



UNITED NATIONS
ZAMBIA



2023

ANNUAL RESULTS REPORT

ZAMBIA

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FOREWORD

Welcome to the 2023 UN Zambia Annual Results Report. This report presents some key results of implementation of the 2023-2027 Zambia-United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) also known as the Cooperation Framework. We continued to embrace UN Reform and sought to focus on results and less on processes.

The UN in Zambia has through its 23 Resident and Non-Resident Agencies, Funds and Programmes been busy supporting various interventions across the four pillars of our Cooperation Framework namely Prosperity, People, Peace and Planet. In doing so, we have fully embraced Partnerships as the fifth and cross cutting pillar that aids the means of implementation, that includes resource mobilization.

In completing 2023 as the first year of our new cycle, we made considerable progress amid certain challenges. We learnt key lessons and came out even stronger to push for an even more impactful 2024. Our successes were made possible through the strong partnerships with the Government, Civil Society, Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, among other groups with the generous support of our donors and cooperating partners.

Hand in hand with the Government, we recorded achievements in health, agriculture, climate change, gender equality, youth empowerment and other key areas. Working together and delivering as one UN family, we leveraged the strengths of each agency while also working together through joint programmes and collaborations.

As we get into 2024, we aim to build on where we scored high and deliver even better results in support of Zambia's priorities. The UN in Zambia, together with its Partners, proved that together we can achieve much.

Beatrice M. Mutali

Resident Coordinator of the UN System in Zambia



UNITED NATIONS TEAM IN ZAMBIA

The UN Country Team in Zambia (UNCT) comprises 23 Agencies, Funds and Programmes of which 12 are Resident and 11 Non-resident. Under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator, the team leads on implementation of the UNSDCF 2023-2027 that is aligned to Zambia's Eighth National Development Plan (8NDP). The team undertakes sustainable development efforts, leveraging innovative SDG financing (public, private and blended) and supporting the engagement of other actors to contribute to the country's development priorities, as well as promptly supporting response to emergencies when these arise.

Drawing on its cross-agency synergistic advantage, the UN in Zambia supports realization of Agenda 2030 in line with the country's vision to achieve a "prosperous middle-income nation by 2030" and improving people's lives, leaving no one behind.



KEY DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS OF UN ZAMBIA



ZAMBIA AT A GLANCE

Zambia is a land-locked country in Southern Africa. The country is a member of both the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). It shares borders with eight countries (Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe).



KEY FACTS

- ▶ The population of Zambia has been increasing over the years.
- ▶ The country is experiencing a large demographic shift.
- ▶ The young people account for **70%** of the population.

Economy:

Zambia has abundant natural mineral resources, which have been the main drivers of its economy. **GDP growth: 4.3%** in 2023 and **4.9%** projection for 2024; **Inflation: 13.2%** end December 2023 and **8.2%** projections for 2024.



Poverty levels:

The Country continues to face challenges, including high poverty levels, food insecurity and unemployment. Poverty increased from **54.4%** in 2015 to **60%** in 2022.



Population:

Increasing with a large demographic shift, amongst the youth, present a big challenge to the economy and is hindering on Zambia's aspirations of becoming a middle-income nation by the year 2030. The country's population stood at **19.6 million** in 2023.



Social Protection:

Great priority of the Government and within the social sectors, comprising Education, Health, Social Protection, and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH), Government allocated a total of **K59 billion** out of the national budget of **K177.9 billion**, marking an 18 percent increase in 2024 from the previous year.



1. DEVELOPMENT FOCUS

Zambia aims for robust economic growth with its Eighth National Development Plan (2022-2026), targeting a 7% annual growth rate to reduce poverty, diversify the economy, and improve living standards. Zambia is endowed with abundant natural mineral resources, including copper, cobalt, and precious stones, which have been the main drivers of its economy. The country continues to depend heavily on the mining sector which contributes around 12% of the country's GDP. Copper remains the leading contributor to the country's economic growth, accounting for around 70% of its export earnings (Annual Report 2022, Bank of Zambia).

The country's economy registered a decline in growth between 2019 and 2021, with an average growth of about 1.4%, in part due to unfavourable weather conditions that

affected the agriculture sector, among other factors. Economic challenges include recent declines in GDP due to factors like adverse weather affecting agriculture and reduced global copper demand during the pandemic. Population growth, especially in rural areas, presents demographic and economic challenges, which may hinder Zambia's goal of achieving middle-income status by 2030.

Despite efforts, poverty and inequality remain pervasive, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the debt crisis. Unemployment, especially among the young population, equally remains a challenge. However, Zambia has continued on its trajectory of political stability and peaceful transitions of power, recognized both regionally and internationally.

2. UN SUPPORT TO NATIONAL PRIORITIES THROUGH THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

2.1 OVERVIEW OF THE COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

The year 2023 was the first year of implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for 2023–2027. The UNSDCF serves as the partnership framework between the Government and the UN System to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's Agenda 2063, as well as to contribute to Zambia's Vision 2030 and its Eighth National Development Plan (8NDP) covering the period 2022–2026.

Through the work of 23 UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes in Zambia, the UN used the Cooperation Framework to provide interventions across four pillars, namely Prosperity, People, Peace, and Planet which align to the four strategic Priority Areas of the 8NDP. The plan is implemented based on the core principles of the United Nations: Leaving no One Behind, Human Rights, Gender Equality and Women's empowerment, Sustainability, Resilience and Accountability.

During the first year of the new Cooperation Framework, the UN Zambia, demonstrating its commitment with Disability Inclusion into action, has, for the first time, produced disability-friendly and accessible formats of the Cooperation Framework, including Braille, sign language, audio and easy-to-read versions. The process was from the onset done in collaboration with people living with disabilities. This was a crucial step in ensuring reliability, ownership and also in informing persons with disabilities of their equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities for contributing to sustainable development. Moreover, it also helps put the onus on policymakers and partners in developing inclusive policies and programmes.

This approach aims to enable people with disabilities to contribute meaningfully to society and live a life of dignity and equal opportunities, which in turn paves the way for a more inclusive and prosperous Zambia.



2.2 BENEFICIARY VOICES – MAKING A DIFFERENCE

ZAMBIAN SMALLHOLDER FARMERS BENEFIT FROM CLIMATE-RESILIENT FARMING

In Western Zambia, the Strengthening Climate Resilience of Agricultural Livelihoods in Agro-Ecological Regions I and II (SCRALA) project is transforming the lives of vulnerable smallholder farmers.

Implemented by the Zambian Government with funding from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and support by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), and World Food Programme (WFP), the project targets vulnerable smallholder farmers at risk of being left behind, such as women, the youth, persons with disabilities and the elderly. It aims to reach more than one million people, including transforming the lives of more than 940,000 farmers in Zambia.

Among those benefiting from the initiative is Nanswau Samisis from the village of Sabazibe in the heart of the Mulobezi District, Western Zambia. Nanswau, is a single mother of three daughters and a son and the sole provider for her family. In the past,

Nanswau struggled to make ends meet. She lacked a reliable source of income, depending primarily on small-scale farming, cultivating crops such as beans, maize, and groundnuts. Her yields were frequently impacted by climate-related factors such as drought and flash floods.

Witnessing her children go hungry and sleep in an unstable thatched-roof house became an overwhelming source of concern for her. “I would constantly worry about my children’s well-being and spend sleepless nights praying for opportunities to make a steady income so I could support them,” Nanswau said.

“When my crops were affected by drought, we did not have any harvest and ended up cutting down on meals; at times we would sleep on empty stomachs. When I did piecemeal work on other people’s farms, I would buy a 2kg bag of maize meal that would only last us a day and this meant not eating the following days,” she said.

The SCARLA project provides comprehensive support to small-scale farmers throughout the agricultural value chain, from farm to market. This encompasses agricultural planning, production guidance, and post-production assistance, along with access to



reliable weather information to enable farmers to make informed decisions, including which crops to plant and when.

Nanswau enrolled in the project’s pass-on mechanism—the model provides goats (four female and one male) to individuals who have been severely affected by climate change—especially focusing on women and persons with disabilities because they are disproportionately affected by the effects of climate change. Under the mechanism, each participant initially receives five goats and subsequently, once their herd grows to 10, they pass on five goats to the next person in line.

“I was very happy when I received five goats last year because I knew for sure this meant a better life for me and my children, so I looked after the goats so well,” Nanswau said.

“I have managed to buy roofing sheets to renovate the house for me and my children. Before, we lived in constant fear of the thatched roof falling on us, especially during the rainy season,” said Nanswau.

After her goats reproduced, she proceeded to transfer five goats to another female small-scale farmer in her village while keeping 15 goats for herself. She then sold five of them for 4,000 Zambian Kwacha.

“After selling my goats, I immediately engaged a local contractor to put a roof of iron sheets on my house and I paid him the entire amount from the sales. In a few weeks, the roofing was complete, and my family could not wait to sleep in the house,” she said.

Empowered by the income from her goat sales, Nanswau also expanded her sources of income by rearing village chickens. She now owns over 20 which she can sell one at 50 ZMW each. She also cultivates vegetables such as tomatoes, rape and Chinese cabbage and can make approximately ZMW 400 per month.

The extra income has not only improved her household’s financial stability but also allowed her to invest in essential items such as goat medications and resilient seedlings capable of withstanding the harsh effects of climate change. Apart from that, Nanswau can afford three meals a day for her family and her children’s school attendance has significantly improved leading to better results.

2.3 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

The UN works closely with multiple stakeholders in Zambia to help the country attain the SDGs, and the success depends on the ability to build strategic partnerships across different result areas. Deliberate attention has been given to the expansion of contributions to SDG achievement across Government institutions, civil society, the private sector, development partners and the UN.

▶ PROSPERITY PILLAR



UNSDCF OUTCOME

By 2027, all people including the marginalised and vulnerable groups, benefit from an inclusive, resilient and sustainable economy that provides equitable, diverse and sustainable opportunities for decent jobs, livelihoods and businesses.



8NDP STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA

Economic Transformation and Job Creation



KEY HIGHLIGHTS



2,000 young people with access to work placements and growth of job skills through the Internship, Volunteer, Apprenticeship and Graduate (IVAG) Programme under the GRZ-UN Joint Programme on Youth



The social sector budget allocations in the national budget rose from **23.7%** to **30.5%**. The Government launched a revised Decentralization Policy and increased allocation to the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) by 10 per cent, increasing resources to local communities



91 MPs capacitated in budget analysis to become advocates for improved social sector budgets in Parliament



1800 farmers capacitated in Agricultural mechanization



A local innovation, the **Village Savers app**, significantly improved the livelihoods and incomes of primarily informal cross-border traders by providing them with surety of funds when needed

The UN focus under the Prosperity Pillar is on inclusive economic transformation; improved productivity and incomes; ensuring opportunities for all; and balancing economic, social and environmental goals for sustainability.

In 2023, UN support focused on contributing to youth skills development and employment opportunities; accelerating innovations, market accessibility for all including women, refugees and others; introduction of modern agricultural practices; enhancing access to social protection by people with disabilities; and support to Government to accelerate financing for development, SDG financing and increase social focus of the national budget allocations. Another key area of support relates to key statistical surveys. In 2023, Zambia did significant progress towards data strengthening – with the UN support, the country produced its Vulnerability profile, conducted the Zambia Living Conditions Monitoring Survey (LCMS) and presented its second Voluntary National Review on the country's progress on the SDGs in the High Level Political Forum, in New York, as described in more detail in the next pages.

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

IFAD supported the Ministry of Finance and National Planning in reviewing the National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS), which became NFIS II (2024 - 2028). Through the Rural Finance Expansion Programme (RUFEP), IFAD supported 25 Financial Service Providers to develop tailored financial products for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and rural producers, including banks, Microfinance Institutions (MFIs), SACCOs, and Savings Groups.

ENHANCING YOUTH AND WOMEN OPPORTUNITIES

A total of 500 young people (48% Male: 52% Female) had increased access to work placements and the growth of job skills through the Internship, Volunteer, Apprenticeship and Graduate (IVAG) Programme under Phase One of the GRZ-UN Joint Programme on Youth supported by the UN. Of these, 32 were placed in UN agencies. Further, the Government placed an additional 1,000 young people in Government institutions. Through the programme, young people from all parts of Zambia, including people with disabilities, are integrated in various Government entities and departments, but also within the private sector and the UN system, contributing meaningfully to Zambia's social and economic development.

In another UN-led initiative, university Students from low-income backgrounds were empowered with resources for ideation, training, coaching, and developing solutions through the UniPod, an innovative platform established by UNDP at the Copperbelt University and implemented in collaboration with the National Institute for Scientific and Industrial Research in Zambia. Designed to be a dynamic physical space, through fabricating and prototyping, the UniPod facilitates the transformation of innovative ideas into viable business ventures. The UniPod seeks to drive youth innovation and entrepreneurship, contributing significantly to the SDGs.

In the same vein of supporting key populations groups, youth and women led Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) were assisted to access market opportunities in regional markets through a programme aimed at reducing trade barriers faced by informal businesses under the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

Further, the Accelerator Lab leveraged building on lessons from the Africa Borderlands Centre Cross Border Trader Experiment to cocreate and design key interventions (inclusive of digital) needed to realise an inclusive AfCFTA that benefits women and youth-led businesses, targeting MSMEs in Lusaka and Cross Border Traders operating along the Zambia-Namibia border.

Leaving no one behind, the Un also supported young



entrepreneurs with disabilities, which had increased access to opportunities and skills through facilitation and mentorship by the Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities, National Trustee for the Disabled (NTD), and Organisations for Persons with Disabilities (OPDs).

Finally, with the aim of giving young people opportunities to voice and actively participate in the society, the UN supported the successful hosting of the African Youth SDG Summit, happening for the first time in Lusaka, and helping improve awareness and knowledge among the youth about the SDGs and their role in the implementation, review and accountability process of the Global Goals. Youth participation, including in developmental processes, was also enhanced by strengthening youth networks, and including them in decision-making platforms. Zambian youth were empowered to participate in the validation of the National Youth Policy; COP28; the inaugural AfCFTA Youth Symposium to deliberate on youth inclusion in regional trade; and provincial and regional adolescent indabas.

