

## CONTEXT

- Zimbabwe is susceptible to various recurrent shocks—including dry spells and localized droughts, floods, livestock diseases, and pest infestations—that hamper agricultural production and drive widespread food insecurity and other emergency needs across the country. In addition, volatile macroeconomic conditions have diminished access to food and livelihoods among urban and rural households, the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) reports.
- Currency depreciation and sharply rising food prices are diminishing household purchasing power and limiting access to sufficient food across much of Zimbabwe. In addition, atypically high global prices for agricultural inputs, including fertilizer and fuel, are likely to adversely affect agricultural production during Zimbabwe’s 2022/2023 cropping season, further increasing food prices and exacerbating food insecurity countrywide, according to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Consequently, an estimated 3.8 million people—nearly 40 percent of the country’s rural population—will likely be food-insecure during the peak of the October-to-March lean season, the annual period when food is most scarce, the 2022 Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee reports. Moreover, high levels of food insecurity are contributing to high levels of chronic malnutrition throughout the country, with nearly 24 percent of children ages five years and younger experiencing stunted growth in 2022, according to the UN World Food Program (WFP).
- Areas experiencing widespread Crisis—IPC 3—levels of acute food insecurity will continue to spread through the peak of the lean season in January 2023 and will likely be more extensive compared to the same period one year prior as a result of below-average 2021/2022 crop production and ongoing poor macroeconomic conditions, FEWS NET reports.<sup>1</sup> Crisis acute food insecurity conditions will likely be widespread across much of Manicaland, Mashonaland East, Masvingo, and Matabeleland South provinces, as well as parts of Midlands Province.
- Approximately 23,000 refugees and asylum-seekers—primarily from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mozambique—remained displaced in Zimbabwe as of September, according to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The majority of refugees are located at Tongogara refugee camp in Manicaland and remain reliant on humanitarian food assistance.



## ASSISTANCE

- USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA) works with WFP to provide emergency food assistance to vulnerable households throughout Zimbabwe during the lean season. This support includes monthly distributions of food commodities—such as cereals, pulses, and vegetable oil—to food-insecure households. With

<sup>1</sup> The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is a multi-partner initiative that developed a standardized scale to classify the severity and magnitude of food insecurity. The IPC scale, which is comparable across countries and time, ranges from Minimal—IPC 1—to Famine—IPC 5—for acute food insecurity.

USAID/BHA support, WFP is providing emergency food and nutrition assistance to more than 712,000 people—including refugees—spread across Zimbabwe during the 2022/2023 lean season. USAID/BHA enabled WFP to support income-generating activities to assist more than 89,400 people in meeting food and basic needs in 19 urban districts across Zimbabwe between April and September.

- With more than \$3 million in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 funding, USAID/BHA partner Mercy Corps is improving food access and availability among rural smallholder farmers in Manicaland and Mashonaland East. Mercy Corps agriculture activities are focused on boosting crop production through the provision of seeds and integrated pest management training, as well as mitigating household reliance on rain-fed agriculture by expanding access to irrigation systems.
- USAID/BHA continues to support early recovery, risk reduction, and resilience (ER4) programming to help local communities meet long-term food and nutrition needs in Zimbabwe. During FY 2022, USAID/BHA provided nearly \$67 million in ER4 support to nine non-governmental organization (NGO) partners who are working to mitigate the impacts of future disasters and economic shocks, while simultaneously building community resilience. Local organizations, such as Dabane Water Workshops, Environment Africa, and Nutrition Action Zimbabwe, are making important contributions to ER4 programming. For example, in August, USAID/BHA began supporting local partner Mwenezi Development Training Center (MDTC) to diversify livelihoods among vulnerable households in Masvingo’s Chiredzi District while strengthening local capacity to withstand future shocks through agricultural and water, sanitation, and hygiene programming. MDTC activities focus on improving poultry management practices, expanding farmers’ access to markets, and restoring poor households’ access to safe drinking water through water points and community-managed borehole rehabilitation.
- Since FY 2021, USAID/BHA has supported CARE to improve food security and nutrition for vulnerable communities in Manicaland and Masvingo provinces, as well as Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture (CNFA) in Matabeleland North Province. With approximately \$130 million in USAID/BHA support over a five-year period, CARE and CNFA are implementing two programs to bolster disaster preparedness and resilience; enhance nutrition and health outcomes; increase household income and improve livelihoods; and promote climate-smart agricultural practices in the provinces. For example, CNFA’s Amalima Loko program aims to increase food access and sustainable watershed management among vulnerable households across five districts in Matabeleland North, while addressing chronic malnutrition. During FY 2022, Amalima Loko’s blanket supplementary feeding program reached nearly 38,200 pregnant and lactating women and children 6–23 months with specialized nutritious foods.



USAID/BHA ER4 programming promotes sustainable livelihoods for people in Zimbabwe affected by climatic shocks, economic adversity, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Above, a Zimbabwean farmer displays crops produced from a USAID/BHA- and WFP-supported hydroponics garden in Mashonaland West Province. *Photo Credit: USAID / Justin Tyvoll*

USAID/BHA Funding in Zimbabwe <sup>2</sup>			
	Emergency	ER4	TOTAL
FY 2021	\$50,044,836	\$63,995,636	\$114,040,472
FY 2022	\$54,048,912	\$66,598,960	\$120,647,871

<sup>2</sup> Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of December 9, 2022. Totals include estimated value of food assistance and transportation costs at time of procurement; subject to change.