



# WFP Zimbabwe Country Brief October 2024

World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES



## Operational Context

Zimbabwe is a landlocked, 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 – many impacted by the effects of climate change, protracted economic instability and global stressors.

Zimbabwe is currently facing the impact of an El Niño-induced drought, which has significantly impacted food and nutrition security outcomes, agriculture production, and livelihoods. The Zimbabwe Drought Flash Appeal was launched in May 2024. The appeal aims to mobilize humanitarian action between May 2024 and April 2025 in support of the Government-led El Niño response, and it directly complements the government's own relief efforts.

The 2024 Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee's (ZimVAC) Urban livelihoods assessment estimates that 35 percent of the urban population, or 1.7 million people, are currently food insecure. The Rural Livelihoods assessment estimates that some 4.7 million people in rural areas are food insecure from July to August 2024, and projected to peak at approximately 35 percent or 5.9 million people at the peak of the lean season from January through March 2025.

The map below indicates the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) presence in the country.



Population: **15.2 million**

2022 Human Development Index: **159 out of 193**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

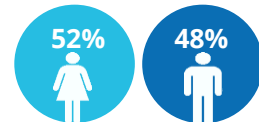
## In Numbers

**187 MT** of food assistance distributed

**USD 897,000** cash transfers distributed

**USD 134 million** net funding requirements for the next six months (November 24 – April 25)

**75,000 people** assisted in October 2024 through in-kind food and cash transfers



## Operational Updates

**Lean Season Assistance:** WFP completed the El Niño response food distributions in Buhera, Mangwe, and Mwenezi, assisting 272,831 beneficiaries. Plans are in place to scale up in-kind distributions to nearly 1 million individuals at the peak of the lean season, beginning in one district in December and potentially expanding to eight additional districts by January 2025.

**Support to Refugees:** WFP and partners supported 12,343 refugees and asylum seekers at Tongogara Refugee Settlement with cash and in-kind assistance. 12,097 individuals received hybrid support of USD 7 per person monthly along with maize meal, pulses, and vegetable oil. 246 new arrivals were provided a full in-kind food basket. To address nutritional needs, 1,753 children under five, 430 pregnant and breastfeeding women, and 362 chronically ill individuals received specialized nutritious foods. However, a recently concluded Joint Assessment Mission found the assistance insufficient to meet the refugees' full nutritional requirements.

**Urban Cash Assistance:** In October, WFP and its partners provided cash assistance to 62,481 food-insecure people in five urban areas: Caledonia, Chinhoyi, Chiredzi, Mutare, and Mzilikazi, distributing USD 13 per person per month to help meet their food needs. This response is being implemented in collaboration with the government and humanitarian partners under the National Cash Working Group.

**Urban Preparedness:** In October, WFP, in partnership with the Department of Civil Protection and UN OCHA, hosted the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean (SAIO) Disaster Preparedness Workshop. Funded by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG-ECHO), the event focused on enhancing urban preparedness and logistical capacities, bringing together stakeholders to strengthen disaster readiness across the region.

## Country Strategic Plan (2022-2026)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
593 m	203.8 m	134 m

### Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food.

**Strategic outcome 1:** Food- and nutrition-insecure populations in targeted rural and urban areas meet their food and nutrition needs at all times, including during crises.

- Activities:**
- Provide unconditional humanitarian cash and food transfers to food insecure people in targeted areas while supporting national institutions in delivering social and humanitarian assistance.

### Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food.

**Strategic outcome 2:** By 2026, food-insecure households in urban areas meet their food and nutrition needs through resilient livelihoods.

- Activities:**
- Provide skills training, tools, and infrastructure to vulnerable urban households for enhanced livelihoods and entrepreneurship.

### Strategic Result 3: Smallholders have improved food security and nutrition

**Strategic outcome 3:** By 2026, targeted rural populations achieve climate resilient livelihoods, sustainable management of natural resources and enhanced participation in local markets and value chains

- Activities:**
- Provide conditional cash and food transfers along with training and tools to rural communities in conjunction with technical assistance for community members and national and subnational authorities.
  - Provide technical assistance to farmer organizations, market actors and national and subnational food quality assurance institutions and empower rural consumers with the aim of strengthening “farm-to-fork” food value chains.

### Strategic Result 5: Countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs

**Strategic Outcome 4:** By 2026, national and subnational institutions in Zimbabwe have strengthened capacities to develop, coordinate and implement well-informed, effective, and equitable actions to achieve food and nutrition security

- Activities:**
- Provide technical assistance to national and subnational social protection and emergency preparedness and response institutions in order to improve social and humanitarian assistance preparedness, planning and response.
  - Provide strategic, technical and coordination assistance to national and subnational institutions in support of well-informed and capacitated zero hunger actions.

### Strategic Result 8: Sharing of knowledge, expertise and technology strengthen global partnership support to country efforts to achieve the SDGs

**Strategic Outcome 5:** Humanitarian and development actors in Zimbabwe can implement their programmes and provide support to their beneficiaries in an efficient, effective, and reliable way at all times, including during crises

- Activities:**
- Provide bilateral supply chain and other services to humanitarian and development actors on demand.
  - Provide mandated services through the logistics cluster to Government and humanitarian actors when the cluster is activated.

## Operational Updates (continued)

**Climate services:** Farmers in the targeted districts of Masvingo, Mwenezi, Chipinge, Rushinga, and Mangwe continue to receive weather and climate advisories for the 2024/25 agricultural season. These updates are shared through meetings with extension officers and PICSA radio programmes to support informed agricultural decision-making.

**Market assessment:** Preliminary findings from the WFP Market Functionality Assessment and Beneficiary Preference Survey revealed key insights for designing transfer modalities. Cash-based transfers (CBTs) are viable in over 70 percent of markets across 68 percent of districts, though risks like price escalation and currency manipulation require monitoring. Rural areas showed the lowest scores in infrastructure and services, highlighting the need for market and supply chain improvements. The survey indicated a strong preference for food-in-kind assistance, especially in rural areas, due to concerns over food scarcity and market access, while cash was valued for its flexibility and support for local economies. These findings underscore the need for context-specific food assistance approaches.

## Challenges

WFP’s current Lean Season Assistance resources can only support 962,000 people, leaving over 500,000 intended beneficiaries without essential assistance. Coupled with limited commodity availability and extended procurement lead times, the situation demands urgent, timely funding. WFP urgently requires USD 134 million to bridge the funding gap and effectively deliver life-saving assistance to the most vulnerable communities; as well as sustain its resilience-building activities.

## Donors

CERF, European Commission through ECHO, Germany, Japan, Korea, LDS, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America, WFP’s Emerging Donors Matching Fund, Zimbabwe (in alphabetical order).

*Photo: Communities in Mwenezi collect their food assistance as part of the ARC replica policy payout distributions. @WFP/Christopher Charamba*