

ZIMBABWE COUNCIL OF CHURCHES(ZCC) HUMANITARIAN SERVICES AND DIAKONIA ANNUAL REPORT



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INTRODUCTION

This report provides information on the work of Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) under the Humanitarian Services and Diakonia (HSD) pillar from January 2022 to December 2022. The organization continues to alleviate suffering through provision of humanitarian assistance and protection, sustainable livelihoods and resilience building programs as well as enhancing the self-supporting capacity of vulnerable people, empowerment of its member churches

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Context

The 2021/2022 agriculture season started late in the of December 2021 in most parts of the country. The season was characterized by poor rainfall distribution in both space and time which saw incessant rains associated with Tropical Storm Ana in January 2022 followed by a prolonged dry spell in the first week of February to the end of March. The Tropical Storm Ana was characterized by heavy rains, which caused water logging and destruction of crops, household properties and homes. The seasonal characteristics resulted in poor crop establishment resulting in decline of crop yields by 43% from 2,717,171 MT in 2020/21 season to 1,557,914 Mt in 2021/2022 season[1]. The proportion of food insecure individuals at national level increased from 27% to 38% due to decline in crop yields[2]. Poverty continues to be major underlying causes of vulnerability to food and nutrition insecurity. About 70.5% of the population are poor whilst 29.3% are deemed extremely poor[3]. Furthermore, the macroeconomic situation remains volatile, the parallel market exchange rates have remained unfavorable for the majority of citizens earning in Zimbabwean dollar (ZWL). This has limited accessibility of food and basic commodities especially among the poor households.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

"To maximize assets of the church towards timely responses to emergencies and vulnerabilities"



The 2021/2 The livelihoods of rural households have continued to be affected by shocks such as climatic (droughts, floods), economic (price increases), crops and livestock diseases and human health shocks and diseases. The long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have been felt in all sectors of the economy, including health, education and agriculture. The impacts of COVID-19 have magnified pre-existing differences in economic and social conditions of the vulnerable populations. It is against this background that Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) has continued to offer HSD services across the country in response to the prevailing situation. The ZCC supported Masase Mission Hospital with personnel protective equipment (PPEs), infection prevention and control (IPC) materials and equipment to prevent the spread of Covid-19 and hospital related infections. The hospital was supported after it recorded an increase in Covid-19 cases and was not able to contain the cases due to lack of resources to procure PPEs and IPC materials. The PPEs and IPC materials supplied are listed in Annex 1.

[The distributed medical supplies and equipment have been utilization to prevent COVID-19 and other hospital related infectious to health workers, patients and visitors.

Masase Mission Hospital Hospital Services Administrator (Mr E. Moyo) and Humanitarian Services and Diakonia Unit Director (Mrs Maria T. Dendere) going through stock control registers on PPE uses at the facility



Supporting church leaders and faith based organisations to deliver health, mental health and psycho social support services

A total of 190 interfaith leaders were trained to offer mental health and psycho social support, HIV, Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) and Gender Based Violence (GBV) services to congregants and members of the community. The interfaith leaders were representing the Zimbabwe Heads of Christian Denominations (ZHOCOD), Union for the Development of the Apostolic and Zionist Churches In Zimbabwe Africa (UDACIZA), Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ), Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs, and Zimbabwe National Traditional Healers Association (ZINATHA). The interfaith leaders have been very active in offering services to members of the community facing various challenges such as illness, death, abuse, and stress. The interfaith leaders also facilitated the development of region specific mental health and psycho social support (MHPSS) interventions as well as taking a lead in strengthening regional MHPSS groups. The intervention has reached out to 4,656 individuals who were reported by interfaith leaders.

Women Ecumenical Fellowship (WEF) strengthening and coordination

The ZCC through the WEF Coordinating Unit conducted WEF coordination dialogues, capacity assessment as well as supporting WEF activities such as spiritual revival and all night prayers in Manicaland, Mashonaland West, Midlands, Masvingo and Matabeleland North provinces where over 500 WEFs participated. The spiritual revival which ran under the theme: "We are more than Conquerors" drawn from Romans 8:35-39 was hosted by Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCZ) at Chegato High School. At this revival and other WEF strengthening and coordination activities, the ZCC had an opportunity to present on "The Marriage Act" from a legal perspective and to respond to issues arising.

*WEFs at the 4 day spiritual revival
Convention hosted by the ELCZ Western
Deanery (Vashandiri Ruwadzano) at
Chegato mission in Mberengwa district.*



In another event, the ZCC held a Greater WEF meeting in Masvingo. This WEF event used the trade fair model where women showcased their products and projects. The event inspired women to become entrepreneurs. Those who were not engaged in any business activity were motivated to start their own businesses.

