



INFORMATION UPDATE ON DROUGHT RESPONSE BY THE UN SYSTEM

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.

Key Highlights

- EU provides €4.5m for Nutrition support to drought affected households through UNICEF.
- So far, \$24.8 million (approximately 10%) of the \$228 million UN Appeal has been funded. UN urgently call on humanitarian partners to provide the necessary funding to save lives and support those affected by the crisis.
- Data collection for the Zambia Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZVAC) in-depth analysis is ongoing and projected to be completed by mid-July. Analysis will then follow with initial results expected at the end of July 2024.
- A Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions (SMART) survey was recently conducted in drought affected areas. Findings show that if timely concrete preventive actions are not taken now, a nutrition crisis is likely to unfold in Zambia especially in Southern and Western Provinces, in addition to North- Western and Central Provinces where hunger scale and nutrient gaps are high. In six of the seven provinces surveyed, more than half of households were already experiencing moderate to severe hunger as early as May when the country is still in the harvest season.
- Rapid Qualitative Assessments (RQAs) were conducted in Southern and Western provinces and indicated that drought-affected people are engaged in negative coping mechanisms.
- OCHA provided training on the 5Ws matrix (Who does What, Where, When, and for Whom) to humanitarian partners.
- USAID intends to provide \$67 million to the drought response to enhance long-term food security and build resilience (this support is out of UN’s Flash Appeal).
- The World Bank has approved a grant of \$207.6 million as the second additional financing to support more than 1.6 million households in 84 drought-hit districts in Zambia. This is under the Scaling Up Shock Responsive Social Protection Project. The financial package is emergency cash assistance to cover the beneficiaries over a 12-month period, including 904,635 current Social Cash Transfer beneficiary households and 726,361 new ones (this support is out of UN’s Flash Appeal).



Situation Update

The 2023/24 crop forecasting survey reveals that the drought-affected Southern and Western provinces of Zambia can produce under 80,000 MT of the projected 1.5 million MT. As the lean season approaches, food insecurity in these regions worsens, necessitating an urgent integrated humanitarian response to meet immediate food needs and restore productive capacities.

A recent SMART survey highlights a potential nutrition crisis in Zambia, especially in Southern and Western provinces, followed by North-Western and Central provinces, due to high hunger scales and nutrient gaps. Over half of households in 6 of 7 surveyed provinces face moderate to severe hunger, with Western, North-Western, and Southern provinces being the most affected.





Global acute malnutrition (GAM) is low, ranging from 1.7% to 6.2%, but infant and young child feeding practices are concerning. Many children lack a minimum acceptable diet, increasing their risk of malnutrition. Exclusive breastfeeding rates are worryingly low, and cases of extreme malnutrition have been noted in Southern, Western, and Lusaka rural areas.

Over the next year, it is estimated that 51,948 children under 5 will suffer from severe malnutrition, and 276,805 will have moderate wasting (the most severe form of malnutrition), necessitating timely action to manage and prevent severe malnutrition.

Drought Response - UN Support to Government

Coordination



In response to the drought exacerbated by climate change, the Government of Zambia activated various clusters in November 2023, co-led with the UN System, to implement a Food Security Drought Response Plan. These clusters cover Agriculture and Food Security, Nutrition, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, Health, Education, Protection, Early Recovery & Resilience, Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE), Energy, Emergency Logistics, Infrastructure, and Wildlife Management.

The UN, as co-chair of the cluster groups, is committed to supporting the Zambian Government in addressing the drought situation, aiming to create a smooth transition from emergency response to development in the affected districts. Regular cluster meetings were held in June 2024.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) deployed a full-time staff member to enhance coordination efforts. The OCHA coordinator supported various activities, including Humanitarian Country Team meetings, inter-sector coordination, response monitoring using the 5Ws matrix, financial tracking of the drought response appeal, and managing the Central Emergency Response Fund for Zambia. The 5Ws Tool helps map and monitor response actions, identify gaps and overlaps, and optimize resource use.

