



JULY 2023

# Creating more resilient and equitable urban food systems in Southern Africa

A TOOLKIT FOR **ZAMBIAN** POLICYMAKERS AND URBAN PLANNERS



## Introduction

Many people living in Zambian cities and towns experience food insecurity. Food insecurity occurs when people do not have enough affordable and nutritious food to meet their daily needs for an active and healthy life.

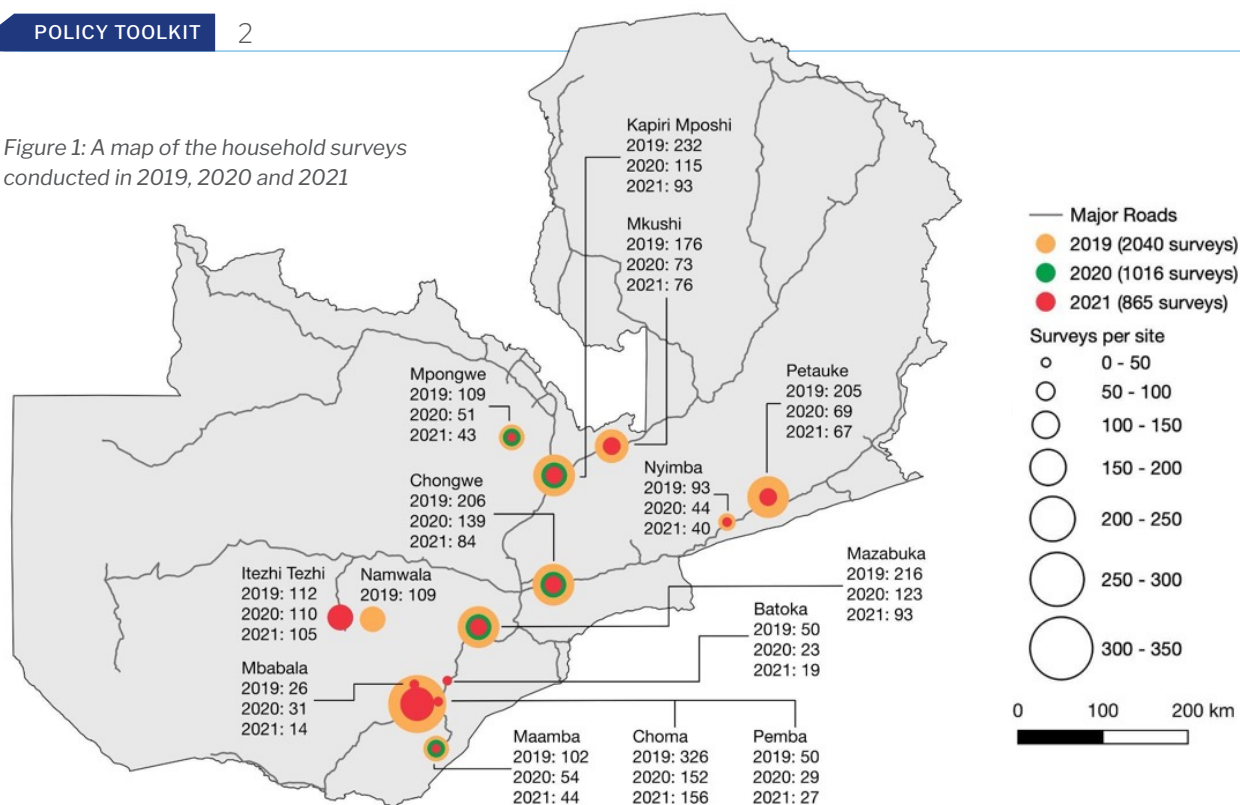
To better understand the challenges of food insecurity in Zambia's small to medium-sized urban areas, a team of researchers from the Ministry of Agriculture - Zambia Agricultural Research Institute and the University of Arizona (USA) **conducted household surveys in 14 Zambian cities in 2019, 2020, 2021** (see Figure 1).

**Households with a diverse range of household incomes participated in the survey.** In 2019, households reported an average income of 650 Kwacha per month. The households with the lowest incomes earned as little as 0 to 300 Kwacha per month and the households with the highest incomes earned as much as 1500 to 11180 Kwacha per month.

