Introduction

The Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) is an integrated set of activities funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) intended to provide timely, accurate, evidence-based, and transparent food security early warning information and analysis. Created in 1985 in response to famines in East and West Africa, FEWS NET provides global coverage through a mix of presence and remote monitoring. FEWS NET’s work is implemented across several pillars by a team of partners that includes the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the United States Department of Agriculture, the United States Geological Survey, Kimetrica, and Chemonics International (Chemonics). Chemonics houses FEWS NET’s Early Warning Team, a team charged with integrated emergency food insecurity analysis through a Washington-based technical office and more than 20 field offices.

Based on an in-depth understanding of local livelihoods, Early Warning Team analysts monitor information and data on factors that affect food security, such as weather conditions and climate, crops, pasture, markets and trade, and nutrition. The FEWS NET Early Warning Team produces regular reports, including Food Security Outlooks and Outlook Updates, emergency alerts, market and price updates, and global weather hazards. FEWS NET makes reports available at www.fews.net and distributes them globally to governments, relief agencies, and other organizations engaged in humanitarian response and development programs.

The seventh phase of FEWS NET (FEWS NET 7) began in 2019. The work of FEWS NET 7’s Early Warning Team relies on close collaboration with international, regional, and national partners on food security analysis. Major activities include joint monitoring and assessments, data exchanges, collaborative analysis and report writing, and technical capacity strengthening. FEWS NET supports local and regional food security networks to contribute to achieving the global objective of food security for all.

Position Description

FEWS NET food security analysis, early warning, and decision support for emergency food assistance rely on the monitoring and analysis of markets and prices associated with staple foods, cash crops, livestock, and labor. The Markets and Trade Analyst supports the Washington, D.C. and field office operations for the markets and trade (M&T) sector. Key duties include preparing technical reports on commodity, livestock, labor, and financial markets, contributing to technical oversight of the project’s analytical approaches, and providing technical M&T support to the FEWS NET Early Warning Team’s home, regional, and field offices, and technical partners. The Markets and Trade Analyst is part of a close-knit team of food security-focused technicians based in Washington, D.C. and around the world.

The proliferation of COVID-19 as a global pandemic has had a significant impact on critical facets of the FEWS NET Early Warning Team’s work. The onset of this global shock arrived amidst increasing levels of acute food insecurity around the world that were already generating significant decision support needs. The layering of a global public health crisis on top of these already challenging food security conditions has significantly increased the need for additional monitoring data, as well as augmented decision support to identify and understand the likely aggregate impacts of this combination of shocks on acute food insecurity. Given that the immediate impacts of COVID-19 are related to potentially large changes in global and national food supplies, and changing effective demand at the household level, the M&T sector is fielding a large portion of the information needs
associated with the augmented monitoring. It is anticipated that increased demand for information from this sector will persist in the medium- and longer-term, given pre-existing market dynamics in FEWS NET geographies and the many anticipated macro and microeconomic impacts of efforts to control, respond to, and recover from COVID-19.

The Markets and Trade Analyst works in close collaboration with the FEWS NET Early Warning Team’s home, regional, and field office technical colleagues to:

- Provide technical oversight and/or prepare M&T-focused reports and decision-support products.
- Contribute to population and expansion of FEWS NET’s data sets used for M&T analysis, with a focus on domains including prices, cross-border trade, and production data.
- Analyze primary and secondary market data as inputs to the FEWS NET Early Warning Team’s integrated food security analysis.
- Develop sector-relevant analytical methods and tools and train technical staff on the use of those tools.

The Markets and Trade Analyst will work with the rest of the M&T team to provide quality control for the routine and ad hoc deliverables of the project and will help ensure that M&T-related activities and products are delivered in a timely manner.

**Specific duties**

The Markets and Trade Analyst is assigned a specific portfolio, including both geographic and thematic areas of focus. The main activities of the Markets and Trade Analyst include, but are not limited to:

- Providing technical oversight for the production of the Early Warning Team’s regional staple food supply and market outlook reports for assigned countries/regions.
- Liaising with M&T staff and other FEWS NET Early Warning Team members to assure the timely publication of monthly deliverables reporting on trends in staple food markets in countries FEWS NET monitors. This includes preparing assigned sections of the Global Price Watch.
- Liaising with FEWS NET Early Warning Team field staff and partners to facilitate timely data flows.
- Providing support to field teams, the Early Warning Team’s Database Manager, and the broader M&T team to improve data quality and integrity.
- Providing technical assistance and guidance to home, regional, and field office teams on market and policy analysis relevant to food insecurity early warning and associated decision support. Technical assistance to the field may be done remotely or may require international travel.
- Participating in regular reviews of the consistency and accuracy of price projections and other M&T-related forecasting in the FEWS NET Early Warning Team’s analysis and assist in incorporating associated learning into sector methods, processes, and products.
- Conducting literature reviews, analyzing data, and drafting reports on market trends and policies in support of the early warning work and in close collaboration with other members of home, regional, and field office technical teams.
- Liaising with research institutions (including but not limited to the World Bank, the International Food Policy Research Institute, and universities) to support market-related research relevant to food security early warning analysis.
• Contributing sector-relevant content to monthly and ad hoc decision support products, including around COVID-19 related information requests.

• Assisting the Markets and Trade Advisor, as needed, in implementing other M&T activities.

Qualifications

• Fluency in English is required; French, Arabic, and/or Spanish language skills is/are desirable.

• Graduate degree in a discipline relevant to the M&T work of FEWS NET, such as agricultural economics, is desired; Bachelor’s degree in a discipline relevant to the M&T work of FEWS NET is required.

• At least two years of relevant experience (with PhD), four years of relevant experience (with Master’s degree), or at least six years of relevant experience (with Bachelor’s degree) is required. Some experience living and working in a region or country in which FEWS NET field staff work is preferable.

• Experience building and using large databases to analyze markets, in particular agricultural markets, using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods is required.

• Excellent interpersonal skills are required, including the ability to work well with field-based, local staff via telephone and email.

• Experience leading capacity building activities is desirable.

• Excellent writing, editing, and presentation skills are required.

• Excellent computer skills, including the Microsoft Office suite, and database management skills are required.

• Familiarity with ESRI ArcGIS mapping and statistical software is preferred.

• Experience working on USAID-funded activities is preferred.

• Previous experience with Household Economy Analysis (HEA) is desirable.

• Previous experience with the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) or Cadre Harmonisé (CH) is desirable.

Location and Reporting

This position is based in the Early Warning Team’s Washington, DC office. Remote work is authorized during the COVID-19 emergency and may be considered under other unique circumstances. The Markets and Trade Analyst works under the supervision of the Markets and Trade Advisor. S/He will collaborate with the Washington-based technical team, regional technical experts, and other technical staff in the field. S/He may be requested to supervise technical assistants and/or short-term consultants, as/if delegated. The Markets and Trade Analyst may be required to travel domestically and internationally.