ENHANCING ACCESS TO CREDIT FOR SMES AND CROSS-BORDER TRADERS

Conscient that localization is key for SDGs achievement, the UN supported a local innovation, the Village Savers app, which significantly improved the livelihoods and incomes of primarily informal cross-border traders by providing them with surety of funds when needed, expanded their business opportunities, and created financial stability for both business and household issues whilst facilitating linkages with other traders.

Traders, smallholder farmers, youth, and women in the informal sector increased their productivity and resilience through increased access to finance. The UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and FINCA launched a partnership to enhance access to finance to micro-, small and medium-sized loans through a Loan Portfolio Guarantee.

Support was also provided in preparation of the National Cooperatives Policy, as well as the preparation of the Supplier Development Programme by the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprise Development and the Ministry of Mines.

Through Responsible Mining Development Initiative (RMDI), the UN through UNDP supported the Ministry of Mines and Minerals Development (MMMD) in the restructuring process with the view of separating its policy function from Regulatory. The restructuring involved the formation of the Minerals Regulation Commission which will be delegated with the mandate to regulate the Mining industry in Zambia. Over 200 Artisanal and Small-Scale Miners (ASM) cooperatives formed and 160 gain mining rights and legal recognition as part of the process of the formalisation of the ASM mining sector to ensure that their contribution is integrated into the mainstream economy and improve their access to finance and technical support. This was achieved through UNDP's support to the Ministry of Mines and Minerals Development and to provide extension services to Artisanal and Small-scale miners in the formalization process.





SUPPORTING FARMERS AND AGRICULTURE MECHANIZATION

The cooperative model is seen as an effective way to improve agricultural production, value addition and mechanisation, access to finance and negotiating capabilities, and the UN has capacitated 143 cooperatives.

In particular, the UN supported capacity building of 10 cooperatives on establishment of Mechanization Service Centres through the German Agricultural Knowledge and Training Centre (AKTC), facilitated linkages between private sector and smallholder farmers for enhanced access to input, output and services markets. Partnerships for smallholder market access were enhanced through input suppliers (SeedCo, Good Nature, Synergy, Afriseed, Yara, Agrifocus, ETG) and mechanization suppliers (CAMCO, SARO Agro, Green 2000, TATA).

With the Ministry of Agriculture extension officers, the UN through FAO facilitated capacity building of 1800 farmers in Agricultural mechanization.

In the spirit of leaving no one behind, the support was also extended to 200 refugee farmers to access farming inputs under the Farmer Input Support Programme (FSIP). The farmers also received agricultural extension services to implement good agricultural practices to improve their yields.

Inclusion of refugee farmers in agriculture value chains through market linkages was another priority. Four market days were organised bringing together farmers and private sector players.

In the light of limited employment opportunities for refugees, small scale businesses are an avenue for income generation outside employment and agriculture. Business grants to 90 refugees to start and/or expand their businesses were provided.

The UN also enabled the development of strategies for climate-adaptive economic growth and development to better protect and build resilience against climate crises in Zambia.

INCREASING SOCIAL SECTOR FINANCING AND DECENTRALIZATION

Through strong advocacy efforts from the UN and partners, the social sector budget allocations in the national budget rose from 23.7% to 30.5%. The Government launched a revised Decentralization Policy and increased allocation to the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) by 10 per cent, demonstrating its commitment to fiscal decentralization and provision of adequate resources to local communities.

For this outcome, several complementary steps were taken, including Capacitation of 91 MPs in advocating for improved social sector budgets in Parliament and the preparation and dissemination of budget analysis. The budget diagnostics achieved significant milestones, producing a total of 14 budget briefs. These included a consolidated social sector brief, eight sector-specific briefs covering education, social protection, health, Early Childhood Development (ECD), disability, nutrition, child protection, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH). Additionally, five local authority budget briefs were developed, with four launched by the Minister of

Local Government and Rural Development. UNICEF also supported the Nutrition Expenditure Review and the development of a social workforce investment case to strengthen government expenditures on the respective social sectors. The utilisation of budget diagnostics improved and stirred dialogues between social sector ministries and the Ministry of Finance.

The UN further supported Members of Parliament to understand and address complex developmental issues through platforms, including the Parliamentary Youth Caucus, the Parliamentary Caucus on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and the Parliamentary Caucus on Food Systems and Nutrition. MPs were also trained in sector budget analysis in order to enhance accountability in the Public Sector.

The capacity of the Government to raise and allocate resources equitably was equally built through the UN's support to decentralization, notably through support to the Ministry of Finance to review the Intergovernmental Fiscal Architecture (IFA); support to local authorities to strengthen their Own-Source-Revenue (OSR) capacity to increase available resources; the formulation of a Development Financing Assessment (DFA) to identify gaps in SDG financing at the local level, and the bolstering of citizens' involvement in planning and budgeting to improve government process accountability.

The UN supported the Ministry of Finance to undertake a Rapid Integration Assessment (RIA) and ensure integration of the SDGs into national and subnational planning frameworks.

Because all society actors should have a say in development issues and decisions, through collaboration with Civil Society organisations, a scorecard mechanism engaged community members in identifying development priorities, which were shared with the Government and contributed to various initiatives including CDF implementation.

Another major step towards increasing the financing for development was done with support from the UN SDG Fund. In partnership with the Government, cooperating partners and the private sector, the UN Zambia supported elaboration of an Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) for both the 8NDP and the SDGs to enhance financing for development.

ECA and UNCTAD supported capacity building of

government officials, private sector and civil society in the area of financing for development under the aegis of the Ministry of Finance and National Planning and raised awareness on the significance of impact investing and corporate sustainability reporting to mobilize the engagement of the private sector in Zambia and across the region in delivering on SDGs.

STRENGTHENING EVIDENCE-BASED DEVELOPMENT

In 2023, significant milestones were achieved with the introduction of the long-awaited demographic and national surveys. The initial Census of Housing and Population in 2022 furnished updated population statistics, complemented in 2023 by the Living Conditions and Monitoring Survey (LCMS), which enabled the country to generate substantial evidence for policy planning, and M&E, especially on the welfare of the people and assessing progress towards the attainment of both national and SDG targets. Furthermore, the completion of the Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (MODA) updated child poverty figures.

Zambia received also technical support for preparations of the Vulnerability Profile Report, which equally provided important refreshed evidence in terms of poverty metrics and was critical towards preparing for the country's graduation process in the context of the Least Developed Country (LDC) status.

Not least important, with UN support, the Zambian Government prepared and presented its second Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report, highlighting how implementation of the SDGs had been impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic bringing the most disruption to the economy while also inspiring hope.

In order to conduct these important statistical exercises, along the year statisticians under the Zambia Statistics Agency (ZAMSTATS) were trained to improve the quality of data collection and analysis to meet international guidelines and standards and produce rich data for Zambia. In the same vein, capacities of national and sub-national levels were strengthened to generate data and statistics on poverty and living conditions to ensure better social protection, budget allocations and programming that targets the needs of the most marginalized and vulnerable people and geographic locations in Zambia.

THE DRC-ZAMBIA BATTERY INITIATIVE

With support from ECA, the Zambian and Congolese Governments signed an agreement in March 2023 in Kinshasa to develop a special economic zone (SEZ) for the production of battery precursors, batteries, electric vehicles and renewable energies. The two countries host key battery minerals including manganese, cobalt, lithium, graphite, nickel and copper.

As part of the process of sensitization on project activities and raising awareness on opportunities in the project in the two countries, ECA and Afreximbank organized, in early October, under the theme "Needs and financing mechanisms of the Special Economic Zone for Battery Electric Vehicles in the Republic of Zambia", a forum for the Zambian private sector and entrepreneurs, the Zambian financial sector, development partners, institutional investors and negotiators to discuss the opportunities and identify entry points for the active participation on specific nodes of the battery value chain. ECA and Afreximbank continue to support technical work on the initiative and will support reviews of the pre-feasibility study.



SUPPORTING INDUSTRIAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT IN ZAMBIA

The UN provided technical support towards the review of the implementation of Zambia's National Industrial Policy (2018–2027). The process included a review of the first five years of the implementation of the policy (2018 to 2022) and the development of an implementation plan for the remaining five years (2023–2027).

CLIMATE SENSITIVE INTERVENTIONS

IFAD collaborated with the Ministry of Green Economy and Environment and the Ministry of Finance and National Planning to draft a \$10 million project proposal for the adaptation fund to aid in implementing Zambia's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) targets, primarily by increasing climate adaptation funding access for over 50,000 households.

Under the IFAD-funded Enhanced Smallholder Livestock Investment Programme (E-SLIP), IFAD supported the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock in implementing climate-sensitive interventions including developing plans and oversowing rangelands with legumes and forages and introducing Livestock Weather Index Insurance for 5,000 farmers. Additionally, IFAD facilitated livestock distribution to vulnerable households and provided training in climate-smart livestock production.

1,020 households passed on livestock to other beneficiaries, highlighting the program's effectiveness as a safety net during emergencies. Moreover, nearly 193 hectares of various forage seeds were established and maintained by seed growers and breeding centers, serving as a reliable source of seedlings for restoring rangelands.

SUCCESS STORY

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION TO IMPROVE GOVERNANCE AND SERVICES

Pemba Town Council in Zambia's Southern Province has embarked on an ambitious project aimed at digitizing its information management systems to enhance governance and service delivery. Established in 2013, the local authority has traditionally relied on paper-based records and manual processes for its operations, resulting in cumbersome access to information for citizens. Even basic inquiries necessitated physical visits to council offices, hindering efficient service delivery.

To overcome these challenges, the council has initiated a digitization campaign with support from the International Centre for Local Democracy (ICLD) and the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF). The primary objective is to grant citizens access to information and services through digital platforms. This initiative has already yielded benefits for council employees, residents, marginalized communities, schools, cooperatives, and community organizations.

Council authorities anticipate that digitization will revolutionize citizen access, enabling them to remotely retrieve details regarding budgets, projects, tender information, payments, application statuses, and more via their phones or computers. This enhanced accessibility is expected to significantly enhance convenience, inclusivity, and satisfaction.

The council has taken concrete steps, including the development of a web-based portal for managing information and applications related to the Constituency Development Fund (CDF). This portal enables real-time access to CDF details for citizens and oversight bodies. Similar online platforms and databases are being developed for other services provided by the local authority.

Crucial hardware, such as computers, servers, and internet connectivity, has been installed, and council staff are undergoing training to leverage technology for improved productivity and customer service. Additionally, the digitization of existing paper records is underway, representing a pivotal aspect of Pemba Town Council's modernization agenda. The local authority aspires to serve as a model for harnessing technology to enhance governance and has actively engaged stakeholders, including council leaders, the CDF committee, and marginalized groups, to garner support for the initiative.

The project is poised to have a profound impact on enhancing transparency, accountability, participation, and trust between local authorities and citizens. Furthermore, by offering efficient services, it aims to position Pemba district as an attractive investment destination. This success is anticipated to inspire similar initiatives across other Zambian districts.



Under the United Nations Joint Programme on Social Protection-II, capacity-building workshops and training sessions were conducted in the Eastern and Western provinces, Chiefs and traditional leaders were equipped with the knowledge and tools to promote disability inclusion within their communities. They learned about the rights and needs of persons with disabilities, as well as practical ways to ensure their full participation and inclusion in societal activities.

PEOPLE PILLAR



UNSDCF OUTCOME
By 2027, all people in Zambia, including marginalised and vulnerable groups, have equitable access to and utilisation of quality, inclusive and gender- and shock-responsive universal social services

8NDP STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA
Human and Social Development



KEY HIGHLIGHTS



2.1 million vulnerable and food-insecure school children nationwide had access to nutritious meals through school-feeding programmes in 2023, an increase compared to 1.9 million in 2022



1.1 million vulnerable households benefitted from social cash transfers and alternative livelihoods to improve wellbeing and alleviate poverty, through the UN Joint Programme on Social Protection



120 Social Cash Transfer beneficiaries living with disabilities were trained in financial literacy and entrepreneurship



2,000 Persons with Disabilities (PWD) covered by the National Health Insurance Management Authority (NHIMA), who will receive medical care including assistive devices for 3 years as part of the pilot on extension of health insurance services to beneficiaries of the social cash transfer programme.



80,000 primary school children enrolled in a remedial learning programme in all 10 provinces of Zambia



A landmark legislation towards ending child marriages (the Marriage (Amendment) Act No.13 of 2023) was passed, setting 18 years as the legal age for all marriages including those under customary law



586 GBV survivors and those at risk of GBV received entrepreneurship skills trainings and enterprise start-up kits



64 Fistula survivors successfully operated in Luapula, North-Western and Western Provinces



6,700 young learners with enhanced knowledge on Reproductive Health to reduce teenage pregnancies and early child marriage, as well as empower young people to make informed decisions

Under the People Pillar, the UN works to improve the well-being of Zambians by addressing and integrating service provision for health, education and skills with a focus on the present and the future. In addition to strengthening systems, social protection and human capabilities, the UN supports critical transformations aimed at fostering the resilience of people and systems to the effects of climate change and other crises, including public health emergencies.

In 2023, the UN supported millions of households through social cash transfers, millions of vulnerable children enhancing their nutrition daily intake, and provide assistance and/or opportunities for the most left behind, including people with disabilities, women victims of GBV, fistula survivors, refugees and migrants, particularly vulnerable to HIV, health and education services accessibility barriers, unemployment and climate crisis shocks. Read more in the coming pages.



INVESTING IN SOCIAL PROTECTION TO REDUCE VULNERABILITIES

Under the leadership of MCDSS, the UN implements its flagship programme on social protection, implemented by UNICEF, ILO, WFP and UNDP. The Joint Programme is considered one of the biggest and more robust in Africa, with Zambia being seen as a model for other countries willing to expand and strengthening their social protection systems. In 2023, the programme was able to reach important milestones. Over 1.1 million vulnerable households benefitted from social cash transfers and alternative livelihoods to improve wellbeing and alleviate poverty, and increase access to decent jobs, income and entrepreneurship opportunities. In 2023, the Social Cash Transfer (SCT) programme was expanded with coverage at 1,374,469 households nationally, and payment cycles remain regular. However, heightened cost of living eroded the value of the SCT.

