

Anticipatory Action Plan (AAP)

for Drought

Chiredzi, Kariba, Mwenezi
Zimbabwe



AAP

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Summary

Hazard	Drought
Country, Province, District	Zimbabwe Masvingo; Mashonaland West Chiredzi (Wards 5 & 10), Mwenezi (Ward 5 & 10); Kariba (Wards 5 & 7)
Validity Period	March 2026 – April 2029
Custodian organisations	Action against Hunger (ACF) and Nutrition Action Zimbabwe (NAZ)
Impacts to be addressed by anticipatory action(s)	1. Food insecurity 2. Livestock poverty deaths 3. Loss of income 4. Water shortage
Anticipatory action(s)	• Food assistance • Income-generating activities (poultry) • Supplementary feeding
No. of people to be reached	Window 1: 25,050 Individuals Window 2: 12,000 Individuals
AAP budget	Window 1: 423.165 EUR (141.055 EUR per district) Window 2: 456.103 EUR (152.034 EUR per district)
Trigger model indicators for model used for early warning (and lead time)	WFP Drought Model "Ready-Set-Go", lead time 1 month
Timeframe of implementation of anticipatory action(s)	3 months
Focal point for this AAP	Country Representative, ACF Zimbabwe
Governmental coordinating agencies	N/A
Last updated	2026-03-26

1 Introduction

1.1. Overview

The Drought Anticipatory Action Plan (AAP) outlines proactive measures by Action Against Hunger (ACF) and Nutrition Action Zimbabwe (NAZ) to address drought in the targeted high-risk districts Chiredzi, Mwenezi and Kariba and selected wards.

The AAP brings together everything needed to move from an early drought warning to timely action on the ground. It holds:

- a risk analysis that lists the hazards, shows who is vulnerable and spells out likely impacts on food, water and livestock;
- a trigger model that follows the World Food Programme's drought-monitoring tool and releases funds in two phases, first on a long-range forecast, then on a short-range confirmation;
- a set of anticipatory actions agreed with communities, such as food vouchers, borehole rehabilitation and agricultural inputs (small grain seed, indigenous chicken starter packs, vegetable seeds and livestock supplementary feed);
- a budget, theory of change and clear duties for ACF, NAZ, the District Civil Protection Committee (DCPC), backed by existing terms of reference, supplier agreements and a memorandum of understanding with local authorities.



Figure 1: Zimbabwe with Kariba, Mwenezi and Chiredzi districts highlighted

The AAP was developed through a collaborative process that included an inception workshop, community sensitisation meetings, focus-group discussions, a district planning workshop, a five-day scenario-planning workshop and a community feedback tour. Throughout these sessions district officials, ward leaders, community representatives and technical staff confirmed drought impacts, listed existing coping strategies and selected anticipatory actions that are practical, locally led and acceptable to women, men, girls and boys. Ground-truthing exercises and open information sharing were used to keep the process transparent and to make sure that the anticipatory actions match conditions on the ground.

The AAP matches national and district policy. It answers the Districts Civil Protection Plans, which put drought first, and it supports the National Development Strategy 1 aims on food security and water infrastructure. By linking regular disaster-risk-reduction tasks such as conservation farming and irrigation to rapid, funded anticipatory action, the plan bridges the gap between long-term resilience work and short-term relief. Government departments, donors, NGOs, private firms and community groups can use the document to see what will happen, when and by whom. To ensure relevance and adaptability, the AAP will be reviewed and updated regularly following each activation or as risk conditions evolve.

1.2. Introduction of the AAP custodians

ACF Zimbabwe

Action Against Hunger (ACF) has been registered in Zimbabwe since 2004 and has operated across all provinces. ACF has worked in Mwenezi and Chiredzi districts for more than 10 years, and in Kariba District since 2021. ACF has implemented a wide range of humanitarian responses in Zimbabwe, including the emergency response to Cyclone Idai in 2019. It has also responded to multiple localized cholera outbreaks (including in Chiredzi District), the Tokwe-Mukosi floods and associated internal displacement in Mwenezi District in 2014, as well as COVID-19, drought, and flood responses. Response modalities have included non-food item (NFI) distributions; WASH hardware provision and trainings; WASH management and capacity strengthening in internal displacement camps; cash distributions; seed distributions; nutrition trainings; and trainings for Ministry of Health staff and village health workers, among others. Since 2016, ACF has primarily worked through local implementing partners, with Nutrition Action Zimbabwe (NAZ) being one of ACF's core partners.

Nutrition Action Zimbabwe (NAZ)

Nutrition Action Zimbabwe (NAZ) was established in 2014 and is registered as a Private Voluntary Organisation (PVO) with the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare. Initial years were dedicated to developing the capacity of other local NGOs within the Zimbabwe Scaling up Nutrition network. Full operations began in 2016. NAZ has worked with ACF in Chiredzi and Mwenezi since 2016 and has also been working in Kariba since 2021. In partnership with ACF, NAZ contributed to Cyclone Idai response and recovery efforts, as well as to seasonal drought responses and rapid-onset flooding responses. Key interventions have included cash programming, nutrition screening, and training of health care workers and caregivers on nutrition screening and treatment for malnourished children.

1.3. AAP validation

In December 2024, formal validation workshops were convened in each district under the leadership of the District Civil Protection Committee (DCPC), bringing together representatives from the District Development Coordinator's Office, sector ministries, local authorities, police, traditional leadership, NGOs and other partners. Participants reviewed the complete AAP template - including the trigger model, anticipatory actions, targeting criteria, budget and roles and responsibilities - confirmed its relevance to the district context and endorsed it for implementation. This process was complemented by simulation exercises that tested trigger interpretation, decision-making and communication procedures in real time, strengthening institutional readiness in all the 3 districts. Comments and recommendations from validation events and community feedback sessions were incorporated into the final version of the district-specific AAPs, which formed the basis for this consolidated AAP.

