



World Food Programme

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LIVES

# WFP Zambia Country Brief January 2023



## Operational Context

In 2022, the World Bank reclassified Zambia as a low-income country after a decade in the lower middle-income category. The reclassification followed sustained poor economic performance exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. More than half of the country's 18.4 million people live below the poverty line. The country continues to grapple with a high debt burden, posing a significant threat to the government's efforts to deliver social services, alleviate poverty, and achieve zero hunger.

In the last decade, Zambia has suffered from the impact of climate change, with frequent, prolonged dry spells, extreme high temperatures, and floods that have undermined food security and threatened the livelihoods of many smallholder farming households. Smallholders are the country's largest population of food producers, responsible for up to 90 percent of the food produced in Zambia.

Under the Zambia Country Strategic Plan (CSP) 2019–2023, WFP provides food assistance to vulnerable and food insecure people, including on-demand logistics support during emergencies. WFP also implements integrated nutrition and smallholder farmer support interventions in food insecure areas and helps strengthen the capacity of the Government to implement national programmes and systems that contribute to zero hunger and improved nutrition.

WFP has been present in Zambia since 1967, providing food assistance and strengthening the capacity of the Government in addressing people's food and nutrition needs.



Population: **19.6 million**

2021 Human Development Index: **154 out of 191 countries**

Income Level: **Low**

Stunting: **35% of children aged 6–59 months**

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## In Numbers

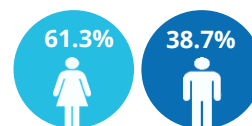
**7.1 mt** in-kind food assistance distributed

**US\$ 51,984** cash-based transfers made

**US\$ 8.9 million** six-month (February – July 2023) net funding requirements

**24,049 people assisted**

In January 2023



## Operational Updates

In January, WFP assisted 24,049 people including 7,589 refugees and asylum seekers from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) with food and cash assistance; 5,141 individuals through nutrition improvement interventions; and 11,319 people through smallholder support and resilience interventions. Although no direct individuals were reached through social protection interventions, WFP provided ongoing technical assistance to the Government as part of strengthening national capacities and systems for delivering social protection programmes.

**Crisis Response:** WFP continued to provide cash and food assistance to the refugees and asylum seekers at the Mantapala Refugee Settlement. With over 10,500 refugees returning to the DRC at the end of January, the population assisted at the settlement reduced to 7,589 people in January, with USD 52,000 and seven metric tons of food distributed in cash and in-kind food assistance, respectively.

As the country received above-normal rainfall during the 2022/2023 season in January, nearly 170,000 people (in 33 districts across seven out of the ten provinces) were affected by flooding and needed immediate humanitarian assistance. In response, WFP, through the activated emergency Food Security Cluster, started supporting the Government through the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit, to assess the scale of the impact of the floods. After a rapid impact assessment, WFP, in coordination with the Government and other partners, plans to implement an emergency response to provide immediate food assistance to flood-affected people. Overall, implementation of WFP response is yet to commence as assessments were still ongoing.

**Nutrition improvement support:** As part of promoting the use of energy-efficient cooking alternatives that are environmentally friendly, WFP distributed 500 stoves to communities and schools across five districts (Chisamba, Chibombo, Kapiri Mposhi, Mazabuka and Monze).

To promote post-harvest management among smallholder farmers and rural communities under the second phase of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN II) programme, WFP supported the Ministry of Agriculture to train 1,905 beneficiaries (81 percent women) in food processing, preservation, and storage technologies in Choma and Chinsali districts. The trainings equipped beneficiaries with skills and knowledge on

**Country Strategic Plan (2019–2023)**

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirement (in USD)
<b>142 m</b>	<b>62.43 m</b>	<b>8.9 m</b>

**Strategic Result 01: Everyone has access to food**

**Strategic Outcome 01:** Crisis-affected people, including refugees can meet their basic food and nutrition needs all year.

**Focus Area:** *Crisis response*

**Activities:**

- Unconditional cash-based and food transfers.
- Supplementary feeding for targeted refugees.