On 27 June 2024, a Humanitarian Country Team meeting brought together all humanitarian partners to update on ongoing response efforts. OCHA also conducted training on the 5Ws matrix to ensure a swift and coordinated response.



Overall Resource Mobilization Update (Financial Tracking)

Resource mobilization for the response is a priority of the UN. So far US\$ 24.8 million has been confirmed. This is approximately 10% of the requested US\$ 228 million. The breakdown of the sources of the funding to date is below:



- US\$ 5.5 million from the UN Central Emergency Relief Fund (CERF)
- US\$ 3.5 million from Africa Risk Capacity (ARC) Premium paid (WFP)
- US\$ 325,000 to WFP from Government of Ireland
- US\$ 3.9 million from WFP Emergency funds
- US\$ 5.3 million from FAO (Emergency response and internal resources where 2.2 million are programme re-purposed)
- US\$ 250,000 from UNFPA Emergency funds
- US\$ 86,000 from UNICEF Emergency funds
- US\$ 100,000 from UNDP Crisis Bureau (Emergency)
- US\$ 50,000 from UNDP SURGE
- US\$ 1,350,000 from UNDP SCRALA Project Water and Irrigations System (reprogrammed funds)
- US\$ 4.5 million from EU to UNICEF on Nutrition (SUN Phase II)

Agriculture & Food Security

The Agriculture and Food Security Cluster, co-led by WFP and FAO, targets 2.6 million people in 41 drought-affected districts, requiring \$109.5 million. A March 2024 assessment revealed 85% of affected households rely on agriculture, with total crop losses, leading to negative coping strategies.

The Government's multifaceted response includes data collection for the Zambia Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZVAC), maize distribution by the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit (DMMU), and a Social Relief and Social Protection (SRSP) scale-up in July. The Food Reserve Agency (FRA) plans to sell 47,000 MT of subsidized maize, and the ARC insurance cash payout is set to begin in July. WFP supports the ZVAC process, maize transportation, and school feeding programs, aiming to reach over 4,000 schools and 2.5 million learners.

WFP has delivered 99% of Phase I maize (4,560.5 MT) and plans to start Phase II (7,500 MT). The organization is also providing fuel to DMMU for maize delivery. Data collection for the mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (mVAM) exercise is ongoing, with the first bulletin expected by the end of June. UNICEF and WFP support cholera kit distribution to schools.



The Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (MCDSS) and WFP are aligning targeted beneficiaries in eight districts of Western Province. Other Food Security Cluster (FSC) partners, including Norwegian Church Aid, DanChurchAid, Zambia Red Cross, CARE, and ADRA, are active in Southern Province. The FSC is updating its 5Ws Tool, with 79 projects registered, assisting in mapping response coverage.

Key achievements include joint community-based targeting in Western Province, near completion of Phase I maize delivery, and ongoing Phase II planning. Challenges include targeting issues between drought-affected and new SRSP beneficiaries, bad road conditions, and logistical obstacles.

FAO has mobilized \$6.1 million (including funds from the UN CERF) for early recovery and resilience efforts for 200,000 small-scale farmers in 30 districts. Immediate interventions target 10,200 farmers in four provinces and eight districts, providing agricultural input packs, solar irrigation kits, and pellet-making equipment. FAO's program supports livelihood and agricultural inputs, community water point rehabilitation, solar irrigation, and climate-smart agriculture. For livestock, the program enhances disease surveillance, water point rehabilitation, and provides supplementary feeding, drugs, and vaccines.



Photos from Pemba district show total crop failure due to prolonged dry spells during crucial growth stages.

Before



After



Before



After



Nutrition

The Nutrition Cluster, co-led by UNICEF, plans to implement preventive and treatment interventions in 26 districts over 12 months at a cost of \$11,607,898, targeting 1,047,571 people. Child health week, held from 24-29 June in Lusaka, Eastern, and Southern Provinces, enhanced child screening for wasting.

