



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

**Zimbabwe**

# Data in Emergencies Monitoring (DIEM-Monitoring) brief – round 3

Results and recommendations  
February 2022

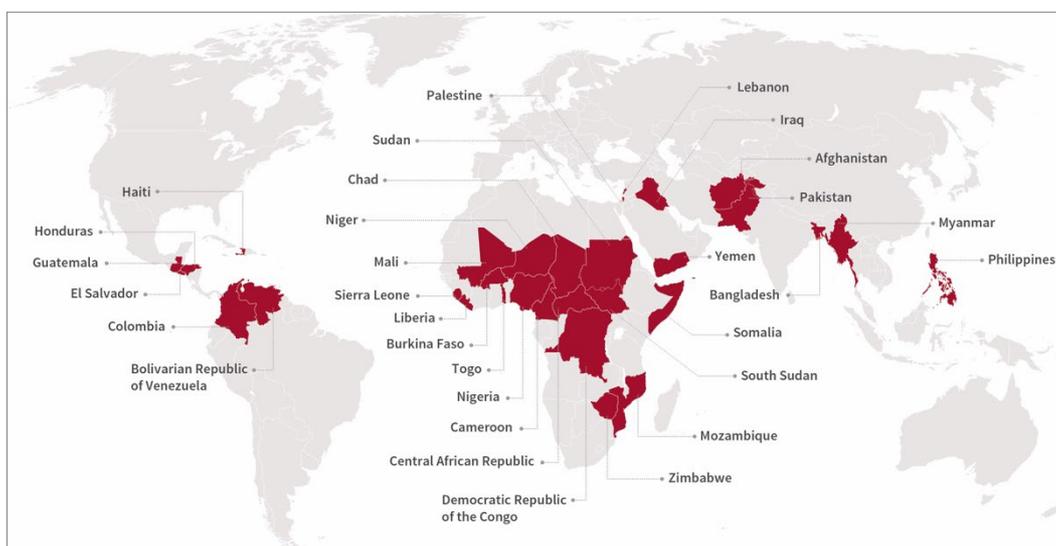
Data collection 28 September to 14 October 2021

## Methodology

This brief presents the results of a household survey conducted in Zimbabwe by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) through the Data in Emergencies Monitoring (DIEM-Monitoring) System on agricultural livelihoods and food security in Zimbabwe. This third-round survey was representative at the provincial (admin 1) level and covered eight out of the country's ten provinces. Harare and Bulawayo were excluded since they are predominantly urban.

Data were collected through computer-assisted telephone interviews between 28 September and 14 October 2021. A total of 1 539 respondents were reached, including 574 contacts from a previous round of data collection undertaken between 4 February and 9 March 2021. Between 146 and 188 agricultural households were sampled per province; weights were applied to correct for disproportionate sampling.

Figure 1. Countries with established DIEM-Monitoring System



Source of map: United Nations. 2020. *Map of the World*. [online]. [Cited 6 December 2021]. [www.un.org/geospatial/content/map-world](http://www.un.org/geospatial/content/map-world)

### About DIEM-Monitoring

FAO established the DIEM-Monitoring System to collect, analyse and disseminate data on shocks and livelihoods in countries prone to multiple shocks. DIEM-Monitoring aims to inform decision making by providing regularly updated information on how different shocks are affecting the livelihoods and food security of agricultural populations.

At the core of the DIEM-Monitoring System are country-level dashboards. Readers are encouraged to explore these dashboards to gain more insights on the context in Zimbabwe and other countries.

