



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Zimbabwe Country Brief April 2025



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**

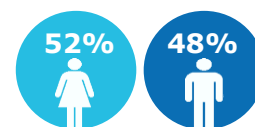
In Numbers

7,132 MT of food assistance distributed

USD 84,777 cash-based transfers distributed

USD 29.6 million net funding requirements for the next six months (May – October 25)

451,994 people assisted in April 2025 through in-kind food and cash transfers



Operational Updates

Lean Season Assistance: WFP successfully concluded its Lean Season Assistance (LSA) programme in April 2025, reaching 439,883 people with critical food assistance. At its peak, the programme supported 983,507 individuals across nine districts between December 2024 and April 2025. Each beneficiary received a monthly entitlement of 8.5 kg of cereals, 1.7 kg of pulses, and 0.6 kg of vegetable oil, helping to meet immediate food needs during the most food-insecure period of the year.

The LSA was delivered in close coordination with the Government's Food Deficit Mitigation Strategy, enhancing complementarity between interventions. This collaboration improved operational efficiency and strengthened coordination among key stakeholders, reinforcing WFP's commitment to working hand in hand with national systems to achieve food security.

To maximize impact, WFP partnered with UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women, FAO, and WHO to transform food distribution points into integrated service hubs. These platforms enabled the delivery of essential messages and services on nutrition, gender, protection (including PSEA), agriculture, food security, and disease outbreak response demonstrating the value of multi-sectoral, collaborative approaches to humanitarian programming.

Support to Refugees:

In April 2025, WFP supported 12,111 refugees (94.6 percent of the planned caseload) with monthly cash entitlements and 12,109 individuals with in-kind food assistance. Each individual received USD 7 for oil and pulses and 13.5 kg of cereals.

To address nutritional needs, Super Cereal Plus was distributed to 2,545 vulnerable individuals, including children under five, pregnant and breastfeeding women, and the chronically ill. Additionally, WFP provided in-kind food assistance to 276 newly arrived refugees.

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Photo: Recognising that the most effective way to respond to an emergency is through preparation, WFP hosted an urban preparedness simulation exercise for government stakeholder in Bulawayo. The exercise helped to enhance coordination, readiness, and response capacities among key stakeholders in the event of an urban crisis. WFP/Tatenda Macheke

Country Strategic Plan (2022-2026)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
593 m	219 m	29.6 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

Collaboration with other actors: At the 2025 Zimbabwe International Trade Fair (ZITF), WFP hosted a private sector side event focused on food security. This event fostered collaboration and explored opportunities for private sector engagement in resilience-building and food systems support. It provided a platform for dialogue between businesses, government, and development partners to scale up innovative approaches to food and nutrition security.

At the 2025 Zimbabwe International Trade Fair (ZITF), WFP, together with FAO and IFRC, co-hosted an Anticipatory Action advocacy event. The event highlighted ongoing AA initiatives and the Government-led AA Community of Practice, bringing together UN agencies, government, donors, and beneficiaries to promote a shift from reactive to proactive humanitarian responses.

WFP provided technical and financial assistance to the 2025 Rural Zimbabwe Livelihoods Assessment Committee (ZimLAC) process, including the development of assessment tools and support for data collection activities scheduled for May and June. The results, expected in July, will inform evidence-based planning and response for the 2025 humanitarian cycle.

Challenges:

WFP Zimbabwe faces a USD 29.6 million funding gap, 66 percent of its needs from May to October 2025. The funding gap threatens the delivery of emergency and resilience programmes. Urgent donor contributions are needed to sustain operations and protect food security gains.

WFP Zimbabwe is also facing a critical pipeline break in its refugee response programme, with cash-based transfers (CBT) expected to be disrupted from July 2025. Over 12,000 refugees risk losing access to essential food assistance, threatening their food security and wellbeing.

In addition, WFP has put on hold the urban cash assistance programme due to severe resourcing constraints. This suspension affects potential layering and synergies with ongoing efforts to strengthen and diversify urban livelihoods.

Urgent donor support is required to restore both refugee and urban assistance components and prevent a deterioration in the food and nutrition situation.

Donors

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