*Women showcasing their products at the
Greater Women's Ecumenical Fellowship*

Capacitating of member churches on horticulture and climate smart agriculture to produce food

In its mission to empower the member churches to produce food, the ZCC trained a total of 100 church leaders from 2 member churches (United Church of Christ and Anglican Church) in Manicaland. The training focused on horticulture and climate smart agriculture. Topics covered during the training include horticulture classification, cropping calendar, crop rotation, nursery establishment, hardening, transplanting, trellising and mulching, and conservation farming.

Church leaders, community leaders and church youth leaders receiving training at UCCZ church farm in Mount Selinda on climate smart agriculture and commercial horticulture production in Manicaland province.



In addition to the trainings each member church received agricultural inputs which include fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides and seeds (maize, cabbages, tomatoes, beans, carrots, rape, cowpeas and sugar beans) and were assisted to set up demo plots at their farms.



Sections of the horticulture crops at Mt Selinda UCCZ farm. Tomatoes (right) and Cabbages (left)

The trainings increased local church leaders' and church structures' knowledge and skills on horticulture and climate smart agriculture which they have managed to apply to improve agriculture productivity.

Section of the 0.25 Ha of maize planted in October at UCCZ farm in Mt Selinda.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

"Saving lives and alleviating the suffering of those most in need of humanitarian assistance and protection."

Provision of food and nutrition assistance

The ZCC has conducted food and nutritional assistance distributions reaching out to a total of 14,237 beneficiaries that include children under the age of 5 years, pregnant and lactating mothers in Mashonaland East province (Epworth district), Masvingo province (Gutu and Bikita districts), Midlands province (Chirumhanzu district), Matebeleland South province (Gwanda district). Prior the intervention the target group was experiencing food consumption gaps which were reflected by high or above-usual acute malnutrition, inability to meet their minimum food needs and were employing emergency food consumption and livelihood coping strategies.



ZCC General Secretary Rev Dimingu and Humanitarian Services and Diakonia Director Maria Tendai Dendere handing over mealie meal, cooking oil and beans to project beneficiaries in Gutu and Bikita



Humanitarian Services and Diakonia Director Maria Tendai Dendere handing over food to beneficiaries in Gwanda (left), beneficiaries after receiving food and nutritional assistance in Epworth (right)

The assistance has improved access to and consumption of nutritional foods for 14,237 assisted beneficiaries as well as reducing the risks for households in engaging consumption coping strategies as evidenced by the increase in food consumption scores and the reduction of average coping strategy indexes for 99% of the beneficiaries. The support has also improved nutritional status for children under the age of 5 years as evidenced by increase in Mid Upper Arm Circumferences (MUACs) for 80% of the targeted 400 children. Thus the intervention has improved food access and reduced the risk of malnutrition to special groups such as children, pregnant and lactating mothers.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

'To facilitate safe, equitable, gender sensitive and dignified access to critical cross-sectoral basic services for the most vulnerable.'

Improving access to water sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services to communities
The ZCC established a piped water scheme in Chimanimani ward 7 where a solar powered borehole, 1000litres storage tanks and piped distribution network with taps were installed to improve access to adequate safe water for about 200 internally displaced people (IDPs) and host communities families. The IDPs were relocated from Ngangu to a dry area in ward 7 where there were inadequate water sources.

The piped water scheme installed in Chimanimani ward 7-complete with solar powered boreholes and storage tank.



The organization further distributed sanitary hygiene kits (lotion, buckets, bathing soaps, toilet paper, and sanitary pads) to 300 women and girls at St Michaels Secondary School in Tongogara Refugee Camp, Chipinge.



Distribution of Hygiene kits (sanitary pads, toothpaste, tissues, bath soaps, washing soaps & buckets) to 200 young girls at St Michael's Secondary School in Chipinge

Improving access to Gender Based Violence (GBV), protection, MPSS services for vulnerable members of the community

To ensure that members of the community have access to gender, GBV and protection services, the organisation reached out to a cumulative of 1,961 members of the community (1,470 females and 490 males) through trainings, consultations, awareness campaigns and bringing of GBV and protection services to the communities, therapeutic support group sessions, and group counselling session with school prefects in Mashonaland Central, Masvingo, Manicaland, Midlands and Matabeleland South.