> Learn more at <https://data-in-emergencies.fao.org/pages/monitoring>

## Income and shocks

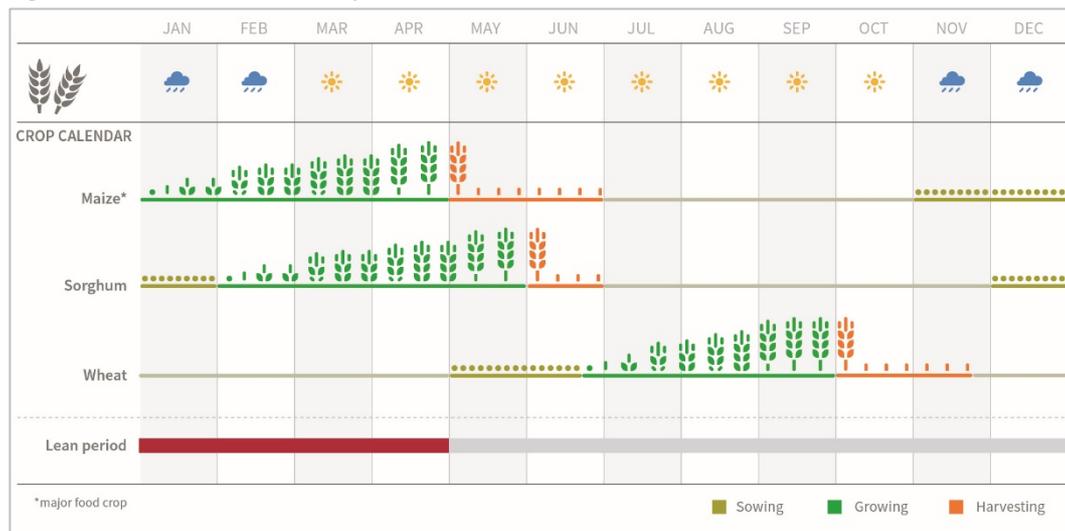
In the three months prior to the survey, nearly 80 percent of households reported being impacted by measures aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19. These included stay-at-home orders and movement restrictions, which impeded the transport of goods to markets. In addition, 59 percent of households faced other shocks that reduced their main source of income. Eighty percent of respondents reported that their income was lower than usual at that time of year, and a large majority reported not having a second or third income source.

## Crops

The major food crop cultivated in Zimbabwe is maize, with sorghum and wheat also grown widely (Figure 2). Of the 82 percent of households identified as crop producers, 87 percent stated that they cultivate less than five hectares of land. In this sample, maize was the predominant crop cultivated (and the main crop for 65 percent of crop producers), followed by sorghum (cultivated by 5 percent). Of the crop producers surveyed, 56 percent reported a reduced harvest in the 2020/21 season, and 58 percent faced difficulties with crop sales of the main 2021 harvest.

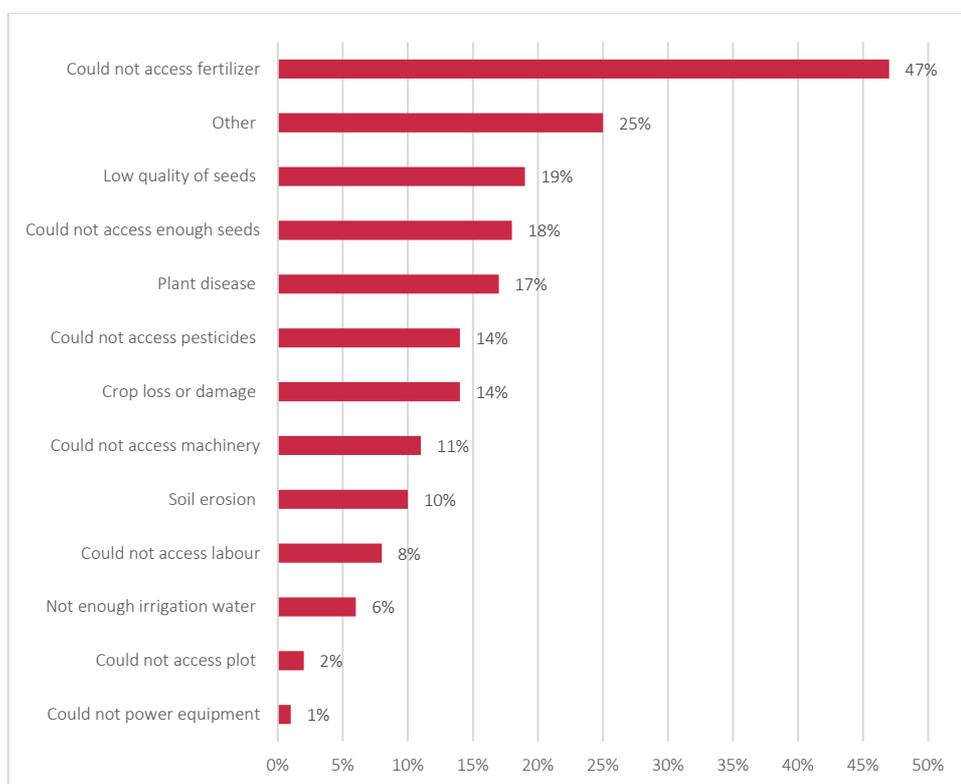
Difficulties in crop production in the ongoing 2021/22 season were reported by 79 percent of producers. The most common reason cited was lack of access to fertilizer, by 47 percent (Figure 3). Crop producers who faced production difficulties were also more likely to be affected by restrictions aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19 than those who did not face these difficulties (81 percent versus 70 percent).