**In 2019, 40 percent of the households surveyed were food insecure.** Most households with lower incomes faced more hardships due to food insecurity compared to households with higher incomes. **Female-headed households with lower incomes especially faced greater hardships.**

To cope with food insecurity, some households reported that they rely on less expensive and less preferred foods, borrow food from relatives or friends, limit portion sizes at mealtime, restrict food eaten by adults so that children can eat, or reduce the number of meals that are eaten in a day. **Regardless of income level, however, households perceived a concern for high food prices to be the biggest challenge for maintaining household food security.** Maintaining employment and income of the household was a second challenge, followed by climate- or weather-related challenges as a third challenge.

Figure 1: A map of the household surveys conducted in 2019, 2020 and 2021



A **diverse urban food system** that enables appropriately affordable and nutritious food options for different types of households can **help reduce food insecurity**.

**Open air markets, street vendors, and local shops were important sources of food** for all households, especially among lower income households.

**Urban agriculture was also practiced by 40 percent of all households in 2019.** In 2020, during the COVID pandemic, this figure increased to 50 percent of all households and remained at a similar level at 48 percent in 2022. However, many households still face challenges with urban agriculture, such as not having the right inputs, enough water, or sufficient access to land.

**Some households obtain food from their own family farms** or from relatives and friends in the rural areas.

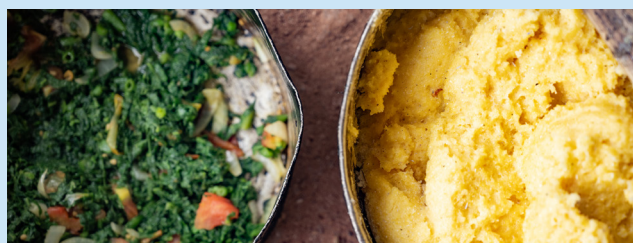


**Urban food systems also differ city to city, and have varying responses to shocks.** During COVID lockdowns in 2020, household visits to open air markets decreased significantly from 2019 in some cities (Mbabala, Maamba, Pemba, and Batoka), while visits to street vendors increased in other cities (Mkushi and Mpongwe). Some cities did not see significant changes in open air market visits (Nyimba, Petauke, Kapiri Mposhi, and Chongwe). The unique strengths and vulnerabilities of each city, including how decision makers support cities in response to shocks, can affect how households respond to food insecurity challenges.

To address these challenges, it is important to consider how different policies and actions can help to ensure access to safe, nutritious, affordable, and culturally appropriate food for all urban residents, both now and in the future.

### What is a resilient and equitable urban food system?

Resilient urban food systems embrace diverse food sources, both formal and informal, and strengthen the entire value chain against shocks. Equitable urban food systems ensure fair access to food for all residents.



## What actions can you take to promote resilient and equitable urban food systems in Zambia?

1

Learn more about the Constituency Development Fund (CDF).

2

Consider the important role of street vending and urban agriculture.



4

Learn more about national policies.

3

Learn more about local policies.

# 1 Learn more about the Constituency Development Fund (CDF).

The Constituency Development Fund (CDF) recently increased to K28.3 million per constituency in the 2023 National budget to account for inclusive development. The CDF can support government councils to implement policies and projects that improve urban food systems in Zambia. Here are some examples of how CDF funding has been used to support food system-related investments:



## Supporting urban agriculture:

In 2021, the CDF in Lusaka Province funded the construction of a fishpond in the Kaunda Square area. The fishpond provides a source of protein for residents and income for local fish farmers. The Kafue District Council has also proposed to use CDF funding to construct a new fishpond in the district, and the Southern Province Council has proposed to use CDF funding to construct a new irrigation system that will help to increase agricultural productivity in the province.



## Constructing new food processing and storage facilities:

In 2022, the CDF in Copperbelt Province funded the construction of a maize mill in Kitwe District. The maize mill will reduce processing costs for farmers and decrease purchasing costs for consumers. Additionally, the Copperbelt Province Council has proposed to use CDF funding to construct a new grain storage facility in the province.



## Upgrading and creating new markets:

In 2020, the CDF in Lusaka Province funded the upgrading of the Kanyama Market in Lusaka District. The market upgrading project included the construction of new stalls, the installation

of solar lighting, and the provision of sanitation facilities. These upgrades can help to improve the safety and convenience of food shopping for urban residents. The Lusaka District Council has also proposed to use CDF funding to construct a new vegetable market in the district. Markets have also been upgraded through CDF-funding in Chibombo District, Livingstone District, and elsewhere.



