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 NASA, NOAA, USGS, Kimetrica, and Chemonics International (Chemonics). Chemonics implements FEWS NET’s integrated emergency food insecurity analysis through a Washington-based technical office and more than 20 field offices.

Based on in-depth understanding of local livelihoods, FEWS NET analysts monitor information and data on factors that affect food security, such as weather conditions and climate, crops, pasture, markets and trade, and nutrition. FEWS NET 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 and 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

The RFSS–MT for Southern Africa will work with the Southern Africa Regional Representative (RR), the rest of the regional team, the country teams in the region, and partners to design, execute, and coordinate regional activities in the M&T technical area. These activities will include but are not limited to: M&T data quality assurance, providing sectoral technical assistance and guidance to country teams, preparing regional decision-support products, and strengthening capacity to conduct relevant market analyses both inside and outside FEWS NET. The RFSS–MT will contribute to providing high-quality and effective early warning of threats to food security and support efforts to mitigate food insecurity and prevent food crises through the provision of actionable food security analysis.

Responsibilities

The main responsibilities of the RFSS–MT for Southern Africa will include, but are not limited to:

Monitoring, analysis, and reporting

- Compile market data including but not limited to staple food prices, exchange rates, consumer price indices, trade flows (formal and informal), crop production, and commodity balance sheet estimates collected in countries monitored by FEWS NET in Southern Africa. Enter secondary data into the FEWS NET price database for selected countries.
• Help establish and/or maintain systematic and efficient data collection and management processes among country, regional, and home office staff. Control the quality of data and ensure the timeliness of market data flows from field offices in the region.

• Prepare regional market reports (bi-annual Regional Supply and Market Outlook report, monthly Price Watch report, monthly cross-border trade bulletin) and, as needed, ad hoc decision-support products. Gather and analyze market information and draft analytical reports. Provide quality assurance for national and regional Price Bulletin reports.

• Monitor and analyze market and policy developments concerning staple food commodities, livestock, cash crops, and other commodities relevant to livelihoods and food security analysis. Identify emerging regional market issues and provide input into the analysis of regional and local food security conditions.

• Support (through in-person participation, remote guidance, etc.) FEWS NET’s participation in seasonal field assessments in the region and contribute to development of associated assessment reports. Lead or provide support to market assessments in the region serving to inform integrated food security analysis or the food assistance planning processes, as needed.

Technical capacity development and guidance

• Provide ad hoc technical assistance and guidance to enable Country Representatives to deliver high-quality market information and analyses pertaining to food security analysis, early warning, and food assistance decision support in their geography. Provide assistance with the design and implementation of market assessments and market studies and with the improvement of monitoring methods.

• Design and coordinate/execute activities to build and maintain an up-to-date knowledge base and market monitoring plan for food and cash crop commodities, labor, and livestock markets in Southern Africa. Knowledge base components may include commodity balance sheets, production and price databases, seasonal monitoring plans, and other products as required.

• Provide technical assistance and guidance for remote monitoring start-up activities and market monitoring in established non-presence countries, as needed.

• In collaboration with the home office, transfer knowledge and provide short-term training to strengthen the capacity of country teams to understand the structure and functioning of markets and to monitor, analyze, and report on food and cash crop commodity markets, labor, and livestock markets that affect the livelihoods of poor and very poor households.

• Support the home office M&T Team in developing technical guidance materials, tools, and standards for field offices covering market and trade data collection, analysis, and reporting.

• Contribute to FEWS NET methods development and testing.

• Share successful experiences and best practices in market monitoring, communication of market information, and institutional strengthening with FEWS NET country and regional teams in other regions. This includes but is not limited to best practices in price and informal cross-border trade data collection.

Leadership, representation, and liaison

• Organize and lead monthly technical coordination and work planning conference calls between the Home Office and Regional Office to provide an update on emerging market issues within the region and coordinate on key ongoing or planned activities.

• Lead the regional informal cross-border trade data collection activity that is implemented in collaboration with WFP and other key partners. This includes but is not limited to supervising data processors; coordinating between FEWS NET and other implementing partners; providing training to enumerators, enumerator coordinators, and FEWS NET technical staff; and ensuring data quality.
• Contribute to the identification of priority markets and trade activities in line with the strategic orientation of FEWS NET. Design, execute, and direct associated technical and operational work.

