



Anticipatory Action Activation

Zimbabwe



Anticipatory action to mitigate the impacts of drought in Zimbabwe

In October 2024, the World Food Programme (WFP), with the leadership of the Government of Zimbabwe, successfully implemented an AA activation to mitigate the impacts of the forecast drought on the lives and livelihoods of highly vulnerable people in the Chiredzi district, located in south-eastern Zimbabwe.

This AA activation was based on a coordinated effort from national to district-level institutions actively designing a drought AA mechanism, with the support of WFP. At the district level, the District Technical Working Group (DTWG), composed of government departments, coordinated the operationalization of the Anticipatory Action Plan (AAP) in collaboration with WFP, the Department for Civil Protection and the national AA Community of Practice (CoP).

On 15 August 2024, WFP and the Meteorological Services Department observed a forecast exceeding the pre-agreed readiness and activation triggers thresholds, meaning that the seasonal forecasting information satisfied the requirements to implement AA in the Chiredzi district. These forecast alerts were issued based on the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) released between June and August (2024).

This activation is drawing lessons from the [Mudzi AAP activation](#), where AA was implemented ahead of the predicted 2021/2022 drought, as well as the [2023/2024 activation](#) ahead of the forecast drought across four districts in the country, including Chiredzi.

Key facts

Location: Chiredzi district	
Number of people supported with early warning messages	24,920 people
Number of people supported with drought-tolerant inputs	24,920 people

Some lessons learned emphasized the importance of making anticipatory actions more inclusive. For instance, early warning messages sent through radio stations and mobile phones need to be increasingly complemented by direct communication from extension officers and local leaders to reach individuals who may lack access to mobile phones or radios. The use of pamphlets with simplified training messages in the local language is also required.

As part of the current activation, WFP is delivering the following anticipatory actions:

1) **Distribution of drought-tolerant inputs** ahead of the planting season. The goal is to prevent a significant reduction of crop yields in the face of abnormally dry seasonal conditions, thereby stabilising their income and food security while minimising the use of high-risk coping strategies (e.g., reduced food intake, selling productive assets).

2) **Dissemination of relevant, timely, simple, and actionable early warning messages** with recommended actions to minimize potential impacts of the drought and guidance on appropriate agricultural practices and adjustments.

These anticipatory actions are implemented to 1) allow households to make relevant and timely decisions ahead of the forecast droughts; 2) safeguard their homes, income, valuable assets, the vulnerable members of their family, such as people with disabilities and children; 3) empower communities to meet their food and nutrition needs before and after the predicted crisis.

This implementation has been made possible thanks to almost half a million funding from the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO) and a historic and sustained multi-year investment from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) in systems building in Zimbabwe.