Furthermore, through multisectoral action to reduce stunting, 13,000 beneficiaries received nutrition and gender-sensitive social protection in the form of regular cash transfers.

The UN also supported the implementation and payments to 12,913 beneficiaries and implementation of social and behaviour change communications under

the gender and nutrition sensitive 1000 Days in the Social Cash Transfer (SCT) pilot in four districts, with UN subsequently leading advocacy with Government and cooperating partners and providing evidence for the planned increase of the SCT transfer value.

Reaching the most vulnerable is naturally a cornerstone of this programme. In partnership with the National Trust Fund for Persons with Disabilities (UNJPSP) and the UN, 120 Social Cash Transfer beneficiaries were trained in financial literacy and entrepreneurship to enable and empower persons with disabilities to venture into financial inclusion, literacy, entrepreneurship, and improvements to enterprises that already exist. Also, 130 Organizations representing People with Disabilities (OPDs) were trained to fully participate in national development processes (each OPD was represented by 1 to 2 members with 46 per cent of all the trainees being women).

In ensuring health coverage that leaves no one behind, the UN supported the National Health Insurance Management Authority (NHIMA) to extend health services to 2,000 Persons with Disabilities (PWD) who will receive medical care including assistive devices for 3 years as part of the pilot on extension of health insurance services to beneficiaries of the social cash transfer which will run up to 2026.

Through UNDP, UN provided support to MCDSS and

Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities (ZAPD) to successfully draft and finalise the new ZAPD Strategic Plan for the period 2023 – 2026 after extensive consultations with key stakeholders in six provinces. Further, support to MCDSS enabled the development of the Food and Security Information System to enhance data and to better deliver on social protection programmes.

The UN provided technical and financial assistance to MCDSS, leading to the development of the Cash Plus Roll-out Strategy, which served as a framework guiding the implementation and outlining effective approaches for the roll-out of the Cash Plus Agenda adopted by the Government. It has been scaled up to 81 districts for Supporting Women's Livelihood and 65 districts for Keeping Girls in School.

The UN also financially supported the MCDSS and other Cluster line Ministries in developing and

disseminating the Single Window Implementation Guidelines. The guidelines were disseminated in 16 Single Window Implementing Districts with the aim to enhance coordination amongst Social Protection Service Providers and promote access to various Social Protection Services within communities (at district and sub-district levels, thereby reducing the distance travelled to access these services). Through WFP, the UN supported the digitization of the Single Window Initiative as a single referral mechanism for the social protection sector.

Another key area of intervention of this joint programme is on the policy front. Under the Joint Programme on Social Protection, the UN, in particular through UNICEF and ILO, supported the MCDSS in the drafting of the new National Social Protection Policy. The new national framework is expected to guide the country's social protection policy for the next decade.





EDUCATION: THE KEY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Education: the key for sustainable development

Children and learners in Zambian schools have struggled to receive quality education and build a solid foundation for academic excellence, particularly with disruptions from COVID-19, but also during cholera outbreaks or climate change crisis such as floods. The UN in Zambia through UNICEF supported the attainment of basic literacy and numeracy skills of around 80,000 primary school children through a remedial learning programme known as Catch-up, which has been rolled out in all 10 provinces of Zambia.

17,000 learners had access to 3,000 pieces of content from Early Childhood Education to primary, secondary, and adult learning, as well as skills development through the Digital Learning Passport platform.

The UN continued to support capacity building of national and sub-national stakeholders in increasing retention and completion of secondary education. The

implementation of the Learning Passport Zambia (LPZ) progressed with all education officers (10 male, 4 female) in 10 provinces sensitized on the intervention. The MoE was also supported with development of e-learning content including learning materials for Learners with Special Education Needs and Disabilities.

The National Early Childhood Development (ECD) Policy was aligned with the latest education standards and the curriculum expanded for seven local languages. Further, to supplement the Government's investments in teachers and school infrastructure, the UN supported teacher policy and institution of social dialogues was expanded to improve the quality of teachers.

The multisectoral ECD policy framework was completed while officers at national, subnational and community levels were trained to strengthen their provision of community based integrated ECD services.

In particular through the CapED programme in partnership with the Ministry of Education (MoE) UNESCO and its partners enhanced the capacity of 509 teachers (216 females and 293 males) in Gender

Responsive Pedagogy (GRP), social dialogue and standards of practice. As a result, 35,630 learners across Early Childhood Education (ECE), primary and secondary levels indirectly benefited from improved educational services.

At the same time, the most vulnerable and food-insecure children nationwide had increased access to nutritious meals through school-feeding programmes that helped them attain concentration and improve academic performance. Through support to the Ministry of Education, 2.1 million school children received school meals in 2023 compared to 1.9 million in 2022. Further, in aid of this intervention, the UN extended support to the local communities, by engaging smallholder farmers as commodity suppliers of locally produced foods to schools.

With the aim of increasing the accountability of this programme, WFP supported the maintenance and stabilization of the Food Tracking System as an accountability and decision-making tool for the Ministry of Education to effectively manage the Home-Grown School Meals (HGSM) programme while training was also provided Government officers to manage the Food Tracking System as a tool for planning, procurement and reporting of the HGSM programme.

In the communications front, the UN supported Zambian caregivers to adequately provide nurturing care to their children, through UNICEF's Early Childhood Development Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) advocacy campaign focusing on the five key behaviours for the optimal development of children.

Another area of concern is the high level of school dropouts, in particular by young girls due to early pregnancies or forced marriages. The UN through UNESCO supported the validation of the Ministry of Education Revised Re-entry Policy guidelines for the prevention and management of teenage pregnancies among school-going learners. The Re-Entry Policy guidelines are intended to help in the prevention and management of teenage pregnancies among school going learners and promote inclusivity and address the needs of age and disabilities.

The UN also continued to support the Government of Zambia to implement the Life Skills & Health Education

(LSHE) - formerly Comprehensive Sexuality Education - in schools with a particular focus on School Related Gender Based Violence (SRGBV) using the Connect with Respect Tool with UNESCO support. The new Life Skills and Health Education (LSHE) curriculum, adopted by decision makers through Members of Parliament aims at bringing culturally sensitive and age-appropriate comprehensive reproductive health rights to young learners in schools.

The piloted LSHE curriculum reached 6,700 young learners and is expected to enhance knowledge on Reproductive Health and Rights (RHR) to reduce teenage pregnancies and early child marriage, as well as empower young people to make informed decisions about their sexual health and well-being.

In the same area, UNESCO, UNFPA and UNAIDS, with support from the Swedish cooperation - SIDA, supported the development of the Advocacy Strategy for Members of Parliament-2023-2027-Advancing Life Skills and Health Education & Sexual Reproductive Health in Zambia. The Advocacy Strategy is aimed at making MPs to be champions of LSHE and SRH at both local and national levels.

In addition, UNESCO helped to build the capacity of Education Management Information System (EMIS) officers in ensuring efficient and timely data collection, processing and management to meet the current information needs of an expanding education system.



STRENGTHENING ZAMBIA'S PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM

With the support of the UN, in Zambia responded to concurrent outbreaks of Cholera, Polio, Measles and Anthrax. 13 districts reported Cholera outbreaks, and the cholera outbreak that started in October 2023 and prolonged until 2024 was the worst ever in decades, with unprecedented number of cases and deaths, and an overall fatality rate of around 4 percent. The UN, through WHO and UNICEF, were in the forefront of the response supporting MoU and were able to rapidly deploy 1.7 million oral cholera vaccines to contain the outbreak. Zambia National Public Health Institute rolled out a sub-national emergency preparedness action plan to improve disease outbreak investigations and management for measles, polio and COVID-19. Accordingly, UNICEF provided support to the Zambian Government to conduct response campaigns to polio and measles in priority districts.

Nonetheless, Zambia sustained essential health services amidst concurrent public health emergencies of polio, measles, cholera and anthrax outbreaks. As of 31 October 2023, nationally, 72 per cent of all districts achieved 80 per cent Penta-3 coverage; 56.3 per cent women delivered with skilled health personnel; 60.1 percent mothers and newborns received postnatal care within 48 hours; 78 percent of HIV positive pregnant women initiated Anti-Retroviral Treatment (ART), and 81,640 adolescents accessed adolescent-friendly health services.

Zambia achieved 86 per cent full coverage of COVID-19 vaccination among the eligible population, and 6.4 million children below 8 years received novel Oral Polio Vaccine Type-2 (nOPV2). The cold chain footprint across the country was also improved. The revitalisation of the cold chain system was done with the EVAM Comprehensive Improvement Plan.

The UN, through UNICEF, further provided support to the Government to conduct an HPV vaccination and health education campaign in schools, health facilities and community outreach centres across the country, reaching over 960,000 girls aged 9 to 14 years representing a national coverage rate of 61%.

Together, UNICEF and UNOPS completed delivery of a Duplex Medical PSA Oxygen Plant at Kitwe Teaching Hospital for the Copperbelt Province. With capacity

to produce 120 cylinders per day, the new oxygen plant it is expected to cut the cost of oxygen supplied commercially to the MoH institutions across the province and beyond, as well as provide a quick and reliable source in emergencies. The project covered the design, construction of building and associated infrastructure, as well as the procurement, installation, testing, commission for operation and operator trainings, to guarantee sustainability.

For the first time ever, Zambia developed a training package for the management of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) at primary health care level and implemented it in 5 districts, whilst establishing a national technical working group on NCDs.

Along the year, WHO and UNICEF provided technical and financial support, medicines, and medical supplies to the Ministry of Health.

Mothers and newborns across five districts and neighbouring regions had increased access to quality maternal and newborn health care services through UN support to the Government to strengthen the quality and coverage of Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn and Child Health interventions, including through Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission and Paediatric HIV; the establishment of seven Centres of Excellence (CoEs); the training of 30 Trainers of trainees in community-based newborn care; the provision of over 95 percent of supplies for Neonatal Intensive Care and Kangaroo Mother Care units; and the training of medical staff in the use of equipment as well as the provision of all lifesaving critical medicines for newborn units.

Pregnant women had increased access to quality care in the management of post-partum haemorrhage (PPH) through the UN's support to the Government to procure 100 non-pneumatic anti-shock garments for PPH management and the development of SOPs on prevention and management of PPH. Also with support from UNFPA, about 64 fistula survivors were successfully operated, covering Luapula, North-Western and Western Provinces.

58 registered nurses received bursaries to be trained as Midwives while another 320 health care workers had their skills strengthened in Comprehensive Abortion Care, Emergency Obstetric and New-born Care (EmONC) and Family Planning (long-acting reversible contraception).

Still in the framework of the efforts to reduce maternal deaths, 90 individuals from multisectoral teams were trained in the Minimum Initial Service Plan to provide analytical reporting of Maternal and Perinatal Death Surveillance and Response.

Additionally, Zambian children received better quality care in the management of diarrhoea and pneumonia at Zambia's largest, tertiary hospital and across five first-level hospitals.

In the health system strengthening front, the UN supported the development of multiple key strategies and policies to enhance Zambia's public health system, emergency preparedness and response. These include:

- National Health Strategic Plan (NHSP, 2022-2026) of Zambia, which is aligned with the Vision 2030, the 8th NDP, and other regional and global development frameworks and policies, finalized.
- Costed Plan to rollout a Package of Essential Non-Communicable Disease interventions at PHC level in five districts developed.
- National Antimicrobial Resistance Coordination Strategy developed.

- COVID-19 Vaccination Guidelines now integrated into Primary Health Care.
- Ending Preventable Maternal Mortality and Every Newborn Action Plan updated 2023-2035 for Zambia approved.
- Polio Laboratory Surveillance Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) after introduction of nOPV2 vaccine reviewed.
- National HIV/AIDS Strategic Framework (2023-27) adopted.
- Zambia HIV Prevention Roadmap (2023-27) developed.
- HIV and Workplace Wellness Guidelines for the Informal Economy developed and adopted.
- Advocacy Strategy for the Parliamentary Caucus on SRHR launched.
- National Immunisation Strategy (2022-2026) aligned to National Health Strategic Plan (NHSP) 2022-2026;
- Measles Outbreak Response Immunisation Plan adopted.
- National Community Health Strategy 2022-2026 and Community Health Services Package (CHSP) developed.
- National Adolescent Health Strategic Plan 2022-2026 rolled out.



IMPROVED ACCESS TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS (RHR)

The UN in Zambia continued to invest in reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health, including in refugee settlements, clinics, places of learning, and in communities.

Capacity of national actors was strengthened across reproductive health commodities, family planning protocols, newborn care services and related services through capacity building and investment in community health workers, medical personnel, Government institutions and stakeholders to ensure that minimum standards are met for persons seeking RHR services.

Substantial investments in community-level engagement improved service delivery and referral pathway systems. Multiple mentorship programmes and community-based volunteers and health workers trainings enabled them to better deliver information and advice on RHR, GBV and human rights, and as a result empowering community members with knowledge and outreach to make informed choices about education, health and rights.

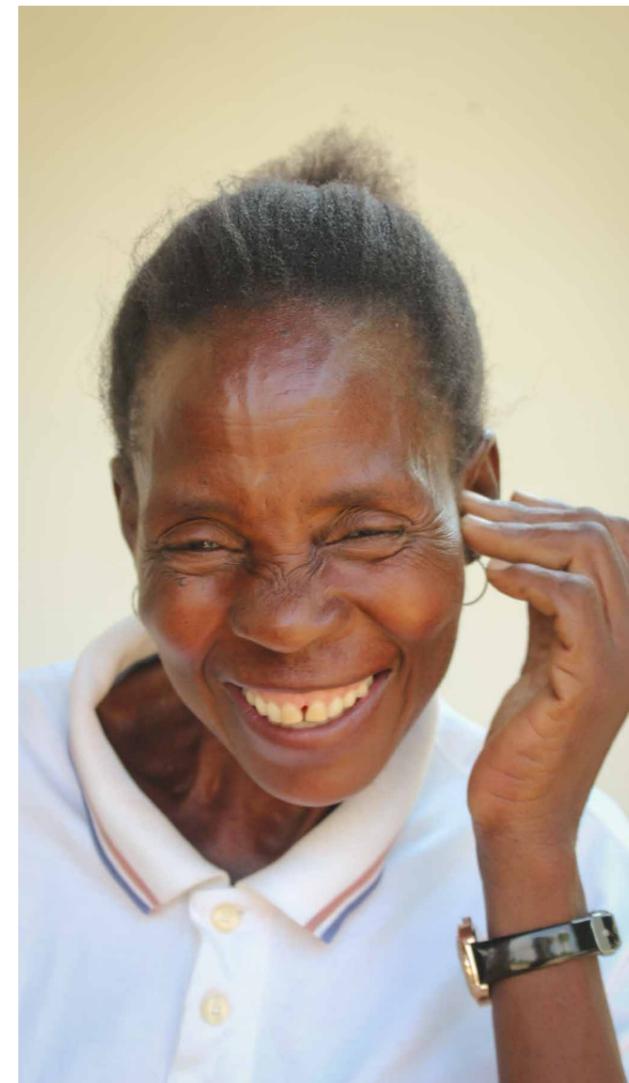
Strengthening the youth-friendly spaces at healthcare facilities across the country and the implementation of differentiated service delivery models for pregnant and breastfeeding Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) yielded promising results, including high service utilization rates for HIV testing, ART coverage and retention in care.

