

Food & Water Security in South Africa WEEKLY MONITOR

25 March - 31 March 2017

Prepared by Augustus Consulting

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1.0 Key Weekly Trends, Themes and Issues

- **Oxfam says that South Africa's drought has exposed serious inadequacies in the planning and management of the country's water resources**
- **Department of Rural Development and Land Reform says it will soon be establishing a new Land Commission in order to register all land ownership in South Africa**
- **Statistician General Pali Lehohla says that South Africa is struggling to find a solution to the swelling unemployment rate, especially among the younger generation**
- **South Africa's Crop Estimates Committee announces that the country might reap the largest harvest of the grain in 36 years as rains improved yields and boosted the crop's size by 83 percent from last year**
- **South African workers take-home pay for last month declined 0.8 percent due to nominal salary terms growth for the period being lower than the month's inflation rate of 6.3 percent**
- **Western Cape Department of Agriculture has set aside R47 million for drought relief to assist farmers in the province**
- **StatisticsSA announces that the mining industry has shed almost 50,000 jobs from 2012 to 2015**
- **South Africa's expected record maize harvest could assist other African countries affected by the armyworm**
- **South Africa's National House of Traditional Leaders Traditional asks President Jacob Zuma for referendum on land expropriation**
- **South Africa's President Jacob Zuma says that the country is going to deal with the contentious issue of land reform legally and will not follow the Zimbabwean agrarian reform model**

- **South African Weather Service warns that the prospects for a return of El Nino in the coming months has risen significantly**
- **City of Cape Town announces that it is treating its dwindling water supplies for a harmless organic compound that is affecting its smell and taste**
- **Survey Stats SA survey reveals that at least 2.2 million households, mostly in rural provinces of North West, Limpopo and the Eastern Cape, do not have access to water**
- **Cape Town residents who still use too much water could see their utility bill increase by 19% in July**
- **South African households unhappy with service delivery as the percentage of households with access to water inside the dwelling steadily declines from 62, 6% for metropolitan municipalities to 6, 8% for rural municipalities**
- **City of Johannesburg's plan to do away with free water may lead to protests amid reports that residents will see an increase of R42.84 per month on their water bills from the start of the new financial year**

1.1 Food Security

1.1.1 Oxfam says that South Africa's drought has exposed serious inadequacies in the planning and management of the country's water resources

On 28 March, *News24* reported that the ongoing drought has exposed "hazardous shortcomings" in the planning and management of the country's water resources, according to report by Oxfam SA released on Tuesday.¹

1.1.2 Department of Rural Development and Land Reform says it will soon be establishing a new Land Commission in order to register all land ownership in South Africa

On 28 March, *SABC News* reported that the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform says it will soon be establishing a new Land Commission in order to register all land ownership in South Africa.²

¹ SA's drought a 'harvest of dysfunction' – Oxfam, Kaveel Singh, News24, 28 March 2017, <http://www.news24.com/Green/News/sas-drought-a-harvest-of-dysfunction-oxfam-20170328>

² Government to establish new Land Commission, Abongwe Kobokana, SABC News, 28 March 2017, <http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/fac63600409285e88619977ad0505162/Government-to-establish-new-Land-Commission-20172803>

1.1.3 Statistician General Pali Lehohla says that South Africa is struggling to find a solution to the swelling unemployment rate, especially among the younger generation

On 29 March, *SABC News* reported that Statistician General Pali Lehohla says South Africa seems to be far from finding a solution to the swelling unemployment rate, especially among the younger generation.³

1.1.4 South Africa's Crop Estimates Committee announces that the country might reap the largest harvest of the grain in 36 years as rains improved yields and boosted the crop's size by 83 percent from last year

On 29 March, *Bloomberg* reported that South Africa, the continent's biggest maize producer, might reap the largest harvest of the grain in 36 years as rains improved yields and boosted the crop's size by 83 percent from last year, the Crop Estimates Committee said.⁴

1.1.5 South African workers take-home pay for last month declined 0.8 percent due to nominal salary terms growth for the period being lower than the month's inflation rate of 6.3 percent

On 30 March, *IOL Business* reported that South Africans take-home pay for last month declined 0.8 percent due to nominal salary terms growth for the period being lower than the month's inflation rate of 6.3 percent.⁵

1.1.6 Western Cape Department of Agriculture has set aside R47 million for drought relief to assist farmers in the province

On 30 March, *SABC News* reported that the Western Cape Department of Agriculture has set aside R47 million for drought relief.⁶

1.1.7 StatisticsSA announces that the mining industry has shed almost 50,000 jobs from 2012 to 2015

On 30 March, *Business Day* reported that the mining industry shed almost 50,000 jobs from 2012 to 2015, most of which were in the gold and platinum sectors, StatisticsSA said in the Mining Industry 2015 report.⁷

³ SA's swelling unemployment rate is still a problem: Lehola, *SABC News*, 29 March 2017, <http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/fb2b92804096008cb759f72b22c482c7/SAs-swelling-unemployment-rate-is-still-a-problem:-Lehola-20172903>

⁴ Record maize crop expected, *Bloomberg*, 29 March 2017, <http://www.iol.co.za/business-report/markets/commodities/record-maize-crop-expected-8394557>

⁵ Workers continue to take home less, Kabelo Khumalo, *IOL Business Report*, 30 March 2017, <http://www.iol.co.za/business-report/careers/workers-continue-to-take-home-less-8413570>

⁶ Cash injection for drought stricken W Cape farmers, Lynne Arendse, *SABC News*, 30 March 2017, <http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/db2ed9804097a72d82f2d32b22c482c7/Cash-injection-for-drought-stricken-W-Cape-farmers-20173003Cash-injection-for-drought-stricken-W-Cape-farmers-20173003>