So far, 380,288 children in Lusaka Province have been screened, supported by UNICEF, against a target of 887,618. UNICEF has provided 1,940 cartons of Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF), enough to treat 1,940 children with severe acute malnutrition, with a goal to reach 18,000 children.

Children with Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) are receiving daily supplements of RUTF to prevent relapse into severe acute malnutrition. UNICEF has procured micronutrient powders for 23,168 children aged 6 to 23 months and multiple micronutrient supplements for 27,298 pregnant women, to be distributed soon. Districts with emergency acute food insecurity (IPC4), such as Shang’ombo, Kalabo, Senanga, Sikongo, Sioma, Zambezi, Lusaka, Rufunsa, and Lusangazi, will receive these commodities.



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)



The WASH Cluster, co-led by UNICEF, aims to assist approximately 3.5 million people in 84 affected districts across eight provinces. The focus is on those accessing therapeutic feeding in healthcare facilities and areas with depleted water tables. The response, prioritizing healthcare facilities and schools, is projected to require \$20,650,000.

As a first step to promote the productive use of surface and groundwater. A total of 681 non-functional boreholes are being rehabilitated to restore water services to affected populations. The boreholes are expected to serve about 170,250 people, based on an estimate of 250 persons per borehole. UNICEF aims to rehabilitate 413 boreholes, and World Vision is targeting 268, with 84 already completed.

The WASH sector needs additional resources to mechanize the boreholes to increase water service levels. Preparations are underway to launch activities aimed at reaching 3.5 million people with hand-washing behavior change interventions. UNICEF is partnering with an NGO to support hygiene promotion and distribute WASH hygiene kits to targeted healthcare facilities and surrounding communities. UNICEF plans to reach 1 million people out of the 3.5 million targeted by the cluster.

UNICEF is also supporting the rapid assessment of dysfunctional boreholes, which has now commenced after initial delays in receiving borehole shortlists from the districts. These assessments will be conducted in coordination with District WASH and health services.

Education

The Education sector, co-led by UNICEF, has taken significant steps to address the challenges posed by the drought. In 36 districts without a regular School Feeding Programme, 108 education district staff received training on emergency school feeding from the Ministry of Health and WFP during the week of June 3, 2024. This training equipped them with the necessary knowledge and skills to implement emergency school feeding interventions.

With support from UNICEF, the Ministry of Education (MoE) is finalizing the development of print, audio, and video content to support both in-school and remote learning. This content, developed in collaboration with the Zambia College of Distance Education (ZACODE), is being uploaded to the Learning Passport Zambia (LPZ). For schools without internet access, printed materials are being distributed. Over 4,600 learners and 1,245 teachers are accessing content via LPZ, and printed materials are reaching over 200,000 learners in affected districts.

Starting July 1, MoE is developing additional audio and video content and conducting a capacity-building workshop on continued learning and alternative education modes for 25 Provincial Education Officers (PEOs) and Senior Education Officers (SOEs). These interventions are scheduled for completion by the end of July 2024.

An Education in Emergencies (EiE) capacity-building workshop for MoE officials and cluster partners took place on June 20, 2024, with UNICEF's support, attended by about 30 participants from MoE, DMMU, and cluster members. Additionally, a rapid assessment tool has been developed to monitor school attendance and performance in real time, providing evidence on the drought's impact on learners and informing appropriate interventions.



Protection

The Protection Cluster, co-led by UNHCR, requires an estimated \$3 million to implement its response plan from April to December 2024. With UNHCR support, cluster members coordinated their participation in the OCHA's 5Ws tool presentation, which is now being populated for monthly submissions. The Cluster's Terms of Reference are being finalized and Partnership agreements for Protection CERF implementation are also being finalized.