Figure 2. Zimbabwe seasonal crop calendar



Source of data: FAO, 2022. GIEWS – Global Information and Early Warning System: Country briefs – Zimbabwe. In: *Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations* [online]. Rome. [Cited 25 January 2022]. [www.fao.org/giews/countrybrief/country.jsp?lang=en&code=ZWE](http://www.fao.org/giews/countrybrief/country.jsp?lang=en&code=ZWE)

Figure 3. Crop-production difficulties (percentage of respondent crop producers)



Source of data: FAO. 2021. Zimbabwe: DIEM-Monitoring assessment results, round 3 (September–October 2021).

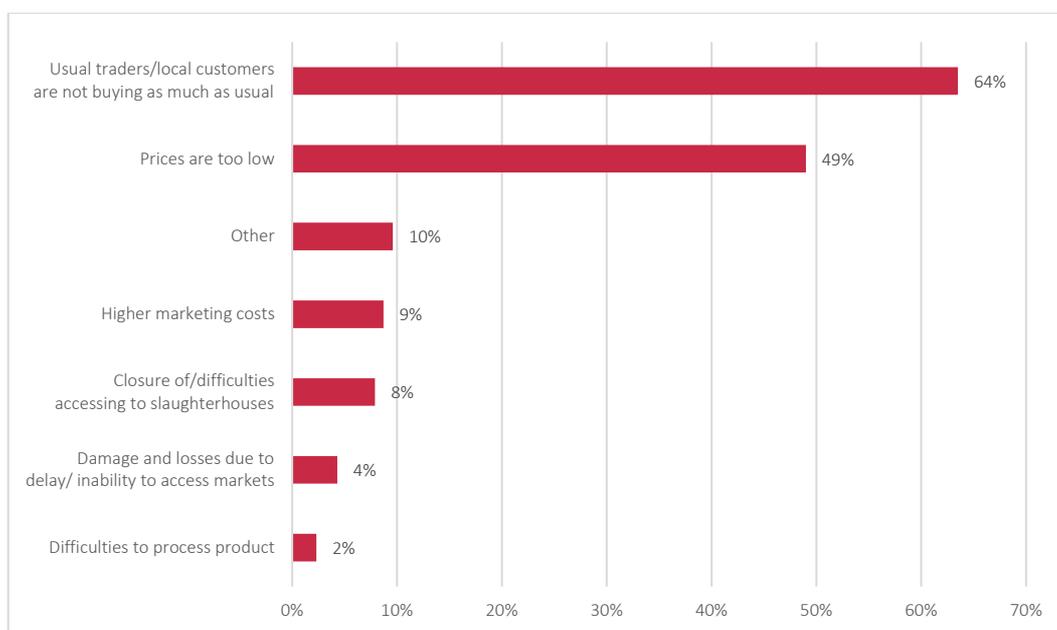
## Livestock

Among the 69 percent of respondents that reported owning animals, the main breeds kept were poultry (49 percent), cattle (26 percent) and goats (21 percent). Compared to the previous year, 67 percent of livestock producers reported a decrease in herd size and 27 percent reported an increase. The May 2021 Livelihood Food Security Programme Crop and Livestock Assessment showed a similar pattern. Among those who experienced a decrease in herd size, the main reason cited was death of animals from poor health and malnutrition (54 percent).