1.4. Addendum to the AAP

In 2026, after extensive consultation with the community members and district holders an addendum to the AAP has been developed to reflect seasonal activities and triggers. As a result, a Window 1 and a Window 2 in Chiredzi, Mwenezi and Kariba districts were added to the AAP. The chosen activities for window 1, -supplementary livestock feed, garden seeds, small grain production, and poultry production- are strategically aligned with the agricultural calendar and the immediate needs of the communities.

Seasonal Activities and Triggers

Window 1- October to December Activation:

Activities will focus on supplementary livestock feed, garden seeds, small grain production, and poultry production.

These interventions are designed to support the community during the onset of the planting season, ensuring both food availability and long-term sustainability.

Window 2- January to April Activation:

Should the trigger fall within this window, the focus will shift to providing food/cash support for the lean season, ensuring that households have the necessary resources to meet their immediate needs and sustain themselves during potential food shortages.

1.5. Budget

Fuel Budget Window 1

#		1 district	All districts
	Fuel Activities	103.868	311.605
	Agricultural Inputs	21.552	64.656
	Chicken Starter Packs & Livestock feed	33.932	101.795
	Agricultural Trainings	2.137	6.41
	Water Supply	20.65	61.949
	Transportation of goods	10.256	30.769
	MEAL Activities	15.342	46.026
	Staff costs	23.159	69.476
	ACF Staff	13.31	39.932
	NAZ Staff	9.848	29.544
	Other Expenses	4.967	14.9
	Admin Lump sum	9.061	27.184
Total EUR		Approx. 141.055	423.165

Fuel Budget Window 2

#		1 district	All districts
	Fuel Activities	119.278	357.833
	Agricultural Inputs	87.179	261.538
	Transportation of goods	13.077	39.231
	MEAL Activities	19.021	57.064
	Staff costs	18.358	55.073
	ACF Staff	11.24	33.721
	NAZ Staff	7.117	21.352
	Other Expenses	4.551	13.652
	Admin Lump sum	9.848	29.545
Total EUR		Approx. 152,034	456,103

The total budget for Window 1 is EUR 423,165, which is structured into three district-specific envelopes of approx. EUR 141,055 each for Chiredzi, Kariba, and Mwenezi, to be made available only upon activation. The total budget for Window 2 is EUR 456,103, which is likewise divided into three district-specific envelopes of approx. EUR 152,034 per district. Activations are district-specific: if trigger conditions are met in one district but not in others, only the corresponding district envelope (Window 1 or Window 2, as applicable) will be released for implementation, while the remaining district envelopes will remain on hold unless and until they are activated separately.

2 Risk Analysis

2.1. Hazard overview and target locations

Zimbabwe is placed 171 / 187 in the 2021 ND-GAIN index, occupying the high-vulnerability / low-readiness quadrant of the ND-GAIN matrix (Figure 1). Historical records show recurrent El Niño-related droughts and prolonged dry spells since the 1970s, leading to repeated harvest failures and chronic food deficits.

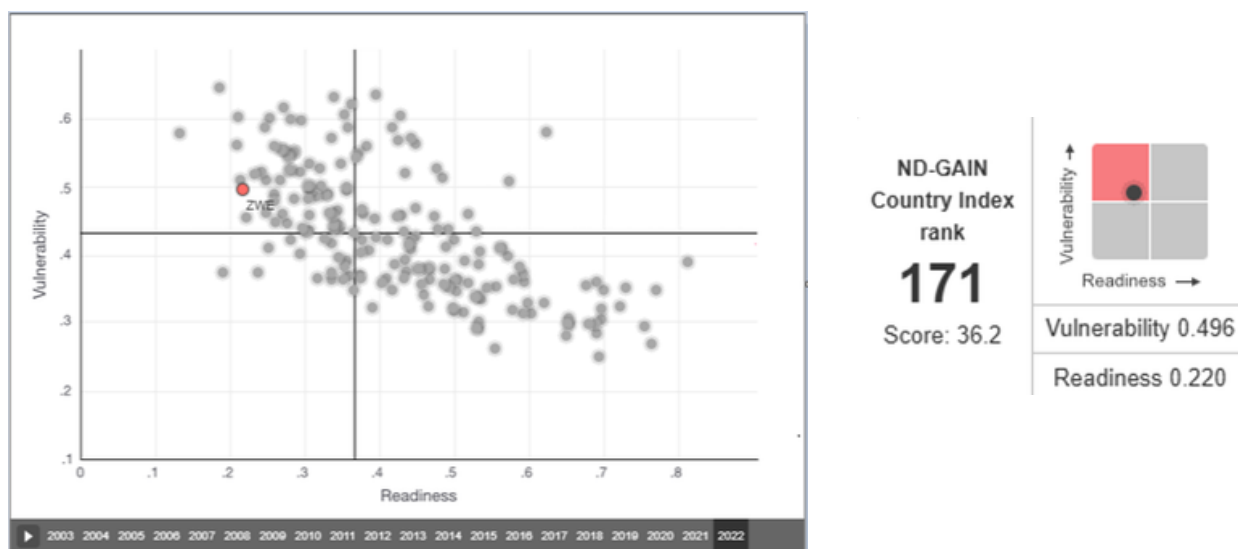


Figure 2 Country vulnerability to climate change and readiness source: ND-GAIN Index (2021)

Rainfall and NDVI time series for Chiredzi and Mwenezi confirm strong inter-annual variability, with seasons of severe deficit becoming more frequent in recent decades. In Kariba, poor soils and very low rainfall compound the impact of drought, resulting in 2–3 significant drought events per decade (compare World Bank, 2021 below). National and regional risk indices (INFORM, ND-GAIN) rank Zimbabwe high for drought hazard and exposure and low on readiness, underscoring the need for anticipatory planning.