UNHCR conducted key informant interviews in Meheba and Mayukwayukwa refugee settlements to gather preliminary protection concerns and is preparing a rapid protection risk assessment for all refugee settlement locations. This household-level assessment aims to understand the drought's negative impact and is expected to conclude within a month. Additionally, UNHCR will join the Cash Working Group to coordinate aid delivery through cash mechanisms.

Over 40 women-led organizations and protection partners of UNICEF, UNHCR, and UNFPA were trained in gender mainstreaming, disability inclusion, child protection, and GBV in emergencies. The training, led by UNICEF's regional office, addressed drought-related community issues and the role of community-based organizations in ensuring safety and well-being.

With UNICEF support, MCDSS conducted a rapid assessment in four drought-affected districts (Kalabo, Shang'ombo, Lusangazi, and Rufunsa) using proxy indicators to determine the drought's impact on school dropouts, adolescent pregnancy, child marriage, child labor, child migration, and violence against children.



Preliminary findings show increased school dropouts due to hunger, much as school feeding programs should improve attendance. Children are being pulled out of school for piecework, with more children in the streets engaging in petty crimes. There is a rise in adolescent pregnancy and migration into neighboring districts and countries, particularly in Western Province. UNICEF is supporting case management in the four IPC 4 districts to identify, assess, and refer vulnerable households to protection services and possible social protection support.

The Protection Cluster (UNHCR, UNICEF, Lifeline, and World Vision International) participated in validating the RCCE Rapid Qualitative Assessment and preparing DAC and EVAC reports. All sub-cluster members will review the Zambia Vulnerability Assessment Committee findings and participate in 5Ws training. Efforts are being made to promote national toll-free lines for reporting drought-related issues and disseminating information. Lifeline/Childline and World Vision have supported capacity building on the Children's Code Act and child marriages related to the drought. World Vision has also facilitated integrating birth registration information into the drought response plan.



To address increased GBV risks for women and girls, UNHCR with CERF funds and UNICEF and UNFPA bilaterally are supporting Lifeline Childline Zambia, the national child helpline, to provide confidential and anonymous support through toll-free lines. As of May, 282,133 calls were received, with 32,015 GBV-related.

Targeted awareness-raising efforts are underway to prevent child marriage through education on the Law of Marriage. Southern Province GAPS mentors received training from Lifeline Childline on the new minimum age of marriage and drought-related issues. UNFPA has also engaged with the Director of Public Prosecutions, Midwives Association of Zambia, and other partners to raise awareness of the new minimum age of marriage.

Health

The Health Cluster, co-led by WHO, is coordinating the drought response with the Ministry of Health (MoH). A technical working group has been established, with WHO overseeing Disease Surveillance, UNICEF managing Child Health, UNFPA handling Sexual and Reproductive Health, and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) coordinating NGOs. WHO collaborates with MoH and the Zambia National Public Health Institute (ZNPPI) to identify priority response packages and establish reporting systems using the Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response (IDSR) and the District Health Information System (DHIS2). IDSR is used for bi-weekly emergency reporting, while DHIS2 provides monthly data for program management and service provision tracking. A partner's resource mobilization meeting is scheduled for 4 July 2024.

WHO has analyzed priority diseases, noting increases in diarrheal diseases, skin diseases, and malnutrition cases in hospitals. Efforts are underway to develop a situation analysis report for the priority package and support the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit (DMMU) in the Vulnerability Assessment Committee (VAC) analysis and report compilation workshop in July 2024.

Challenges include inadequate catalytic funds for preparatory activities before illness surges and the need for improved coordination between MoH and ZNPPI within the Incident Management System (IMS). Resource mobilization is crucial for effective response planning and implementation. Additionally, contingency planning with provincial health offices will focus on district plans, response packages, and implementation strategies. Developing situation analysis reports on the priority disease package for response will enhance intervention effectiveness.