GBV Service Providers Musasa and Judicial Service Commission with a client at Mandadzaka Business Centre in Bikita ward 31.



Children in attendance on the child protection awareness in Chimanimani, Manicaland district

It is expected that the trainings and campaigns will increase awareness on gender and GBV, protection, women's rights, reporting and referral pathways. The bringing of GBV and protection services allowed the community access the services directly from the service providers. The therapeutic support group sessions supported single mothers in Tongogara Refugee Camp with healing and recovery from events that affected them emotional, spiritual, and psychological. The group counselling session with school prefects at St Augustine High School in Manicaland Province enabled the prefects to identify the major problems they are facing when working with other students and how they can handle these cases.

Access to peace through sporting activities

A total of four (4) Sports for Peace tournament games were conducted with Persons of Concerns and host community in Tongogara Refugee Camp. These tournaments consist of netball, volley ball, football and debate. The sports for peace tournaments succeeded in creating peaceful co-existence and building relationship between persons of concern and local host community which is key in attaining development

Sports for Peace soccer match in Tongogara Refugee Camp



*Sports for peace netball tournament in Tongogara Refugee Camp
Sports for peace netball tournament in Tongogara Refugee Camp*

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

To strengthen and support climate smart agriculture, alternative livelihood and community based disaster risk reduction (CBDRR) interventions that increase household food, nutrition and income security and resilience

Improving knowledge and skills on climate smart agriculture, alternative livelihoods and community based disaster risk reduction for farmers, extension works and staff

The ZCC continued with the thrust to improve knowledge and skills on climate smart agriculture, alternative livelihoods and community based disaster risks reduction for farmers, extension works and staff through capacity building trainings, farmer exchange visits and field days

Participants during the Master of Trainer Training workshop



Master Trainer of Trainers workshop for staff

Two (2) ZCC staff participated in a 4 days Master Trainer of Trainers workshop on agriculture held at Kentucky Hotel in Harare. The training was organized by Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB) Agriculture and Livelihoods Technical Advisor for Southern Africa. The workshop was attended by other CFGB and Tearfund partners in Zimbabwe which includes Family Aids Council Trust (FACT), Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ), Pentecostal Assemblies of Zimbabwe (PAOZ), Kulima Mbobumi Training Centre (KMTC) and government extension workers from Ministry of Agriculture. In total all the participants were 19 consisting of 9 females and 10 males. The objectives of the training were to build capacity for partners and government staff on Conservation Agriculture practices and adult education skills for them to conduct further training and conduct further training for agriculture extension to extension workers, NGO staff and farmers. The training covered 3 key aspects which are Conservation Agriculture, Facilitation principles and adult learning. The trained participants from ZCC have managed to cascade the training to 6 remaining staff members, and the staff are currently applying the knowledge during ongoing farmer extension support and monitoring visits.

Training of project participants on climate smart agriculture, community based disaster management and alternative livelihoods

A total of 1,390 individuals consisting of 863 females and 527 males were reached out directly with extension support and capacity building trainings on climate smart agriculture and alternative livelihoods focusing on conservation agriculture, integrated crop pest small livestock, post-harvest handling, value addition, internal savings and landings (ISALs), financial management, and Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRRM) in Masvingo Province (Gutu, Bikita and Mwenezi districts), Midlands Province (Chirumanzu district), Manicaland Province (Chipinge) and Matabeleland South Province (Gwanda district).



Participants during Value Addition training in Bikita Ward 31

The extension support and trainings have improved knowledge and skills for farmers as evidenced by their ability to adopt the basic principles and practices. For instance, through the training on conservation farming, farmers have managed to prepare their own composts to boost the soil fertility status of poor soils, and they have managed to plant their fields using the conservation agriculture principles on minimum soil disturbance and mulching. Moreover, farmers who attended the post-harvest handling and value addition training have applied the post harvesting and value addition processes to minimize post-harvest loss of agriculture produce as well as increase the value of agriculture produce for marketing. Any examples to clarify this point

participants during Value Addition training in Bikita Ward 31



The training on Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (CBDRRM) conducted specifically in Bikita, Mwenezi, Zvishavane and Gwanda revived the functionality of CBDRRM committees. The committees have managed to identify disaster risk and come up context specific disaster mitigation, response and recovery strategies. The CBDRRM are currently supporting the development and implementation of CBDRRM plans at community level.



Participants during the Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction training in Bikita Ward 31.

