



DEVELOPING RADIO PARTNERS

Focus: Vulnerability Assessment

The Zambia Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZVAC) is part of the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit (DMMU) which is a special unit under the office of the vice president. The committee is a multi-sectorial team for different government departments, the U-N system, NGOs and the private sector. The ZVAC conducts detailed vulnerability assessments and analysis to establish baseline information that helps disaster preparedness and also designs relief and development interventions.

In January 2016 the ZVAC released a report of an assessment 2015/16 rainfall performance, crop conditions and prospects for harvest in 2016 for food security in the country and has made recommendations on what needs to be done.

The Weekly for Zambia

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

The Problem: Food and Water Shortages

The January 2016 report by ZVAC has determined that 20% less crop land was cultivated in 2015/16 due to insufficient rain. The crop condition ranges from bad in Region I to good in Region III.

According to an analysis by the Water Management Authority, there has been a general downward trend in water levels in the Zambezi and Kafue River Basins attributed to below normal rains since the start of the 2015/16 growing season.

The Zambezi River Authority (ZRA) indicated that as of 11th January, 2016, the water flows at all stations on the

Zambezi main-stem were much below previous year levels.

In terms of power generation at Kariba, the electric company, ZESCO, will have to reduce generation from the annual average of around 700 megawatts to only 275MW in 2016. This reduction is necessary to allow the water in the dam to replenish until the next rain season.

If the Kariba continues to generate power at the current levels then a shut-down may occur at Kariba by July or August of this year. ZESCO will also have to reduce the power generation at Kafue Gorge Power Station from 650MW to 540MW.

Solutions: Activities for Journalists

The need to keep sensitising the community about the impact of the current poor rainfall due to the El Nino effect is very high. The community radio stations have a big role to play.

It is important to share the information in the report by the Zambia Vulnerability Assessment Committee with listeners.

Make listeners aware of how vulnerable their areas are due to poor rainfall. Most districts in Southern and Western provinces were badly affected by the dry spell. In the Southern province Gwembe and Sinazongwe in the valley were reported to have been the most affected.

The government is preparing for relief food in most of these districts to meet needs through the next rainy season.

Some recommendations from the ZVAC report should be shared on the radio:

- Promotion of planting early-maturing varieties of maize before 30th January, 2016 mainly in Southern and Western provinces;
- Promotion of early-maturing varieties of sorghum and millet in badly hit areas where possible;
- Promotion of crop diversification (legumes such as cowpeas and beans and vegetables)
- Promotion of water conservation measures such as pot holing, tied ridging in affected fields;
- Surveillance of livestock diseases; and
- Intensify livestock vaccination campaigns
- Sensitization of stakeholders on the energy situation;

- Sensitization of stakeholders on water rationing.
- Sustainable utilisation of forest products for food security
- Community monitoring committees of food situation and also prevalence of diseases.
- Encourage the civil servants working in rural areas to obtain the ZVAC reports and share with the local community on the implications of poor rainfall and what measures are encouraged.

Disaster preparedness is very important for local communities as they can save lives. The government through the office of the vice president has formed disaster management committees in the villages to assist in assessing the levels of vulnerability to any form of disaster. Ask listeners how much they know about the committees in their areas? Ask the district commissioners offices and the council secretaries for some details about the local committees. Invite the committee in your community to talk on the radio about their efforts.

Useful Links

Information about farming and the environment: Meteorology Department, Zambia Ranet project liaison person Reidner Mumbi, Email: rfemumba@yahoo.co.uk

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

Mwape Sichilongo, WWF Conservation Manager. Email: mwapesichilongo@wwfzam.org. Phone: +260 966442540

Information environmental degradation write to Irene Lungu of ZEMA on iglungu@zema.org.zm