1.1.8 South Africa's expected record maize harvest could assist other African countries affected by the armyworm

On 30, *Eyewitness News* reported that South Africa's expected record maize harvest could assist other African countries affected by the armyworm.⁸

1.1.9 South Africa's National House of Traditional Leaders Traditional asks President Jacob Zuma for referendum on land expropriation

On March, *News24* reported that President Jacob Zuma must call a national referendum on land expropriation without compensation, the National House of Traditional Leaders heard on Thursday.⁹

1.1.10 South Africa's President Jacob Zuma says that the country is going to deal with the contentious issue of land reform legally and will not follow the Zimbabwean agrarian reform model

On 31 March, *Times Live* reported that South Africa is going to deal with the thorny issue of land reform in a "legal way" and will not "go the Zimbabwe route".¹⁰

1.2 Water Security

1.2.1 South African Weather Service warns that the prospects for a return of El Nino in the coming months has risen significantly

On 28 March, *Eyewitness News* reported that the South African Weather Service is warning the prospects for a return of El Nino in the coming months has risen significantly.¹¹

1.2.2 City of Cape Town announces that it is treating its dwindling water supplies for a harmless organic compound that is affecting its smell and taste

On 28 March, *News24* reported that the City of Cape Town is treating its dwindling water supplies for a harmless organic compound that is affecting its smell and taste, it said on Tuesday.¹²

⁷ Job losses in mining close to 50,000 mark, Charlotte Mathews, Business Day, 30 March 2017, <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/economy/2017-03-30-job-losses-in-mining-close-to-50000-mark/>

⁸ SA eyes African exports on prospect of bumper maize harvest, Ilze-Marie Le Roux, Eyewitness News, 30 March 2017, <http://ewn.co.za/2017/03/30/sa-s-biggest-maize-harvest-expected>

⁹ Traditional leader asks Zuma for referendum on land expropriation, Paul Herman, News24, 30 March 2017, <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/traditional-leader-asks-zuma-for-referendum-on-land-expropriation-20170330>

¹⁰ SA 'will not follow Zimbabwe over land', Babalo Ndenze, Times Live, 31 March 2017, <http://www.timeslive.co.za/thetimes/2017/03/31/SA-will-not-follow-Zimbabwe-over-land>

¹¹ El Nino's prospects of coming back rising significantly, Tara Penny, Eyewitness News, 28 March 2017, <http://ewn.co.za/2017/03/27/el-nino-s-prospects-of-coming-back-rising-significantly>

¹² Cape Town water being treated for harmless compound, Jenni Evans, News24, 28 March 2017, <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/cape-town-water-being-treated-for-harmless-compound-20170328>

1.2.3 Survey Stats SA survey reveals that at least 2.2 million households, mostly in rural provinces of North West, Limpopo and the Eastern Cape, do not have access to water

On 29 March, *SABC News* reported that the Water and Sanitation Department has conceded that, it has not done enough to supply communities in far flung rural areas with water.¹³

1.2.4 Cape Town residents who still use too much water could see their utility bill increase by 19% in July

On 29 March, *Eyewitness News* reported that Capetonians who still use too much water could see their utility bill increase by 19% come July.¹⁴

1.2.5 South African households unhappy with service delivery as the percentage of households with access to water inside the dwelling steadily declines from 62, 6% for metropolitan municipalities to 6, 8% for rural municipalities

On 30 March, *SABC News* reported that majority of the country's households are discontent about the failure of municipalities to resolve some of the challenges that appear to hinder delivery of services.¹⁵

1.2.6 City of Johannesburg's plan to do away with free water may lead to protests amid reports that residents will see an increase of R42.84 per month on their water bills from the start of the new financial year

On 31 March, *The Citizen* reported that it was revealed that domestic residents will see an increase of R42.84 per month on their water bills from the start of the new financial year.¹⁶

¹³ 2.2 million households do not have access to water: Survey, Lucas Mothibedi, SABC News, 29 March 2017, <http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/e96a380040949ea780e89f6ae4541813/2.2-million-households-do-not-have-access-to-water:-Survey-20172903>

¹⁴ City of CT's tariff increase plan targets water guzzlers, Xolani Koyana, Eyewitness News, 29 March 2017, <http://ewn.co.za/2017/03/29/city-of-ct-s-tariff-increase-proposal-targets-water-guzzlers>

¹⁵ SA households unhappy with service delivery, SABC News, 30 March 2017, <http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/eba34b8040992025a6d7a7516c5f19b7/Majority-of-SA-households-unhappy-with-service-delivery-20173003>

¹⁶ Joburg's plan to do away with 'free' water may lead to protests, warns expert, Vicky Abraham, The Citizen, 31 March 2017, <http://citizen.co.za/news/news-national/1472378/joburgs-plan-to-do-away-with-free-water-may-lead-to-protests-warns-expert/>

2.0 Daily Infographics: Africa's farmers are among the most hurt by climate change: livelihoods rely on rainfall for water.



Figure 1. Africa's farmers are among the most hurt by climate change: livelihoods rely on rainfall for water. (Source: AgriFoodAID)

3.0 Overall Assessment

- ❖ South Africa is urged to declare the drought a national disaster as the return of El Nino is imminent
- ❖ Despite report of an expected maize bumper harvest, South Africa's agricultural sector is struggling to transform and emerging farmers remain marginalized
- ❖ The Government of South Africa is urged to define a clear strategic direction of the land reform process
- ❖ Food insecurity increases in South Africa amid rising unemployment, slow economic growth and increasing political uncertainty
- ❖ South Africa is urged to address the chronic inadequacies in the planning and management of the country's water resources