Livestock-production difficulties were reported by 82 percent of producers surveyed, with animal disease the main difficulty (reported by 70 percent of those who faced production difficulties); followed by limited access to veterinary services (24 percent) and veterinary inputs (20 percent). Livestock producers who faced production difficulties appeared to be more affected by COVID-19-related restrictions than those who did not face these difficulties (82 percent versus 77 percent).

Approximately 30 percent of livestock producers reported that they sold livestock and livestock products. Of these respondents, 57 percent faced sales difficulties. The main reported difficulty in livestock sales was traders or customers buying less than usual (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Livestock-sales difficulties (percentage of respondent livestock producers)



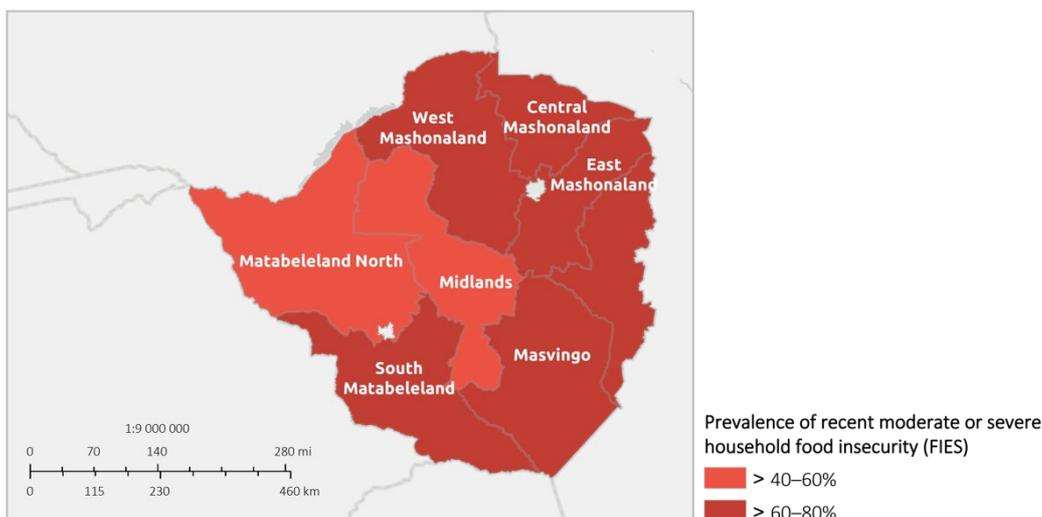
Source of data: FAO. 2021. Zimbabwe: DIEM-Monitoring assessment results, round 3 (September–October 2021).

## Food security

The results on food security indicators were slightly more optimistic than those from the last round of data collection in February and March 2021. Based on Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) results, the prevalence of moderate to severe recent food insecurity (RFI) dropped from 71 percent in February–March 2021 to 63 percent in September–October; while severe RFI affected 26 percent of households (round 3). The prevalence of moderate to severe RFI was higher among non-agricultural households (71 percent) than agricultural households (62 percent), and also higher among households that faced an income shock (68 percent) than those that did not (55 percent).

Rates of RFI were slightly lower in the western region (Mashonaland West, Matabeleland North, Matabeleland South and Midlands provinces) than in the eastern region (Figure 5). The slightly lower rate of RFI in the western region could be associated with the fact that, compared to the eastern region, the western region had a: (i) slightly lower share of households affected by COVID-19 restriction measures; (ii) lower proportion of households affected by income shocks; (iii) slightly higher share of households with high dietary diversity; and (iv) lower proportion of crop producers expecting a reduced harvest in the 2021/22 cropping season. The western region also had lower share of households resorting to Crisis- and Emergency-level coping strategies, which is consistent with a lower incidence of RFI.