**Improving transportation networks:** In 2021, the CDF in North-Western Province funded the construction of a new road in the district of Solwezi, which improves access to agricultural markets for farmers in the district and makes it easier for food to be transported to urban areas.



## Empowering women and girls:

In Lusaka, the CDF was used to provide training in business management, marketing, and financial literacy to women who are market vendors. Financial support from this CDF has been used to purchase goods, rent stalls, and pay for other business expenses. In Ndola, the CDF was used to provide loans to women who are starting food-related businesses. In Kitwe, a market was constructed specifically for women using CDF funds, the aim being to provide women with a safe and secure space to sell their goods as well as access to water, sanitation, and other essential services. In Kabwe, the CDF supported a project that is training women in urban agriculture and providing them with access to land, seeds, and other agricultural inputs.

## 2

## Consider the important role of street vending and urban agriculture.

With investment and policy planning, street vending and urban agriculture may become important pillars in a resilient and equitable urban food system.



### Street vending:

Street vending provides both affordable food options for urban residents and income for vendors. Establishing clear guidelines and designated areas is essential for ensuring that vendors operate in a safe and organized manner. The government can provide resources, training, and support on food safety, finance, and business management. Local government authorities, along with the Ministry of Local Government and Commerce, Trade and Industry, are responsible for implementing regulations and creating a clear framework for street vending.



**Urban agriculture:** Urban agriculture can contribute to food security, poverty alleviation, and sustainable urban development. While some cities such as Ndola have local policies, a specific national policy could help to address unique challenges of urban farmers. Any local or national policies should consider land allocation, property rights, water availability, access to resources and inputs, technical support, and market linkages as important parts of urban agriculture. However, since households rely on a variety of sources for food, urban agriculture cannot be a standalone solution to urban food insecurity. Collaboration between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Local Government is necessary to develop and implement a national urban agriculture policy at the municipal level.



### 3 Learn more about local policies.

#### Local policy:



**Markets and Bus Station Act:** Overseen by local government authorities responsible for market management and urban planning, this act regulates open-air markets in urban areas through market licensing, setting of market fees, enforcement of market rules, and waste management in markets.



**Urban Development Policy:** Implemented by the Ministry of Local Government and Housing, this policy guides the development of urban areas in Zambia and makes provision for improving urban infrastructure and services.



**Urban Energy Policy:** Implemented by the Ministry of Energy in coordination with the Zambia Electricity Supply Corporation Limited (ZESCO), and the National Energy Conservation Council (NECC), this policy promotes renewable energy, energy efficiency, and affordability.

#### Take action:

- ☑ Increase investment in markets, including through the establishment of new markets and the management and upgrading of existing markets (e.g., improvement in waste management).
- ☑ Seek out market committees, vendors, and consumers to understand their needs through participatory inclusion.
- ☑ Ensure that new urban residential developments include zoning for markets and retail shops and invest in the infrastructure necessary to link households and food retailers, such as market shelters, water points, stormwater drainage, sanitation, power, and roads.
- ☑ Improve access to energy for cooking, lighting, and refrigeration in households and markets, and continue providing technical assistance to businesses and consumers to save energy.



## 4 Learn more about national policies.

### National policy:



#### **National Food and Nutrition Policy:**

Implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Health, this policy aims to address the root causes of food insecurity and malnutrition in Zambia.



**National Agriculture Policy:** This policy aims to sustainably increase agricultural activity and address the challenges facing the agriculture sector in Zambia. The Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for implementing this policy with support from various government departments.



**National Lands Policy:** Implemented by the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, with the support of other government agencies such as the Department of Town and Country Planning, this policy aims to promote sustainable and productive land management and equitable access to land for all citizens.



**Food Safety Act:** Overseen by the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce and enforced by local governments, this act regulates food quality and safety within urban areas.



**National Social Protection Policy:** Aimed at reducing poverty and vulnerability, this policy is implemented by the Ministries of Community Development, Social Services, Finance, and Health, and includes programs like Social Cash Transfer, School Feeding, and Food Security Pack.



**National Transport Policy:** Implemented by the Ministry of Transport and Communications, this policy sets out the government's vision for the development of transport infrastructure and services in Zambia.



#### **National Climate Change Policy and National Adaptation Plan for Climate Change:**

Implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Energy, these policies promote climate-resilient agriculture practices, early warning systems, capacity building among farmers, energy efficiency, and reduced food waste.

