 International Herald

Tribune's "A job to Do in Africa" endorsing the UN appeal and saying -
inter alia:

The pot bellies, swollen feet and skeletal frames can be seen everywhere in Mozambique. The prospect of slow death by starvation and disease will... confront 18 million men, women and children in ...[ten]... severely drought stricken southern African countries unless they can stay alive with the help of food aid. Whether that trouble plagued region experiences a colossal loss of life is out of the hands of those left with dried out fields and empty wells. That momentous moral choice ultimately rests with the human family, especially the United States and richer members of the international community. The world should not leave them to suffer alone.

Donor action has - especially in the absence of major media coverage - been substantial. The USA has committed \$253 million additional funding; EEC has raised its food aid allocation to Southern Africa by 350,000 tonnes; WFP has initiated and made progress with efforts to augment its programmes by of the order of 500,000 tonnes. A number of other countries have made reasonably firm - if not always quantified - commitments and UNICEF has moved to increase its Southern Africa emergency programme with special attention to rural and peri urban drinking water. Fairly clearly the sums moving toward final commitment and programming as of late May did not yet approach the \$854 million UN appeal goal. However, they already appeared to be of the order of three-fifths to two-thirds of it.

In summary, over March-May 1992 the physical situation and crop perspective worsened, but the planning for and mobilisation of resources to meet the shortfall made significant progress. Given the magnitude of the deficit, the lags inherent in moving to delivery and the massive physical as well as institutional delivery problems in several Southern African countries the adequacy in terms of quantity, timeousness and ability to reach the people needing to be fed remained problematic. That there was a significant dynamic toward substantial action was no longer in doubt.

III.

NEEDS, OBSTACLES AND OPPORTUNITIES: REGIONAL OVERVIEW

The first requirement for the people of Southern Africa to be fed is food. Because of the breadth and depth of the drought (which also affects Kenya severely and Madagascar calamitously) that food must come from outside Africa. For both external and fiscal balance fragility reasons, most of it will need to take the form of food aid. If not, the people will not be fed. Table 3 adjusts Table 2 primarily in respect of Angola (whose past imports have been calamitously low because of now partly relaxed barriers to distribution, of quasi food aid concessional loan purchases and purchase of general import support funds and of unmanageably high commercial imports as well as for emergency programmes clearly too small relative to rural entitlements wipeouts.

The total food aid requirement on this basis is nearly 4,850,000 tonnes - slightly over 2,300,000 emergency and an excess of 2,500,000 other (dominantly "import support" for urban market monetisation). Of this pre-drought pledges likely to be delivered (adjusting for late 1990/91 pledge deliveries sliding to 1992/93 delivery and 1992/93 pledges to 1993/94 delivery) appear to have been under 1,300,000 tonnes leaving a gap of over 3,550,000 tonnes. Part would probably have to be bridged in cash to restore reserves used in turn to make commercial imports to bridge the request-pledge-delivery-distribution gaps. At commercial c.i.f prices 3,650,000 tonnes (including 300,000 other staples) might cost \$500,000,000 to \$550,000,000 and at average donor "transfer prices" perhaps \$600,000,000 to \$650,000,000.

Transport and distribution from point of entry to user are both difficult and - especially in Angola and Mozambique and for emergency programmes more generally - very costly. A reasonable regional cost estimate is of the order of \$340,000,000. This excludes most of the cost in Botswana which is the only state capable of financing a large increase in such costs out of its domestic budget without either severe cuts on other important heads or a dangerous increase in domestic bank borrowing.

TABLE 3
IMPORT AND FISCAL REQUIREMENTS '1992/1993': FOOD AND DROUGHT
(Tonnes / \$)

	FOOD ² (tonnes)						OTHER REQUIREMENTS AND SOURCES ³ (\$)				
	Imports		Food Aid ⁴				Transport/ Distribution ⁷	Water/Camps/ Work Programmes ⁸	Pledged Pre-Drought	Additional Monetisation ⁹	Gap ¹⁰
	Grain	Other Staple	Emergency ³	Other	Pledged ⁵ Pre-Drought	Gap ⁶					
Zimbabwe ¹¹	1,410,000	75,000	509,000	300,000	75,000	734,000	60,000,000	60,000,000	5,000,000	15,000,000	100,000,000
Mozambique	1,381,000	150,000	688,000	615,000	600,000	703,000	100,000,000	60,000,000	30,000,000	5,000,000	125,000,000
Malawi	976,000	75,000	438,000	337,000	350,000	425,000	60,000,000	20,000,000	20,000,000	10,000,000	50,000,000
Zambia ¹²	970,000	30,000	209,000	670,000	100,000	779,000	40,000,000	20,000,000	5,000,000	20,000,000	35,000,000
Tanzania ¹²	500,000	10,000	116,000	300,000	50,000	366,000	25,000,000	15,000,000	5,000,000	7,500,000	27,500,000
Lesotho	297,000	20,000	78,000	100,000	30,000	148,000	7,500,000	10,000,000	7,500,000	2,500,000	7,500,000
Swaziland	129,000	15,000	47,000	19,000	5,000	61,000	3,000,000	2,500,000	1,000,000	500,000	4,000,000
Botswana ¹³	240,000	50,000	17,000	-	2,000	15,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	negl.	negl.	4,000,000
Namibia	125,000	35,000	61,000	39,000	15,000	85,000	7,000,000	8,000,000	2,500,000	500,000	12,000,000
Angola ¹⁴	500,000	70,000	150,000	50,000	50,000	250,000	35,000,000	35,000,000	5,000,000	8,000,000	57,000,000
Total											
Southern Africa	6,428,000	530,000	2,313,000	2,530,000	1,277,000	3,566,000	339,500,000	232,500,000	81,000,000	54,000,000	437,000,000