School health facilities now include a trusted standard package of youth-friendly health services for students, along with referral mechanisms to specialist care and support services as needed. Young people in universities and colleges across 11 higher education institutions were deliberately targeted with GBV and RHR sensitisation. Trained student-led peer mentors, HIV and STI testing, counselling and student support services, staff capacity building were other complementary strategies used to improve student wellbeing and service uptake.

Adolescents across five districts benefited from the launch and implementation of the National Adolescent Health Strategic Plan 2022-2026, which focuses on five strategic priorities: sexual and reproductive health; HIV/AIDS and other STIs; sexual and gender-based violence; non communicable

disease such as nutrition and mental health related conditions; alcohol, tobacco and drug use. The plan also contemplates adolescents with special needs including those with disabilities.

Furthermore, Over 1.5 million condoms were distributed through the UN-supported national CONDOMIZE! Campaigns at strategic locations including special engagements, major events and traditional ceremonies.



ENDING HIV/AIDS BY 2030

Of the estimated 1.3 million people living with HIV (PLHIV) in 2023, 1,257,623 people accessed antiretroviral therapy services (including 41,256 children aged 0-14), with 273,644 patients initiated on pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). Zambia continues to record high new HIV infections at 27,000 per year, and AGYW and Key Population groups are disproportionately vulnerable. Zambia's HIV response is multi-sectoral, with 11 UN agencies working together under the umbrella of the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS, to strengthen and support Government, civil society and cooperating partners to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030.

Successful advocacy and negotiation amongst stakeholders, including the UN under UNAIDS leadership, resulted in Zambia becoming one of five priority countries to roll out injectable PrEP medication Cabotegravir, which will be piloted in early 2024

to prevent new HIV infections amongst the most vulnerable and key populations in four priority locations. The Ministry of Health was supported to develop and roll out a paediatric HIV data dashboard in five provinces, supporting real time monitoring and use of data for action towards improving quality and coverage of paediatric HIV services.

Knowledge and capacity building has been a critical component of the UN's work, from the grassroot levels with community health workers and key population members, and all the way up to Parliamentary Caucuses and line ministries. Successful interventions for reaching vulnerable groups included the support to CSE and anti-AIDS clubs for out-of-school youths, targeted dialogues with gatekeepers, traditional leaders, community leaders, religious leaders and community members, campaigns to reduce adolescent pregnancies and condom distribution.

Along 2023, UN work to fight HIV/AIDS also included support to conduct the impact assessment on HIV self-testing in five Provinces; technical support to the 2023 National HIV Commodities Quantification; and a prison Assessment to complement existing information in the country about HIV, AIDS, STI, Hepatitis B and C and TB among prisoners.

Acknowledging that ending HIV/AIDS entails a multisectoral approach, UN interventions tackled the transport and labour sectors. IOM has identified the transport sector as a key priority area for intervention, given the increased vulnerability of transport workers to HIV infection due to their mobility and long-distance travel. Enhanced HIV/AIDS services in both the transport sector and at border communities are a priority area for intervention due to increased vulnerability to HIV infection of mobile populations.

In the world of work, the UN strengthened HIV prevention access, referral systems to treatment and care, distributed HIV self-testing kits in workplaces, provided entrepreneurship training to PLHIV and supported partners to achieve meaningful participation in the informal economy, including information on legal and policy frameworks to ensure non-discrimination or stigmatisation of PLHIV. The UN has supported the development of a private sector engagement strategy in partnership with its social partners and the National AIDS Council, which will foster well-coordinated participation from the private sector in the national HIV response by ensuring equality of opportunities and treatment for PLHIV.

The UN in Zambia also supported the development of an HIV Sustainability Roadmap to strengthen domestic resourcing for the national HIV response, which is currently 93% funded by external donors. Additional funds were mobilised through the Swedish-funded joint UN 2gether4SRHR initiative which will expand youth-led community models for integrated SRH, HIV and GBV services in Monze and Katete districts.

A key step towards domestic resourcing for the national HIV response is high level political engagement. At the African Union mid-year summit, which took place in Lusaka, the President of the Republic of Zambia H.E. Hakainde Hichilema launched the Education Plus initiative, a new joint UN programme which empowers adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) in sub-Saharan Africa to curb high HIV infections.

COMBATING MALNUTRITION

Scale Up Nutrition (SUN II) is a UN flagship joint programme, implemented UNICEF, FAO, WFP and WHO, through partner non-governmental organisations (NGOs) supported the government to implement Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN-II) activities.

The UN partners worked in collaboration with the sectors and the National Food Nutrition Commission (NFNC) to strengthen implementation of key sustainability actions to ensure continuity of activities post donor funding. The SUN-II Programme is jointly funded by FCDO, SIDA, German Cooperation implemented by KfW, Irish Aid and the EU.

276,350 households reached directly through 24,221 trained Nutrition Support Group (NSG) volunteers across the 17 districts, with enhanced access to quality nutrition counselling on maternal, infant, and young childcare feeding and childcare practices.

293 health facilities implemented Baby Friendly Health Facility Initiative (BFHI) supporting integrated on-site technical supportive supervision and reverse mentorship on case management of children with malnutrition, HIV, diarrhoea and pneumonia for level one hospitals and their feeder facilities.

107,409 households trained in nutrient-dense crop production which led to access to diversified and nutritious food and 10,491 households were reached with training in the utilisation of Non-Wood Forest

Products (NWFPs), such as various wild vegetables, fruits, and insects.

Skills to reduce post-harvest nutrient loss also improved, with 36,761 beneficiaries trained in food processing and preservation.

To increase financial inclusion and economic empowerment of women, the programme trained a cumulative 126,660 women, direct support was provided to well established Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) for the purpose of linking these to the Constituency Development Fund (CDF).

The programme improved use of multisectoral and diverse Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) delivery strategies to trigger and support social and behaviour change for nutrition, through the Tikonde Bana campaign. districts. Estimated monthly listenership has exceeded 14,200,000 reaching a diverse audience that comprised 59 per cent male listeners and 41 per cent female listeners aged between 15 and 65 years.



An Adolescent Nutrition Framework was developed to inform a multisectoral approach to addressing the nutrition needs of adolescents, with a National Spending Review and multi-sectoral Nutrition Information System to coordinate joint UN programming benefitting over 2 million people with targeted interventions to address food insecurity, village saving, SRHR and improve WASH.

In the same vein, in order to reach most vulnerable populations, UNHCR in collaboration with MoH supported Community-based Health Workers (CHWs) to conduct Community Management of Acute Malnutrition through nutrition demonstration and health education of preparation of local food stuffs to maximize nutritional value. In the refugee settlements, a total number of 44 under five children were registered on Therapeutic Feeding Program for Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) while 66 had Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM). UNHCR provided 1,950 Kg of Yummy Soya and 1,000 by 90g of Soya pieces to support the Supplementary Feeding Programme and reduce malnutrition among under five children and lactating women, among the refugee population.



GENDER EMPOWERMENT AND WOMEN'S INCLUSION

In 2023, Zambia did significant strides to advance women's inclusion and empowerment. This can be seen through revision and approval of key legal frameworks such as the National Gender Policy 2024-2028, that will enhance participation of women in economic activities through, among others, helping to create an enabling environment that provides for equitable access to productive and economic resources in conjunction with the private sector.

Another major achievement is the Anti-GBV Act No.1 of 2011 to foster harmonization with other GBV legislation and provide for penalties related to GBV offences. In the same vein, the Marriage (Amendment) Act No.13 of 2023 is a landmark legislation towards ending child marriages, by setting 18 years as the legal age for all marriages including those under customary law. This work was supported by the joint efforts under the UN Global Joint Programme on Ending Child Marriage in partnership with Gender Division and the Civil Society Network on Ending Child Marriage.

The country also did major progress in terms of fulfilling its international obligations in the gender area. From 2010

to 2023, Zambia was lagging in terms of submissions of periodic reports on its commitments to the Convention on Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The UN, through its Gender Theme Group, actively supported the Government in the drafting, review and consolidation of the pending 7th and 8th Draft Reports into the combined 9th State Party Report. The Gender Division will submit the State Report to Cabinet Office for approval and subsequent submission to the CEDAW Secretariat in 2024.

The UN is also supporting the Government to develop its National Action Plan on the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. This is a key instrument to accelerate empowered participation and inclusion of women in peace, security and sustainable development. Capacity development for the multi-sectorial Government team was ensured through South-South cooperation, namely by sharing of experiences from Malawi, Kenya and Tanzania.

In advancing women's economic empowerment, the UN with support from Ireland and Sweden under the GRZ-UN Joint Programme on GBV facilitated training of over 500 women and girls in digital financial literacy, digital footprint and cyberbullying. Additionally, provided support towards development of entrepreneurship manuals for women empowerment and savings groups. So far, 33 savings groups have been formed and 586 GBV survivors and those at risk of GBV have been supported with entrepreneurship skills trainings and enterprise start-up kits in selected districts across the country.

Under the Global Environmental Facility and the Forest and Farm Facility, support to women groups in value addition of forest products was uplifted. In 2023, 15 women groups were provided with grants with a value of 500,000 USD for capacity building in sustainable forest management, good governance and climate smart Agriculture.

In the framework of the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Joint Initiative with Ireland support, the UN is working hand in hand with Government in the roll out of the African Women Leaders Network – Zambia Chapter, to accelerate efforts to encourage women's active participation in leadership, political processes and decision-making. IN the same lines, the UN through UNDP supported the development of the Zambian Women Parliamentary Caucus Strategic Plan

(2023-27) to harness a strengthened voice of women parliamentarians within and outside of the National Assembly, aimed at operationalising the function of a well-organised Women's Parliamentary Caucus to enhance women's political participation and retention of existing female MPs. Currently, only 25 female Members of Parliament (MPs) were elected (15% female representation). The Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) was also supported to ensure gender equality throughout the electoral process for improved inclusion and diversity.

Finally, the UN has been also supporting gender research, gap analysis and data strengthening. The Zambia Gender Based Violence Assessment and Zambia Gender Assessment reports were published to offer strategic recommendations to advance women's empowerment. These highlighted gender disparities in areas such as human capital, economic opportunities, asset ownership, and women's agency.

INVESTING IN WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

Over 75,000 households, 60 schools and 24 health care facilities are accessing safely managed water, sanitation, and hygiene through nearly 400 new and rehabilitated boreholes which the UN in Zambia has drilled in communities and institutions in Zambia.

In response to the cholera outbreak, UNICEF provided support to the Government beginning October 2023, in the areas of WASH sector coordination, and interventions towards infection prevention and control of the outbreak, including support for distribution of household water treatment chemicals and water quality monitoring (in conjunction with the Ministry of Health), WASH National Prevention and Control (IPC) coordination, as well as WASH in schools coordination (in conjunction with the Ministry of Education).

Basic water services to increase usage were delivered to 160,412 people. Over 249,706 additional people built at least basic sanitation facilities and 144,201 built their own basic hand-washing stations. Additionally, 488,332 people were reached through hand-washing behaviour change programs. UNICEF also strengthened sector coordination and increased capacities for sustainable, safely managed, WASH services.

Furthermore, over 200 young people have built their skills and knowledge in climate change advocacy through digital storytelling; climate awareness in the management of water and sanitation interventions; climate resilient WASH; and the development and submission of position papers on climate (attained through preparation of the Zambian position paper ahead of COP28). The UN in Zambia through UNICEF supported this effort to ensure communities and institutions strengthened capacities to prepare for and respond to disasters and climate change in WASH, and the capacity of young people to undertake climate change advocacy.



REFUGEES AND MOBILE POPULATIONS: SUPPORTING THE MOST VULNERABLE

In Zambia's humanitarian and refugee response, displaced persons are now included in the National Health Insurance scheme (NHIMA). As a result, refugees, former refugees, and asylum seekers can access healthcare services at all Zambian public health facilities.

HIV services were provided through Test and Treat policies at health centres, ensuring that new HIV patients receive treatment and counselling. PrEP and condoms are also distributed.

The 3 refugee settlements of Meheba, Mayukwayukwa and Mantapala have 23 community and Government

schools, attended by both refugees and the local population. The Government schools are staffed by civil servants, while community schools are a community initiative, recognised by the Ministry of Education, to reduce congestion in public schools. The UN supported the Government by providing incentives to community school teachers not paid by the Government and other support teachers to reduce the pupil-teacher ratio. This resulted in better retention of children in school, representing 56% of the total population of children aged 2 -17 years. A total of 17 Zambian, 15 Congolese and Angolan additional incentivised teachers were supported in 2023. UN also provided supplies and materials to community schools to ensure that they continued to run throughout the year.

The UN supported mass sensitisation and awareness activities in youth friendly centres and community outreach centres in the refugee' settlements, as well as Lusaka urban, on Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR). These outreach centres are supported by community volunteers from both the refugee and local community, that provide counselling to the youth and information using brochures, leaflets and posters, translated in different languages as well other more captivating methods such as drama performances.

The refugee settlements and surrounding local communities benefited from the German-funded KFW project (2020 - 2023), which has greatly improved access to water and sanitation. At the end of 2023, the entire population of forcibly displaced persons had access to over 20 litres of water/person/day, aligned with international humanitarian standards. Sanitation coverage is estimated at 90%. Trained V-WASHE committees in the settlements, involving both refugee and local communities, provide regular health and hygiene sensitisation, reaching the entire population forcibly displaced persons.



