

# DRR4AFRICA

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION:  
A RESILIENCE AGENDA 4 URBAN AFRICA

FUNDER



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## LUSAKA

### LUSAKA: SUMMARY INFORMATION

Climate change refers to long-term shifts in weather patterns which lead to more extreme weather events, such as heavier floods, longer droughts, and more intense heatwaves. The main cause of climate change is global warming which is driven by human activities such as burning fossil fuels (coal, oil, gas) and agriculture, amongst others. These activities release greenhouse gases into the atmosphere that trap heat around the earth like a blanket. This warming disrupts natural weather systems, impacting our environment, health, and livelihoods.

### LUSAKA IS AT RISK OF



Droughts



Heatwaves



Flooding



### POPULATION GROUPS MOST IMPACTED BY CLIMATE HAZARDS

- **WOMEN & GIRLS** often bear the responsibility of collecting water, requiring longer travel during droughts. Floods increase their exposure to water-borne diseases.
- **YOUNG MEN** often lack post-disaster support, making them vulnerable to depression, a sense of powerlessness, and risky behaviours involving substance abuse and crime.
- **LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS** tend to live in unplanned, flood-prone areas, facing frequent and severe flooding.
- **CHILDREN** are highly vulnerable to health risks from floods and heatwaves. Drought-induced food insecurity can hinder development, and floods disrupt schooling and increase disease exposure.
- **YOUTH** suffer job losses during droughts due to reduced energy production in industry. Flooding also limits access to higher education, business, and trade, deepening youth poverty.
- **ELDERLY & PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES** face evacuation challenges during floods, increasing their risk of injury and disease.
- **PEOPLE WITH CHRONIC ILLNESSES** are more vulnerable during heatwaves, which can worsen conditions like diabetes, heart, and respiratory diseases.

### CITY'S CLIMATE CHANGE PROJECTIONS

- **DROUGHT:** Shifts in rainfall lead to water scarcity and reduced water quality. Droughts cause crop failure, worsening food insecurity, and disrupt energy supply due to Zambia's reliance on hydropower.
- **FLOODING:** Intense rainfall, poor land use practices, and inadequate drainage systems cause flooding. Floods damage homes, roads, and bridges, hindering emergency response. Overflowing sanitation systems contaminate water, spreading disease.
- **HEATWAVES:** Prolonged high temperatures—driven by climate change, high-pressure systems, and less cloud cover—are becoming more frequent and intense. They worsen health conditions and disrupt economic and livelihood activities.



### CLIMATE CHANGE PROJECTIONS

The average temperature in Lusaka Province is expected to increase 2-3°C by 2050 while rainfall is expected to decrease by up to 35% by 2100.

- This means that droughts will have greater impacts in the long-term, driving increased water and food insecurity. Negative health impacts will increase and socio-economic activities in the city will be further affected.
- Despite an overall decrease in annual rainfall, the narrowing and intensification of the rainfall window is expected to drive an increase in flooding, with more heavy rainfall occurring over a shorter period.
- Rising temperatures are forecast to increase the severity and frequency of heatwaves, contributing to water and food insecurity. Health impacts will worsen, and livelihoods will be threatened as costs of goods and services rise with the increased need for air conditioning and refrigeration.

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## WHAT TO DO BEFORE A FLOOD

### Know your settlement

Get to know which households are at risk of flooding, your community's strengths and challenges, who to call for help, and where streams, unstable ground, and drains are.

### Prepare a community flood response plan

Identify vulnerable areas and people, evacuation routes, roles, and alert signals (e.g. flags, pots). Choose safe relocation sites and share this info with everyone.

### Manage water flows

Build channels to divert water from homes without affecting others. Use sandbags, tyres, or carpets to slow water and stabilise soil.

### Grow and look after trees, plants, & other crops

Plants and trees stabilise soil, absorb water to reduce flooding, and help cool informal settlements during heat waves.

### Do not build in risky areas

Building close to a river, on soft soils, or steep slopes puts you at greater risk of harm during a flood.

### Remove waste from drains and streams

Work with your community and municipality on a waste plan. Clear litter from drains, especially before heavy rain, to prevent blockages.

### Prepare an emergency kit

Pack essentials like food, water, clothes, medicine and important documents in a well-sealed waterproof container.

### Protect important documents

Store documents such as identity documents, birth certificates and clinic cards in a waterproof box out of reach of water, in the event of a flood.

### Build relationships

Establish points of contact with your municipality, community members, local universities and aid organisations that can assist during floods.

### Stay connected and informed

Charge phones, know where to get signal, and follow weather alerts from trusted sources like the Zambia Meteorological Department. Stay updated via WhatsApp groups, social media, or radio, and share info with neighbours.



## WHAT TO DO DURING A FLOOD

### Alert others

Use agreed flood warning signals to alert others. Flash torches to guide in the dark. Keep your community, family, and authorities informed.

### Stay calm and follow the plan

Stay calm and follow your community's flood plan. Trust local leaders to guide the response and adjust if needed. Help the elderly, disabled, sick, and young.

### Share reliable information

Only share info from trusted sources (e.g. Zambia Meteorological Department, Lusaka City Council) to avoid harm from false information.

### Move to safety

Go to designated safe sites with emergency supplies. Avoid floodwaters, power lines, and unstable structures—they're very dangerous.

### Emotional wellbeing

Seek counselling or support and check in on the emotional wellbeing of other community members.



## WHAT TO DO AFTER A FLOOD

### Prioritise safety

Check yourself and others for injuries and seek medical assistance if needed. Only go back to your home once a trusted source has confirmed that it is safe.

### Identify damage and hazards

Report hazards like downed power lines, unsafe buildings, or sewage leaks. Avoid damaged structures and switch off power/gas if safe. Note details of those who lost homes or land (house number, ID, phone).

### Health precautions

Floodwater is often dirty. Use bottled or boiled water, disinfect items it touched, wash hands often, and see a doctor if you feel sick.

### Seek support and aid

Follow updates from local authorities and the media for information on aid and relief. Register with aid groups such as Councillors offices and the Disaster Management & Mitigation for emergency supplies.

### Clean up, if it is safe and report problems

Clear stagnant water to prevent mosquitoes and damage. Wear gloves, boots, and masks, and watch for unstable structures. Report water infrastructure issues to Lusaka Water Supply and Sanitation company (LWSC).

## EMERGENCY CONTACTS

For emergency situations in Lusaka related to disasters, you can contact the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit by calling their National Emergency Help Line at: 909 or by calling the unit at +260 211 252692 / 256528 / 252436 / 253142