Sources: FAO/WFP Mission Report, "Tucsin", National Data

Notes:

- Totals include baseline (pre-drought) and drought requirements.
- Adjusted from Mission data for Angola and by Inclusion of Other Staple Food (beans, legumes, vegetable, oil, sugar) in Imports as well as Emergency Food Aid Totals.
- Adjusted to include estimates of all national free and food for work/work for food programming, except in the case of Botswana where part will be covered by commercial imports.
- Includes food financed from general balance of payments support and concessional loan arrangements (especially for wheat and, secondarily rice) apparently excluded in Report. Adjusted upward in cases in which commercial import residual in Report's Table 1 (Table 2 above) appears unattainably high.
- Rough estimate - broadly similar to 1990/91 deliveries.
- Stated in tonnes because donor accounting prices for food and transport tend to be on average 25% to 50% above commercial import parity.
- Average of \$100 tonne for emergency and \$25 tonne for non-emergency (basically monetised) food aid. Substantially higher in Mozambique and Angola.
- Rough estimates because water shortage alleviation costs are not fully articulated and importance of drought displaced person camps (i.e. inability to meet food and water needs in home area), food for work/work for food and water supply security enhancing needs vary sharply by country.
- Calculated on non-emergency portion of gap (assuming pre-drought pledged aid counterpart elements have already been allocated). Rough estimate of \$50 per tonne on account of built in 180 day lag in most states because credit ceilings prevent wholesaler using overdraft increase to buy on a cash basis. Given collection experience (lags and leakages) this may be an overestimate.
- Fiscal gap arising from enhanced drought impact mitigation programme.
- Zimbabwe's national 2,200,000 import requirement estimate covers 18 months with, of the order of 150,000 tonnes prior to and some 450,000 outside the 1992/93 period. The remaining apparent 200,000 tonne divergence seems to relate to divergence on minimum acceptable stocks to cover the time to a delayed harvest (or the time to mobilise aid) in drought disaster years. Increased aid estimate because Zimbabwe's external account and fiscal position are far too fragile to carry projected level of commercial imports and domestic financing.
- Emergency requirement adjusted upward (within unchanged total). Mission figures below minimum Zambian rural relief requirements and 'normal' Tanzanian drought year District ration distribution levels.
- Emergency figure may be correct in terms of external assistance sought. However, in that case it would seem that 50% or more of food will be provided by government out of commercial imports and general budget revenues. In the Botswana case this is perfectly practicable.
- Import, aid, emergency figures all adjusted upward. Conclusion of war and some reallocation of personnel plus transport make much larger rural food distribution possible. Inability to deliver not lack of need has explained very low Angola imports relative to Mozambique.

Other famine prevention/limitation programmatic requirements include emergency water provision, supervision-tools-materials for food for work/work for food programmes and camp facilities in those cases in which drought damage mitigation measures are inadequate or too late to avert massive displacement of persons. On a very rough estimate these could cost over \$225,000,000.

The associated cost total comes to almost \$575,000,000. Of this perhaps \$80,000,000 had been pre-drought externally pledged and - assuming delivery of food aid for urban monetisation - perhaps \$55,000,000 could be covered from monetisation proceeds received in 1992/93 (less than half of sales assuming a minimum 180 days from delivery to wholesaler to payment to Treasury relating in large part to bank lending ceilings requiring de facto Treasury working capital finance).

The associated cost gap is of the order of \$440,000,000 which together with the food cost at donor "transfer" prices of - say - \$600,000,000 comes to \$1,040,000,000. This suggests that the UN \$850,000,000 target is conservative but - except for Angola which accounts for about \$75,000,000 of the gap - of the right order of magnitude.

