



World Food Programme

WFP Zambia Country Brief September 2025

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



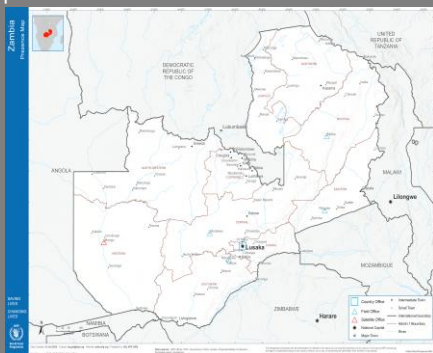
Operational Context

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**

2022 Human Development Index: **153 out of 193 countries**

Income Level: **Low**

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

Contact info: Chileshe Chilambwe (Chileshe.chilambwe@wfp.org)

Country Director: Cissy Byenkya Kabasuuga

Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/zambia

In Numbers



USD 71,376 in cash-based transfers to beneficiaries in September 2025

USD 2.5 million six-month net funding requirements (September 2025 - February 2026) representing 24 percent of total needs.

18,332 people assisted in September 2025

- **9,666** refugees through cash-based transfers
- **1,475** through nutrition interventions
- **7,161** through smallholder farmer support
- **30** through capacity strengthening

Strategic Updates

Refugee response: Mantapala Refugee resettlement remains peaceful with an increase in the inflow of asylum seekers. Between January and September, 6,747 individuals were newly registered. This includes 4,225 new arrivals, 1,614 in situ registrations, and 908 birth registrations. In September, 517 new arrivals registered, compared to August, showing a 49 percent increase. Most of these new arrivals came from the Democratic Republic of Congo, with notable numbers from South Kivu (1,367), North Kivu (489), Tanganyika (324), and other regions (291).

Nutrition Support: Following France and Russia's contribution of Yellow Split Peas, sensitization on utilisation and incorporation of the Peas in schools' meals programme were held for Field Office staff to begin trainings of stakeholders in Chipata – eastern province, targeting government schools. The roll out of sensitisation sessions is currently ongoing targeting School administration and Parent Teachers Associations, once concluded the trainings will be beneficial to the school meals programme reaching approximately 900,000 learners in 1,200 schools, promoting diet diversity, WASH, and energy-efficient cooking.

Re-launch of the Maano Virtual Farmers Market Digital App:

On 29 September, WFP, in partnership with ZANACO, Digital PayGo, and Citi Bank, re-launched the Maano Virtual Farmers Market in Mumbwa District-Central Province, reaffirming its commitment to market access, financial inclusion, and climate resilience. The event, officiated by the Ministry of Agriculture, brought together key stakeholders to showcase Maano's enhanced role in connecting smallholder farmers to buyers, financial services, and digital tools for sustainable agriculture.

Scaling Livestock Insurance to Protect Zambia's Smallholder Farmers:

Building on Zambia's first Index-Based Livestock Insurance (IBLI) pilot, implemented by WFP and IFAD from 2021 to 2022 and reaching 5,000 farmers across five provinces, WFP signed an agreement with the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock to scale up livestock insurance under the Enhanced Smallholder Livestock Investment Programme (ESLIP). The new initiative will extend coverage to 25,000 farmers, focusing on sustaining IBLI for asset protection and introducing livestock mortality insurance for asset replacement. This strategic collaboration aims to boost climate resilience, safeguard livelihoods, and advance financial inclusion for smallholder livestock farmers in Zambia.

Photo Caption: Beneficiary explains Maano app use during its relaunch in Mumbwa district in Central province- @WFP/Joseph Kaluba

Country Strategic Plan (2023–2028)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirement (in USD)
177.7 m	96 m	2.5 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

Strengthening Livestock Health with Cold Chain Equipment: In a significant step toward strengthening veterinary services and safeguarding livelihoods, WFP handed over 300 Freeze-Free Cold Boxes (15-litre capacity each) to the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock in September. This targeted investment in cold chain infrastructure is designed to improve the safe storage and transport of livestock vaccines, particularly in hard-to-reach areas. The handover was officially received by the Minister of Fisheries and Livestock, who commended the partnership as a timely boost to national efforts in promoting sustainable agriculture and protecting at risk populations

Harnessing AI for Climate-Smart Agriculture: Between 8–16 September, WFP collaborated with NEC Africa to introduce the CropScope platform to Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) officials and WFP staff through training sessions held in Kafue, Kabwe, and Chipata. CropScope, which integrates AI and satellite data, is designed to strengthen climate-smart agricultural practices and data-driven decision-making. Nearly 100 participants from five key districts, Chipangali, Lufwanyama, Mazabuka, Monze, and Mumbwa, were trained to operationalize the platform. To ensure long-term impact and scalability, a Technical Working Group was established to guide strategic integration and future expansion.

CERF Drought Recovery Scoping Mission: To strengthen recovery and resilience in drought-affected areas under the new CERF programme, WFP led a coordinated multi-agency scoping mission across six districts in Southern, Western, and Luapula provinces. In close collaboration with the Government of Zambia, FAO, and UNFPA, the mission aims to deliver targeted support to nearly 30,000 vulnerable individuals. The mission focused on gathering baseline data and mapping key stakeholders to inform the design of sustainable interventions, including irrigation systems and school garden rehabilitation. These efforts lay the foundation for a coordinated, evidence-based response that strengthens food security, nutrition, and community resilience in the face of climate shocks.

Anticipatory Actions: To strengthen the capacity of key institutions such as the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit, the Zambia Meteorological Department and members of the National Technical Working Group (TWG) to develop drought trigger thresholds for the country, WFP supported an in-country technical mission. The mission provided hands-on training and facilitated the validation of drought triggers in preparation for the 2025/26 rainfall season. Over the course of a three-day training involving 30 participants held in Kabwe, a detailed work plan for 2025 was finalized, following a review of existing anticipatory action trigger methodologies and their alignment with methodological best practices and lessons learned

Looking Forward:

In October, WFP is expected to hold a physical workshop to translate the Seasonal Rainfall Forecast, laying the groundwork for the nationwide dissemination of seasonal messages planned for November 2025.

Donors: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, the European Commission, the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, The People’s Republic of China, Private donors, Russia, United Nations Children’s Fund, UN-CERF, WHO, and the Government of Zambia.