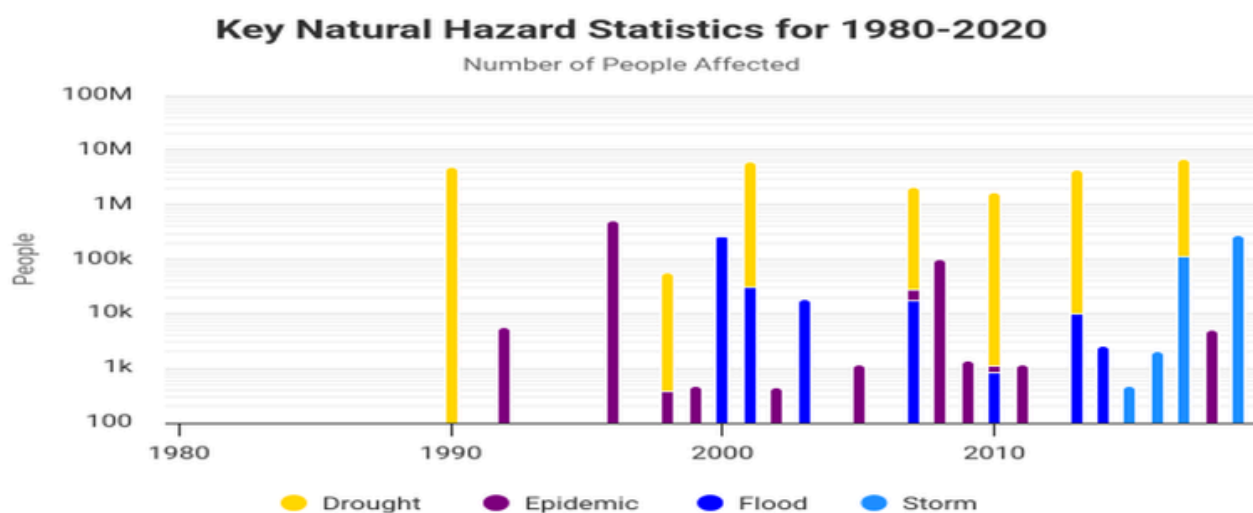


Figure 3: Key Natural hazard statics

Across all three districts, livelihoods depend heavily on rain-fed smallholder agriculture and livestock. When rainfall fails or is poorly distributed, crop yields collapse, pastures and surface water dry up and households face food shortages, livestock deaths, water scarcity and loss of income, with knock-on effects on nutrition, education and social protection.

A detailed hazard overview per district is available in Annex 1.

2.2. Impact analysis

Qualitative data was collected using focus group discussions (FGDs) to identify and rank impacts. People were organised and categorised into seven groups: women, men, older people, youth, people with disabilities, local leaders, and government employees. This categorisation aimed to enhance stakeholder participation by creating an environment that encourages all participants to contribute their ideas freely. Participants were randomly selected by community leaders, i.e., councillors, headmen, and village heads. Enumerators facilitated data collection. Respondents and participants in the FGDs were asked about the main impacts of drought and identify and prioritise EAs that can address those challenges. 120 individuals participated in the FGDs, with 40 females and 80 males. The target populations included all community members, ensuring the representation of vulnerable groups such as older people and individuals with disabilities.

Response from communities showed that the immediate effects of drought are food shortages for both people and livestock, as well as water scarcity that could result in water-borne diseases in humans and the death of animals. Furthermore, they reported a decline in income, as cash crops serve as their primary source of revenue. Additionally, there is likely to be a rise in malnutrition among children, which can be attributed to a decrease in dietary variety. Among other impacts, the following have also been noted as consequences of the drought: increased incidents of theft, conflicts such as gender-based violence, a rise in child labour, child marriages and higher rates of school dropouts.

The below seasonal calendar summarizes key climate patterns, livelihood activities, vulnerability factors, drought impacts, and potential anticipatory actions.