From Finance Through Procedure To Physical Capacity

Beyond financial constraints lie a series of procedural and physical obstacles to effective delivery of food, water and associated services. The first set are lags in seeming pledges, converting them to contracts, agreeing delivery target schedules, handling purchasing and dispatching procedures. The main problems are internal to donors albeit these can usually be reduced sharply for emergency programmes backed by a real sense of urgency. Even so, from pledge to Southern African port is unlikely to take under three months and from port to consumer (at least in rural areas) another two. In fact stocks and presently guaranteed (? , at least anticipated) flows will not last until November 1992. The only evident way to loosen this constraint is agreeing accelerated delivery schedules for pre-drought 1992-93 pledges.

The physical transport and distribution constraints have three aspects:

1. port capacity

2. port corridor land transport capacity (both for domestic distribution to non-coastal centres and for transit to landlocked states)
3. town to camp and/or rural area distribution point transport.

In practice the first constraint is not binding at Maputo, Nacala, Dar es Salaam or Walvis Bay (nor at South African ports other than Durban) and probably not at Beira. In these cases - especially Maputo and Nacala - it is onward rail and road capacity which is the effective limitation.

Over the relevant time frame little can be done to upgrade railway or main highway infrastructure and only a limited amount to rehabilitate or augment locomotive capacity (especially strained on the Nacala line). This is not to say forward planning - more accurately accelerated action on existing studies and projects - is not needed for 1993/94 and subsequent cargo movement facilitation but that it correctly is excluded from the appeals for 1992/93 famine prevention/limitation.

Road haulage fleet capacity can be augmented - although this does not feature prominently in the appeal:

- a. spares and workshop equipment to restore lorries to and keep them on the road can be delivered at least as fast as food;
- b. finance (including catastrophe insurance in respect to total losses of lorries on naturally or conflictually hazardous routes) is needed for private sector fleet expansion in several countries and for small town to rural operator renaissance in most;
- c. given the finance and a sense of urgency lorries (whether directly imported or regionally assembled in existing under capacity plants) could be supplied and brought into use before the end of 1992.

Logistical Bottle-necks

However, the distribution capacity - including both overall logistical scheduling and management and also actual warehouse/distribution point facilities and staff is very weak in Angola, Mozambique, Zambia, and - except for refugees - Malawi. It was strong in the mid-1980s but may have atrophied in Zimbabwe, is reasonable in Lesotho and Tanzania and first rate in Botswana. Namibia has limited experience but a stronger (church) NGO

base than most usable for the actual delivery to consumers while Swaziland has the advantage of being very small.

The institutional logistical capacity constraints - especially in Angola, Mozambique, Zambia and Malawi - require immediate attention. What is less clear is how. Introducing de facto expatriate managements and parallel channel external NGO distribution systems has a very mixed record in terms of raising short term capacity to deliver and a fairly demonstrable national capacity erosion and coordination dismantling medium and long term one. Domestic personnel recruitment and training is dangerously slow for coping with the 1992/93 crises and is hampered by low to derisory salaries for senior national personnel.

A very particular challenge is coordination to ensure that all suitable transport corridors are used to capacity and with priority to users (including domestic emergency operations) with no reasonable alternatives. Failure to achieve that would lead to massive disruption both of food deliveries and of the regional transport systems. It is this issue which SADCC/SATCC are seeking to manage in Southern Africa and SpoorNet, in conjunction with at least some SADCC member State railways, for the South African ports and access corridors.

Food For Peace: Peace For Food

A final problem is ensuring that war, banditry and/or civil disaster do not prevent or limit the geographical coverage of famine prevention/alleviation relief. This cluster of problems is potentially serious in Malawi, significant in Angola and potentially disastrous in Mozambique.

Malawi has experienced serious 1992 riots - not directly related to the drought situation. In 1980 famine conditions in southern Malawi resulting in food riots generally and more specifically to hijacking of food lorries. Rising hunger and lags in creating emergency distribution system capacity could bring these two strands together. The results would be serious for many Malawians and catastrophic for most of the over 900,000 refugees registered as being in Malawi and dominantly dependent on UNHCR managed and/or coordinated food aid.

Angola's civil war thwarted emergency operations in most of the country - including to many substantial towns. Corridors of Peace operations before

the MPLA-UNITA accord had a chequered record. Certainly the present position is much less constrained. However, allowing free movement of relief food is by no means always the practice of some local commanders; a unified or even closely coordinated - set of civil governance and service provision operations is yet to be achieved; 'free lance' bandits (ex-combatants or otherwise are a very real problem).

Mozambique is the crisis case. The bandidos armados of Renamo have historically prioritised food relief convoys, food warehouses, distribution points and growing crops as prime targets. With the 1989-92 evolution of their strategy to achieve maximum disruption from each military action, this war against food relief has become more evident and articulated. The increasingly tight food position confronting Renamo units has led to adding food looting to food destruction as a top military priority.