ROAD SAFETY: TACKLING AN INCREASING CHALLENGE

Road traffic accidents continue to be a public health concern in Zambia and the country has continued to record significant numbers of fatalities and injuries due to road crashes. In response, the UN in collaboration with various Government agencies implemented interventions to improve road safety. To highlight the health and economic costs, Zambia's first ever Road Safety Investment Case was completed and it outlines steps and key interventions that the country must undertake to reduce economic loss resulting from the high loss of lives and injuries. It offers evidence for selecting speed bumps, road sideway pathways, road crossings, post-crash prehospital care and alcohol breath testing as cost-effective interventions to reduce pedestrian injury and estimates the costs and benefits of implementing them.

Further, road infrastructural improvements on traffic hotspots and around schools were undertaken. In line with participating in Global Initiatives, UN with the Zambia Road Safety Trust and Lusaka City Council, commemorated Zambia's first Car-Free Day, a global initiative gaining momentum in cities across the world, that demonstrates collective commitment in combating the adverse effects of urbanization.

▶ PEACE PILLAR



UNSDCF OUTCOME

By 2027, all people, including the marginalized and vulnerable groups, participate in and benefit from sustained peace, democracy, human rights, rule of law, justice, non-discrimination, equality and inclusive and transformative governance



8NDP STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA

Governance and Environment



UN work under the Peace Pillar focuses on enhancing national efforts on human rights, inclusive governance, inclusion, safety, gender equality, access to justice and sustaining peace.

In 2023, Zambia gave important steps towards ensuring the rights and empowerment of its citizens, particularly in areas such as birth registration, child protection, election participation, gender equality, refugee support, and human rights. These advancements have been directly supported by the UN and other partners.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS



157,000 children under five years old registered and issued certificates



Six Village-Led One Stop Centres operational in 4 provinces, to fight GBV



500 women and youth were empowered to break the cycle of abuse following training in digital skills for marketing and prevention of online GBV



Upon Government's request, an UN-led Needs Assessment Mission was conducted, resulting in recommendations for the holding of inclusive, transparent and fair elections in 2026



50 traditional Chiefs reconfirmed as champions for Ending Child Marriage in their chiefdoms

STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RULE OF LAW

UN support focuses on building stronger political partnerships, improving Zambian citizens' access to justice, and strengthening legal and judicial development. In this vein, UN support contributed to the review/launch of several important legal frameworks, such as Zambia's Access to Information Bill; NGO Bill; Public Gathering Bill; and Cyber Security and Cyber Crimes Law to enable their conformity with international law and standards.

The UN further supported the Government to follow-up on the recommendations of the international human rights mechanisms, including the ones emanating from the 4th Cycle Universal Periodic Review; launch of an inter-ministerial National Mechanism for Implementation, Reporting and Follow-up (NMIRF) in June 2023; and capacity-building towards the functioning of the NMIRF.

BIRTH REGISTRATION

One notable achievement has been the improvement in birth registration rates across the country. More children in Zambia enjoyed their rights to birth registration and legal identities through the UN-supported Integrated National Registration Information System (INRIS) and the decentralization of birth registration processes, which has been rolled out in 79 of the country's 116 districts. Additionally, the Births and Deaths Registration Act was reviewed to incorporate provisions in the children's code act on the right to birth registration and clearly define the role of the Ministry of Health in notifications of births (for children born in health facilities). These efforts aim to increase birth registration coverage from 14% to 50% by 2026. Through increased mobile birth registration in health facilities in two districts and ongoing routine registration using INRIS, a total of 157,766 children (male: 78,879; female: 78,887) under 5 years old out of a target of 498,394 were registered and issued certificates.

In the realm of child protection, Zambia has also developed more robust legal frameworks and data management systems to promote children's rights and ensure their well-being, including the Children's Code Act, Marriage Act, The Child Protection Information System, among others.



JUSTICE AND INCLUSIVITY

The UN also supported the Zambian Government to domesticate multiple international human rights treaties, including the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Convention on the Rights of a Child (CRC), Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD), Convention Against Torture (CAT), and Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED) to which Zambia is a party.

PREPARING THE NEXT ELECTORAL PROCESS

To enable Zambians better participate in electoral processes, the government-led Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG) was established and launched with support from UNDP and cooperation partners. The IAWG will advise and track progress on the implementation of various election observer mission recommendations.

Through UN support, Zambia's curriculum on voter education was revised to foster increased understanding of electoral issues and better enjoyment of voting rights by the people.

Establishment of the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ)'s National Call Centre was facilitated by the UN, to enable the people in Zambia to have a voice on electoral matters and improve communication between the electoral management body, citizens, and stakeholders.

The Early Warning and Early Response System (EWERS) to address electoral violence challenges was established with support from the UNDP and the Human Rights Commission (HRC). At least 232 community-based human rights champions across 10 provinces were trained on the use of the i-report platform, integrated into EWERS, significantly strengthening the system's data collection and analysis capabilities of the community champions. The EWERS will aid conflict management by facilitating informed responses to human rights violations during electoral processes.

In addition, low-value grants to 18CSOs amounting to \$783,386 for civic and voter registration advocacy were provided, resulting in the registration of 7,023,499 voters (3,751,040 - 53.4% being women), representing 83.5%

of the targeted 8,414,840 eligible citizens including inmates in prison to ensure inclusivity of the electoral process.

UNDP also supported the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) to conduct research on Voter Turnout and Rejected Ballots for the 2021 General Elections. The research identified trends in voter turnout and rejected ballot papers with a view to informing future decisions of the ECZ to enhance voter turnout and reduce rejected ballots in future elections. These insights are expected to contribute towards improved electoral processes through increased voter participation.

As part of efforts to sustain peace, the UN conducted a Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) which resulted in recommendations for the holding of inclusive, transparent and fair elections in 2026.





REINFORCING SYSTEMS TO FIGHT GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Gender-based violence (GBV) remains a significant challenge globally, and Zambia has taken proactive steps to combat it. Through collaborative efforts with stakeholders and support from the UN, policies and guidelines have been developed to strengthen GBV prevention and response mechanisms.

The collective development of various policies with stakeholders helped mainstream GBV as a gender equality bottleneck. The UN through the GRZ-UN Joint programme on GBV phase II supported the development of: Minimum standards for Shelters for standardized operations in safe shelters and Prosecutors Handbook Guidelines on the Protection of Child Victims and Witnesses.

The UN, through UNDP, also helped strengthen the Anti-GBV Act Guidelines for operationalization of the GBV Fund, and Community Savings Groups Manual. Improved disposal of GBV cases was observed after the development of the Prosecutors' Handbook on GBV, supported by UNODC, and judicial officers were capacitated to provide timely justice.

The GRZ-UN Joint Programme on GenderBased Violence Phase II implemented with the Government of Zambia and civil society organizations has enabled

the establishment of the six Anti-GBV Fast Track Courts, the first Forensic DNA Lab, temporary safe shelters, and One Stop Centers. Feedback has shown that these centres are innovative and effective in bringing to the fore the importance of community involvement for gender equality and women and girls' empowerment, as a means of achieving citizen's aspirations and SDGs. Six Village-Led One Stop Centres are now operational in four provinces; Central, Eastern, Muchinga and Northern provinces. A study on Online GBV amongst women and girls in Zambia was concluded. The report will be used to inform interventions to combat such violence. Further, in collaboration with the GRZ, UNDP supported the development of a report on Cyberbullying and its effects on women and girls in Zambia. This work builds on the policies, laws, and regulations on online GBV. The report also established the existence of a gender gap in usage of mobile phones with males at 57.3% and females at 47.4%. The study will be used to inform women's economic empowerment interventions.

Women and girls were empowered through the various initiatives across the different programme areas in political and economic participation as well as response to and prevention of GBV. A total of 250 women were equipped with business development services, which has seen them improve household income, access to productive assets and resources thereby improving their positions in the intrahousehold bargaining processes. Five hundred women and youth were empowered to break the cycle of abuse following training in digital skills for marketing and prevention of online GBV.

CAPACITY BUILDING AND STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONS

A Gender Workplace Policy to curb the high levels of PSEA case incidences was published and disseminated within the Zambia Police Service (ZPS) across all the 10 provinces.

Zambia's House of Chiefs and the Parliamentary Caucus on Children have strengthened capacity to lead their communities in addressing harmful practices and child marriage through UNICEF's support to a dialogue that saw 50 chiefs reconfirm their commitment to becoming champions for Ending Child Marriage in their chiefdoms. Government institutions have strengthened capacity to address mixed and irregular migration and support victims of trafficking. ZAMSTATS and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security had their capacities strengthened to meet SADC regional migration requirements and use data to make informed policy decisions. the school to generate income for sustainability through selling excess produce.



REFUGEES: PROMOTING SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Refugee support programs have been integral to Zambia's commitment to humanitarianism and solidarity. Through self-sufficiency initiatives and targeted assistance, thousands of refugees have received vital support, fostering resilience, education, and empowerment.

WFP continued to respond to the needs of refugees in Mantapala Refugee settlement, supporting 8,210 refugees with cash assistance, having completed the 100% transition from food-in-kind to cash-based transfers during the first quarter of 2023.

Nonetheless, a planned livelihood support programme aims to enhance refugees' resilience. A total of 1,000 refugee farmers and 200 from the host community are targeted. All 1,200 farmers received training and input packs to enable production during the 2023/24 farming season.

In addition, drip irrigation systems were installed at two primary schools production gardens in Mantapala Refugee Settlement to support school feeding programmes while a hydroponics garden was installed at Mantapala B Secondary School to enable skills transfer, support school feeding programmes, and allow the school to generate income for sustainability through selling excess produce.



SUCCESS STORY

PREVENTING IMMIGRATION DETENTION OF CHILDREN ON THE MOVE

“Seeing children happy here is all that matters to me. I take care of children awaiting family tracing and re-integration,” says Fedis Bukama (32), a caregiver at a child-care facility in Chililabombwe district of Zambia. Fedis Bukama, a caregiver at a child-care facility in Zambia, emphasizes the importance of seeing children happy as his primary goal. He ensures that children awaiting family tracing and re-integration receive proper care, including food, clothing, hygiene, and education. Fedis plays a crucial role in collecting information to aid in family tracing and reintegration processes. He finds satisfaction in his work, especially when children are eventually reunited with their families.

UNICEF, in collaboration with various government and local partners, including the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, is implementing a project funded by the European Union. This project aims to promote best practices for children in migration in Zambia and other regions. It focuses on alternatives to detention and emphasizes family and community-based care options for children on the move. Through this project, over 800 children have been placed in various alternative care options between January 2020 and December 2022.

“At UNICEF, we are committed to support the role of government in promoting and protecting the rights of every child in all circumstances. The Best Interest Procedures and Case Management System helps identify children in mixed migration flows and fosters implementation of alternatives to immigration detention of children in Zambia. This work would not have been possible without the funding support from the European Union,” says Angela Maswau, Child Protection Officer, UNICEF Zambia.

**Name and age of the child has been changed to protect the privacy.*



▶ PLANET PILLAR



UNSDCF OUTCOME

By 2027, ecosystems are healthier, and all people, including marginalised and vulnerable groups, are more resilient and continue to benefit from the sustainable management and use of natural resources and environmental services, and more effective responses to climate change, shocks and stresses



8NDP STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA

Environmental Sustainability



The Planet Pillar is concerned with enabling more sustainable management of Zambia's natural resources, mitigating climate change impact and reducing and managing disaster risks.

The UN supported efforts to address climate change and enhance emergency response, including by increasing small-holder farmers climate resilience, national emergency preparedness, improvement of natural resource management and biodiversity protection through community involvement.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS



20,000 smallholder farmers strengthened adaptive capacities through climate-smart agriculture practices, access to climate information and early warning, resilient alternative livelihoods



Zambia issued its first Green Bond as part of efforts to foster environmentally friendly practices in financial institutions and promote green financing mechanisms.



152 individuals trained on renewable energy and energy efficiency, aiming at increasing use of clean energy



146 young people were engaged as changemakers in interventions on climate advocacy and environmental protection





CLIMATE RESILIENCE IN AGRICULTURE

With funding from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) for Strengthening Climate Resilience of Agriculture Livelihoods in AER I and II (SCRALA) project, UNDP, FAO and WFP supported the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources Management Authority (WARMA) and Zambia Meteorological Department to help strengthen adaptive capacities of over 20,000 smallholder farmers through climate-smart agriculture practices, access to climate information and early warning, resilient alternative livelihoods and strengthened extension services.

36 (20% female) Government officers had their capacity strengthened in the application of crop yield prediction tools on climate information services to mitigate the adverse effects of climate-induced hazards. They were able to provide farmers with a full range of advice regarding climate and its impacts on crops, livestock, fisheries, and management practices to prevent, reduce and/or manage climate risks in agricultural production systems.

One million smallholders (40% female), across 16 districts



benefited from the development of the 2023/24 weather forecast, facilitated by UN financial support provided to the Zambia Meteorological Department (ZMD) for the creation, analysis, and dissemination of climate data.

