



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Zimbabwe Country Brief December 2025



Operational Context

Zimbabwe's 2025 Second Round Crops, Livestock and Fisheries Assessment (CLAFA-2) estimate total cereal production at 2,928,206 metric tonnes (MT), with maize contributing 2,293,556 MT. Traditional grains—including sorghum, pearl millet, and finger millet—account for 634,650 MT, broken down as follows: sorghum at 436,784 MT, pearl millet at 188,261 MT, and finger millet at 9,605 MT. While these figures suggest national-level grain availability, significant deficits persist in vulnerable rural areas, where access and affordability remain constrained.

Concurrently, the 2025 Zimbabwe Livelihoods Assessment Committee (ZimLAC) projects that approximately 3 million people will face food insecurity at the peak of the lean season (January–March 2026), in both rural and urban areas. The 2025 ZimLAC Rural Livelihoods Assessment indicates that 609,087 individuals are currently food insecure (July–September 2025), rising to 1,046,895 between October and December 2025, and peaking at 1,548,432—representing 15 percent of the rural population—from January through March 2026. In urban areas, the 2025 Urban Livelihoods Assessment estimates that 1,408,385 individuals, or 28 percent of the urban population, will be food insecure in 2025.

These findings underscore the need for targeted food assistance, resilience-building interventions, and strengthened social protection systems to mitigate the impact of seasonal and structural vulnerabilities.

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**

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Photo: WFP Zimbabwe



In Numbers

36,362 people assisted in December 2025 through in-kind food and cash transfers

USD 400,480 cash-based transfers distributed

USD 48 million net funding requirements for the next six months (January - June 2026)

231 MT of food assistance distributed

Operational Updates

Lean Season Assistance (LSA):

- Preparations for the 2026 LSA programme commenced with partner engagement and training, with distributions scheduled to run from January to March 2026. While the programme was initially planned to support 1.5 million people, current available resources will enable WFP to reach 200,000 people across four districts: Bulilima, Kariba, Mberengwa, and Mwenezi. In Kariba and Bulilima, WFP will jointly implement the LSA with the Government of Zimbabwe, utilising government-provided cereals alongside pulses and vegetable oil supplied by WFP.

Urban Cash Assistance Programme:

- In December, WFP assisted 8,500 beneficiaries in Epworth with cash transfers. Implemented directly by WFP to maximise efficiency, the intervention provided USD 13 per person per month (since September 2025) through Mukuru and EcoCash platforms, ensuring assistance was fast, secure, and accessible. December marked the final distributions under the programme due to funding constraints.

Support to refugees:

- In December 2025, WFP Zimbabwe assisted 12,362 refugees with monthly entitlements of government-donated cereals and cash transfers, providing USD 8 per person to cover milling costs and enable the purchase of essential items such as vegetable oil and pulses. During the same period, WFP partnered with the UN Refugee Agency to support the voluntary repatriation of 1,723 Mozambican refugees from Tongogara Refugee Settlement, facilitating cash transfers of USD 50 per person through Mukuru, amounting to USD 82,650 in total.

Integrated Rural Resilience Building (IRRB):

- WFP advanced rural resilience initiatives through multiple activities, including Juncao grass production and mushroom production training in Matobo which reached 108 farmers and saw the planting of 230 Juncao grass cuttings to diversify agricultural practices and provide livestock feed.
- In partnership with Sustainable Agriculture Technology (SAT), WFP also finalised IRRB activities in Chipinge, Mt Darwin, Chiredzi, Masvingo, and Rushinga, reaching 3,100 smallholder farmers under Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) and benefiting a further 15,500 participants through asset rehabilitation.
- Under the Integrated Climate and Risk Management activities, WFP has promoted Village Savings and Loan clubs as a vehicle for financial inclusion and to overcome social and financial barriers. In December, 66 groups with 775 members shared USD 116,729, averaging USD 151 per person and up to USD 590, demonstrating how savings groups enable members to collectively access, manage, and grow financial resources while strengthening resilience.



Country Strategic Plan (2022-2026)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
593 m	231.3 m	48 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)

Capacity Strengthening:

- WFP provided financial and technical support to facilitate the first targeted capacity-building workshop for drought relief committees in Matabeleland North and South, following recommendations from the 2024 ARC payout After-Action Review. Delivered in collaboration with the ARC Agency, the ARC Technical Working Group, and the Start Network, the training strengthened participants’ knowledge of the African Risk Capacity (ARC) mechanism and broader disaster risk financing approaches. This initiative marks an important step toward enhancing provincial and district-level capacities for risk-informed planning and improving preparedness for climate-related shocks.
- WFP, together with its partners, continued to advance rural resilience initiatives through a series of livelihood-strengthening activities. In Masvingo, WFP and the National University of Science and Technology convened an Asset Creation and Regenerative Agriculture Bootcamp, capacitating 87 participants, including representatives from key government ministries and agencies at national, provincial, and district levels, technical partners, and 66 community members from Mt Darwin, Chipinge, and Masvingo. The bootcamp strengthened knowledge and skills in asset creation and regenerative agriculture, fostering greater capacity for risk-informed planning and sustainable livelihoods.

Climate Resilience:

- In December, WFP Zimbabwe disseminated climate advisories through the Participatory Integrated Climate Services for Agriculture (PICSA) radio programmes across five districts, Chipinge, Mangwe, Masvingo, Rushinga, and Mwenezi, reaching more than 160,000 farmers. PICSA is an approach that helps farmers use climate information to guide agricultural decision-making. To broaden outreach and ensure timely access to information, the broadcasts were complemented by distribution via WhatsApp mobile platforms, thereby strengthening rural communities’ ability to make informed decisions in the face of climate variability.
- WFP is advancing anticipatory action in Zimbabwe by advocating for its integration within the draft Disaster Risk Management Bill and piloting flood trigger models to enable proactive disaster response. These efforts seek to institutionalise anticipatory approaches, ensuring that preparedness measures and early interventions are systematically embedded into national frameworks, thereby strengthening resilience and reducing the impact of climate-related shocks.

Challenges:

- WFP Zimbabwe is facing a critical funding shortfall of USD 48 million, covering 83 percent of operational needs for January to June 2026. Without immediate support, essential resilience-building programmes that help vulnerable communities strengthen food security and self-reliance are at risk.
- The Government of Zimbabwe has restricted grain imports from and through Mozambique due to the risk of Maize Lethal Necrosis (MLN), a severe viral disease affecting maize. Consequently, WFP is exploring options to sell its maize stocks in Mozambique to other country offices and redirect resources toward procuring maize within Zimbabwe and/or Zambia.

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).