A tentative and fragile initiative toward what one observer termed "bogeys, bags and basins of peace" involves:

- a. Government and Renamo granting peaceful passage to food aid carrying vehicles and not attacking food distribution points;
- b. provision of food aid to civilians throughout the country with supplies to those (perhaps 10%) in Renamo controlled areas organised and supervised by WFP and UNICEF (including supervising actual use);
- c. no troops (Government or Renamo) on food aid carrying vehicles proceeding to or returning from Renamo controlled areas - but probably with UN agency recruited guards to defend against 'free lance' bandits;
- d. use of food aid to ensure that all personnel involved in its transport, handling, distribution and protection do have adequate food security for themselves and their families.

This package is acceptable to the Government and has now been accepted by UNITA's commander following an initial rejection by one of his senior officers when it was first publicly put to him by UN agency representatives. Its durability and general operationality - or otherwise - will affect not merely the cost but the capacity of the 1992/93 emergency operation in Mozambique. Thousands - quite probably scores of thousands - of lives turn on the outcome.

IV

OUTLOOKS FOR THOSE AT RISK: REGIONAL OVERVIEW

The outlook in March justified gloomy reference to and amendment of T. S. Eliot's poems. In the first - "Coriolan: Fragments of an Ode for a Statesman" - the protagonist amid rising public wrath and external disaster appoints committee after overlapping committee observing in the ultimate in non-functional proceduralism "one secretary will do for several committees". The second more sombre paraphrase and continuation came from the end of "The Waste Land":

Here we go round the mulberry bush,
mulberry bush
At six o'clock in the morning.
This is the way the world ends,
This is the way the world ends,
This is the way the world ends -
Not with a bang but with a whimper.
The whimper of a dying child
Huddled against its dead mother
On the cracked mud of the dead river bed
With the only living witnesses
The watching, waiting vultures perched
In the dead acacia tree
On what - once - was the river bank.

There is a sense in which that doom remains real in southern Africa. Lack of food and - at this stage especially - of water are killing. No matter how much is now done, how fast or how efficiently the drought toll will be in tens of hundreds not only tens of human lives. The struggle now is to hold the litany of death at that level and prevent its breaking loose to tens of thousands or tens of scores of thousands. What are the prospects of achieving that aim?

One test is to look at the critical action path set out in Tocsin as of March and look at the progress, and especially pace of progress (or otherwise), along it. The critical path for minimising human and medium term economic disaster was argued to include:

1. national quick review of own data/analysis with country UNDP-WFP-FAO-UNICEF offices leading to an immediate, forceful alert to potential donors and the international press by the beginning of April;

2. collection-checking-analysis of basic data on crop losses and food balance shortfalls (nationally and by province) leading to a report of physical food aid and immediately suppliable logistic inputs plus finances for domestic distribution requirements which cannot be met domestically to go to donors, SADCC, SATCC by mid-April;
3. a meeting of Member States (including central economic, transport and food security units) with SADCC/SATCC leading to agreement on SADCC's information and mobilisation roles and on SATCC's responsibility to develop a coordinated logistical plan by the end of April;
4. continued data collection and analysis review to correct, articulate and update;
5. on the basis of all available data, Southern African States to negotiate with Donors bilaterally, but preferably on a coordinated basis - ideally at a joint meeting of States and Major Donors either in the Southern African region or in Europe perhaps with SADCC serving as a joint secretariat to its ten members in May;
6. agreement on the levels and timing of assistance followed by immediate technical logistical meetings of Donor, State and SATCC officials to agree on an operational routing and timing programme by early June;
7. procurement and dispatch of initial shipments during June and July;
8. arrival in Southern Africa and forwarding to main cities of destination and thence to rural areas over August/September;
9. review of progress and of new developments on an ongoing basis - primarily at operational level beginning in September;
10. continuation of the programme through the 1992-93 harvest over the period February-July (depending on country) and
11. preliminary assessment of 1992-93 probable harvest and food balance position involving the ten countries, WFP-FAO-UNDP-UNICEF, SADCC and bilateral donors in January 1993 to determine whether a further 1993-94 programme will be necessary.

How Far? How Fast?