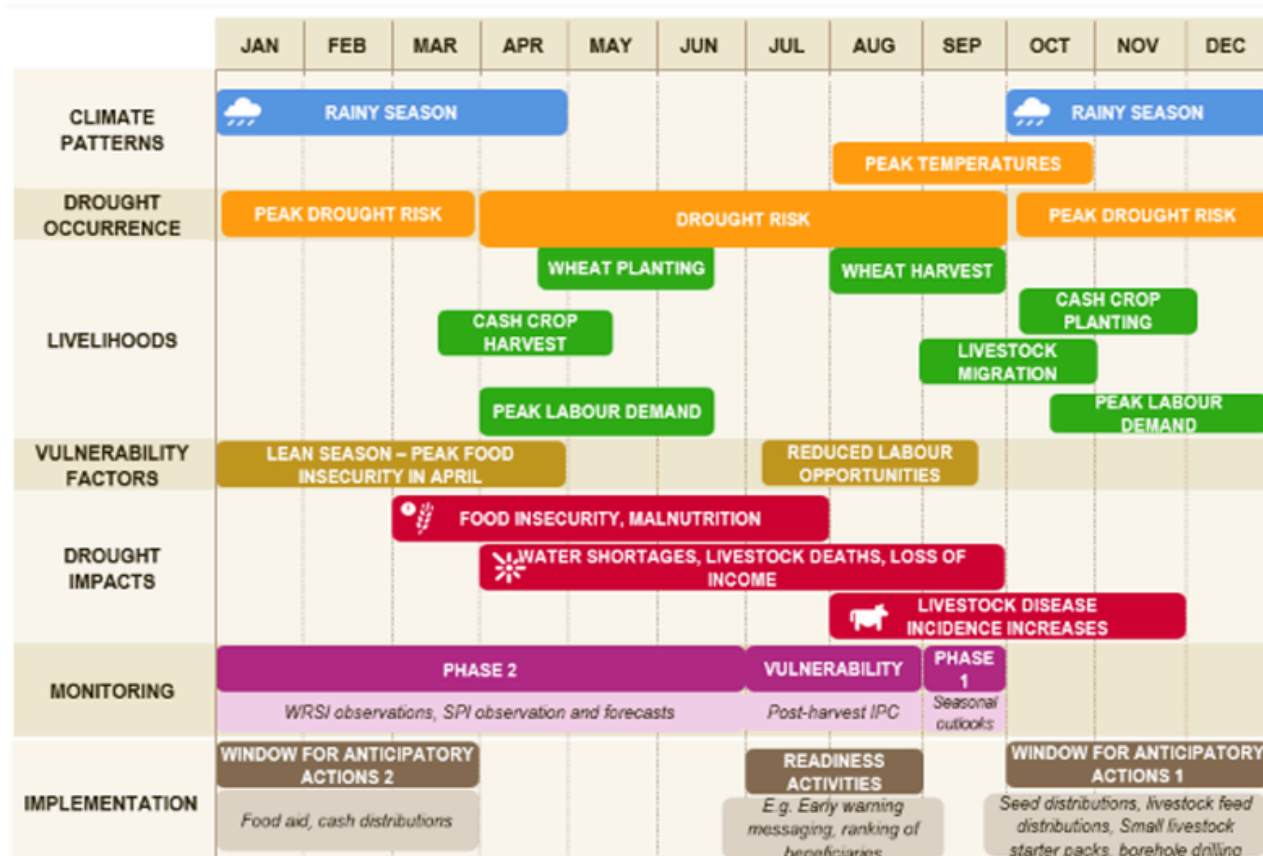


Figure 4: Seasonal calendar

2.3. Vulnerabilities and capacities

Chiredzi

The vulnerability of communities in Chiredzi is reduced by various capacities which communities have and implement to mitigate drought impacts and ensure food security. These include:

- Establishment of Community Gardens, which serve as a vital source of nutrition (vegetables and crops). Zunde raMambo System is a traditional agricultural practice that gathers community members to pool their resources for collective farming efforts. Under the leadership of local chiefs, communities cultivate communal fields, which will provide food for vulnerable households.
- In addition, communities receive remittances from family members working in South Africa; this financial assistance is crucial for purchasing food and other essential supplies, particularly during periods of drought when local resources may be scarce.
- In severe drought, some households sell livestock, such as cattle or goats, to generate the necessary funds for food purchases.
- To adapt to the challenges of low rainfall, communities focus on growing drought-tolerant crops such as pearl millet, sorghum, and rapoko. These grains require less water and are better suited to hot/dry conditions.
- Moreover, local leaders, NGOs, and community stakeholders actively collaborate to mobilise vital support and resources during drought conditions. This includes organising food aid/distributions, securing access to clean water, and facilitating drought relief programs that target affected families.
- Communities leverage early warning systems and reliable weather forecast services to anticipate drought conditions accurately. With information from AGRITEX, farmers adjust their planting strategies, prioritise water conservation measures, and stockpile food in preparation for potential shortages. Regular crop and livestock assessments allow community leaders to gauge the extent of drought impacts on local agriculture. By analysing crop performance, through the help of local government stakeholders, communities can better plan for food distribution and identify households that may need additional support.
- Many farmers adopt sustainable agricultural practices such as conservation, minimum tillage, mulching, and crop rotation. These methods enhance soil moisture retention, improve fertility, and increase crop resilience, ultimately leading to better harvests even under challenging conditions.

Kariba

Despite persistent drought conditions, communities in Kariba have adopted various strategies to reduce their vulnerability.

- In drought-prone wards like Mola, Nebiri, and Kasvisva, households cultivate drought-tolerant crops such as millet, sorghum, and cowpeas. Some farmers also practise conservation agriculture techniques like mulching and contour ridging to retain soil moisture and improve fertility.
- Traditional coping mechanisms remain vital. These include storing food and water and managing livestock through supplementary feeding or destocking during severe droughts. Rainwater harvesting and small dam construction are common local efforts to improve water access, often supported by NGOs and government extension services.

- Innovative practices, such as small-scale irrigation and experimenting with resilient crop varieties, are emerging. However, poverty, poor infrastructure, and the high cost of drilling boreholes due to the low water table hinder broader adaptation. Rain-fed farming remains the primary livelihood for most households.
- Stakeholder consultations identified smallholder farmers, women, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities as the most vulnerable. Women face challenges accessing land and credit, while children's nutrition and education are disrupted during drought. These layered vulnerabilities highlight the need for inclusive, well-targeted mitigation strategies to build community resilience.

Mwenezi

Agriculture is the primary livelihood source for most of the population in Mwenezi.

- Due to the challenging agro-climatic conditions, relying on crop production is often uncertain; therefore, livestock production becomes a significant supplementary source, particularly for wealthier households.
- The district also depends on employment opportunities and remittances. Mwenezi Sugar Cane Estate, located near Rutenga, is the largest employer in the district, offering both formal and informal jobs.
- Remittances play an essential role in the livelihoods of several households.
- Various initiatives have been established to encourage the cultivation and use of traditional grains among farmers, including providing food aid rations composed of these grains. The presidential input support programs have also promoted conventional grains by substituting maize seed packages in the Mwenezi district with sorghum and pearl millet seeds, which are more suitable for the local climate.