The Ministry of Health, with support from UNFPA, has launched mobile clinic outreaches to deliver essential Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) services to vulnerable communities. These services include family planning, antenatal care, and HIV testing. Mobile teams, comprising healthcare professionals and community volunteers, travel to remote areas to provide quality SRH services, promote health education, and address the specific needs of women and girls affected by the drought. The outreach with mobile clinics has begun in Monze district (Southern Province), Mambwe and Petauke districts (Eastern Province), and four constituencies in Lusaka district. With bolstered resources, the service has become more integrated, combining mobile SRH clinics with nutritional cooking demonstrations and food and cash distribution to ensure meaningful referral.

Traditional leaders in Southern Province have been oriented on the importance of continued SRH services during the drought. The orientation, conducted by the Ministry of Health, ensures that traditional leaders can guide and support their communities on SRH issues and encourage uptake of services from mobile health clinics.

UNFPA, with the Ministry of Health, YWCA, and Lifeline Childline, has been working to ensure the continuation of essential SRH services in the hardest-hit areas. The support has focused on strengthening the capacity of healthcare providers, community members, and traditional leaders to provide critical services and support to vulnerable populations.



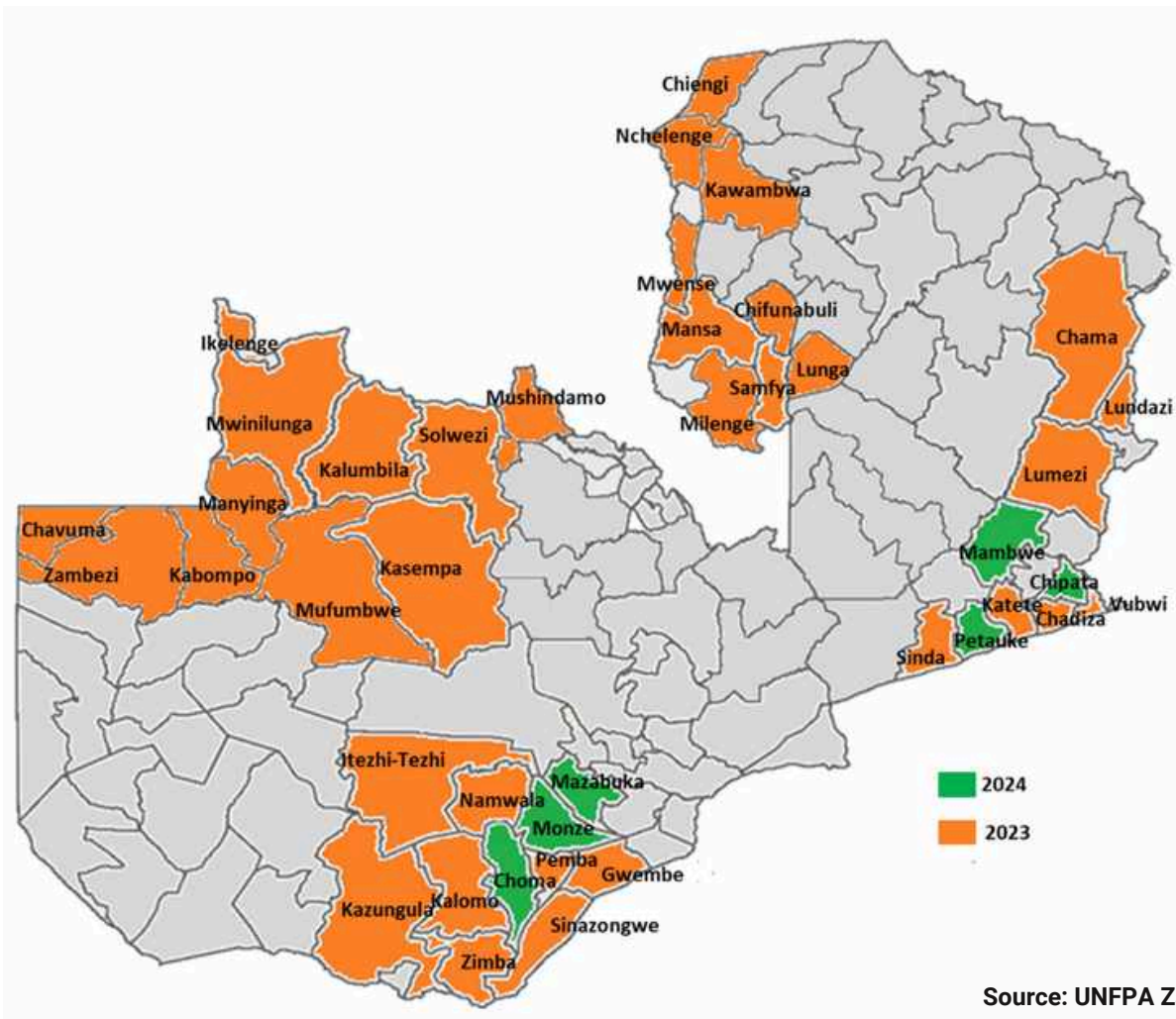
Through the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) training, UNFPA and partners have reached over 40 districts in 2023 and 2024, empowering multisectoral teams to respond to heightened risks of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and other protection concerns. Among others, the MISP training covered the following topics:

