



# INFORMATION UPDATE ON DROUGHT AND CHOLERA RESPONSE

## BY THE UN SYSTEM APRIL 2024

The purpose of this information update is to keep the UN in Zambia updated on the United Nation's contribution to the current emergencies (Drought and Cholera). The brief may also be shared with Cooperating Partners as a way of also keeping them updated.



### Introduction

- The President of the Republic of Zambia, Mr. Hakainde Hichilema declared the drought a National Disaster and Emergency on February 29, 2024.
- Eight provinces are affected namely: Central, Eastern, Lusaka, Muchinga, Copperbelt, Southern, North-western and Western Provinces with Western, Southern, Central and Lusaka being severely affected by the drought.
- Specifically, maize cultivation has been severely impacted, with around one million hectares of maize fields damaged out of 2.2 million hectares planted.
- The Government has since developed a Drought Response Plan with a requirement of ZMW 23.5 billion or US\$ 941 million to provide life-saving and early recovery assistance to targeted 6.6 million out of 9.8 million affected people.
- Following the formulation of the Drought Response Plan, the President of the Republic of Zambia, Mr. Hakainde Hichilema, made an international appeal on 16 April 2024 requesting for humanitarian assistance.

### Situation Overview

In response to the escalating drought crisis, the President of Zambia officially declared a state of emergency on 29 February 2024 urging both local and international assistance. Subsequently, on 4 March 2024, the Government, led by the Office of the Vice President (OVP) and the Disaster Management Mitigation Unit (DMMU), convened a consultative meeting with key stakeholders to rally support in light of the declared emergency. Emphasizing the urgency of the situation, the Government underscored the necessity for a collaborative, multisectoral response to address the plight affecting approximately one million families across the nation.

The drought has significantly impacted eight of the 10 provinces in the country; Central, Copperbelt, Eastern, Lusaka, Muchinga, North-Western, Southern and Western provinces. According to the GRZ Drought Response plan, 9.8 million adversely affected by the drought and among these 6.6 million are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance. This aligns with the above bullets. Notably, maize cultivation has been severely impacted, with around one million hectares of maize fields damaged out of the 2.2 million hectares planted during the 2023/2024 season.

Critical staples such as maize, legumes, groundnuts, millet, and sorghum are deteriorating due to inadequate moisture levels. Additionally, dwindling water sources pose challenges in accessing safe and clean water for domestic purposes. Livestock farmers face hardships as pastures dry up, exacerbating their plight. Escalating demand has led to soaring prices of food items and essential commodities, burdening communities reliant on market purchases.

The most vulnerable groups directly affected include small-scale farmers that depend on rainfed agriculture, livestock herders, and individuals reliant on natural water bodies and shallow wells. This situation unfolds against the backdrop of the recently shared Integrated Food Insecurity Phase Classification (IPC) report, estimating that between October 2023 and March 2024, an average of 2.04 million people grapple with food insecurity, underscoring the urgency for concerted action.



## DROUGHT RESPONSE

### Drought Update by Province

Central Province	Copperbelt Province	Eastern Province	Lusaka Province
<p>Chibombo, with a total population of 421,315, is the most affected district where 412,294 individuals have been affected by the drought and 276,237 in need of assistance. Other significantly affected districts include Kapiri Mposhi, Mumbwa, and Kabwe, where populations ranging from 299,206 to 332,237 are grappling with the impacts of the drought.</p>	<p>Kitwe, Chililabombwe, and Masaiti are among the most affected. With a total population of 2,132,960, over a million individuals are facing the effects of the drought, with approximately 763,074 in need of immediate assistance.</p>	<p>Chadiza, Chipata, and Petauke are among the districts in the Eastern Province severely affected by the drought. With a total population of 2,454,788, over 2 million individuals are affected, with around 1.4 million in urgent need of support.</p>	<p>Chilanga, Chongwe, and Kafue are among the districts in Lusaka Province facing significant challenges due to the drought. With a total population of 3,079,964, nearly 570,748 individuals are affected, with around 381,731 requiring immediate assistance.</p>
Muchinga Province	North-Western Province	Southern Province	Western Province
<p>Mpika and Mafinga districts are among the most affected. The total population of the province is 385,860, with the same number affected, and around 258,526 individuals in need of assistance.</p>	<p>Kalumbila and Kabompo districts are significantly affected by the drought. With a total population of 755,860, over 570,931 individuals are grappling with the effects of the drought, with around 382,524 in need of urgent assistance.</p>	<p>Choma, Kalomo, and Livingstone are among the districts facing severe challenges due to the drought. With a total population of 2,381,728, nearly 1.95 million individuals are affected, with around 1.3 million requiring immediate assistance.</p>	<p>Mongu and Senanga are among the districts experiencing the impacts of the drought. The total population of the province is 1,363,520, with over 1.09 million individuals affected, and around 736,047 individuals in need of immediate assistance.</p>

