

The Food and Nutrition Security, Enhanced Resilience (FANSER) Project in Zambia

Initiated by the *ONE WORLD – No Hunger* Special Initiative and part of the Agriculture and Food Security Programme Zambia

Background

Hunger and malnutrition are two of the greatest global challenges. In Zambia the majority of the rural population depends on subsistence agriculture, mostly engaging in the production of maize. Maize is dominating Zambian's diets and daily food intake.

The lack of food diversity leads to an insufficient micronutrient intake for the vast majority of the population. This is causing serious health conditions, especially for vulnerable groups such as pregnant and lactating women and young children, often resulting in irreversible physical and cognitive damage and impaired children's growth and development (stunting). According to the 2018 FAO report on the state of food security and nutrition in the world, Zambia ranks among the worst affected countries regarding malnutrition and hunger with a stunting rate of 35% among young children (ZDHS 2018). The stunting rates in Eastern Province are almost matching the national average (34.2%) while Luapula Province records an even more devastating rate of 44.9% were FANSER is being implemented. Over 50% of infants in the districts Katete, Petauke and Sinda in Eastern Province and Mwense, Kawambwa and Mwansabombwe in Luapula Province suffer from diarrhoea, indicating poor sanitation and hygiene environment (GIZ FUSII/NBS, 2020).

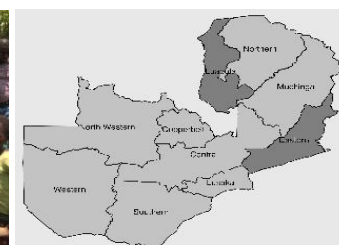
According to the FAO, dietary diversity can be described by the consumption of different types of food, classified for Zambia in 6 food groups. Food groups are based on the major nutrient content, the role of the foodstuffs in human nutrition. The FANSER baseline survey revealed that the dietary diversity in Eastern and Luapula provinces is low for both women and infants averaging to 40.5% and 48.9% respectively for both provinces.

Project name	Food and Nutrition Security, Enhanced Resilience (FANSER) Project in Zambia
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	Eastern Province: Petauke, Katete & Sinda Districts; Luapula Province: Kawambwa, Mwense & Mwansabombwe District
Political partner	National Food and Nutrition Commission (NFNC)
Implementing partners	Catholic Relief Services (CRS), governmental and non-governmental service providers.
Target population	110,000 women of reproductive age (15–49), 33 000 men and 64 000 children under the age of 2 years
Duration	2015 – 2025

Food and nutrition insecurity is particularly severe between December and March. This marks the period when rural households are running out of their own stocks of food and must buy additional food to meet their needs. However, many households lack the financial means and, therefore, hunger and food insecurity are at its peak.

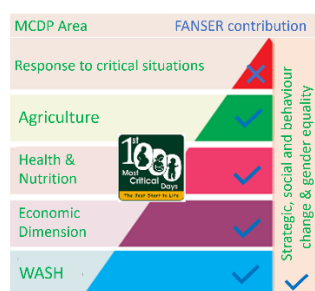
Political Framework

FANSER has been initiated by the **German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)** as part of the German Special Initiative *ONE WORLD – No Hunger*, which aims to address the challenge of hunger and malnutrition. GIZ has been commissioned to implement the global programme Food and Nutrition Security, Enhanced Resilience (FANSER) in 11 countries in Asia and Africa.



Eradicating hunger and malnutrition among mothers and small children is the most effective investment for their future. It is a priority for the Zambian government (GRZ), represented through the national **First 1,000 Most Critical Days Programme** phase two (MCDP II), which is the national implementation of the international Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement. The MCDP II was signed in April 2018 and started in 2019. GRZ, donors and partners agreed on (1) principles of collaboration including a minimum service package for all beneficiaries, (2) 90% outreach in the targeted districts and (3) a geographical division of labour to avoid duplication of efforts.

The minimum service package



Our approach

The FANSER Project aims to improve the nutritional situation for women of reproductive age and young children in the following **five fields of intervention**, corresponding to the MCDP minimum service package (*except critical situations*).

1. Increase knowledge about nutrition, change attitudes positively
2. Increase knowledge about hygiene, change attitudes positively
3. Increasing the year-round availability of nutrient-rich foods / nutrition-sensitive agriculture
4. Households have developed strategies to manage their household and productive resources
5. Strengthening nutrition governance at the district, provincial and national level

Furthermore, the project supports national communication initiatives and monitoring of the MCDP phase II under the coordination of the NFNC.

In addition to the overarching multi-sectoral approach, the FANSER Project is stimulating positive change on household-level. While poor adoption of new practices is often attributed to a lack of knowledge, individual attitudes towards new practices are also very important

contributing factors. They need to be positively addressed by special **behaviour change techniques** like positively framed messages and appropriate **communication** channels like videos, and nutrition sensitive playful instruments.

Since 2015, project implementation focused on the Eastern Province (Katete, Petauke); extended in 2019 to Luapula (Kawambwa, Mwense). Since 2021 the project also covers Sinda and Mwansabombwe districts.

Achievements

The project has **reached more than 65,000** women, **23,000** men and **32,000** children under the age of 2. These households have been trained on good nutrition and hygiene practices as well as in nutrition-sensitive agriculture, processing and storage methods. The results include:

- Innovative Care Group model implemented reached out to 66,658 women and 23,166 men.
- 66,658 women participated on trainings about hygiene.
- Strengthening of government agriculture extension services through the Lead Farmer model
- 35,183 cumulative households trained and supported with legume (Beans and Cowpeas), Vitamin-A rich Orange Maize and vegetable seeds or Orange Fleshed Sweet potatoes vines in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA).
- Innovative gardening concepts, including keyhole gardens and the use of treadle pumps have been successfully promoted.
- 27,169 households have been supported to engage in Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC), and 5626 households have been supported through the innovative Farmers Business School approach (FBS).
- Under the guidance of NFNC, the District Nutrition Coordinating Committees (DNCCs) have been formed in six districts and supported to develop annual multi-sector plans to improve coordination in food and nutrition security programming and implementation.

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	Food and Nutrition Security, Enhanced Resilience (FANSER) Project Zambia	Division:	Sondereinheit EINEWELT ohne Hunger - Special Initiative ONE WORLD - NO HUNGER
	1st Floor Evexia Office Building Plot No. 1014 Church Road, Fairview Private Bag RW 37X Lusaka, Zambia T +260 211 252 234	Address:	BMZ Bonn Dahlmannstraße 4 53113 Bonn, Germany T +49 (0)228 99 535-0 F +49 (0)228 99 5353500
			BMZ Berlin Stresemannstraße 94 10963 Berlin, Germany T +49 (0)30 18 535-0 F +49 (0)30 18 535 2501
Author(s):	FANSER Zambia		poststelle@bmz.bund.de www.bmz.de
		Project contact:	julia.kirya@giz.de

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