- **Climate Change Impact:** Discussed the implications of climate change, linking it to increased sexual and physical violence, food insecurity, and agricultural challenges due to droughts.
- **Cholera Awareness:** Provided insights into cholera prevention, emphasizing the importance of clean water consumption.
- **Gender in Emergencies:** Highlighted the disproportionate impact of crises on women and children and outlined strategies for gender-sensitive approaches in humanitarian settings, particularly addressing the enforcement of the amended marriage act prohibiting child marriage.
- **GBV Prevention and Response:** Detailed duty-bearer responsibilities, barriers to care for GBV survivors, and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) prevention strategies.
- **Anticipatory Action Planning:** Discussed how to identify potential risks, develop contingency plans, and pre-position resources for a swift and effective response.
- **Integrated Coordination of SRH in Disaster:** Highlighted overseeing the coordination and implementation of SRH services in humanitarian crises, assessing needs, developing response plans, mobilizing resources, ensuring comprehensive SRH services, and facilitating collaboration and advocacy to prioritize SRH in humanitarian responses.

These teams are now better equipped to ensure the continuity of SRH and GBV services, including family planning, during humanitarian crises.

Regarding the challenges, these include inadequate technical and financial resources for a complete rollout of initiatives. The Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) has often been implemented too late. Coordination between the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit (DMMU) and the Ministry of Health (MoH) in funding identified needs requires strengthening. Additionally, support services are limited beyond the referral of identified vulnerable women.

Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) training coverage



Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)



The RCCE sector Cluster is co-led by UNDP. Call centre agents have been trained and placed at the DMMU call centre. The cluster is formulating key messages based on submissions from various clusters and the findings of the Drought Rapid Qualitative Assessment, which were presented to the RCCE Cluster on 21 June 2024, with similar presentations planned for other clusters.

To encourage private sector involvement in the drought response, the Public Private Dialogue Forum (PPDF) will convene a private sector engagement meeting in July 2024.

UNICEF, WFP, and ZESCO will meet to plan thematic training for call center agents. Additionally, UNDP will support the broadcasting of key drought messages on community radio stations in the five provinces where the UN-supported drought resilience SCRALA project is implemented.

To keep the public informed about Government and partner support for the drought response, the RCCE cluster is regularly featuring key personnel from participating organizations to give updates on ZNBC TV 1 during the main evening news bulletin.

Early Recovery and Resilience Building

The Early Recovery and Resilience Building Cluster is co-led by UNDP. The first meeting took place on 27 June 2024 with all UN cluster members as the lead institution from Government is awaited.

Energy

The Energy Cluster is co-led by UNDP. Activities included validation of the Energy Crisis Communication Plan that will be followed by formulation of key messages in English and local Zambian languages.





This issue is published by the United Nations System in Zambia.

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