## Humanitarian Preparedness and Response

In response to the unprecedented challenges posed by the drought exacerbated by climate change, the Government of Zambia through DMMU activated Clusters, co-led with the UN System, in November 2023, to facilitate the implementation of the government-led Food Security Drought Response Plan. Below are the Clusters:



- Food Security:** The agriculture sector response focuses on providing relief and support to affected households, restorative crop production, and livestock and fisheries support to mitigate immediate impacts and build resilience.
- Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH):** The Ministry of Water Development and Sanitation, in collaboration with partners, will ensure access to clean water and sanitation across affected communities. Activities include borehole rehabilitation, WASH training, and water point construction.
- Health:** With an estimated 9,779,145 people exposed and 6,552,027 adversely affected, the response plan aims to mitigate the impact of drought on health services, emphasizing disease surveillance, prevention, and control, alongside ensuring access to essential drugs and logistics.
- Nutrition:** An estimated 2,037,712 people face food insecurity, with 9,779,145 exposed and 6,552,027 adversely affected. Malnutrition rates, already concerning, may rise sharply, especially among children under five and pregnant and lactating women. Targeted interventions aim to address malnutrition, with activities including managing acute malnutrition, providing supplements, and supporting active case finding.
- Education:** Efforts focus on ensuring continuous learning and improved outcomes, with activities like expanding school feeding programs and enhancing partnerships for a coordinated response.
- Energy:** Zambia's energy sector faces a critical challenge due to the severe decline in rainfall induced by El Nino, affecting major water catchments for hydropower generation. Load management programmes, directed by Zambia Electricity Supply Corporation (ZESCO), prioritize strategic institutions like health facilities and water utilities to ensure essential services continue uninterrupted. The government aims to promote social behavior change toward alternative technologies and fuels, including LPG and solar power, while creating an enabling environment for the private sector to offer affordable alternatives.
  - Key objectives** include enforcing regulations on charcoal production, reducing taxes on alternative fuels, and supporting the expansion of solar electricity generation. Importation of power is also planned to cover a 700MW deficit for 15 months, with a capacity of 150MW at \$10.7cents/kWh.
- Risk Communication and Community Engagement:** In response, effective Risk Communication and Community Engagement activities are vital for disseminating crucial information and promoting adaptation measures. Leveraging data from entities like the Zambezi River Authority (ZRA) and the Zambia Meteorological Department, the sector aims to forecast water shortages and other drought-related risks. Community involvement is key, as locals help identify vulnerabilities, act on disseminated information, and contribute indigenous knowledge. Led by the Ministry of Information and Media, with support from UN System in Zambia (UNDP, UNICEF and UNCG), the Cluster's objectives include enhancing community participation and disseminating early warning information. Activities range from SMS alerts and radio broadcasts to sensitization sessions with communities, schools, and traditional leaders, ensuring widespread awareness and engagement across affected areas.
- Emergency Logistics:** The Emergency and Relief sector provides logistical support across affected districts, involving transportation and distribution of relief supplies, hiring transportation and storage facilities, and procurement of essential items.