• Monitor and, as appropriate, contribute to activities undertaken outside FEWS NET that aim to enhance capabilities in market monitoring, early warning, and food assistance decision support. Seek collaboration with regional partners to enhance the quality and impact of FEWS NET markets and trade work.

• Liaise with regional partners to exchange information and promote a dialogue on market and institutional issues pertaining to food security, early warning, and preparedness.

• Bring together efforts from food security partners to improve the quality of market and food security information, to facilitate local assessment methods producing comparable market data and adequate geographic coverage, and to enhance the link between food security information and decision making.

• Contribute to FEWS NET’s capacity building and institutional strengthening objectives. Facilitate trainings and the transfer of FEWS NET market monitoring tools and systems to regional and international organizations, as appropriate.

• Assisting the RR in carrying out other technical, management, and representational functions of the regional office upon request.

Qualifications

• Proficiency in written and spoken English is required and working proficiency in French is highly desired. Local language skills relevant to Southern Africa are also desirable.

• Advanced university degree (Master’s degree or higher) in a discipline that is directly relevant to household/food economy and food security, including economics, agricultural economics, social science, etc. is required. Directly related professional experience can substitute for educational experience.

• At least three years of relevant regional experience analyzing agricultural markets in Southern Africa is required.

• Significant experience in agricultural market analysis in developing countries and formal instruction in commodity market analysis (including developing projections of economic data) is preferred.

• Demonstrated ability to effectively conduct market assessments, focus group discussions, key information interviews, and analyze markets using both qualitative and quantitative methods is required.

• Demonstrated ability to work and coordinate effectively with regional partners and stakeholders is required.

• Experience leading capacity building activities is desirable.

• Excellent communication and interpersonal skills are required.

• Excellent analytical and report-writing skills are required.

• Strong computer skills and ability to use statistical software are required.

• Previous experience with GIS applications is preferred.

• Previous experience with the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is preferred.

Location and Reporting

The RFSS—MT will be based in Harare, Zimbabwe at the FEWS NET Southern Africa Regional Office. The RFSS—MT will work under the technical direction and supervision of the Regional Representative (RR). The RFSS—MT will work in close collaboration with the FEWS NET Home Office Markets and Trade Team. S/He may be required to supervise technical assistants, data processors, and/or short-term consultants, as/if delegated by the RR. The RFSS—MT will assist the RR in providing technical sectoral oversight for CRs in the region. The RFSS—MT will be required to travel frequently within Southern Africa, and some international travel to other regions may be required, security permitting.
Selection Criteria

In addition to their qualifications, candidates will be evaluated for the following core competencies and technical skills, including minimum education and experience requirements.

Core Competencies

- Relevance of education to the work of FEWS NET
- English and French language ability (spoken and written)
- Presentation skills
- Computer skills
- Evidence of working with and coordinating partners, networking and collaboration
- Coordination and representational experience
- Evidence of working independently and in different context/countries in Southern Africa

Technical Skills (depth of understanding and experience on the following topics)

- Food security
- Commodity Market Analysis (qualitative and quantitative methods)
- Market data collection methods (prices, cross border trade, production, balance sheets)
- Advanced Excel functions (pivot tables, charts, solver, data analysis)
- Building and using large databases of socio-economic data
- Market assessments (quantitative and/or qualitative)
- IPC analyses

Minimum education and Experience

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<th>Academic Degree</th>
<th>Minimum Years of Related Experience</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ph.D.</td>
<td>2 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>J.D.</td>
<td>3 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>4 years</td>
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Application Information

Chemonics International Inc. is looking for individuals who have a passion for making a difference in the lives of people around the world and demonstrate leadership, versatility, and integrity in their work. The full job description for the RFSS–MT position can be found at www.fews.net/vacancies. The position is open to qualified candidates legally authorized to work in Zimbabwe. Interested candidates should fill out the general information form and upload their CV and a cover letter at https://fewsnet.formstack.com/forms/rfss_sa_fewsnet by May 25, 2020.

All application materials, including responses to the general information form, CVs, and cover letters, should be provided in English. No telephone inquiries. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.