If one compares what has happened through May with this target set there appears to have been relatively little slippage and no cumulative lag build up:

1. quick review surveys for several countries were prepared and discussed by early April although several in effect combined stages 1 and 2 and a few as of late May still seemed to have rather weak articulated data;
2. the basic food, water, logistic support report was prepared by the FAO/WFP Mission over March-April in association with government personnel and has served as a basic building block toward the UN appeal, albeit the Mission Report's coverage of water and transport support appears to be uneven and probably to underestimate the necessary and the feasible;
3. by late April/early May, SADCC at Secretariat level had prepared papers toward a regionally convened round table and at SATCC level had port/corridor use working groups in operation;
4. the data collection and evaluation process has continued;
5. the UN launched appeal and early June meeting on it (as well as SADCC's efforts) do constitute a regional framework/national case negotiations approach albeit, the coordination of UN and SADCC efforts has - though not from lack of goodwill - not been entirely effective;
6. a certain lag has emerged in that the Geneva UN appeal meeting was not basically a detailed logistical and programming meeting even if it did seek to open up that phase of support for feeding people;
7. few shipments are likely to be made in June - other than speeded up or previously still to be programmed pre-drought pledges;
8. arrival beginning in August/September - especially of pre-drought commitments rescheduled from October-March period - remains possible;
9. it is to be hoped that a review of work in progress meeting will occur in September;

10. at which time extensions from March through June 1993 can be negotiated for those countries whose harvest cycle - and, where relevant, annual external support consultative group processes - make a July 1 - June 30 calamity offset year more appropriate;
11. the chances are high for serious forward planning taking a position on probable climatic impact and avoiding the desperate (and for some human beings fatal) rush if there is not an ongoing process into which February/March weather outcome can be fitted - if Southern African countries/co-operating partners avoid exhaustion or sole attention to operating the 1992/93 effort without also considering how to avert being caught late again.

Looking Beyond 1992/93

At some stage three further issues will require attention. First, what type of ongoing (even if standby) structures are needed on the part of external partners as well as of Southern African states and domestic NGOs and SADCC/SATCC, in order to make calamity response both faster and more efficient and how can those structures be kept from atrophying over a period of relatively (or mercifully!) low use, as Zimbabwe's apparently did over 1986/89. Second, what medium term risk and vulnerability reduction investment could be made whether in terms of, e.g. less vulnerable water supplies through deeper wells and longer distance main river links for - respectively - rural and urban areas through research and extension; more drought resistant and shorter planting to yield period seeds which could be made available for late rain and replanting after initial failure (a common practice - in some cases repeated at least twice) use. Third, what rehabilitation after calamity should be built into emergency programmes. In one sense having project banks of food for work/food for work is an example because of their post-calamity household cash flow and infrastructural context effects. More particularly, pastoralists or mixed farmers who lose all or a substantial portion of their herds/flocks do need assistance in replacing their "working capital".

A more immediate example is seed. In respect to farmers normally sewing out a reserved portion of their own harvest (still the majority), seed provision before the 1992/93 long rains should commence will be essential - all too many households will quite literally and necessarily will have eaten their seed-corn to survive. In respect to users of improved

commercially distributed seed, there is also a major problem. Most countries in the region depended on a mix of locally propagated and imported South African and/or Zimbabwean seed. In virtually every case the domestic supply of improved seed is far below normal. Because this pertains in South Africa and Zimbabwe (not surprisingly as their crops were even worse drought parched than those of the regions as a whole) they will have little, if any, seed to export in 1992/93. Locating suitable improved seed elsewhere - whether in Kenya (most unfortunately also drought scarred) or in Asia - is an exercise which should be undertaken at once by a designated UN agency on behalf of other cooperating partners and of the Southern African states. Unless that is done timeously (and successfully) 1992/93 crops will be well below average whatever the weather.

Clearly it is not possible to say that the 1992/93 calamity impact limitation exercise is a full success. With victims, of delay as well as of weather, and also of contexts of violence as well as of resource shortages already dying and hundreds of thousands of people "on the move" because lack of water and of access to relief food prevented their remaining at home, it is necessary to admit partial failure and to reflect how to do better next time. Unfortunately, next time may be 1993/94 because 1979/80-1983/84 constituted a run of five regionally moderately poor to disastrous harvests regionally followed by a 1984/85-1988/89 run of average to bumper harvest climatic conditions followed by an apparent recurrence of the below average phase of the cycle in 1989/90. If there is indeed a pronounced (if less than uniform in either generality or intensity) cycle then the 1992/93 and 1993/94 harvests in most Southern African countries are more likely than not to be moderately to severely below average. Until early warning sequences disprove that presumption, it would be prudent for early pre-planning to be based on it.

However, gloom is not as of mid-1992 an appropriate dominant emotion. Especially in Mozambique and Angola the horrors of the mass killer famines of the first third of the 1980s can be avoided. Tanzania can be helped to preserve a nearly forty year record of preventing famine deaths even in the face of severe droughts combined with severe resource scarcities. The tocsin has rung, the rallying round to act has taken place - there is room for determined hope as to the outcome. If that prognosis is correct, relief and a determined attempt to learn from experience, not exhausted rest nor triumphalism will be the appropriate responses when (if) a good

1993 (or 1994) harvest means that over 1993/94 (or 1994/95) most Southern Africans (and especially most farming families) can be fully fed from the fruits of their own soil, and toil.