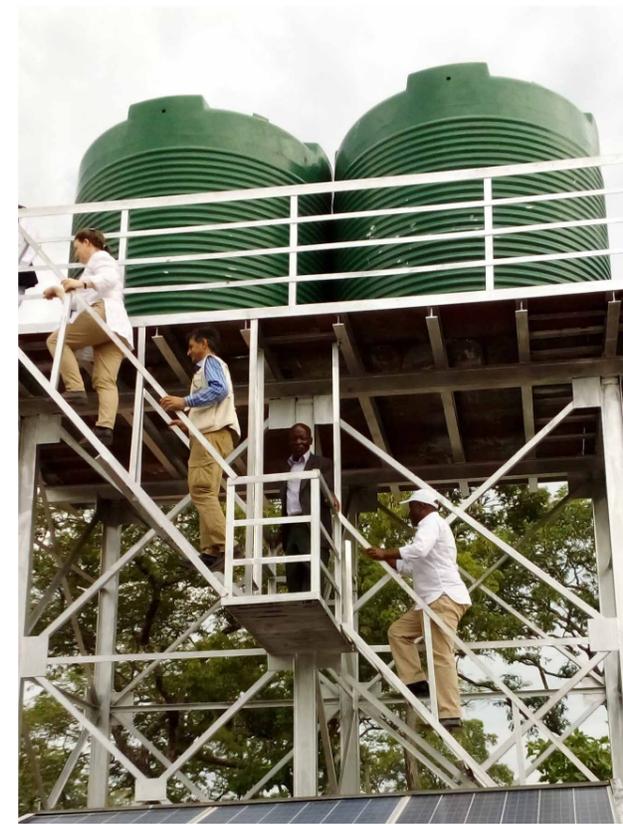
Recognizing the importance of accurate forecasting in mitigating agricultural risks, the UN conducted targeted training sessions to enhance forecasting capacities, with efforts directed towards developing advanced crop capability prediction models and tools. Empowered 28 multi-disciplinary teams in Luapula province with the necessary skills gained including emergency healthcare, nutrition, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), shelter, protection and resources to effectively deliver minimum initial service packages in disaster-prone areas.

The UN equally promoted clean, affordable, and sustainable energy methods, including efficient charcoal production. FAO and UNHCR increased access to improved cooking stoves in rural communities.

At the same time, linkages between farmers and seed companies have been strengthened to ensure better access to quality seeds, while infrastructure development such as bulking centres and irrigation schemes have improved agricultural productivity, resilience, and market access.

GREEN FINANCING: AN ASSET FOR IN ZAMBIA

Zambia issued its first Green Bond through UNDP support as part of efforts to foster environmentally friendly practices in financial institutions and promote green financing mechanisms for Sustainable Development. Support included the development of Green Loans Guidelines by the Bank of Zambia.



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT TO ENHANCE RENEWABLE ENERGIES

ILO developed 26 renewable energy and energy efficiency courses aimed at increasing access to clean energy through skills development; 152 individuals were trained with a particular emphasis on empowering young females, as evidenced by the awarding of full scholarships to 54 young women.

A major step towards advanced skills development in this area is the joint initiative of FAO, UNESCO and UNITAR, in collaboration with Copperbelt University and the University of Zambia. The parties initiated a new project aimed at enhancing the capacity of public and non-state actors in implementing climate actions. **The project will train 20 PHD students in behavioural Change Science and Renewable Energy** and set up a Presidential Award in collaboration with ZEMA on environmental stewardship.

On another front, UNDP's solar for health project reduced the health sector's greenhouse gas footprint, highlighting the cross-cutting nature of climate action.



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

Together, FAO, UNDP, and WFP enhanced environmental sustainability, gender responsiveness, and climate-smart natural resource management. Projects addressed deforestation, promoted community ownership of forests, and implemented interventions along the forestry and agricultural value chain.

At the same time, the UN strengthened the capacities of MGEE to address deforestation and forest degradation through the UNDP gender responsive community forest management project, which will further assist to establish Community Forest Management Groups in two districts of Kazungula in Southern Province and Kasempa in Northwestern Province.

Community forest management groups in Eastern, Northwestern, Southern and Western provinces helped in addressing deforestation, promoting community ownership of forests, and implementing programs along the forestry and agricultural value chain. Through projects like UN-REDD, Global Environmental Facility (GEF), and Forest and Farm Facility (FFF), funded by the UN, GEF, and governments of Finland and Sweden, initiatives such as tree planting, agroforestry, and women's participation in forestry programmes were promoted, contributing to forest restoration and resilience to climate change.

UNDP, FAO, WFP also actively engaged traditional leaders to champion the importance of preserving and protecting natural resources and landscapes as nature-based solutions to brake impacts of climate change.

In addition, FAO partnered with the Ministry of Agriculture in training over 1,900 extension officers from 116 districts in integrated pest management for the fall armyworm, empowering them with knowledge and skills for early detection and effective management of fall armyworm infestations, thereby protecting maize crops and securing food security for communities.



ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOODS PROMOTION

500 small-scale farmers (60% female) in 10 districts received training in honey production and processing to encourage alternative livelihoods and foster climate-resilient agriculture. 1,905 farmers (30% female) received honey processing equipment to enhance the quality of honey products, thus facilitating increased income opportunities.

The UN in partnership with the Government continued to engage stakeholders, including private sector and commercial farmers, in Mkushi district as part of the design phase of the Catchment Investment Plan, aimed at restoring water catchments through a Payment for Ecosystem Services mechanism. Further, two community-based organizations in Meheba and Mayukwayukwa Resettlement Schemes were trained in sustainable natural resources management through UNDP.



INVEST IN WASH FOR A BETTER PLANET

The UN played a pivotal role in improving the Government's capacity to develop and implement sector policies, coordination mechanisms and budgeting frameworks that can enhance WASH as an essential way to protect the Planet. A major progress in this regard was made in revising the Water Supply and Sanitation Act of 1997.

In addition, the WASH Integrated Management Information System reporting indicators were finalized and a Statutory Instrument was developed to support the regulation of Onsite Sanitation and Faecal Sludge Management. Zambia was recognised for its progress towards the Ngor commitments on Sanitation and Hygiene during the 7th AfricaSan conference.

Further, UNICEF's support in developing key sector documents included the validated WASH High-Level Equity and Inclusion guidance note that integrates gender and disability, which is expected to yield significant outcomes and impact. Another key step was given in conducting a WASH Private Sector Situation Analysis.

The UN collaborated with the Ministry of Health (MoH) to conduct WASH Facility Improvement Tool (WASH FIT) assessments across four provinces and provided financial support for MoH officers to attend a WASH FIT Training of Trainers in Kenya.

Through UNICEF, the UN supported regulators in the WASH sector, contributing to the digitization of borehole records for the Water Resources Management

Authority (WARMA) and collaborating with the National Water Supply and Sanitation Council (NWASCO) on mapping small-piped water schemes.

The UN provided technical input during the development of the Zambia Water Investment Programme and the National Adaptation Plan Resource Mobilization Strategy and joined the high-level launch of the Zambia Water Investment Programme during the Mid-year AU summit.

Evidence and rationale for climate-financed WASH projects was strengthened through the completion and sharing of a WASH climate risk assessment. This assessment, supported by UNICEF, contributed to the evidence base for climate finance mobilisation.

To support the climate evidence for the other programmatic areas of Zambia's office, a draft Climate Landscape Analysis for Children (CLAC) was developed, building on the WASH climate risk assessment. The CLAC will be finalised with external technical support in 2024 and will provide a basis for office-wide climate programming.

WASH emergency supplies targeted an estimated 160,000 people affected by floods of February, following a rapid assessment and the development of a WASH sector response plan. Furthermore, WASH infection prevention and control supplies were received and utilised in nine districts affected by cholera. The WASH supplies included 86,000 bottles of 250ml liquid chlorine, 23.4 tons of granular chlorine, 1,028 bottles of 400ml liquid hand washing soap, 490 bottles of 5 litres disinfectant, and various sizes of bins and bin liners for healthcare waste management.



ADVOCACY FOR CLIMATE ACTION

Young Zambia are in the forefront of the awareness raising efforts regarding the climate crisis. A total of 146 young people (70 females and 76 males) were engaged in initiatives on climate and protection of the environment, aiming at promoting them as changemakers in interventions on climate advocacy to ensure youth engagement in climate action policy and strategies; of these, 85 (50 females and 35 males) youth received skills for climate change advocacy through digital storytelling while 61 (20 females, 41 males) young people received capacity and skills for incorporating climate awareness in management of water and sanitation interventions.

80 additional young people acquired knowledge and skills on climate change and climate resilient WASH through UNICEF technical expertise provided to youth engagement interventions funded by the Italian Embassy and the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF).

With the participation of 81 young people, the Zambian position paper was drafted and sent to COP28. In preparation for the COP28, the UN supported the MGEE, as well as the participation of traditional leaders from Eastern, Northwestern, Southern, Central and Western provinces, as well as youth voices. The UN supported the participation of two young delegates (1 Female; 1 Male) at the COP28 and also hosted a young people's side event at the Zambia Pavilion to further provide a platform for young voices at the 2023 UN Climate Conference.

CLIMATE RESILIENCE IN AGRICULTURE

In collaboration with the International Centre for Local Democracy (ICLD), United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), Luangwa town in Zambia has launched an innovative program to boost revenue and enhance economic resilience amidst increasing climate change challenges.

Recurrent floods, attributed to climate change, have disrupted businesses, straining the local economy heavily reliant on markets and shops for revenue. Despite

meeting 92% of overall revenue estimates, local revenue stagnated at 74% in 2022, necessitating new strategies. Luangwa officials developed a comprehensive approach focusing on financial stability, adaptability, and inclusivity. Initiatives included regular audits, constructing a flood-resistant market to attract women entrepreneurs, increasing community engagement, and diversifying revenue sources.

These efforts led to a 38% increase in locally generated revenue, highlighting improved economic stability despite climate change impacts. Officials foresee expanded services and local development facilitated by the augmented revenues.



2.4 JOINT PROGRAMMES IN ZAMBIA

In 2023, the UN in Zambia had 11 joint programmes (JPs) with the overall budget amounting to USD149,920,631 addressing: agriculture value chains; climate smart agriculture; agriculture and climate change; environment, climate change and biodiversity; youth empowerment; GBV; gender and women empowerment; ending child marriage; resilience and livelihoods; social protection; health and HIV; nutrition; and disability inclusion.

Item	Joint Programme	Participating Agencies	Amount (US\$)	GEM
1	Opportunities for Youth in Africa (OYA) – Regional Programme	UNIDO, FAO	1,500,000	GEM 2 (has focuses on female youth)
2	Strengthening climate resilience of agricultural livelihoods in Agro-Ecological Regions I and II in Zambia	FAO, UNDP, WFP	32,000,000	GEM 2 (focus of women empowerment – minimum/ at least 40 % should be women)
3	GRZ-UN joint programme on Social Protection phase II	UNICEF, ILO, WFP, UNDP	10,236,814	GEM 3 (has selection criteria for beneficiaries are FHH)
4	Scaling Up Nutrition II	UNICEF, WFP, FAO	55,839,670	GEM 2 (Core component includes teaching mothers/ pregnant)
5	GRZ-UN Joint programme on GBV Phase II	UNDP, ILO, UNFPA, UNICEF, IOM	6,500,000	GEM 3
6	UN Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS (with annual financial allocation from Secretariat and Agencies)	UNAIDS, WHO, ILO, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNWOMEN, UNFPA, IOM, UNODC, UNDP, WB	550,000	GEM 2
7	Ending Child marriage	UNICEF, UNFPA	5,600,000	GEM 3
8	Joint programme on disability inclusion	UNICEF, ILO, UNDP, UNFPA	600,000	GEM 3
9	Gender Equality and Women's Participation	UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, and UNESCO, UNICEF (RCO)	200,000	GEM 3
10	Zambia Multisectoral Pandemic Preparedness and Response Project (ZaMPPR)	WHO, FAO	18,874,602	GEM 2
11	Facility for Action for Climate Empowerment to Achieve Nationally Determined Contributions	FAO, UNITAR, UNESCO	18,019,545	GEM 2
Total Amount			149,920,631	



2.5 PARTNERSHIPS AND FINANCING FOR SDGS

The UN in Zambia continued to nurture partnerships for acceleration of the SDGs with the Government, Cooperating Partners, Financial Institutions, Civil Society, Private Sector, Academia, Philanthropy, Media, and Trade Unions among others.

The UNCT, delivering as one, operationalized the Joint Steering Committee with the Government to provide strategic guidance and oversight towards the implementation of the Cooperation Framework 2023-2027, during its entire cycle, and ensure its alignment to evolving country contexts, national, regional, and international development processes, mechanisms, and goals, in order to advance the SDGs. The GRZ-UN Joint Steering Committee is co-chaired by the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Finance and National Planning, and the UN Resident Coordinator.

The UN in Zambia took over as the chair for the Cooperating Partner's Group 'Troika' for the period January to June 2023, which was a strategy position to enhance UN work with other Cooperating Partners and Government, as well as to advocate on decisions meant to accelerate the achievement of SDGs.

Another strategic partnership is the one with the European Union, as a multilateral organization with shared values. The UNCT and the EU Delegation explore areas of collaboration and synergy in supporting the government to advance the SDGs and to bring about transformation to improve the lives of the people of

Zambia, as well as to promote governance, democracy strengthening and Human Rights. The European Parliament's Development Committee visited Zambia and had the opportunity to meet with the UNCT. This engagement with the UNCT was meant to get first-hand experience of the development issues to inform its policy making and scrutiny role and focus on the review of EU development and humanitarian policies in the country. The committee is a longstanding champion of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the global goals agreed by all UN member states.

The UN Zambia continued to strengthen its partnership with the World Bank, following the deployment of a new Country Director. The World Bank enjoys a good working relation with the UNCT, and it intends to further enhance the collaboration with the UN System in Zambia, to further explore specific areas of collaboration in supporting the Government to accelerate the SDGs to deliver the much-needed development. The areas of partnership and common interest identified included debt management, gender equality and women empowerment, environment and climate change, decentralization, data and statistics, and refugees.

The partnership between the UNCT and the Republic of Ireland over the Gender Equality and Women's Participation Initiative continued to grow in 2023, with an additional allocation of US\$129,000 from Ireland. This initiative is centred around the need to enhance existing strategies and programmes towards a more

integrated and strategic approach that responds to gender inequalities and emerging megatrends at country level. This includes supporting the Government to address current gaps in existing coordination mechanisms across Government and non-governmental stakeholders, UN Agencies and Development Partners in the Gender area. The initiative is grounded on an evidence-based approach, and it also aims at contributing to addressing the lack of gender disaggregated data and evidence.

The UNCT continued to strengthen its partnership and engagement with the media as an important sector in advancing SDGs and development in Zambia. The UN in partnership with the Livingstone Press Club, convened a media orientation for 30 media representatives from major media houses that provide news to other institutions around the country. This media engagement was meant to create awareness on UN support to Zambia through the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and further create a better understanding among journalists of the UN's work, the UNSDCF and SDGs as frameworks for advancing development.