In terms of ISALs, separate training conducted in 7 districts (Gutu, Bikita, Chirumanzu, Zvishavane, Gwanda and Mwenezi) enhanced the participant knowledge and skills to conduct savings. As a result, a total 47 ISALs groups were borrowing, lending and sharing the money in December 2023. The annual group funds including savings and interest for an average group of 15 people ranges from US\$1,400 to US\$4,000. It is anticipated that more ISALs group will be saving and sharing money in 2023. The money borrowed from the groups is being used by project participants to start petty business, buy small livestock, and pay school fees. Thus ISALs have improved the ability to respond to emergencies and cope up with future shocks for participating households.



Musarunzirwa group during their ISAL meeting in Bikita, ward 31

One example of ISALs group that shared the annual savings of US\$1,300 is in Gutu ward 16 where a group of 22 members shared the proceeds with each member receiving a she-goat and two hoes. This outcome from ISALs has shown progress towards building household livelihood base and resilience.



ISAL groups in Bikita ward 31 sharing goats from bought using ISAL proceeds.

A one-day training conducted on financial management with Persons of Concern (PoCs) and Local Host Community in Tongogara Refugee Camp (TRC) was aligned to the Sewing and Detergent Making Project.



PoCs producing garments from the sewing machines they received from the project

Farmer exchange visits and field days

Farmer exchange visits and field days were conducted in Masvingo Province (Gutu and Bikita districts) and Midlands Province (Chirumanzu district). These events were attended by a total of 795 farmers consisting of 475 females and 320 males. The exchange visits and field days promoted uptake of climate smart conservation agriculture by farmers through sharing experiences and learning of best practices. Farmers have managed to apply the best practices, although in some areas crop condition has been affected by erratic distribution of rainfall. As a way of encouraging good work, the 3 best farmers were rewarded with prizes including barbed wire for fencing conservation agriculture plots, spades and hoes for using during conservation agriculture land preparation.

Mr Raymond Hutire the CA winner of the year in ward 2 Chirumanzu with his wife in the maize plot during the field day



Provision of crops and livestock inputs to farmers

A total of 1,390 farmers (863 females and 527 males) received crops and livestock inputs in Masvingo (Gutu, Bikita and Mwenzezi districts), Midlands (Chirumanzu and Zvishavane districts) and Matebeleland South (Gwanda district). The package for crops was given to 1350 of 1390 farmers consists of maize, sorghum, millet and cow peas seeds while each of the 40 of 1390 farmers who benefited from small livestock received 6 borsh veld chickens.



Beneficiaries after receiving crops and small livestock inputs in Gwanda and Bikita

.Monitoring and evaluation

Routine monitoring support visit to the projects was conducted by the Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) Unit as well as the ZCC Management. Joint monitoring activities were also conducted with funding partners from Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB) and United Church of Canada (UCC) in Gutu and Bikita districts. Process monitoring activities that include registration, verifications and post distribution monitoring were conducted in Masvingo province (Gutu, Mwenezi and Bikita districts), Midlands province (Chirumanzu and Zvishavane districts), Manicaland province (Mutasa and Chimanimani districts) and Matabeleland South province (Gwanda district). In addition, the baseline surveys were also conducted in Masvingo province (Gutu and Mwenezi districts), Midlands province (Zvishavane districts), Manicaland province (Mutasa and Chimanimani districts) and Matabeleland South province (Gwanda district) while the endline survey was conducted in Tongogara Refugee Camp, Chipinge in Manicaland province.

*CFGB partners at Dadirai
Dzareva's CA plot*



The monitoring and evaluation activities have enabled the ZCC to track progress of implementation versus targets; to gather feedback from stakeholders and project participants; to understand the performance of programs based on efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, impact and sustainability indicators of the various programs; and created opportunities for sharing and exchange of information, learning and improvement.

Challenges, actions taken/recommendations

Two major challenges were encountered during the year. These challenges are continued shrinking of operating space and delayed rolled out of activities due to the vetting process which has been done by local authorities before entering into Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ZCC. To solve these challenges, the organization has continued to regularize its work through entering into MoUs with Rural District Councils. The organization has also shifted the geographical location of projects in areas where it was not granted MoUs. For instance, the interventions which were earmarked for Mbire were shifted to Mutasa while the interventions which were targeted for Insiza were shifted to Gwanda

Acknowledgement to Partners

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- § Act for Peace (AFP)
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- § Evangelical Lutheran Church of Wurttemberg
- § Finish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (Felm)
- § Global Ministries
- § United Church of Canada (UCC)
- § United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- § World Health Organization (WHO)
- § Women World Day of Prayer (WWDP)