V.

COUNTRY CAPSULES

The Southern Africa situation is marked by significant similarities, by common themes and by a need for coordinated action both by the ten SADCC member States and by their external cooperating partners. However, there are also significant national contextual divergences. Some of these are noted in the following country capsules.

ZIMBABWE faces four cumulative problems. First in 1990/91 a less conservative policy was adopted on the previously very cautious level of intra year reserves held against future drought. Later in the year even the working stock reserves were depleted so that only an early bumper harvest would have averted the need for food imports - a fact recognised by placing 100,000 tonnes of orders in December. The causal factors appear at first to have been attempts to reduce marketing body deficits on intra-year stocks. Later sales were to increase foreign exchange available to try to offset the vertiginous foreign exchange price/inflation spiral set off by what, at least in retrospect, was imprudent speed and generality in import and currency market liberalisation; a course of action Zimbabwe was urged to follow by its external cooperating partners.

Second, the highly efficient, articulated system for reporting local food shortages and putting ration and food for work projects into operation built up by 1985 had atrophied by 1989 (when it failed in minor localised drought crises) and at least until March 1992 had not been fully restored.

Third, the 1991/92 harvest is barely one quarter normal and near nothing in several districts. Taken with the first factor this leads to import needs of over 2,000,000 tonnes during the January 1992/July 1993 period. About 1,500,000 tonnes (of which over 1,400,000 tonnes grain) relate to the April 1992/March 1993 consumption year. It also means that up to 4,000,000 Zimbabweans (plus over 100,000 refugees) have no entitlements, so that 1992/93 emergency programme requirements are of the order of 500,000 tonnes. 300,000 tonnes more is needed for monetisation (or in cash to refinance commercial imports now contracted which Zimbabwean cannot afford consistent with keeping its malfunctioning Structural Adjustment Programme in being) to urban, peri urban and large farm commercial networks.

Fourth, while transport within Zimbabwe is, with a few exceptions, good, coast to Zimbabwe routes are in danger of clogging. About 500,000 tonnes can transit the Beira corridor and - less clearly - 200,000 tonnes the Limpopo Valley line from Maputo. Therefore up to 1,000,000 tonnes in 1992/93 will have to use South African ports and rail or road links - a problematic target given South Africa's own import and internal distribution requirements. In addition Zimbabwe will need to provide transit capacity for any South African grain to Zambia not using a rail/road route through Botswana and - assuming, as seems doubtful, capacity on Mozambique's Tete Corridor - to Malawi as well.

MOZAMBIQUE has had a war related food insecurity emergency for a decade. In 1989-91 greater security and fairly good weather reduced its intensity. Even so, national food supplies were at least a quarter below totals required for universal access to minimum acceptable nutrition levels. A 60% 1992/93 crop shortfall has pushed at least seven and a half provinces (excluding the northern pair of Niassa and Cabo Delgado and port of Nampula) to the brink of mass starvation.

Food import requirements are over 1,500,000 tonnes (1,380,000 grain and 150,000 vegetable oil, beans, legumes, sugar). Little more than 10% can possibly be financed commercially by what may today be the world's poorest country leaving a food aid target of over 1,300,000 tonnes (about 55% emergency/45% monetised). Persons at risk of severe malnutrition and death through food entitlements failure exceed 4,000,000. In addition (as in Southern Zimbabwe) severe rural drinking water shortages were killing as early as March and sending hundreds of thousands of people "on the move" looking for water in small towns or peri urban areas - most of whose water supplies were also, if less obviously - at grave risk.

Distribution capacity in Mozambique is the largest in the region - and also the most stretched - because of the decade long emergency. Its ability to respond effectively this year turns on:

- a. provision (basically to the enterprise sector) of spares, lorries and credit to buy the latter;
- b. better coordination of parallel channel operations via foreign NGOs which have in the past not shown uniformly high technical competence and several of which have uniformly shown contempt or hostility to

Mozambican civil society bodies as well as to local and national government bodies;

- c. success to the current UN agency brokered efforts to secure Renamo's halting it's bandidos armados attacks on food relief operations in return for UN supervised delivery and monitoring of distribution of food to the 10% of civilians in areas it controls.

Mozambican port capacity is adequate - even taking account of transit traffic to landlocked states. However, on key internal routes from Beira and Nacala there will be competition for limited rail and road capacity between domestic and interstate uses.