Figure 5. Prevalence of recent severe food insecurity, by province (percentage of respondents)

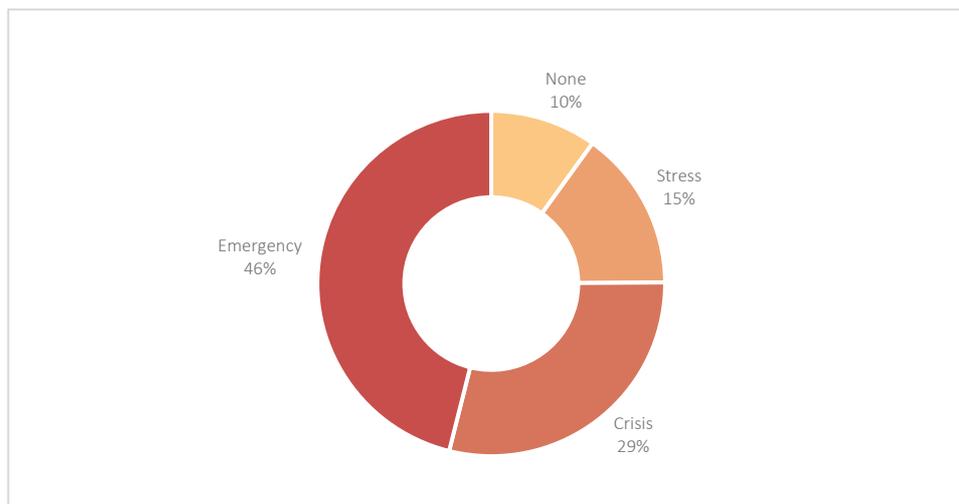


**Source of data:** FAO. 2021. Zimbabwe: DIEM-Monitoring assessment results, round 3 (September–October 2021).  
**Source of map:** Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS. 2018. *Map of Zimbabwe* [online]. [Cited 24 January 2022].  
<https://data-in-emergencies.fao.org/pages/explore>

Among respondent households, 17 percent had low dietary diversity according to Household Dietary Diversity Scores and 35 percent had moderate dietary diversity. Households with high dietary diversity had a lower prevalence of moderate to severe RFI than those with low dietary diversity (52 percent versus 75 percent).

In the month preceding the survey, 90 percent reported that their households had resorted to livelihood-based coping strategies, with nearly half resorting to Emergency-level strategies (Figure 6). This finding is worrisome given that data collection took place before the lean season. Such coping strategies are known to deplete physical and livelihood assets, and are difficult to reverse. However, the proportion of households resorting to Emergency-level coping strategies in this third round of data-collection (46 percent) was lower than that in the previous round (59 percent).

Figure 6: Coping strategies employed (LCSI) (percentage of respondents)

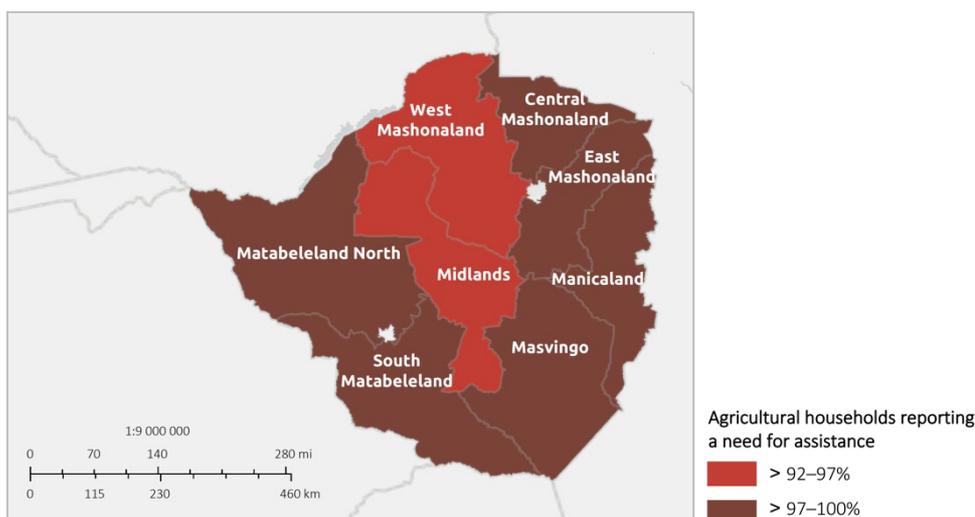


Source of data: FAO. 2021. Zimbabwe: DIEM-Monitoring assessment results, round 3 (September–October 2021).

## Needs

Nearly 98 percent of surveyed households reported the need for assistance in the next three to six months, mainly with agricultural production (Figure 7). The main needs for assistance reported by agricultural households were access to fertilizer (70 percent), seeds (68 percent), animal feed (25 percent), veterinary inputs (23 percent) and pesticides (23 percent) (Figure 8). Among those surveyed, 89 percent stated that they had not received any assistance in the previous three months.

