



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# WFP Zimbabwe Country Brief March 2022



## Operational Context

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 31 March 2022, Zimbabwe recorded 246,182 COVID-19 cases and 5,440 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.

Despite a bumper harvest in 2020/2021, compounding circumstances continued to impact people most vulnerable to shocks – with growing needs also in urban areas as a result of COVID-19 related lockdowns.

The 2021/2022 agricultural season that has been marked by erratic rainfall and dry spells in different parts of Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC) will provide further information on the yield.



Population: **15.6 million**

2019 Human Development Index: **150 out of 188**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **24% of children between 6-59 months**

## In Numbers

**7,516 mt** of food assistance distributed

**USD 1.1m** cash-based transfers made

**USD 52 m** next six months (May – October 2022) net funding requirements

**725,478 people assisted**  
In March 2022

## Operational Updates

- WFP and partners completed the 2021/22 lean season response in March, assisting 655,222 people in 12 rural districts at peak, through in-kind transfers. The programme complemented the Government of Zimbabwe's Food Deficit Mitigation Strategy which will continue into April. The close out of the programme was preceded by lessons learnt workshops to shape future programming. After the lean season, WFP will focus on resilience-building to strengthen the livelihoods of the most vulnerable and gradually reduce the need for humanitarian assistance.
- The Urban Social Assistance and Resilience Building programme assisted 48,304 people through cash-based transfers to meet their immediate food needs, while 12,845 households who were initially receiving CBT were transitioned to resilience-building activities to enable them to effectively respond and adapt to shocks and stressors.
- In partnership with the Ministry of Health and Child Care, WFP assisted 2,773 pregnant women in maternity waiting homes (MWH). WFP provided the pregnant women with a daily ration of cereal, pulses, fortified oil, and Super Cereal during their two weeks stay at the clinics prior to childbirth. WFP will undertake a study to identify how best to ensure sustainable provision of meals and other nutrition services in the Government's programmes in support of expecting mothers.
- WFP continues to assist close to 12,800 refugees at the Tongogara refugee camp through cash transfers. 210 households in the camp are currently piloting hydroponic crops at five green houses, with the aim of diversifying their diets and livelihood activities.
- WFP partnered with Welt Hunger Hilfe Zimbabwe to implement capacity strengthening activities through trainings such as financial literacy, business planning, market linkages and farming as a business in 12 rural districts, to ensure maximum utilization and sustainability of the created and rehabilitated assets and infrastructures, such as nutritional gardens, orchards, weir dams, various environmental protection works and solar powered boreholes.

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Image: Emily Sibanda, a beneficiary of the urban resilience programme uses hydroponics to grow vegetables in Bulawayo. WFP/ Samantha Reinders

## Country Strategic Plan (2017-2022)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
<b>959 m</b>	<b>615 m</b>	<b>52 m*</b>

\* Includes the first four 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

- Under the leadership of the Food and Nutrition Council (FNC), WFP completed the updating of all 60 rural district profiles. Livelihood profiles provide ward-level information on various socio-economic and vulnerability indicators.
- The evaluation of the first phase of the R4 Rural Resilience Initiative was released. It covers the period from January 2018 to June 2021, focusing on the districts of Masvingo and Rushinga. Key findings show that R4 actions align with government policies on food security and resilience. The R4 initiative is also able to respond to new economic issues by increasing insurance pay-outs to combat inflation. Moreover, R4 appears to have increased and diversified household income (or at least safeguarded income levels and diversification from shocks), as well as crop variety. The evaluation will inform operational and strategic decision-making, as well as the second phase of the R4 rural resilience initiative and WFP Zimbabwe's approach to resilience programming under the upcoming 2022-2026 Country Strategic Plan.

## Challenges

- For the next six months (May to October), WFP in Zimbabwe has a funding gap of USD 51.9m, with only six percent of requirements for this period available. Limited resources are forcing WFP to prioritize activities, reducing and halting some of its programmes.
- In January, WFP had to cut its Urban Social Assistance programme, from 326,000 to 49,000 recipients who are now entitled to USD 10 instead of USD 12 every month. Unless additional funding becomes available, WFP will have to further reduce or even suspend this activity in July.
- The constrained funding situation is also forcing WFP to reduce the geographic scope of the Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) programme. This can jeopardise gains under the integrated resilience-building programme, through which participants enroll in multiyear cycles and are engaged in a layered set of interventions (asset creation, market support for smallholder farmers and integrated climate risk management activities). Suspending assistance for a year or more can result in communities taking steps back along the resilience graduation process.

## 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.