MALAWI has experienced a severe drought nationally with under half a normal crop. In the south - especially the Shire Valley - the results are far worse. Total import requirements are of the order of 950,000 tonnes (including 75,000 tonnes vegetable oil, groundnuts and beans). Slightly under 450,000 tonnes of that will be required for emergency operations in support of over 950,000 refugees and about 2,000,000 Malawians disentitled by total or very severe crop failure. Commercial import capacity is unlikely to exceed 175,000 tonnes implying an additional 325,000 to 350,000 tonnes for supplying the urban, plantation and peri urban commercial network. Of this total of 775,000 tonnes at most 350,000 (about half for refugees) had been pledged pre-drought.

Malawian distribution capacity for citizen households is low - as was demonstrated in the early 1980s. Unless this is remedied, repetition of the 1980 food riots on a larger scale and looting of food vehicles designated for refugee camps is likely.

Getting food from ports to Malawi will pose Herculean problems. Little capacity will be available on the Beira corridor, traffic from Dar es Salaam is limited by Lake Niassa-Malawi-Nyassa vessel capacity and by the capacity of the road link to Zambia. South African ports are not a usable option given Zimbabwean and Mozambican transport constraints and both the emergency requirements and problematic 'peace' conditions in Tete Province. The main route has to be via Nacala. Here limited traction capacity in Mozambique (perhaps soluble by using Malawian locomotives) and the non-rehabilitation of the last 150 odd kilometres of rail on the Mozambican side (perhaps augmentable by lorry transport) pose serious technical

problems. Whether this is fully realised is unclear - in the early 1980s the two Malawi rail lines to Mozambique were fully functional, later Zimbabwean grain exports could fairly easily transit Tete and in 1992 Malawi has been relatively slow in formally highlighting the emergency or articulating means to meet it.

ZAMBIA has experienced very severe drought and high temperature damage to its grain crop which is barely above one third of normal. March rains may have eased pasture and drinking water outlook but were too late to save the crop. A Presidential disaster proclamation was issued at the end of February.

Import requirements are of the order of 1,000,000 tonnes - 970,000 grain. No foreign exchange is available domestically beyond 125,000 tonnes of South African commercial imports now being imported. Of the 879,000 tonnes total food aid needed over 200,000 tonnes is needed for emergency distribution to rural households disintitiled by the drought and numbering up to 2,000,000 persons. These people are concentrated in the south and west. Institutional capacity for emergency distribution is low, a problem compounded by up to 250,000 unregistered Angolan and Mozambican refugees in the West and Southeast respectively.

Transport from port to Zambia poses grave problems. Beira capacity is largely allocated to Zimbabwe and Nacala totally to Malawi. Tazara (rather than the port of Dar es Salaam) may be a bottle-neck depending on the volume of south going grain imports for Tanzanian use. If southern Tanzanian surpluses can be sent north (empty back haul) and south to Zambia (in swop transaction with donors supplying Dar es Salaam) the bulk of Zambia's needs can use this route. Otherwise a 50-50 split with the more distant South African ports of East London and Port Elizabeth (and thence via the potentially overloaded Spoornet and Zimbabwe National Railways network) will be needed. Delivery from line of rail to smaller towns and rural centres may require assistance in provision of spare parts, tyres, fuel and emergency minor bridge repairs.

TANZANIA has major food import requirements because of the drought and even greater logistical problems because of the national pattern of regional surpluses and deficits. Its main Southern grain growing areas will have surpluses. The Centre will have serious deficits. The North will remain unclear until July's harvest because late but moderate rains may give it a

below average crop adequate for the region but not for normal supplies to the Lake area.

Tanzania is a fiscal/forex knife-edge economy. To meet substantial famine avoidance costs on its own account (which is a political priority if necessary) would wipe out much of the 1984-1992 claw-back toward balance with sustainable output growth above that of population. Further Tanzania is the key transit state to avert famine in Zambia and - to a lesser extent given lower relevant capacity - Malawi. It can hardly play that role if overwhelmed by domestic hunger outbreaks.

The old (dating to late 1950s) rough and ready, food ration system oriented to calamity hit districts works well. Doubtless more work for food components should be built in - but beginning in 1993/94, not at the cost of smooth 1992/93 distribution. The bottle-neck is long distance transport from the surplus in the South to the deficit Central, Lake and Urban areas. The key requirement both for emergency and commercial operations is more on the road lorries (perhaps largely by delivery of more spares). Ideally swap operations with Southern Tanzanian maize purchased for use in Zambia and Malawi and paid for in grain and vegetable oil landed at Dar es Salaam and Tanga would reduce transport constraints. Whether donor procedures (and that unhappy joint import with past food aid the Greater Borer Beetle) will allow that in 1992/93 requires urgent exploration to reach a prompt decision one way or the other.