The UNCT continues to partner with the private sector on various fronts through the Zambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ZACCI) which is a national body representing the interests of the private business sector in Zambia focusing on the promotion and development of trade, commerce, and industry. The

ZACCI President engaged the UNCT on the need to strengthen collaboration as well as to enhance private sector development to contribute to driving economic transformation in Zambia.

The UN in Zambia engaged the UN Global Compact Africa Regional Hub to explore ways of growing the local network which currently has nine members. The partnership with ZACCI will be very instrumental in growing the Global Compact Network in Zambia so that the private sector could take a centre stage in advancing SDGs and development in Zambia.

On the governance front, the UN in Zambia proactively engaged with the National Prosecution Authority (NPA) and the Anti-Corruption Commission. With the NPA, the two parties explored possible opportunities for UN support to enhance the legal frameworks in criminal matters at sub-regional level. The UNCT and NPA further explored opportunities for enhancing coordination of support offered to other relevant government ministries that directly interface with the NPA in execution of the latter's mandate.

The NPA has been partnering with UN Zambia through UNODC, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, OHCHR but were keen to interface also with the IOM and UNHCR in related areas. The UNCT supported Zambia Anti-Corruption Conference which was centred around addressing issues of integrity building through development of integrity tools such as codes of ethics, codes of conduct, gift policies, service charters and many others, in public and private sector organizations and in the case of the Government, asset disclosure/declaration as well as the performance of Integrity Committees.



2.6 PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY WITHIN THE UN

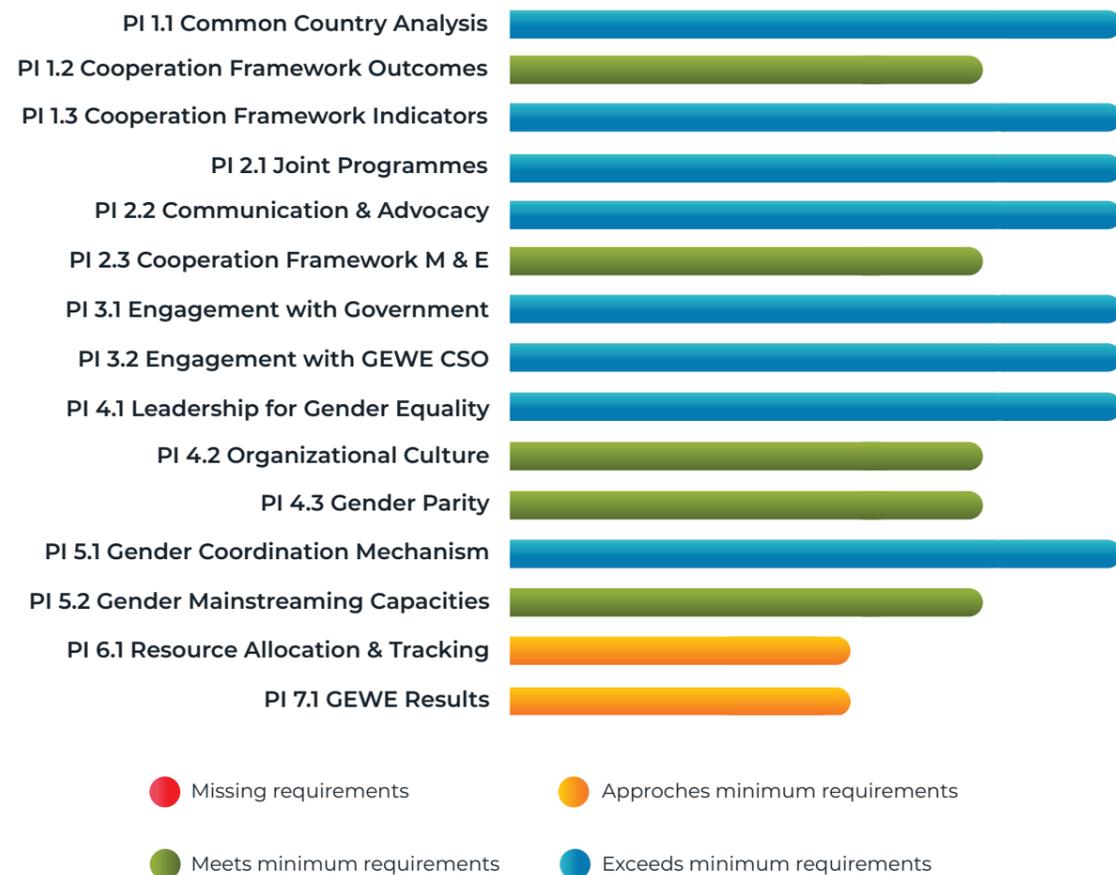
OVERVIEW OF UNCT-SWAP CUMULATIVE RESULTS IN 2023

The UN System Wide Action Plan (SWAP) Gender Scorecard continued to show efforts to ensure accountability and transparency in Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming by the UN in Zambia. The findings indicate ratings scored by the UNCT for 15 different performance indicators across the different dimensions.

Exceptional performance where Gender equality was mainstreamed in Cooperation Framework outcomes with two out of four Cooperation Framework outcomes

specifically target gender equality in line with the Cooperation Framework Theory of Change and SDG Priorities, including SDG 5 and JPs looking at promoting gender equality and empowerment of women and girls operational, including the Global Programme on Ending Child Marriage; the JP on Social Protection and on GBV.

Resource allocation and Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) results are areas of improvement where adequate resources for gender mainstreaming will need to be allocated and tracked and UN programmes to make a significant contribution to gender equality in the country respectively.



To further enhance work on GEWE Results, the UN in Zambia is currently at design stage of a multi-year GEWE transformative programme design.

The programme will tap into the role of the UN's convening power through the UN Resident Coordinator's Office to catalyse and accelerate support to the Government to holistically respond to challenges of gender inequality and women's low participation, through an integrated, multi-sectoral approach on gender equality and women's leadership across all critical dimensions.

The UN inter-agency Gender Theme Group (GTG) in Zambia is very active and plays a critical role in ensuring gender is mainstreamed in all UN Joint programmes and interventions, including Operations. In 2023, the GTG ensured a comprehensive and coordinated approach of all UN Agencies working in the gender space in Zambia, avoiding duplication of efforts and up scaling advocacy efforts, particularly on ending GBV.

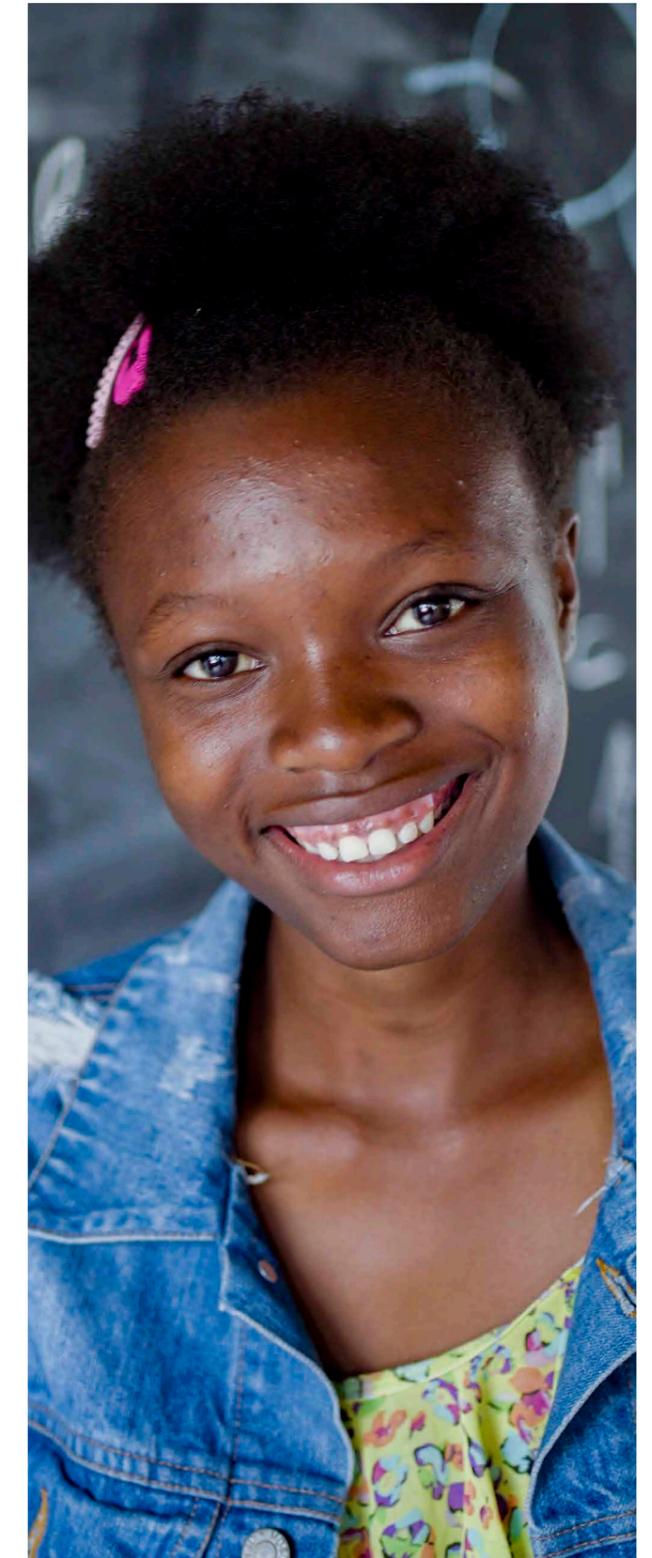
PREVENTION OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE (PSEA)

Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse remains a high priority for UN Zambia. In 2023, the UN Zambia Interagency PSEA Network reviewed and validated its Standard Operating Procedures (PSEA reporting mechanisms and referral pathways) for United Nations agencies and its Implementing Partners in Zambia. The Standard Operating Procedures are designed to guide and provide recommended steps and measures to be taken where there is suspected or alleged sexual exploitation and abuse committed by UN staff or related personnel in Zambia.

A major step towards the operationalization of its 'Zero tolerance' policy, was the training of more than 120 Implementing Partners of the different UN Agencies, in PSEA and the UN policy in this regard.

Furthermore, through implementing partners, UN Agencies have reached 278,789 (male: 167,221 and female: 111,568) beneficiaries in terms of the PSEA orientation in 2023. This aimed at giving children and adults access to safe and accessible channels to report SEA by humanitarian, development, protection and/ or other personnel who provide assistance to affected populations.

Internally, the UN Zambia PSEA Network conducted training and awareness raising on the SOPs to the UN Human Resources Working Group to ensure that UN agencies put in place PSEA Policies and Procedures in all Human Resources operations on a daily basis.





COMMUNICATIONS AND ADVOCACY

Through the UN Communication Group (UNCG), the UN in Zambia promoted several advocacy campaigns and initiatives, around the UN core values and principles. In 2023, a landmark initiative was the promotion of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to celebrate the 75 anniversary of the adoption of this historic document. A series of activities were carried out, including stakeholder consultations, social media engagement and community outreach culminating into a candlelight vigil and commemorative event.

The UN continued to advocate for gender equality and the need to end GBV, the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities, people living with albinism, among other causes.

As a result of the advocacy efforts, 2023 was a year of progress in terms of advances in key policy instruments. Progress on Governance and Human Rights included the: adoption of the Children's Code

Act; technical support on the Access to Information Bill, the NGO Bill, the Public Gathering Bill, and the revised National Gender Policy and the review of the Anti GBV Act No. 1 of 2011.

At the same time, the UN continued to advocate for the SDGs, and the need to accelerate action if we are to achieve the Global Goals by 2030. The UN facilitated the opening of 30 UN Clubs and Youth of United Nations Chapters in schools and tertiary education institutions leading to increased awareness among over 2,000 children and youth of the UN and global development issues.

To celebrate the UN Day, the UN organised an advocacy event, the Run for the SDGs to raise awareness and inspire actions on attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. A total of 800 people including government officials, members of the diplomatic corps, private sector and Civil Society representatives, youth and United Nations staff with their families participated in the event.



The UN coordinated Zambia's participation in the SDG Global Summit by providing financial and technical support, leading to a strong country position at the UN General Assembly and sharing of key country messages.

Achieving the SDGs by 2030 requires an all-of-society approach. In partnership with the National Assembly of Zambia, the UN through its UN Communications Group (UNCG) produced and broadcast 17 live and in-studio Radio and TV programmes about actions and progress

on attainment of the SDGs. The programmes, which featured Cabinet Ministers, Members of Parliament, Civil Society and Heads of UN agencies, helped to create awareness about the Global Goals, made people care and inspired actions at individual and institutional levels. In an effort to bring the UN closer to all people, leaving no one behind, the UN supported the translation of an 'easy to read' summary of the Cooperation Framework into seven local languages leading to increased access to the document among the Zambian population.



PROMOTING DISABILITY INCLUSION

Promoting disability inclusion and leaving no one behind is at the heart of the UN work. In 2023, the UN partnered with the Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities (ZAPD) and organizations representing persons with disabilities (OPDs) to undertake a Covid-19 impact assessment. This groundbreaking study aimed to shine a light on the health and socio-economic challenges faced by persons with disabilities and their families during the pandemic in Zambia.

The COVID-19 impact assessment sought to gather data and insights directly from persons with disabilities, shedding light on their unique experiences and needs during the pandemic. The study delved into the complexities of the challenges faced by this vulnerable population, identifying gaps in support and opportunities for intervention.

The study served as a powerful advocacy tool, highlighting the urgency of prioritizing the well-being and inclusion of persons with disabilities in Covid-19 response and recovery efforts.

In 'walking the talk on disability inclusion', the UNCT adopted a disability inclusion checklist for all its programmes and projects, to ensure that no one is left behind, and that the needs and rights of persons with disabilities are fully considered and integrated into UN initiatives.

By implementing this checklist, the UN Zambia is setting a new standard for accountability and transparency, making sure that disability inclusion is not just a goal, but a guiding principle in all of its work and fostering a culture of awareness and sensitivity towards disability issues. This initiative is a testament to the UN's commitment to leaving no one behind and creating a more inclusive world for all individuals, regardless of ability.