**Strategic Result 02: No one suffers from malnutrition**

**Strategic Outcome 02:** Vulnerable people in Zambia have improved nutrition status in line with national targets by 2024.

**Focus Area:** *Root causes*

**Activities:**

- Provide technical support to government institutions and the private sector for the reduction of malnutrition and the scale up of high-impact nutrition interventions.

**Strategic Result 03: Smallholders have improved food security and nutrition through improved productivity and incomes**

**Strategic Outcome 03:** Smallholder farmers in Zambia, especially women, have increased access to markets, enhanced resilience to climate shocks and diversified livelihoods by 2030.

**Focus Area:** *Resilience Building*

**Activities:**

- Promote climate-smart agriculture, crop diversification through access to finance, climate services, post-harvest management support and access to markets for smallholder farmers.

**Strategic Result 04: Food systems are sustainable**

**Strategic Outcome 04:** Government institutions in Zambia have more efficient, effective, and shock-responsive social protection systems that contribute to the achievement of SDG2.

**Focus area:** *Root causes*

**Activities:**

- Provide technical expertise and other services for strengthening the systems and capacities of government institutions and other partners in implementing and disaster social protection programmes and early warning preparedness and response activities.
- Provide technical support to the Government in strengthening systems and capacities of the structure for the HGSM programme.

**Strategic Result 05: Developing countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs**

**Strategic Outcome 05:** Provide on-demand service provision to the Government, private sector, development partners and United Nations agencies

**Focus area:** *Crisis response*

**Activities:**

- Provision of logistics and technical advisory support

**Photo:** Priscilla Chalivwela, a smallholder farmer of Gwembe District inspecting her sorghum crop field. ©WFP/Nkole Mwape

**Smallholder support:** WFP, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) hosted the Treasury Secretary of the United States (US), Janet Yellen, in Chongwe (one of the 16 districts) where the three United Nations agencies are supporting the Government to implement the Strengthening Climate Resilience of Agricultural Livelihoods in Agro-Ecological Regions I And II in Zambia (SCRALA) project financed by the Green Climate Fund. The Treasury Secretary interacted with beneficiaries including savings group members and smallholder farmers trained in and practising conservation farming and post-harvest management. She expressed concern on the growing number of people facing acute food insecurity globally and stressed the need for the US to work closely with host governments in taking immediate actions to alleviate hunger especially in developing countries like Zambia.

**Social protection:** WFP's interventions supporting the Government to implement the Home-Grown School Meals (HGSM) programme continued to attract high levels visits by senior government officials. During the month, two permanent secretaries from the Office of the Vice President visited Mumbwa District to appreciate how WFP facilitates linkages between local smallholder farmers and the schools implementing the HGSM programme. The delegation appreciated WFP's role in strengthening the capacities of the Government to promote sustainable and resilient food systems, financial literacy, access to markets, nutrition education and innovative vegetable gardening for diversified school meals, with women and girls taking an active role. In addition, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education visited WFP-supported interventions in Katete, Nyimba and Petauke districts, with strong attention on enhanced production gardens with hydroponics and drip irrigation systems set up to promote vegetable production in schools, enhance nutrition education and diversify school meals.

**Monitoring**

Results from WFP's outcome monitoring exercise conducted in December 2022 revealed a significant decline in the refugees' food and nutrition security situation, with fewer households frequently consuming diverse diets. For instance, the proportion of families with acceptable food consumption score sharply declined in December, compared to the same time in 2021 and against the 2022 target. Additionally, more refugee households experienced food shortages during the year compared to the previous years. Conversely, households with poor food consumption score increased six-fold between December 2021 and December 2022. The deteriorating food security situation was mainly attributed to the reduced rations WFP provided to the refugees from April 2022 owing to the funding challenges, which affected the assisted people's ability to buy and consume diverse food amidst high food prices. This was in addition to their limited access to alternative livelihood options. Despite the worsening food insecurity overall, significantly more women of reproductive age (15-49 years) consumed sufficiently diverse diets, mainly due to increased awareness within this population group on the importance of consuming diverse diets.