



DEVELOPING RADIO PARTNERS

## Focus: Food and Nutrition Security

Zambia was reclassified by the World Bank as a lower middle income country in 2011, but still ranks 163 out of 186 countries on the 2012 Human Development Index (UNDP).

Despite improved economic performance, issues such as income inequality and poor access to services like health care have not been fully addressed. Numerous challenges burden the country, including high rates of malnutrition, poverty, food insecurity, HIV/AIDS and malaria.

While Zambia has reduced the rate of extreme poverty from 58 percent (1991) to 43 percent (2010), extreme poverty continues to be much higher in rural areas (57 percent) compared to urban areas (13 percent).

Zambia's food security challenges are worsened by a high dependence on rain-fed agriculture which is dependent on the weather and vulnerable to climate change impacts.

# The Weekly

## Information Resource Bulletin

The goals of the Weekly Bulletin are:

- Bring listeners in the project area the latest information on natural resources, the environment and agriculture
- Focus on solutions, what works and what people can do
- Encourage listeners to share both their questions and solutions (African solutions for African problems)
- Raise awareness of issues that need to be discussed to affect public policy.
- Bring the latest solutions and practices that have relevance to this region from around the world
- Identify and link other NGOs working in the region share the project interests and goals
- Give the participating journalists guidance and tips on their reporting on these issues

### Problem: Food and Nutrition Security

Zambia's food and nutrition security is still very poor as most people are dependent on rain-fed agriculture. Zambia's main diet is maize meal which is also very low in nutritional value.

As a result, malnutrition levels are still very high in the country because of these limited diet options.

The situation is becoming worse with the impact climate change is having on food security in Zambia.

The trend of frequent floods and droughts is continuing to affect rural communities. In fact, we see low production of some crops suitable for food and nutritional security in rural areas. For instance,

the Eastern province of Zambia was well known for production of groundnuts over the last 20 years; however, we see a decline in the production of such crops because of climate change impacts and poor marketing systems.

The government has been promoting maize crop production through the Fertilizer Support Programme and this has disadvantaged other crops which are not promoted by this programme.

There is need to increase awareness of food and nutritional security in the rural communities -- as noted by World Food Programme.

## Solutions: Activities for Journalists

Find out from your radio listeners about their food options and concerns.

The Ministry of Agriculture has introduced a food nutrition department. Are your listeners aware of it? Is it helpful?

Do your listeners think the weather is affecting their crops?

Are some farmers raising a variety of crops? If so, ask them why. Has crop diversification worked well for them?

Climate-smart agriculture encourages crop production with small livestock for the purposes of diversifying food security options.

Use your community radio station to talk about climate smart agriculture. Invite an expert to discuss it.

The Ministry of Health provides information to parents about child nutrition. Invite an expert to talk about nutrition on the radio. You might even have a panel discussion with experts and parents.

The Office of the Vice President has created a disaster management unit to provide support on the effects of climate change.

Ask listeners how much they know about this disaster management unit. Invite someone from the unit to talk about it on the radio.

The office of the District Commissioners can be used to get more information on the disaster management unit.

Food and nutritional security is a right of the citizens of Zambia.

Communities must consult the Ministry of Health and Department of Agriculture to know more about food and nutritional security for a healthy family. Your radio station can help get the word out.

Rain-fed agriculture is easily affected by climate change.

Communities need to understand climate-smart agriculture; this promotes food diversification at the household level.

Use your community radio station to discuss the principles of climate smart agriculture and food nutritional needs.

Consult local agriculture extension officers about climate-smart agriculture in your areas.

### Useful Links

Information about farming and the environment: Makweti Sishekanu, National Farmers Union Zambia: +260-211-252-649 or +260-965-098-360. Email: [makwetiskanu@yahoo.com](mailto:makwetiskanu@yahoo.com)

Mr Arone Simwanza Ministry of Agriculture's food processing expert +260 971 615367

Good source of information: Vincent Ziba,, FAO Zambia; Email: [vinceziba@yahoo.com](mailto:vinceziba@yahoo.com). Phone: 0966-246-924

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