



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Zambia Country Brief February 2025



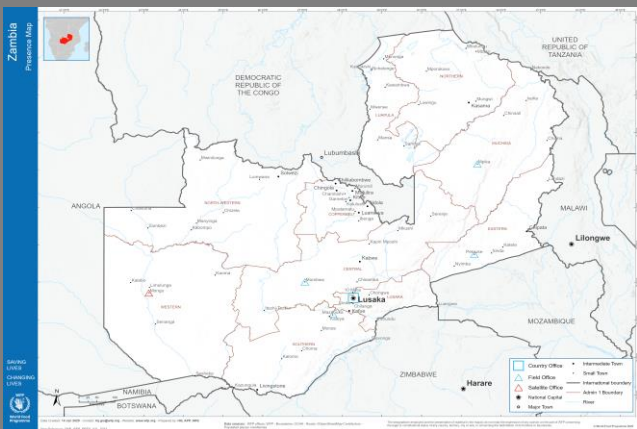
Operational Context

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 19.6 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 (the most recent being the 2023/2024 El Niño-induced drought), 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.

As part of the Zambia United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) Country Strategic Plan (CSP) 2023 – 2028, WFP provides technical assistance to the Government to strengthen national systems and programmes that aim to achieve zero hunger. This includes integrated nutrition programmes, smallholder farmer support, social protection programmes and disaster risk management, as well as providing food assistance to vulnerable individuals and populations, including refugees, and offering on-demand logistics support during emergencies.

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**

2023 Human Development Index: **153 out of 193 countries**

Income Level: **Low**

Stunting: **32 percent of children aged 6-59 months**

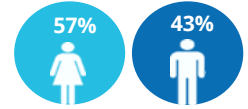
In Numbers

2,555 MT in-kind food assistance distributed

USD 1.67 million in cash transferred to beneficiaries in February 2025

USD 10 million six-month net funding requirements (March – August 2025) representing 49 percent of total needs.

258,089 people assisted in February 2025



Operational Updates

In February, WFP assisted 258,089 people, including 208,020 drought-affected individuals and refugees through crisis response (cash-based transfers and food distributions); 857 people through nutrition improvement interventions; and 49,212 individuals through smallholder farmer support and resilience interventions.

Crisis response/refugees

Food assistance for refugees: WFP continues to provide cash-based transfers to refugees and asylum seekers at the Mantapala refugee settlement. In February, WFP assisted a total of 9,045 refugees (4,585 female and 4,460 male).

Strengthened Livelihoods and Building Self-Reliance (SLABS) of Refugees and Host Communities in Mantapala: On 6th February 2025, WFP through AAH conducted value addition training for beneficiaries of the livelihood project. The training focused on enhancing the value of maize, cassava, beans, and groundnuts. A total of 29 (16 males and 13 females) participants attended the session, with lead facilitators from the Ministry of Agriculture. The objective of the training was to improve the shelf life of these crops while promoting nutrition through their value addition. Participants engaged in practical sessions that included sorting, grading, processing, and packaging the crops. The training included foods that were currently available in the settlement and those that would be accessible following WFP's distribution of farming inputs for cassava, maize, groundnuts, and beans.

Crisis response/drought

WFP assisted 198,975 people across six provinces in Zambia through, in-kind food distributions (75,965 people), cash-based transfers (116,175 people), and voucher distributions (6,835 people). WFP responded to urgent food needs while also supporting local markets and retailers. The effort was part of WFP's commitment to mitigating the impact of drought and enhancing food security in affected regions in the country.

Input distribution under drought recovery programme: In February, WFP concluded the distribution of inputs and reached a total of 55,022 beneficiaries out of the 60,000 targeted beneficiaries from 17 districts. The inputs received included

Photo: From right to left- Zambia's Minister of Education, Hon. Douglas Syakalima, French Minister Delegate Mr. Thani Mohamed-Soulihi, and WFP Country Representative Ms. Cissy Kabasuuga dishing out food to learners at Mulola Primary School in Chongwe during the official handover of Yellow Split Peas from the French Government for Emergency School Feeding. Photo: **WFP/Joseph Kaluba**

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Country Strategic Plan (2023–2028)

| Total Requirement (in USD) | Allocated Contributions (in USD) | Six-Month Net Funding Requirement (in USD) |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 109.7 m | 79.3 m | 10 m |

Strategic Result 1: Access to food (SDG Target 2.1)

Strategic Outcome 01: Food-insecure people in Zambia (including refugees) affected by shocks are better able to meet their essential food security and nutrition needs in anticipation of, during and in the aftermath of crises.

Focus Area: Crisis response

Activities:

- Provide food and livelihood support to crisis-affected, food-insecure people, including refugees, to meet their basic food and nutrition needs, and support self-reliance in anticipation of, during and in the early aftermath of shocks including climate change induced impacts

Strategic Result 2: End malnutrition (SDG Target 2.2)

Strategic Outcome 02: Populations at risk of malnutrition in Zambia have improved access to and consumption of safe and diverse nutrient-dense food all year round.