3 Trigger Model

3.1. Trigger statements

This Drought AAP is activated when the WFP 'Ready, Set, Go' drought monitoring system, which is functional from June to November, reaches the 'Set' level for any or several of the target districts (Chiredzi, Kariba, Mwenezi) during EITHER Monitoring Window One (October to December) OR Monitoring Window Two (January to April). Aligned with recommendations of WFP and MSD, in 2024, we used the "below normal" drought scenario ($SPI \leq -0.44$) as threshold, whereas for 2025, a "moderate to extreme dry" threshold of $SPI \leq -0.85$ is used (a drought with a 5-year return period). The threshold to be used is to be assessed again for 2026.

The 'Ready, Set, Go!' drought monitoring system developed by the World Food Programme (WFP) and partners uses rainfall data and seasonal forecasts from the European Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (ECMWF) for activating anticipatory actions against drought in both Zimbabwe and Mozambique. The system is designed to identify and initiate anticipatory actions for droughts lasting over two months during the target districts' main agricultural season (October–March). It uses a "Ready, Set/Go" double-confirmation approach, requiring drought indicators to be met for two consecutive months before action is taken.

Daily CHIRPS rainfall estimates are used to calculate the Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI), a widely used and WMO-recommended indicator for meteorological drought. The SPI values are calculated using a 2- and 3-month accumulation period (known as SPI2 and SPI3) to detect rainfall anomalies, identifying potential 1-in-3-year and 1-in-5-year drought events. Use of SPI2 and SPI3 enables forecasting of long dry spells (over two months), with standardized thresholds (e.g., $SPI < -0.85$) indicating a moderate to severe event based on historical data.

Forecasts, derived from ECMWF ensemble models are translated into forecasted SPI and provide at least one month of lead time for interventions. Early information from mid-July can trigger the “Set” phase of preparedness. For a forecast to trigger either the ready or set phase, the percentage of ensemble members or probability must exceed the trigger threshold based on the statistical analysis. For the 2025-26 season these can be found in Table 1.

Indicator	Category	Window	Issue Ready	Issue Set	Trigger Ready	Trigger Set	Season
SPI OND	Moderate	1	6	7	0.21	0.26	2025-26
SPI OND	Moderate	1	7	8	0.07	0.26	2025-26
SPI NDJ	Moderate	1	7	8	0.29	0	2025-26
SPI NDJ	Moderate	1	8	9	0.05	0.28	2025-26
SPI DJF	Moderate	2	8	9	0.17	0.26	2025-26
SPI DJF	Moderate	2	9	10	0	0.36	2025-26
SPI JFM	Moderate	2	10	11	0.16	0.26	2025-26

Table 1: Trigger Thresholds

ACF, NAZ, MSD and district stakeholders through the online PRISM dashboard operated by WFP and MSD-provided monthly bulletins will monitor this system closely. The national Meteorological Services Department also uses this model to cross validate the national seasonal outlook forecast.

3.2. Stop mechanism

The Stop Mechanism for the Drought Anticipatory Action Plan is designed to address situations where a drought trigger is erroneously activated, ensuring efficient resource use and maintaining stakeholder trust. Following the activation of a drought trigger, a defined verification window of 14- 30 days allows for continuous monitoring of meteorological, hydrological, and socio-economic data from reliable sources such as national meteorological agencies and ground-truthing reports. Anticipatory actions may be halted if two or more criteria are met, including a significant drop in forecast skill, exceeding rainfall observations, or local reports of normalizing conditions. The District Drought Relief Committee will convene a Trigger Review Panel to make decisions within 7 days, documenting the findings in a formal "False Trigger Review Report." All implementing agencies will be promptly informed of the halt, with community outreach conducted through trusted local channels to clarify the pause's rationale and the commitment to resume actions if risks escalate. Resources that were set aside for anticipatory actions will be either redirected to areas with confirmed needs or reserved for other rapid onset hazards. An after-action review will follow to refine forecast interpretation and enhance future trigger thresholds, reinforcing accountability and community trust throughout the process.

4 Anticipatory Actions

4.1. Identification and prioritization of anticipatory actions

Following the inception workshops designed to give the project overview and goals and identify vulnerable wards for developing anticipatory actions, community sensitisation efforts were conducted to share the same and enhance the community's understanding of drought risks, vulnerabilities, and the purpose of these anticipatory actions. This was accompanied by focus group discussions aimed at assessing the impacts of drought on livelihoods, food security, and water resources. During these discussions, participants proposed a wide range of anticipatory actions to mitigate these impacts effectively. A comprehensive list of drought impacts and corresponding anticipatory actions was created (see district specific AAPs for reference). However, only some anticipatory actions could be prioritised for implementation under WAHAFA to ensure feasibility and alignment with available resources. These actions were ranked based on their importance and potential effectiveness in reducing vulnerability and suffering, as indicated in the table below.

Prioritised impacts	Prioritised anticipatory actions	Window of opportunity
i. Food shortages ii. Shortage of water	i. Food aid Provision of drought tolerant agricultural inputs (small grain seeds) ii. Borehole rehabilitation/solarization	January to March September to December October to December
iii. Livestock deaths	iii. Livestock feed	October to December
iv. Loss of income	iv. Income-generating activities, e.g. small livestock and nutritional gardens	September to December

Table 2: Prioritised anticipatory actions

The communities and stakeholders indicated that the main impact of drought was food shortage, and to address this, food and voucher assistance was deemed the main priority (cash-based assistance to support food needs was considered as well but can currently not be implemented due to restrictions applied by the authorities). Anticipatory action to mitigate food insecurity aims to mitigate negative coping mechanisms such as school dropouts, child labour, early marriages, and incidents of gender-based violence. It was also noted that food assistance could help diminish other harmful coping mechanisms like illegal hunting and charcoal production. Food assistance takes the form of agricultural inputs if implemented in Window 1, when planting is still feasible, and is provided via food voucher commodities if activated in Window 2.