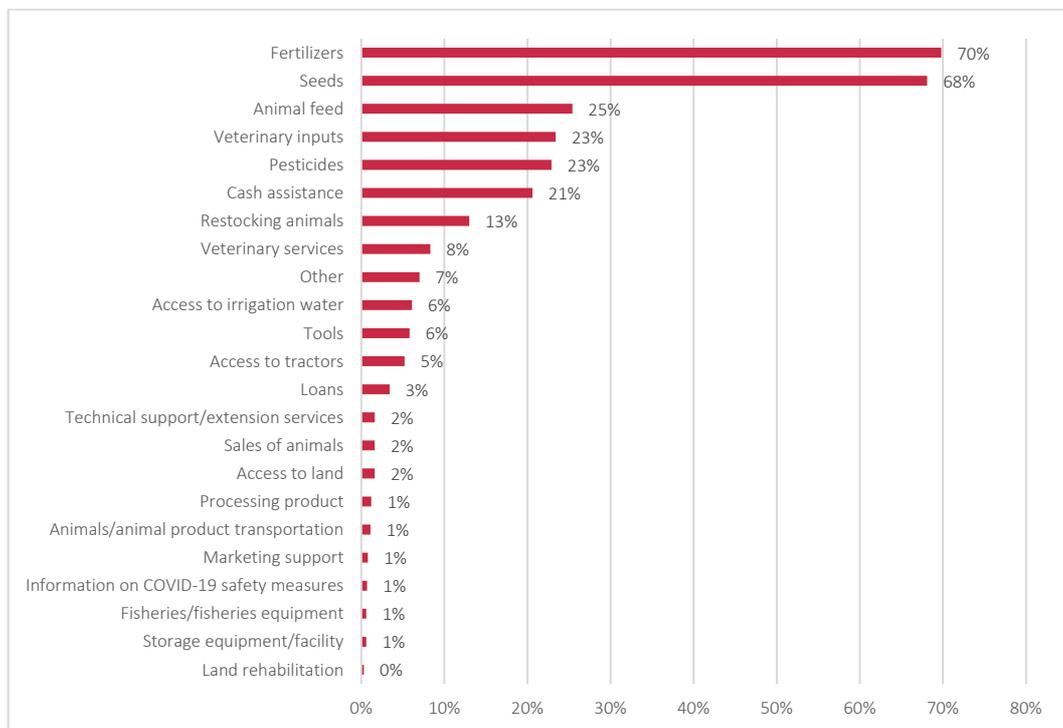
Figure 7: Households reporting the need for assistance, by province (percentage of respondents)



Source of data: FAO. 2021. Zimbabwe: DIEM-Monitoring assessment results, round 3 (September–October 2021).

Source of map: Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS. 2018. *Map of Zimbabwe* [online]. [Cited 24 January 2022]. <https://data-in-emergencies.fao.org/pages/explore>

Figure 8: Most-reported needs for assistance (percentage of respondents)



Source of data: FAO. 2021. Zimbabwe: DIEM-Monitoring assessment results, round 3 (September–October 2021).

## Recommendations

- > Considering that the majority of households reported a decrease in household income, humanitarian and development partners, and the government should strengthen social protection programmes including cash transfers. At the same time, resilience-building initiatives could help households affected by movement restrictions and other shocks to reconstitute their assets.
- > The majority of smallholder farmers reported a reduced harvest, which was linked to poor access to inputs – especially fertilizer. Agricultural programmes aimed at supporting crop producers should consider promoting low-external-input, climate-smart and agro-ecological techniques that help them to increase productivity while cutting external input costs.
- > The survey results indicate a decrease in numbers of livestock kept. Livestock-productivity programmes should focus on good animal husbandry, especially animal disease control and nutrition. Livestock markets in the country also need to be developed.
- > Given that many respondents reported employing coping strategies during the harvest season, food-security interventions are urgently needed to support households in the lean season, which has already begun and will extend until April. This may involve emergency food assistance to vulnerable households as well as those in crisis.



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