### Take action:

☑ Promote diverse and nutritious diets, enhance nutrition education and awareness, subsidize healthy food, and promote equitable distribution of food and resources.

☑ Support urban agriculture and enable farmers to sell at fair prices by improving access to urban markets and investing in food processing, distribution, and storage facilities.

☑ Ensure that all urban planning activities consider food security. Identify and allocate land for food production in the urban and surrounding areas.

☑ Assist residents in urban and surrounding areas with securing land tenure and the necessary resources to produce food.

☑ Support food-safety and hygiene practices with training and implement support structures to enable food system actors to be compliant with standards and regulations.

☑ Recognize the close ties between poverty and food insecurity, ensure that social protection programs are designed to empower communities to achieve long-term food security.

☑ Develop transport infrastructure to connect farmers to urban markets, reduce food transportation costs, and improve urban consumers' access to food retailers.

☑ Over time, adapt decisions on transportation infrastructure development according to the needs of the urban communities.

☑ Invest in climate-resilient urban infrastructure across the range of interconnected urban systems, like transportation, housing, food, water, energy, and waste management systems.

☑ Build awareness of climate change impacts and adaptation strategies among urban residents and key food system actors.



# SARA's work towards building equitable resilience in Southern Africa

Since 2022, the Southern African Resilience Academy (SARA) has supported collaborative working groups to pursue inter- or transdisciplinary synthesis research under the guiding theme of **"Building equitable resilience in Southern Africa"**.

This is in line with SARA's role as a convening and support space for researchers and practitioners working across Southern Africa to engage around pressing resilience and development challenges in the region.

SARA is an initiative of the Global Resilience Partnership (GRP), with support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). The academy's goals are to strengthen existing expert networks, expand collaboration, and facilitate the co-production of policy and practice-relevant knowledge.

Through its links with other regional networks, SARA aims to contribute directly and meaningfully to regional and global policy discussions around resilience and development, and elevate the Southern African voice in international fora.

SARA is coordinated by the Centre for Sustainability Transitions (CST) at Stellenbosch University in South Africa. It is co-funded by the South African Research Chair in Social-Ecological Systems and Resilience.

#### For more information on SARA, contact:

Albert Norström – [albert.norstrom@su.se](mailto:albert.norstrom@su.se)  
or visit [bit.ly/SAResilienceAcademy](http://bit.ly/SAResilienceAcademy)

#### For more information on GRP, contact:

[info@globalresiliencepartnership.org](mailto:info@globalresiliencepartnership.org)  
or visit [www.globalresiliencepartnership.org](http://www.globalresiliencepartnership.org)

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– [hello@kandscollective.com](mailto:hello@kandscollective.com)



#### WORKING GROUP:

### Building Equitable and Resilient Urban Food Systems in Southern Africa

Urban food systems in Southern Africa comprise a hybrid mix of food sourcing opportunities from formal and informal food retailers, urban agriculture and food sharing. Despite this diversity, many low- to middle-income urban households experience high rates of food insecurity due to a lack of sufficient and stable income to purchase adequate amounts of safe and nutritious food. This is as a result of economic pressures associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, food price shocks linked to disrupted food supply chains, and the impacts of climate variability on regional food production.

To mediate such pressures and shocks on urban food systems, an urban food systems approach is required that looks beyond agricultural production and embraces the diversity of urban food environments, using urban planning to shape how households equitably access and afford food.

This working group is assessing the resilience and equitability of urban food systems in Zambia and Southern Africa more broadly, to identify strategic urban planning opportunities in order to promote resilient and equitable urban food systems in the region.

#### Contact:

**Mr Allan Chilenga**, Agriculture Research Officer, Ministry of Agriculture (Zambia), Zambia Agriculture Research Institute – [allan.chilenga@zari.gov.zm](mailto:allan.chilenga@zari.gov.zm)

**Ms Dorcas Kabuya**, Ministry of Agriculture (Zambia), National Agricultural Information Services (NAIS) – [domucar10@gmail.com](mailto:domucar10@gmail.com)

#### Additional working group members:

**Dr Julia Davies**, Arizona Institute for Resilience, University of Arizona

**Dr Corrie Hannah**, Arizona Institute for Resilience, University of Arizona

**Dr Jordan Blekking**, Department of Geography, Indiana University

**Dr Jane Battersby**, Environmental and Geographical Science Department, University of Cape Town

**Dr Percy Toriro**, University of Zimbabwe

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