Water shortage was reported to be the second most important impact of drought, after food. Many water sources in the three districts run dry due to drought, increasing cases of dehydration and water-borne diseases as people struggle to find water. Borehole solarization and rehabilitation was identified as an anticipatory action to mitigate shortages and help curb

the spread of diseases linked to using contaminated water sources. This activity was prioritized in window 1 to mitigate against livestock deaths and support some of the income generating activities also prioritized for window 1 i.e., nutrition gardens and small livestock production.

Thirdly, income-generating activities like nutrition gardening and small livestock rearing can help to mitigate the impacts of crop shortfalls and livestock loss. Providing livestock feed, drugs and indigenous chicken starter packs help the community rely on small livestock production for income and sustenance and to keep existing livestock healthy. The stakeholders and communities agreed to implement this in window 1 as it helps to diversify the communities' food, income and livelihoods options, thereby reducing the impacts of a drought.

To support anticipatory actions prioritized for window 1, communities and stakeholders suggested that there be training of farmers on chicken production, cattle production, small grain production, vegetable production, and livestock feed production, feed formulation and processing. These will enhance the knowledge of farmers on proper utilization of the inputs provided, ensuring improved production, yield and income. Additionally, there is need to train water point committees on water governance and water point management and maintenance for sustainability.

4.2. Anticipatory actions and their theories of change

Food Aid

The Theory of Change for food aid in the three districts addresses food insecurity driven by climate change, limited access to climate-smart technologies, and reliance on rain-fed agriculture and livestock, which are vulnerable to drought. When a forecasted drought trigger is reached, and early warning is communicated, food aid is activated by ACF/NAZ and local authorities. This will be in form of agricultural inputs if activation is achieved in Window 1 (October to December) which coincides with the start of the farming season, where 3,600 households of 18,000 individuals will be supported with drought tolerant small grain seeds. For Window 2 (January to March), if the intervention is timely, with clear targeting, proper logistics, and sufficient food baskets, 12,000 individuals from 2,400 vulnerable households receive food assistance. This support helps prevent the use of negative coping mechanisms and ensures all household members benefit, ultimately stabilizing the food security situation in the district. The process depends on accurate forecasts, readiness of implementers, availability of supplies, and consistent, well-targeted distribution.

Borehole rehabilitation/solarization

To improve access to safe water for domestic and productive (livestock and gardens) use, the plan will focus on rehabilitating (and solarizing) non-functional water points. Nine boreholes will be rehabilitated, with each borehole supporting between 150 to 250 households with clean water. Training local water-point committees and hygiene awareness campaigns will ensure sustainable use and reduce the risks of waterborne diseases.

Income-generating activities

To safeguard household assets and diversify livelihoods options, communities prioritized support for income-generating activities to enable them to meet their basic food and non-food needs. This intervention includes provision of small livestock starter kits i.e., point of lay indigenous chickens, chicken feed and basic veterinary drugs to reduce the negative impacts of drought on household nutrition and food security. Additionally, supporting nutrition garden/vegetable production was seen as an intervention with potential for enhancing food access, dietary diversity and income generation. A total of 300 households will be supported with small livestock starter kits while 750 households will be supported with vegetable seeds for production in the nutrition gardens. These interventions will be supported with water from the borehole rehabilitation activities.

Livestock feed

Livestock feed distribution follows the same anticipatory logic: a clear forecast, communicated warning, shared understanding of the APP, readiness to act and a correctly timed intervention window are treated as indispensable pre-conditions. Once these are met, livestock-feed suppliers are secured, vulnerable livestock identified and feed delivered monthly during three rounds, enabling 4,500 animals to survive. Additionally, the farmers will be supported with inputs and training on production and processing of livestock fodder to enable them to protect their livestock from drought impacts in the long term. By reducing livestock deaths, improving animal health, consumption and conception rates, the intervention keeps families from distress-selling animals, destocking or overgrazing and thereby maintains their asset base; in consequence the livestock-feed situation, and by extension household food security, is stabilised throughout the drought period.

5. Operationalisation

5.1. Trigger monitoring guidelines

The agreed monitoring guidelines are:

- WFP avails updated forecasts of its Ready-Set-Go Model via the PRISM dashboard.
- The food security and livelihoods manager of ACF and food security and livelihoods manager of NAZ, who collectively form the 'WAHAFA project team' are responsible for monitoring the dashboard and establishing whether the thresholds in the trigger model are reached, i.e. this plan is activated.
- Trigger model activation will be validated with WHH (which includes preparedness, finance, procurement and programme colleagues)
- If the trigger model is activated, ACF will communicate with government stakeholders, the global WAHAFA team and community leaders in the affected district(s).
- Community leaders will support 'ground-truthing' by providing information on local warning signs of an upcoming drought. These local warning signs are highly contextually specific and include animal behaviour and timing of tree blossoms. Information on local warning signs is collected to support early warning messaging.

Any actions taken for drought that do not materialise are taken on a 'no regrets' basis. In the event anyone disputes the activation, they have 24 hours to provide feedback, with the final decision to activate taken by ACF and NAZ (the 'WAHAFA project team') in coordination with WHH's WAHAFA team, referring to the sources in this AAP.