*The United Nations (UN) as Co-chair of the cluster groups reiterates its commitment to supporting the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) in positive contribution to the drought situation in the country in creating a nexus between humanitarian and development to facilitate a smooth transition from emergency response to development perspective in the affected districts.*



## UN Support to Government

### *Coordination*

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), deployed two staff as surge capacity to the UN Resident Coordination Office to provide support to UNCT Zambia and the broader humanitarian community in enhancing coordination efforts. The OCHA team worked within the UN and closely with the DMMU and their support reviewing and revising the SOPs for the Clusters to enhance better functioning of these coordination structures. Other support included capacity strengthening of Clusters through refinement of TORs and developing of coordination modalities such as formulation of communication platforms for quick communication within Clusters as well as establishing interlinkages between sectors recognizing that some Clusters overlap thus essential that there are periodic meetings of all sectors to minimize duplication. OCHA has continued to support the Clusters and DMMU to ensure that there is a functional framework for regular Government led SITREPS. OCHA is also supporting the UN in Zambia to develop a UN-Partner Appeal as well as a request for CERF funding.



## Food Security and Agriculture

*WFP and FAO are both co-leads of the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster.*

- WFP as a cluster co-lead of the Agriculture and Food Security cluster, is supporting the Government in coordinating humanitarian response plans and implementation, conducting rapid food security assessments, and harmonizing response modalities and targeting protocols. Additionally, WFP plans to respond to the needs of the most food insecure by complementing government response through the provision of pulses and additional emergency cash transfers top-up targeting districts with high IPC3+ prevalence rates, pockets of IPC phase 4 populations, and drought-affected in Central, Eastern, Lusaka, Southern and Western provinces. Food assistance includes two transfer modalities: - in-kind food assistance and cash-based transfers, based on food supply availability and market functionality. Efforts will be made to ensure the provision of a full food basket that meets the 2100 kcal requirement. The CBT transfer value will help cover the cost of the full food basket of the in-kind assistance to help enhance the nutrition-sensitive food assistance. WFP will provide early recovery and livelihood restoration activities considering the expected upcoming normal rainy season.
- WFP Zambia has received notification from ARC Replica regarding the pay-out amounts to support households affected by drought. The funds will be utilized for three purposes:
  - Providing unconditional food and/or cash assistance,
  - Emergency school feeding activities to complement nutritious food commodities, and
  - Supporting the restoration of livelihoods through input provision.
- Currently, WFP is collaborating with the Government partner to finalize the implementation plan for disbursing the pay-out funds from the ARC Replica to support the worst affected populations.
- FAO also continues providing technical support to the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock to feed the Government emergency response plan for the agriculture sector through the Agriculture and Food Security cluster.
- The Government declared an animal health emergency pursuant to Section 63 of the Animal Health Act in the ZM Gazette No. 7578 issued on 12 April 2024. FAO has been providing technical support in the development of a National Animal Disease Surveillance Strategy that guides concerted national efforts in detection, prevention and reporting of livestock diseases and supported the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock in establishing a Multisectoral Rapid Response Teams (RRT).
- Support will be provided for vaccinations against zoonotic diseases such as anthrax, foot and mouth disease, Rabies as well as for upscale sensitization on all drought prone diseases.
- FAO in partnership with the two ministries have concluded an in-depth crop and livestock assessment using remote sensing and field assessment to assess the impact of the drought on the agriculture sector. This will assist in prioritizing target districts, to plan and design the type of interventions to be implemented per district.
- Once the analysis and report writing are completed, the report will be shared with the Resident Coordinator for dissemination to UN agencies and partners in the last week of April. The actual date will be communicated in due course.

## WASH and Nutrition

*UNICEF is Cluster co-lead on WASH, Nutrition clusters.*

- 4Ws mapping is completed, while Education and Child protection sub-cluster is being finalized. Cluster members have contributed in drafting the Interagency flash appeal coordinated by OCHA. The clusters have also participated in the Vice President DMMU validation of the Disaster Preparedness and Response Policy document.
- UNICEF has participated in the Intra Action Review on Cholera organized by the MOH along with WHO and other partners.
- Further, under Nutrition: UNICEF plans to conduct a SMART survey in the most affected provinces of Western, Eastern, Southern and Lusaka (the latter currently reporting cases of cholera). The survey will inform caseload estimation and intervention targeting for the most vulnerable. The survey is planned to take place from 22 April 2024, with the initial draft report anticipated in May 2024. Active case finding was conducted in Chelstone, Chipata, and Chawama sub-districts of Lusaka district between 8 and 12 April 2024 with 252,975 children aged 6 – 59 months screened. Of these 1,005 were categorised under Moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) while 268 under Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) without complications and 22 were nutritional oedema.
- WFP is also contributing to Nutrition. To avert excess morbidity and mortality associated with moderate wasting among children under age 5, pregnant and lactating women, the elderly, and those with chronic illnesses, WFP plans to support government efforts by assisting 11,674 children (6-59 months) and 8,112 pregnant and lactating women at risk of moderate acute malnutrition. The assistance will be in the form of cash transfers and or specially formulated foods. The World Food Programme (WFP) will also provide nutrition-sensitive messaging and social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) to enhance awareness of the affected populations.