A concrete example is the SCRALA project which has played a crucial role in promoting disability inclusion in Zambia, with a focus on livelihood resilience and emergency response. Through partnerships with the Ministry of Agriculture, the Strengthening of Climate Resilience of Agricultural Livelihoods in Agro-ecological Region I and II (SCRALA) project has increased the participation of persons with disabilities in alternative livelihoods, such as goat rearing and beekeeping. This project operates in 16 districts and has a 30% quota for persons with disabilities, which has notably increased active participation and promoted graduation out of poverty.



UN IN ZAMBIA DOUBLES DOWN ON DISABILITY INCLUSION

The United Nations in Zambia has prioritized disability inclusion as a cornerstone of its development agenda, recognizing the challenges faced by the estimated 11% of Zambians living with disabilities. In response to discrimination and limited opportunities faced by this population, the UN in Zambia has integrated inclusivity into its national development strategy, the Eighth National Development Plan (8NDP), aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The 8NDP emphasizes equitable economic growth that benefits all segments of society, particularly marginalized groups. It acknowledges the importance of social development, human rights, and environmental sustainability in achieving inclusive growth and poverty reduction.

The UN Country Team (UNCT) in Zambia is committed to translating the vision of disability inclusion into practical actions, exemplified through the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2023-2027. This framework prioritizes addressing the needs of people with disabilities and eliminating barriers to their full participation in society.

In a significant move, the UN in Zambia has produced disability-friendly versions of key documents, including the Cooperation Framework, in formats such as Braille, sign language, audio, and easy-to-read formats. This initiative aims to inform persons with disabilities about their rights and opportunities for contributing to sustainable development, while also increasing awareness among policymakers and partners about the unique challenges faced by this population.

Through collaborative efforts with the government, civil society, and disability advocates, the UN in Zambia is empowering people with disabilities to actively participate in decision-making processes and development initiatives. By enabling their meaningful contribution to society and ensuring equal opportunities, Zambia is striving towards a more inclusive and prosperous future.

STRENGTHENING PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Zambia is a country prone to disasters and emergencies, both of public health and climate change nature. In 2023, the UN supported the Government to respond to the emergency caused by massive floods, in February, which also spike a cholera outbreak; and later in the year, the UN again joined hands with Government and partners to respond to another cholera outbreak that started in October 2023, and became the largest in decades.

In the flood response, the UN in Zambia, with WFP as technical lead, supported the authorities in providing aid to 171,000 people displaced in 22 districts, where livestock has been displaced and crops damaged while critical infrastructure such as roads, bridges, schools, clinics and houses was also destroyed. Responding to a Government appeal, the UN provided cash transfers and food assistance to people affected by flash floods in seven of the most affected districts. A total of 55,345 people (11,069 households) were assisted in seven of the most affected districts, representing 99.3% achievement on the target.

Resilient and shock-responsive social protection

systems were mainstreamed across flood-prone and affected districts, including for improving nutrition, food production for farmers, and climate resilient farming techniques.

WFP supported the Disaster Management and Mitigation unit to design the needs assessment including tailored trainings to strengthen the capacity of the Government to improve its shock-responsive social protection systems using climate insurance instruments.

WFP also supported the Government leverage the Social Cash Transfer programme to institutionalize disaster risk financing through the sovereign insurance product provided by the Africa Risk Capacity (ARC) replica initiative to broaden the coverage of the government's drought insurance by taking out insurance of US\$ 500,000 additional to the US\$ 1,000,000 by government during the 2023/2024 season.

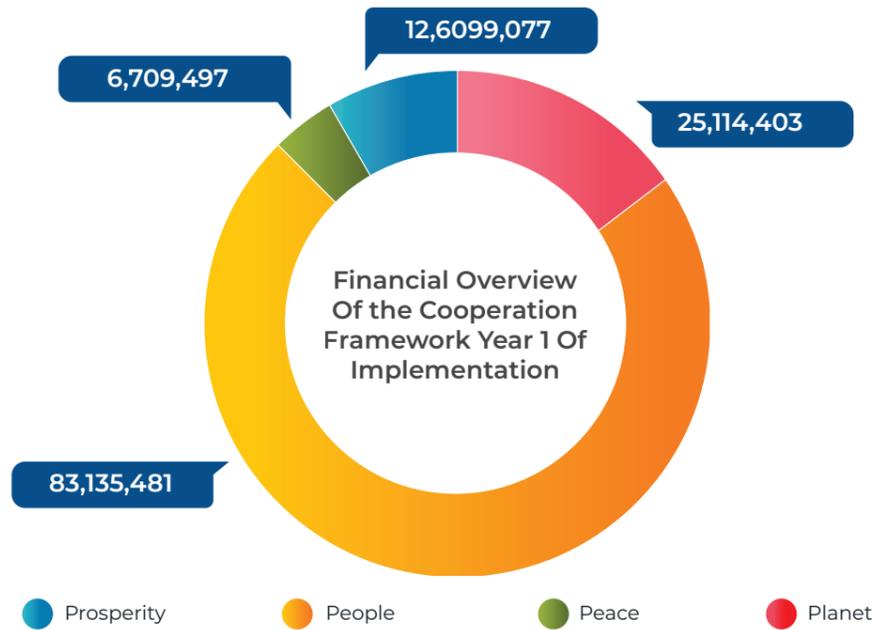
In the cholera response, the UN in Zambia with WHO and UNICEF as technical leads, provided critical support in cholera case management at health facility and community level and access to water and sanitation at homes, schools, and health facilities in the mostly affected areas. Other interventions prioritized included procurement and provision of vaccines, medicines, WASH supplies, as well as awareness raising and community engagement, through training and deployment of community-based volunteers, a campaign that reached about 7 million people with messages on prevention and access to services.

At the same time, Zambia has made significant progress both at national and sub-national levels in integrating Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning (EPRP) into national, provincial and district Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) planning processes. With UNICEF support, 5 districts integrated EPRP into the routine MTEF planning.

In the same framework, analysis on the extent to which the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) is integrated into National Policies and Plans in Relation to Emergencies, Humanitarian Crises, and Climate Change in Zambia was conducted. Key findings indicated that SRH/MISP in emergencies, humanitarian crises, and climate change were not explicitly included in the policies and legislation and UNFPA is taking the lead into addressing the identified gaps.

2.7 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW AND RESOURCE MOBILISATION

The financial overview addresses year one of implementation of the Cooperation Framework covering the core areas under Prosperity, People, Peace, Planet and Partnerships which cuts across. A total of \$ 127,658,458 was the expenditure for 2023.



RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

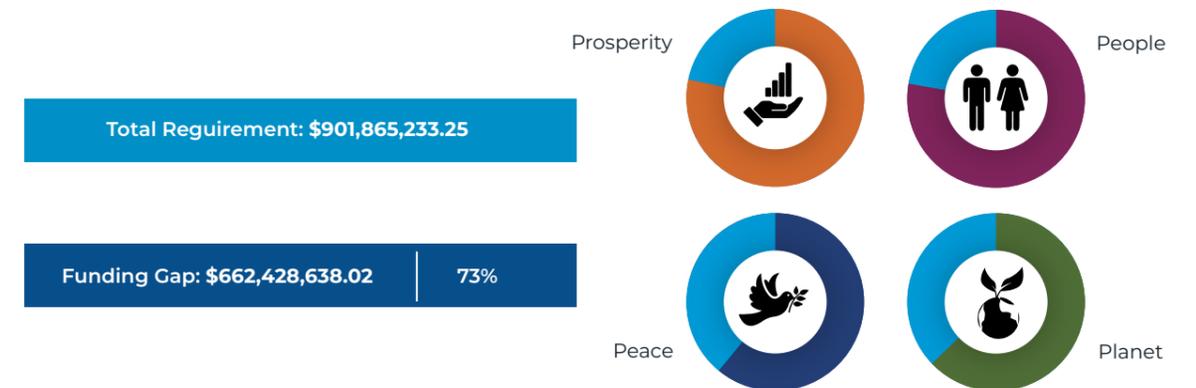
In 2023 the UN Zambia finalized the development of its Joint Partnerships and Resource Mobilization (J-PRM) Strategy. This strategy will serve as a blueprint for the UNCT in Zambia in guiding joint engagement with donors and other partners while defining relevant partnerships and funding opportunities. The strategy also outlines the modalities for prioritising joint initiatives and programmes. Furthermore, it provides strategies for resource mobilisation to support the implementation of the UNSDCF 2023-2027 and will provide appropriate donor and partner engagement methodologies for each flagship joint initiative and programme, in order to close the financing gap identified during the design phase of the UNSDCF.



UNSDCF 2023-27 Resources Requirement Estimates and Gap

	Prosperity Outcome 1	People Outcome 2	Peace Outcome 2	Planet Outcome 3
Required	\$223,943,876.83	\$298,911,303.97	\$214,261,557.41	\$164,748,495.04
Available	\$76,556,013.50	\$94,739,395.15	\$40,481,518.77	\$27,659,667.81
Gap	\$147,387,863.33	\$204,171,908.82	\$173,780,038.64	\$137,088,827.23
Gap as Percentage of Required	66%	68%	81%	83%

UNCT Zambia UNSDCF Expenditure by SDG



The UNCT continued to engage in joint resource mobilisation efforts centred around joint programmes and initiatives.

In 2023, the UN Zambia mobilized US\$18.9 million through the Zambia multisectoral pandemic preparedness and response joint programme which is implemented by WHO and FAO. In addition, the UNCT mobilized about Euros 17.1 million through a joint programme on facility for action for climate empowerment to achieve nationally determined contributions. This joint programme is implemented by FAO, UNITAR and UNESCO.

The UN working directly with the Ministry of Health submitted Zambia's application to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, resulting in a grant of \$380 million (for the period 2024-26).

Additionally, \$500,000 was mobilised through the Swedish-funded joint UN 2gether4SRHR initiative which will expand youth-led community models for integrated SRH, HIV and GBV services in Monze and Katete districts. Through the gender equality and women's participation joint initiative the UN mobilized an additional allocation

of US\$129,000 from Ireland to the initial US\$200,000 in 2022 for the start-up phase. This initiative is jointly implemented by UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNESCO and UNICEF under the overall coordination of the RCO.

Under the JP on Rights of People with Disabilities, about \$600,000 was mobilised.

From the humanitarian front, during the year under review, the UNCT under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator mobilized technical expertise and financial resources from OCHA to respond to cholera, drought, and floods. The UNCT mobilized catalytic funds of US\$100,000 from OCHA to support the Government through the DMMU to respond to the massive floods that affected the country in February 2023.

As for the cholera outbreak, that started in October 2023 and prolonged towards 2024, the UN was able to mobilize a total of 2.5 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and 1 million Euros from the European Union ECHO mechanism and USD 723,583 from the African Public Health Emergency Fund (APHEF).



3. BUSINESS OPERATIONS STRATEGY

The UNCT in Zambia has through its Efficiency Agenda proved to be effective at providing better support to UN Agencies in delivering the 2030 Agenda. Through its Business Operations Strategy (BOS), the UN focused on improving overall effectiveness, accountability, and cohesion, since the BOS has the potential to also achieve cost savings that could be redeployed into development activities.

2023 has been a successful year with rededicated oversight commitments by the UN Operations Management Team (OMT) to improve the linkage between UNSDCF and the BOS to provide the needed impetus for continuous and consistent productivity in

UN Zambia. Opportunities for innovations and operationalization of best practices have been key across the agencies providing a platform for effective collaboration.

As a result of the BOS implementation, the overall realized benefits in 2023 is \$208,528, which builds on and represents an increase compared to the cost avoidance realized in the previous four years. This cost-avoidance was mainly realized through implementation of ICT Services (\$128,361), Finance (\$41,433), Administration (\$35,598) and Procurement (\$3,136).

BUSINESS OPERATIONS STRATEGY - EXPECTED COST AVOIDANCE

Service Lines	# of Common Services	Estimated Cost Avoidance	Realized Cost Avoidance	Cost Avoidance Ratio
Administration	5	\$486K	\$55K	11%
ICT	4	\$402K	\$128K	31%
HR	11	\$0	-%	-%
Finance	5	\$69K	\$62K	90%
Procurement	6	\$14K	\$3K	21%
Total	31	\$971K	\$248K	26%

Expected total cost avoidance of **\$971,049** over the period 2019 to 2023

Cost avoidance ratio of **26%** realized

- Procurement, Finance, ICT, Admin have the highest cost avoidance ratio at 90% (Finance), 31% (ICT) 21%(Procurement) respectively

Future period estimated cost avoidance (2024-2028)

- Admin \$1.6m
- ICT \$1m
- Finance \$183.5k
- HR \$0

4. LOOKING FORWARD TO 2024

In line with UN Reform, the UN in Zambia is expected to be agile, nimble and fit for purpose. Noting the multiple crises of cholera and the El Nino-induced climate change effects of drought and floods, we may start 2024 in 'emergency mode' and help to meet needs across various challenges including food insecurity and an energy crisis.

The multiple impacts of the emergency are likely to be felt until May 2025 and beyond, as severe malnutrition, forced child marriages, school dropouts and other social and protection issues are likely to increase.

On the economic front, the UN will offer its advocacy and thought leadership in supporting Zambia navigate the debt crisis, inflation and exchange rate volatility.

In this vein, the UN will remain steadfast in leveraging agency mandates and resources in addition to mobilizing external resources in working with the Government to respond to these challenges while still delivering on the commitments made under the UNSDCF [Cooperation Framework].

Further, the UN will continue to support Zambia to achieve its development priorities as laid out in the

8th National Development Plan. Generally, the UN has identified Six key transitions namely: (1) food systems; (2) energy access and affordability; (3) digital connectivity; (4) education; (5) jobs and social protection; and (6) climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. These transitions are envisioned to accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and achieving the 2030 Agenda. The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) will aim to deliver on the Transitions relevant to the country context, using the four "engine rooms" which are actions at the country level, both building on and supporting regional and global efforts.

The UN will continue to work with the Government and Partners, aiming at reducing poverty through economic diversification, job creation, reduction of youth unemployment and skills development. Maintaining the focus on strengthening democracy, the rule of law, human rights, gender equality and disability inclusion is equally critical.

The UN remains confident that in 2024, Zambia will make significant progress in accomplishing its vision of a peaceful, inclusive, resilient country, where all people enjoy their fundamental rights by 2030.



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