LESOTHO faces a two pronged assault by drought. At home the weather has seared crops with especially disastrous impact on low income female headed rural households. The South African drought has dried up agricultural and small town employment and remittances which are crucial to many households. Physical delivery from South Africa (ultimately if not physically re-exports since RSA has a 1992/93 eating year deficit) and distribution via commerce pose few problems; entitlement restoration does. The latter is complicated by donor unwillingness either to buy South African grain or to provide foreign exchange fairly certain to be used for that purpose. That is understandable and even laudable in the struggle against apartheid but, perhaps, less than top priority in meeting the famine challenge in the South Africa locked Mountain Kingdom.

Lesotho has a food for work programme of long standing, moderate distributional efficiency and coverage and significant leaks. Whether and

how it can relate to increased rural pressures and to urban/peri urban loads resulting from the spillover of the South African drought via remittances is unclear. Additional channels - perhaps via religious groups - may well be needed, especially in urban areas.

SWAZILAND has a domestic food shortage from drought and an additional entitlement collapse from losses in remittances related to the South African drought. The physical problems of moving grain in via South Africa (or with somewhat more difficulty the rail line from Maputo) are low and the commercial system can sell it anywhere in the quite small country.

However, matching grain in the country with entitlements losses and financing food provision as rations or via work for food programmes is more problematic. Swaziland has a very limited history of either and therefore very little institutional capacity. Further, public finance - while not on the brink of disaster has little room to manoeuvre.

The two urgent topics would appear to be underwriting the cost of food (basically maize, beans, vegetable oil) for transfer to vulnerable households reduced to absolute poverty and devising channels (rations distributed by local authorities, urban religious group outreach programmes, work for food programmes) capable of getting the food (or cash to buy it) to entitlement losers.

BOTSWANA has experienced severe drought and crop loss - perhaps the most severe in the region. On that basis alone it would be high on any impending disaster list. In fact it is not because national priorities, resources and institutional capacities for coping exist, have been tested in previous droughts and have been held on standby for reactivation when needed (by Presidential Proclamation in April). Botswana's key requirement is that grain is available commercially and - more to the point - that transport channels via Namibia, South Africa and - perhaps - Maputo are coordinated to avoid bottle-necks which delay vital supplies.

The irony that its own success makes Botswana a low priority for emergency assistance is accepted by Botswana so long as keeping transport lines open and providing technical advice (on nutrition and work for food programme strengthening) is provided. Triangular technical assistance funding to make Botswana's coping strategy's institutional delivery and entitlements maintenance via employment on local infrastructure experience available to

other Southern African states (perhaps especially Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia) should be a donor (as well as a SADCC) priority for 1993/94.

NAMIBIA's 1990/91 record crop by northern small farmers has been followed by a rain failure related disaster which has also affected the two central commercial farm maize zones. In a country with perhaps two thirds of households in absolute poverty and the budgetary as well as the external account position precarious, the risks are very high. The State's clear priority to avert famine, if pursued without substantial food aid, is likely to have severe negative fiscal and forex repercussions. Not pursuing it - quite apart from human concerns - would endanger the whole strategy of reconciliation and of building up rural livelihoods.

There are few physical or main line transport problems. Indeed Namibia is a key transit state for Southern Angola and Zambia. For wage earners and pensioners the commercial system can meet demand once the grain, sugar, beans and vegetable oil are to hand. In respect to entitlement losses (and existing urban/peri urban unemployed) delivery problems do exist. Work for food would be optimal but whether very many projects can be designed/supervised in 1992/93 is problematic. Domestic NGOs - especially churches - may be better able than the government apparatus to identify and to reach those households in need because local government reform while seriously begun is in mid-course with both old security focussed and new basic needs capacity orientations less than fully operational.

ANGOLA's potential famine is neither new nor related to the 1991/2 weather which - while uneven - was above average with only the southeast suffering from drought. Flood damage elsewhere appears to be localised. That, however, does not make the famine peril to life less severe.

The combination of civil war, domestic strategy and international perceptions had - by 1989/90 - placed Angola in a position of endemic severe malnutrition in most of the countryside and real danger of famine in many small and provincial towns and their clusters of displaced person encampments. UNITA mined fields to prevent rural life in areas it did not control and sought to starve out towns. The Government gave top priority to the hydrocarbon sector to produce the sinews of war and to the military to wage war. Emergency food support came third. In addition, Angola - unlike Mozambique - has never ranked high on donor lists.

Since the Government/UNITA peace process accords, some personnel and transport have been reallocated to emergency and some foreign exchange to food imports. While still difficult, access to areas of hunger is much better. But at least until 1993/94 both financial (including food) and technical assistance are necessary on an increased scale if the opportunities to avert famine, reduce chronic severe malnutrition and begin rural rehabilitation are to be grasped.