Health	Emergency Logistics	Education
<p><i>WHO is the Cluster co-lead on HEALTH</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● WHO is preparing to coordinate the health response to the emergency as it arises. WHO is supporting the Government with information generation, disease surveillance, and laboratory diagnostics as well as with surge teams for malnutrition case management in 1st, 2nd and 3rd level hospitals and treatment of priority diseases and management of current outbreaks.</li> <li>● <b>SRH/GBV/HIV:</b> UNFPA is providing support to the Lifeline and Childline to enable them provide support to women and girls in the affected areas through the national toll free line on information relating to safe delivery for pregnant women as well as Gender-Based Violence (GBV) services and support. The toll free line is being spread through awareness messages on public and community radio stations. Further, UNFPA is working with the Ministry of Health (MoH) to conduct mobile clinic outreaches in hard-to-reach areas in Eastern and Southern Provinces, as well as supporting Safe Motherhood Action Groups (SMAGs) conducting door to door contraception services as the economic consequences of the drought have reduced the frequency of women traveling to access services at health facilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● As cluster co-lead, WFP is enhancing the Government's logistics capacity through the delivery of Government maize stocks to selected hard-to-reach districts. WFP is co-chairing the logistics cluster and coordinating the sharing of information, as well as combining transport and warehousing capacity. Additionally, WFP will provide logistical support to the Government of Zambia for the transportation of 6,733 MT of relief maize from selected collection points to designated districts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Digital learning platform for continuation of learning: UNICEF, as co-cluster lead is working on expanding the availability of the Learning Passport Zambia, a digital learning platform provided by the Ministry of Education, that helps children continue learning when face to face learning is disrupted, including in the face of emergencies.</li> <li>● Television, radio and internet for continuation of Learning: UNESCO will support the Government through the Ministry of Education (MoE) with the continuation of learning using Television (TV), Radio and Internet should the impact of the drought require children being kept away from school or should it trigger the closure of schools. UNESCO remains a key member of the UN Drought Emergency Response led by UNICEF.</li> <li>● WFP will support the Government to establish emergency school feeding programmes in new and existing districts. This will include providing training at the national and sub-national level on decentralized procurement, food tracking, nutrition integration, among other areas.</li> </ul>

Early Recovery and Resilience	Energy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● UNDP Funds US\$32 Million through the Strengthening climate resilience of agricultural livelihoods in Agro-Ecological Regions I and II in Zambia (SCRALA) Project in 16 districts across 5 provinces including Southern, Western, Lusaka, Eastern and Muchinga. The project is assisting with building the resilience of smallholder farmers in Agro-Ecological Regions I and II in Zambia in view of climate change and variability through value-chain approach, addressing risks posed across key stages of the value chain – planning, inputs, production and post-production.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● UNDP funds through the Africa Mini Grid (AMG) project with US\$1.3 million advanced for implementation with Zambia's Rural Electrification Authority under the Ministry of Energy to enhance recovery and resilience of local enterprises and community social services in view of the energy deficit arising from the drought.</li> </ul>
<b>RCCE/Awareness raising</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● IOM donated Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials on Early Warning Systems (EWS) to the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit (DMMU) to strengthen EWS at national, provincial and community levels amidst extreme climate conditions affecting Zambia such as droughts. Through information, IOM is supporting DMMU to make disaster response much more effective at all levels.</li> <li>● <b>Capacity Strengthening;</b> IOM is prioritizing long-term capacity building for Government and other stakeholders to handle mixed and irregular migration, during crises like droughts, in a sustainable manner. This is through initiatives such as Training of Trainers (ToTs) programmes focusing on migration-related areas like counter-trafficking and migrant smuggling. Additionally, IOM has been supporting the Government in developing training manuals, disaster management action plans, and standard operating procedures to manage irregular migration flows and protect vulnerable migrants. The aim is to support the Government in anticipating, preparing for, and responding to population movements triggered by climate change and natural disasters through community-based programming.</li> <li>● UNFPA is supporting the Government in strengthening capacity of coordination for emergency preparedness and response and improving risk communication and referral to services leading to increased awareness of cholera prevention, management, and treatment.</li> </ul>	