5.2. Organisational preparedness / readiness

Organizational preparedness and operationalisation of the AAP actions are guaranteed through the following processes and procedures of ACF and NAZ:

- Predefined ToRs of departments/staff,
- Existing Memorandum of Understanding with the host district authorities
- Existing framework agreements with suppliers and service providers
- Existing checklist for processes, approval and grant management
- Operational planning

Specific responsibilities and tasks for ACF and NAZ department staff involved in the implementation of the AAP:

Department/Staff	Responsibilities and tasks
Project Management	Provide guidance and backstopping throughout the operationalisation and implementation of anticipatory actions. Coordinate and communicate with the different departments to ensure processes are initiated and completed according to timelines. Engage relevant stakeholders at the district and provincial levels to ensure swift planning and implementation. Liaise with relevant institutions and networks at the national level
Finance	Manage financial systems and procedures Ensure proper budgeting and follow-up Contract reputable cash transfer agencies for cash distribution Put in place controls to ensure the correct beneficiaries receive their funds Reconcile the cash advanced to the agent against the signed and acknowledged distribution lists Timely donor reporting
HR	Staff recruitment Contracting compliance for staff working under the project Review of compliance to the budget, local and donor rules in terms of salary and benefits payments to the staff Capacity building and technical support on compliance with the labour laws/regulations, including for staff managed under these projects
Logistics	Assess the security situation / the risk associated with the cash distribution model and map a security plan. Fleet management Supply chain management Assess the challenges encountered in the network and ways to mitigate those. Point of contact with the service provider
Compliance	Ensure sub-award agreement with the local partner is in place and complied with Review the signed distributions list to ensure that cash distributed to beneficiaries reaches the intended targets. Ensure organisational policy, donor regulations, and procedures are complied with during the implementation.

MEAL	Undertake beneficiary selection processes, i.e., registration and verification. Undertake quality assessments PDMS, Cash distribution quality assessment Set up and monitor beneficiary feedback mechanism Data management, M&E Compilation and quality assurance of reports
FSL field coordination	Facilitate FSL training, e.g., VSL, cash or food distribution committee training, DRR/DRM, good agricultural practices facilitate distributions (cash, food, inputs) Monitor project activities Report writing

Table 3: Roles and Responsibilities ACF and NAZ for AAP implementation

ACF and NAZ's existing framework agreements with service providers, financial institutions or other suppliers

- Cash distribution – Mukuru, Econet Wireless
- Food aid – Mukuru, Gain
- Vehicle rental, fuel suppliers
- Security services
- Visibility and communication materials

Admin Planning

Checklists and procedures in place to facilitate the implementation of anticipatory actions:

- Admin processes: treasury forecast, employee file checklist, accountancy monthly and end-of-project closure checklist, Office set-up and closure checklist, and Security protocol checklist.
- Approval: Authorised signature list for bank approvals and procurements
- Grant management: Monthly BFUs, Shared cost allocation guide

District stakeholders receive a thorough introduction and briefing about organisational procedures and operationalisation during a district inception meeting to clarify implementation processes and expectations. Project participants/beneficiaries are also briefed about the different organisational procedures and field processes before the commencement of the anticipatory actions.

Checklists and procedures in place to facilitate the implementation of anticipatory actions

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- Approval – Authorised Signature list for bank approvals and procurements
- Grant management – Monthly BFUs, Shared cost allocation guide

ACF internal processes

- Request/transfer of fuel funds from WAHAFa
- Agreements/ Amendments with partners (operational agreement between ACF Zimbabwe and NAZ)

- Fund's transfer (to NAZ)
- Staff hiring/training

NAZ internal processes

- Operational agreement with ACF
- Receipt of fuel funds from ACF Zimbabwe
- Adapt project tools and SoPs (beneficiary registration tool, beneficiary lists, PDM tool, feedback and complaints mechanisms)
- Framework agreements with service providers (e.g., livestock feed suppliers)
- Procurement of required material (PPE, stationery, materials for response)

5.3. Anticipatory actions implementation step by step

The actions to be taken include:

- Stakeholder sensitisation
- Community sensitisation
- Baseline data collection
- Engagement of commodity suppliers. Initiate procurement process
- Beneficiary registration
- Data cleaning
- Beneficiary verification
- Selection and training of food distribution point committee members
- Mobilisation for food distributions
- Food distributions
- Carry out PDMs
- Food distribution reports
- Nutrition, Gender and AAP dialogues
- Endline data collection
- Evacuation
- Relocation
- Identification of malnourished children
- Identification of potential boreholes
- Capacity testing
- Training of Water Point committees

Annex 2 provides a district-specific list of these actions with the responsible focal point and their contact information.

5.4. Selection strategy for population(s) at risk

The Anticipatory Action Plan intends to cover the most vulnerable, and a bottom-up approach was used to identify the households most at risk of drought. The following table summarizes vulnerability group profiles and characteristics.

Group A Already resilient	Already resilient: These households are food secure and resilient, benefiting from growth and development through their efforts. They are likely to manage difficult seasons and shocks without emergency assistance and would benefit from social programs – such as health, education, further capacity development, early warning, etc. Participants agreed that this group would have modernised farming equipment such as tractors, estate owners owning more than 50 hectares of land with some access to irrigation, diversified sources of income (business ventures), and be able to hire both temporary and permanent labour force. Surplus reserves for food stocks, own more than 50 cattle and have reliable remittances. Overall, they have adopted better farming and livestock practices.
Group B Food secure under no major shocks	Food secure under no major shocks: These households are moderately resilient and vulnerable to not meeting food needs during difficult seasons or in the event of shocks without compromising assets or livelihoods through negative coping strategies. On top of social programs, this group may require seasonal support or emergency assistance during crises to safeguard assets. It was identified that households that lost significant holdings in recent years risk sliding downwards (into Group C or D) if not supported with development and asset creation programs. Participants identified these households as having access to some productive assets (farming equipment), owning livestock (both big and small livestock) (20+ cattle), having access to adequate arable farming land and using both own household and hired labour. They have access to suitable housing and water /sanitation and receive consistent remittances while they can afford to send children to mission boarding schools.
Group C Food insecure from last or consecutive shocks	Highly food insecure from last or consecutive shocks: These households have become highly food insecure due to eroded coping strategies from the war, coupled with constant exposure to difficult seasons and shocks, hindering their ability to recover by rebuilding lost assets and livelihoods. They would benefit from recovery and resilience-building interventions while improving their access to food and other complementary support (e.g., social programs). Without such support, they risk sliding downwards into eventual destitution (Group D). This group has no reliable sources of income, works as casual labour, and may receive irregular remittances. They have limited livestock (around five livestock), limited draught power, small arable land (less than 5 ha) with inadequate farming equipment, and rely on small gardens. Most of these households live in communal areas, with difficulty sending children to secondary schools.

