**Figure 1 – Seasonal Calendar for the Livelihood Zone 59303 (ZAHIC)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | Who? | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| Maize (LP) | B |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| (P) | B |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| (W) | B |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| (GC) | W |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| (DH) | B |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sunflower (LP) | M |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| (P) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| (W) | B |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| (H) | M |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Beans (LP) | B |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| (P) | B |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| (W) | B |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| (H) | B |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Vegetables | F |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Casual Labour (crop fields) | B |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| (domestic work) | F |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| (herding) | M |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| (public work) | B |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Off-Farm Employment | B |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Livestock (heat and birth) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Livestock sales | M |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Purchases (low prices) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| (high prices) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Labour migration | B |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Annual Hunger |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Health (flue) | B |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| (diarrhoea) | B |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**ZAHIC LIVEHOOD ZONE**

The open Highveld intensive crop zone is not fully utilized anymore. The zone comprise of the villages such as Vitvlugt, Spitspunt, Kabete (Koedoeskpoort), Seabe, Marapyana, Tshikanosi, and Maklerekeng in Limpopo Province. It was observed that most of the villagers have a potential to produce their food from the farms they have. However, due to lack of proper planning and good advice the community members are not able to fully utilise the land to their best interest. The mean annual rainfall for the villages in Limpopo is between 300-600 mm. The minimum temperature in those villages is 7°C and the maximum is 35°C.

And in Mpumalanga it comprise of villages such as Kwa-Ngema, Soul Mkhize and Daggarskraal. The villages in Mpumalanga receive 300-700 mm of annual rainfall. The temperatures range from -2°C in winter to maximum of 33°C in summer. Some of the village have the timber plantation around where local people get casual work. Almost 60% of the wealth groups fall between very poor and poor. The nearest town is Piet Retief and Volksrust.

Due to highly variable rainfall pattern this disrupts agricultural production and thus cause related socio-economic stresses. The farm areas that were previously productive are now infested with the acacia trees and other weeds. The farms where the cattle and goats graze are not fenced and thus pose danger to the car passing through those communities. And also the cattle herds are in danger. According to the community members stock theft is still predominantly high. Villages like Daggarskraal are affected by frost and strong winds

These villages in Limpopo experience high temperatures up to 35°C in some villages this makes the crops to suffer through high transpiration. Hails and strong winds destroy the crops in the field as well as the houses in the villages. The recent drought badly affected the villages, livestock died; crops that were planted never produced anything to eat.

A large number of the community now depends on the food purchases from the local tuckshops that are owned by foreign nationals and also on big retail companies in the nearby towns (Marble hall, Piet rietief, Volksrust). More than fifty (50%) percent of the households form part of the very poor and poor group. The very poor and poor groups in the community depend highly on social grants especially child support grant and old pension for buying staple food such as 50-80kg bag of maize meal, cooking oil, chicken feet and potatoes that can sustain them for a month. They have fairly large family size between 7 – 11 members per household. Most of the school going children also get some meals from their respective public schools. Most of the member from these household seek job from the nearest commercial farms. The farms that are close to the communities are citrus farms, crop farms and timber plantations.

The middle and better off families are smaller in household size 4-7 member per household was most visible. The middle class and better off households practice one type of farming either crop or livestock. Very few household practice both types of farming. They do own productive assets such as bakkies and tractor which help them to produce more and to move their produce to the nearest markets and hence generate so income. They employ small number of people within their communities at most three people can be employed by a single farm or family, for jobs such as weeding, and cattle herding.

**Communities coping strategies**

The coping strategies in these communities are similar. When they get affected with drought they resort to buying of bales to feed their livestock. Most of them who cannot afford to buy bales so they resort to animal migration where they go and ask from neighbouring farms and villages for their livestock to graze. They also protect their crops from frost by covering them with dry grass. Most of the communities are powerless when it comes to hail and high temperatures.

**Interventions from government**

Most of the older people prefer to work the land. They asked for the advisory services as well as other inputs such as garden tools, tractors, trucks, proper grazing camps, and fencing for fields. They also asked government to be more transparent and approach them with useful information. While the younger generation asked for more job opportunities such as home base care jobs, more EPWP, any other jobs that can help them generate some income. Even learnerships, agricultural community project are welcomed. Other asked for adult schools were they can attend if they stand a better chance of being employed after acquiring the skills such as reading and writing.