## CHOLERA RESPONSE

The UN in Zambia has continued to support the government to respond to the cholera outbreak. As of 21 April 2024, three provinces, Lusaka, Copperbelt, and Eastern, continued to report cholera cases in five districts namely Lusaka, Chilanga, Ndola, Kitwe and Chipata district.

### Health

- WHO has been supporting the Government of the Republic of Zambia to sustain the response to the cholera outbreak as cholera cases continue being reported in selected high-risk provinces. WHO has been supporting cholera response through:
  - Coordinating and hosting CPs in weekly partner coordination meetings with the purpose of sharing experiences and aligning response measures for efficiency and effective response. The frequency of these meetings has been changed to once every 2 weeks.
  - Supporting national level coordination through technical guidance to the national IMS
  - Repurposing personnel and other office resources at the country office to cholera response
  - Sourcing surge personnel from other country offices, the regional office and HQ of the organization as well as from other external partner organizations. At the peak of the outbreak, a total 28 surge staff were brought into the country through this mechanism.
  - Providing direct technical assistance to the ministry of health through coordinated field visits to assess and guide response.
  - Paying salaries and allowances for 389 health workers and community level volunteers in cholera response who include Medical Doctors, Clinical Officers, Public Health Nurses, Registered Nurses, Environmental Health Professionals, and community-based volunteers.
  - Providing 17 field operational vehicles and 7 ambulances for enhanced patient transfer to treatment centres
  - Procuring and donating to government response supplies that include: 216 cholera beds; Cholera test kits; Chlorine for water treatment; Assorted IPC material and equipment; Assorted PPEs for cholera management; Medicines and medical supplies for patient care and Oral rehydration solutions, among others.
  - Facilitating and supporting holding of a cholera Intra-Action Review that explored the experience in response and identified actions to improve the current cholera response as well as response to cholera and other public health emergencies in future.
  - Supporting integration of cholera response into drought response plan
  - Mobilizing resources to support cholera response.
  - Working with WHO, UNICEF supported the Lusaka district health office to train 42 supervisors and 386 community-based volunteers (CBVs) who have been deployed to 91 Oral Rehydration Solution Corners (ORCs) in the various hotspot sub districts of Lusaka.
  - UNICEF has provided funds to Copperbelt, Central and Southern Provinces to extend treatment at community level.
  - WHO in collaboration with UNICEF supported Oral Cholera Vaccine (OCV) campaigns to complete the first phase in high-burden areas reaching 99% (1,870,375/1,888,112) of the target population. Zambia has been approved to receive additional 2,246,140 million OCV doses with support from the International Coordinating Group (ICG)."



- The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) supported the Labor ward at Levy Mwanawasa Hospital Cholera Centre with Midwives to ensure continued maternal and neonatal health services to pregnant women affected with cholera. Since the cholera treatment centre was opened in December 2023, over 21 deliveries have been recorded with no maternal deaths recorded. In the absence of women requiring maternal and neonatal care, the midwives provided care in the general admission wards at the facility. Further, UNFPA is procuring medical equipment and supplies such as maternity equipment (delivery beds, delivery packs etc) and Infection Prevention Control materials for selected Cholera treatment centres.



## WASH

- UNICEF collaborated with cluster members to systematically gather information on water sources. The agency distributed 2,250 cholera kits to 2,250 households (11,250 individuals) in Monze district, completed the list of supplies and BoQs for 15 HCFs' maintenance in Lusaka and Southern provinces as well as completed the distribution plan for 40,000 households in Central Province to distribute 40,000 cholera kits (ECHO).