Group D Highly food insecure, vulnerable	Highly food insecure, including destitute: These highly food insecure households – including people in need - are the most vulnerable groups, with little or no asset ownership; they are labour-constrained and are likely to be supported by the community. This group is expected to be persistently (chronically) food insecure and require different programming support (e.g. social protection and alternative livelihoods). Participants identified those households with few means for self-support, labour constraints, and dependence on others, and they received little, irregular, or no remittances at all. They have few or no meaningful assets and will own no livestock. Their food harvest only lasts for less than a month; therefore, has no reserves. Hence, they live from hand to mouth and, more so, loan their land (3 ha) to others.
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Table 4 Vulnerability Group Profiles & Characteristics

The following table displays the percentage distribution of vulnerability groups in the population based on the DSD vulnerability classification of households, which was adopted at the scenario planning workshop.

Vulnerability groups	Vulnerability group profiles and characteristics	Proportion
A	Resilient, already benefiting from growth and development	8%
B	Meet food needs if no major shocks with moderate resilience	24%
C	Highly food insecure from last shock / consecutive shocks	50%
D	Highly food insecure, including destitute	18%

Table 4 Vulnerability Group Profiles & Characteristics

For assistance under the AAP, group C & D are to be prioritized, with D being the top priority.

5.5. Implementation MEAL

The Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) Plan for implementing Anticipatory Actions (AA) in response to drought triggers is designed to ensure effectiveness, transparency, and continuous improvement. Its objectives include monitoring the timely implementation of AAs, evaluating their outcomes, ensuring accountability to affected communities, and capturing lessons learned for future programming. Key MEAL activities involve:

- Implementation monitoring to ensure the effectiveness of the AA after trigger activation, focusing on outputs and process. ACF & NAZ will use their internal tools (Activity Progress Update for ACF) to track and ensure a smooth implementation of the activities identified.

- Outcomes monitoring to measure the immediate impact of the AA. Quantitative methodology will be used through household data collection at minima for baseline and endline. At least one Post Distribution Monitoring will be implemented to learn from the first distribution.
- Evaluation will focus on the trigger activation, regarding timeline, effectiveness and appropriateness of the mechanism used. This evaluation will use Key Informant Interview Focus group discussion with the different stakeholders (WFP, district authorities, local communities & leaders, implementation partners)
- Accountability mechanisms include community feedback systems, transparency measures, and inclusive targeting reviews to ensure equitable support for vulnerable groups.
- Learning activities, such as after-action reviews and lessons-learned reports, facilitate the documentation of findings and sharing of best practices.

Roles and responsibilities are clearly delineated among the AA coordination team, implementing partners, the MEAL unit, local authorities, and community leaders, ensuring a collaborative approach to data management and reporting through digital tools like Kobo Toolbox and ODK. Reporting frequencies include weekly & monthly situation updates during implementation, midline reports, and final evaluations, all aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of anticipatory actions in the face of climate-related hazards.

5.6. Financial flow process

Once a trigger is reached, ACF Zimbabwe/NAZ will send a request for release of pre-agreed FUEL funds to WHH/WAHAFA via ACF Germany. The WAHAFA HQ team will assess the request for activation. Once a positive decision is reached, the WAHAFA representative will share a "Notice to proceed" with ACF Germany. ACF Germany will in turn inform ACF France/Zimbabwe and Nutrition Action Zimbabwe of the permission to proceed. ACF France / Zimbabwe and Nutrition Action Zimbabwe will prefinance as soon as the notice to proceed is signed to ensure timely action.

WAHAFA

Welthungerhilfe (WHH) coordinates and implements the WHH Anticipatory Humanitarian Action Facility (WAHAFA), a three-year program funded by the German Federal Foreign Office, which provides WHH Country Offices, German NGOs and their local partner organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa, Syria and Yemen with the opportunity to implement their own AHA sub-projects in partnership with WHH. WAHAFA aims to identify and analyze hazard risks, support and scale the development of AHA mechanisms, and secure funding to implement these mechanisms.

WAHAFA supports access to essential key pillars of AHA:

WAHAFA ANTICIPATE AND ACT

Capacity Sharing

Build

Supports the development of Anticipatory Action Plans (AAPs), including risk analysis, trigger development, and definition of anticipatory actions.

Maintenance

Supports the updating, testing, and institutionalization of AAPs to ensure long-term readiness and functionality.

Fuel

Provides pre-arranged funding to roll-out AAPs and implement anticipatory actions once agreed triggers are reached.

How we work

WAHAFA places people, including communities, local stakeholders, and LHPs, at the center of efforts. To achieve this, WAHAFA has developed an AAP Custodianship approach, encouraging German NGOs to collaborate with LHPs. The LHPs take a leading role in developing the AAPs by contributing its unique skills and knowledge to the process. The custodian engages with actors at various levels, from community members to local and national governments.

WAHAFA ensures contextualized AAP development by providing guidance for community-based approaches. Involving a LHPs or CBOs as the custodian, in collaboration with stakeholders at different levels, creates a space for local actors to participate in designing processes and desired outcomes. This approach helps ensure that AAPs include anticipatory actions that are meaningful, relevant to the local context, and garner high acceptance and buy-in from people at all levels. Ultimately, this makes the entire process more sustainable and aligned with the needs of populations at risk from hazards.

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Anticipatory Action Plan (AAP)

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