Focus Area: Root causes

Activities:

- Promote adoption of optimal nutrition practices among populations at risk of malnutrition and strengthen partnership with food system actors to increase the availability of nutrient-dense foods.

Strategic Result 3: Smallholder productivity and incomes (SDG Target 2.3)

Strategic Outcome 03: Food-insecure and risk-prone smallholder farming populations, especially women, youth, and people with disabilities in targeted rural and urban areas, are enabled to withstand climate change and other shocks and benefit from more resilient food systems through increased incomes that contribute to improved nutrition and food diversity and increased economic and livelihood opportunities by 2030.

Focus Area: Resilience Building

Activities:

- Promote knowledge and adoption of climate services, regenerative agriculture practices and innovative technologies among smallholders and nutritious food value chain actors to build resilience with regard to climate change and other shocks while simultaneously reducing environmental degradation.
- Provide targeted smallholders and value chain actors with an integrated package of innovative and transformative skills, tools and systems to enable the adoption of diversified and decent livelihoods

Strategic Result 4: Capacity Building (SDG Target 17.9)

Strategic Outcome 04: National institutions in Zambia have strengthened capacity to design policies and programmes that promote the enhancement of national food systems and deliver national emergency preparedness, anticipatory and response programmes, nutrition-sensitive, shock-responsive social protection, supply chain systems and sustainable food security programmes by 2030.

Focus area: Resilience Building

Activities:

- Provide technical assistance, including through South-South and triangular cooperation, to national institutions to strengthen national capacity and systems for emergency preparedness, anticipatory action and early response, social protection, food and nutrition security and sustainable food systems.

Strategic Result 5: Global Partnership (SDG Target 17.16)

Strategic Outcome 05: Humanitarian and development actors in Zambia have improved access to on-demand services and benefit from innovative, effective, and cost-efficient supply chain capacity by 2030.

Focus area: Resilience Building

Activities:

- Provide timely and appropriate on-demand services for supply chain, innovation, and health logistics services to relevant actors

cereals (maize/sorghum), tubers (cassava, sweet potatoes), legumes (groundnuts, cowpeas, beans), and assorted vegetables (tomatoes, onion, rape, and amaranthus).

Nutrition Integration among the drought-affected communities: WFP coordinated with the Ministries of Education, Community Development, Health, and Agriculture to train 200 extension officers and 521 community volunteers in nutrition Social Behaviour Change across 10 districts in Western and Southern Provinces. So far, 1,627 households in the first 1,000 days of child development and 6,224 non-1,000-day households have been engaged. The trained individuals are now educating communities on optimal nutrition practices and Infant and Young Child Feeding, emphasizing bean utilization.

Nutrition improvement support

Gender and Nutrition: The Gender, Protection, and Inclusion unit conducted an Integrated Cross-Cutting Analysis and Risk Assessment (I-CARA) to address intersectional needs and protection risks in the ongoing drought response and WFP programming (CSP 2023-2028). This analysis allowed the country office to identify potentials, gaps, and risks, with findings guiding recommendations for strengthening the CSP's gender, protection, and inclusion objectives. Primary qualitative data was collected in Western, Southern, Muchinga, and Eastern Provinces, as well as Lusaka, and is currently being analyzed for the final report.

Nutrition Messaging in Schools: With support from WFP, the Ministry of Education has continued building capacity in Nutrition messaging within the Emergence School Feeding districts that were trained. In February, a total of 3143 learners (1579 boys, 1564 girls) across 20 schools in Kasenengwa District were reached. The key nutrition messages are being disseminated across various platforms including school assemblies, school classes and SHN clubs.

Smallholder Farmer Support

City Foundation Field Visit, Chongwe District, Lusaka Province: On 21st February 2025, Citi Foundation, hosted by WFP, visited Chongwe district to review the SheCan project. They engaged with beneficiaries of WFP's Savings for Change model, assessing their financial and digital literacy. The Foundation interacted with savings groups such as Penga Ujane, Antioch, Tabwela bwela, and Twikatane, noting progress in financial inclusion and climate resilience for smallholder farmers.

Capacity Strengthening

Handover of Yellow Split Peas to the Ministry of Education: In response to the severe drought of 2023/2024 that affected agriculture and food security in Zambia, WFP facilitated the donation of yellow split peas from the French Government to Zambia's Ministry of Education at Mulola Primary School in Chongwe District. This donation aims to enhance the Government's Emergency School Feeding Programme, supplementing government-provided cereals and benefiting around 1,800 schools and over 970,000 children. The program seeks to alleviate hunger and reduce undernourishment among schoolchildren from food-insecure households.

Donors: Africa Risk Capacity, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, the European Commission, the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, France, Germany Ireland, Japan, Russia, United Nations Children's Fund, United States of America, The Government of Zambia