Zimbabwe is a land-locked, lower-middle income, food-deficit country. Over the last decade, it has experienced several economic and environmental shocks that have contributed to high food insecurity and malnutrition. At least 49 percent of its population live in extreme poverty and it is estimated that 5.3 million people across rural and urban areas are food insecure – many impacted by the effects of climate change, protracted economic instability and COVID-19. As of 28 February 2022, Zimbabwe recorded 236,380 COVID-19 cases and 5,395 deaths.

Drought is the most significant climate-related risk. Frequent occurrence has significant consequences on livelihoods and food security. About 70 percent of the population is dependent on rain-fed farming, while most farmers are smallholders with low productivity. This past year and upcoming lean season are predicted to produce better harvest results – following good rainfall. However, despite a bumper harvest, the compounding circumstances continue to impact people most vulnerable to shocks – with growing needs in urban areas.

The 2020/21 agricultural season produced better harvest results – following good rainfall. However, despite a bumper harvest, the compounding circumstances continue to impact people most vulnerable to shocks – with significant needs in urban areas.

Operational Updates

- As part of the implementation of anticipatory actions to mitigate the effects of drought in Mudzi, training on climate services was held with the Meteorological Services Department (MSD), targeting extension officers and lead farmers. The objective of the training was to equip AGRITEX and farmers with knowledge and skills on how to interpret weather and climate information for informed decision making. The training also provided a platform to further sensitize stakeholders on the concept of forecast-based-financing. This was the first time that farmers in Mudzi had the opportunity to interact directly with MSD officers allowing them to provide feedback on MSD products.

- Weather index insurance policies in Rushinga and Masvingo districts triggered for excess rainfall and are due for payouts in varying percentages. Discussions are underway with the insurer to identify appropriate payout distribution channels.

- WFP’s lean season response runs from October to March, supporting and complementing the Government of Zimbabwe’s Food Deficit Mitigation Strategy. WFP increased its coverage to 649,000 people from January to March 2022 month, across 12 rural districts.

- WFP is developing a rain/flood and cyclone preparedness plan, with the worst-case scenario informed by the impact of the Cyclone Idai weather system that hit the country in 2019. Through the logistic working group, a simulation exercise is planned for June, with Government involvement.

- Under the Stopping Abuse and Female Exploitation (SAFE) initiative in Chiredzi, WFP and Plan International registered 315 households in 23 Internal Savings and Lending (ISAL) Groups. Through this programme, WFP strengthens its approach to gender-sensitive programming, particularly for cash-based interventions in urban areas.

- The Fill the Nutrient Gap (FNG) analysis is being expanded with the modelling of nutrition intervention strategies identified in consultation with key stakeholders. It will help understand the magnitude of the nutrient gap as related to the (un)affordability of a nutritious diet and helps to estimate the effect of nutrition improvement strategies in filling this gap. The FNG analysis will inform policies and actions.
WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2017-2022)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Requirement (in USD)</th>
<th>Allocated Contributions (in USD)</th>
<th>Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>959 m</td>
<td>615 m</td>
<td>51 m*</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Includes the first three months of Country Strategic Plan 2022-2026 starting in July 2022

**Strategic Result 1:** Basic food needs of vulnerable populations are met.

**Strategic Outcome 1** Food-insecure people, including refugees, in the most affected districts are enabled to meet their basic food and nutrition requirements during severe seasonal shocks or other disruptions.

**Activities:**
- Cash/food transfers to households affected by seasonal food shortages.
- Unconditional food/cash transfers and livelihood support to refugees

**Strategic Result 2:** Child stunting rates in line with national/global targets.

**Strategic Outcome 2** Children in prioritized districts have stunting rate trends in line with the achievement of national and global targets by 2025.

**Activities:**
- Build evidence for nutrition advocacy, policy direction and programme decision-making.
- Support the Government’s nutrition programming at the national and sub-national levels.

**Strategic Result 3:** Increased access to markets.

**Strategic Outcome 3** Smallholder farmers in Zimbabwe have increased access to well-functioning agricultural markets by 2030.

**Activities:**
- Support the development of an efficient local food marketing and procurement mechanism.
- Enable farmer organizations to aggregate and market surplus production.

**Strategic Result 4:** Food security and resilience to seasonal shocks.

**Strategic Outcome 4** Food-insecure rural households and smallholder farmers achieve food security and resilience to repeated exposure to multiple shocks and stressors.

**Activities:**
- Support the creation and rehabilitation of assets for sustainable food and nutrition security.
- Enhance the capacity of prioritized districts to plan and manage resilience-building.

**Strategic Result 5:** Vulnerable peoples basic needs met all year round.

**Strategic Outcome 5** The social protection system ensures that chronically vulnerable populations throughout the country are able to meet their basic needs all year round.

**Activities:**
- Support innovative risk management, insurance and financing mechanisms.
- Provide analytical expertise to support the evidence-based planning.

**Strategic Result 6:** Partnerships and supply chain.

**Strategic Outcome 6** Partners in Zimbabwe are reliably supported by world-class, cost-effective and efficient supply chain services.

**Activities:** Provide logistics and procurement expertise and services.

Evidence generation & research

- In collaboration with the Food and Nutrition Council (FNC) and Zimbabwe's Vulnerability and Assessment Committee, WFP started updating the livelihood profiles for all 60 rural districts in Zimbabwe, which were last developed in 2016. The rural update will be followed by the profiling of the urban domains. These district profiles are widely used by stakeholders to inform the design and targeting of humanitarian, resilience and development programmes. Livelihood profiles provide ward-level information on various socio-economic and vulnerability indicators.

In February, a workshop was conducted to update the profiles for the 14 districts in Matabeleland North and South Provinces. In March, WFP will support the updating of profiles in Masvingo, Midlands, Manicaland and Mashonaland East provinces.

- Stakeholders are awaiting the publication of the urban ZimVAC findings after adoption by the cabinet, expected by the end of March 2022. This multi-sectoral assessment covered a total of 41 urban domains and will generate evidence to inform urban programming, policy development and adjustment. In addition to livelihoods, food security and nutrition, the urban ZimVAC also provides information on health, WASH, education, social protection, impact of COVID-19 and key cross-cutting issues such as gender and disability.

Challenges

- WFP operations in Zimbabwe continue to face funding challenges, with USD 51 million of the required USD 53.4 million for the period April to September 2022, still not resourced.

- The decline in emergency funding is of particular concern in 2022/2023 since FEWSNET, the Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster and farmer organizations alert that erratic rainfall is likely to result in a below-average harvest and that some regions are already showing signs of drought. The rural ZimVAC will provide further insights.

- Resilience-building activities, which are critical to lift people out of food insecurity, also experience funding shortfalls. These are a key pillar to WFP’s Country Strategic Plan to start in July 2022, which promotes shock-responsive social protection and sustainable and resilient food systems.

- Global food and fuel prices have increased sharply since the onset of the Ukraine-Russia conflict – reaching an all-time high in February 2022 according to FAO’s Food Price Index. This will in turn affect local food prices and, through these, access to food.

Donors

Canada, China Aid, Danida, EU-ECHO, Finland, France, Germany, Green Climate Fund, IFAD, India-UN Development Partnership Fund, Ireland, Japan, Korea, Liechtenstein Development Service, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Russia, Sweden, South Africa, Switzerland, UN-CERF, UK FCDO, US BHA, World Bank.