



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Zimbabwe

DIEM – Data in Emergencies Monitoring brief, round 6

Results and recommendations
March 2023

Key highlights

- > The survey was conducted during the beginning of the lean season period (November through December). Planting has begun, as this period was also the start of rainy season.
- > The food security situation in Zimbabwe requires further intervention despite the majority of households consuming diets of a wide variety and more than 40 percent of those surveyed recording a high Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS).
- > The proportion of households facing recent food insecurity (RFI) according to the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) was approximately 5 percent. This was similar to the proportion of households facing severe hunger according to the household hunger scale. Those engaging in emergency livelihoods coping strategies such as begging (7 percent) and selling of their last female animals (27 percent) signal a lack of coping capacity – primarily in Masvingo, Midlands, Manicaland and Mashonaland West provinces.
- > Income drops were reported in all provinces for approximately half of survey respondents. In Mashonaland West province, over 60 percent of households reported an income drop.
- > Important to this round was assessing crop area planted in comparison to normal. The findings show that while the majority of respondents planted the same area or more, 30 percent of surveyed households planted less area than in a typical year. The Midlands and Mashonaland provinces reported that this drop in area planted was mainly attributed to crop production challenges elaborated in this report.
- > Livestock production difficulties included diseases and deaths caused mainly by the lack of access to veterinary services.

Methodology

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) launched a household survey between 28 November and the 31 December 2022 to monitor agricultural livelihoods and food security in Zimbabwe. A total of 1 534 respondents were interviewed. The survey is representative at the administrative level 1 (province level). Eight out of 10 provinces (excluding Harare and Bulawayo metropolitan provinces) were surveyed. Household quotas were set at the provincial level, including quotas on agricultural households (fixed at 160 per province), and proportions were observed in the population for non-agricultural households. The survey reached all quotas for agricultural and non-agricultural households and, as a result, met provincial quotas. Quotas for crop producers and livestock producers were achieved at 1 145 and 750 respectively. The survey was conducted through computer-assisted telephone interviews.

Figure 1. Countries with established DIEM-Monitoring Systems



Source of data: FAO. 2022. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *FAO Data in Emergencies Hub*. Rome. Cited 2 October 2022. data-in-emergencies.fao.org

Source of map: United Nations. 2022. *Map of the World*. Cited 2 October 2022. un.org/geospatial/content/map-world

The final boundary between the Sudan and South Sudan has not yet been determined. Final status of the Abyei area is not yet determined. The dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties.

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 insight into the context of Zimbabwe and other countries.

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

Income and shocks

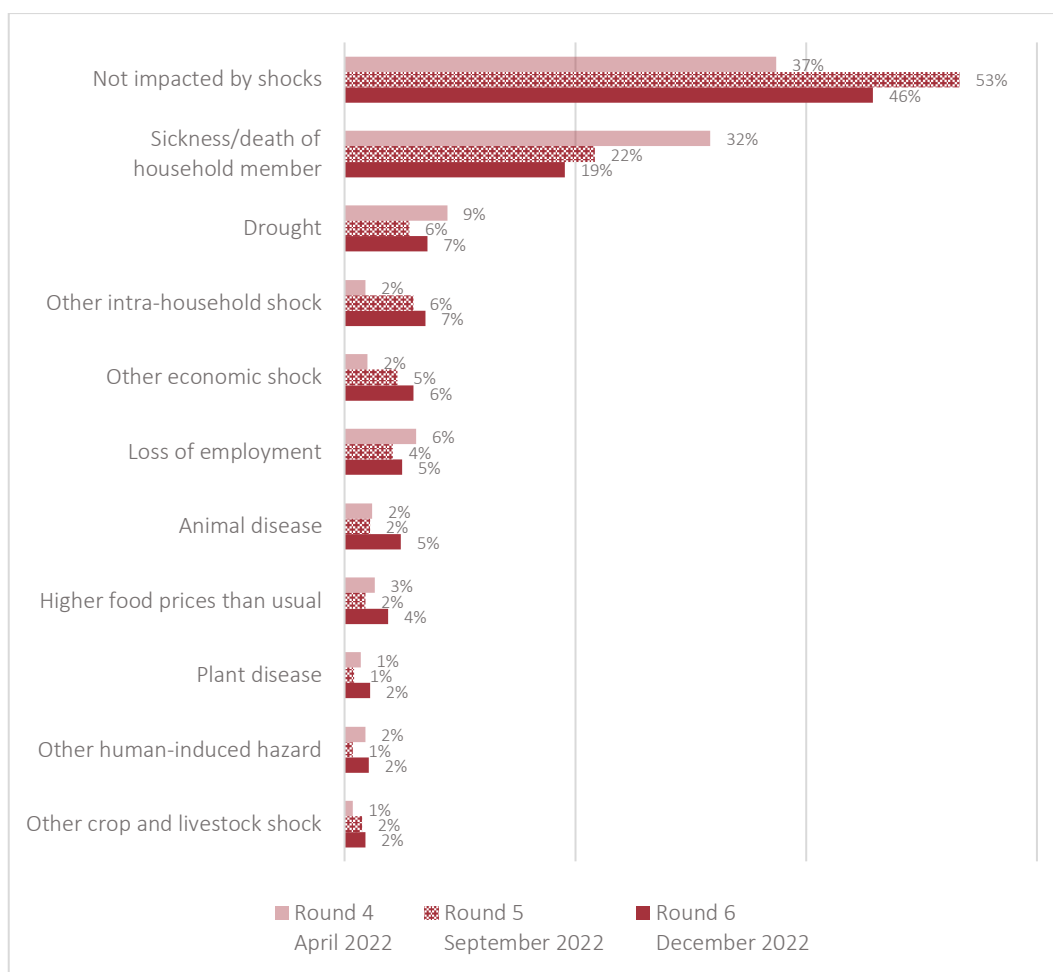
Approximately 5 percent of households had no main income (a slight decrease from last round), 65 percent had no second income (down from 76 percent) and 78 percent had no third income (down from 97 percent).

Approximately 49 percent of surveyed households reported a main income decrease (down from 58 percent last round), 39 percent reported a second income decrease (down from 58 percent) and 33 percent reported a third income decrease (down from 35 percent). During round 5, more than 60 percent of households in Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland West, Midlands and Manicaland reported a drop in income. In round 6, however, only Mashonaland West reported a 60 percent drop in main income. Respondents' three main income sources were reportedly non-agricultural self-employed (15 percent, down from 16 percent during the last round), the production and sale of staple crops (15 percent, up from 12 percent in the last round) and stable employment in non-agricultural industry (13 percent) – replacing off-farm daily wages and other non-agricultural casual employment (12 percent in the last round).

Animal diseases were the predominant agricultural shock while plant disease was reported in Manicaland province during the last round (at the beginning of the rainy season). Drought/heat stress was the main shock experienced across the provinces.

Approximately 46 percent of households reported that they were not impacted by any shock during the 3 months preceding the survey (down from 53 percent in the last round). Those who were affected reported sickness, accident or death of a household member as the main shock experienced (19 percent, down from 22 percent in the last round) followed by drought/heat stress at 7 percent (up from 6 percent in the last round) and other intra-household shocks (7 percent, up from 6 percent in the last round).

Figure 2. Main shocks (percentage of households)



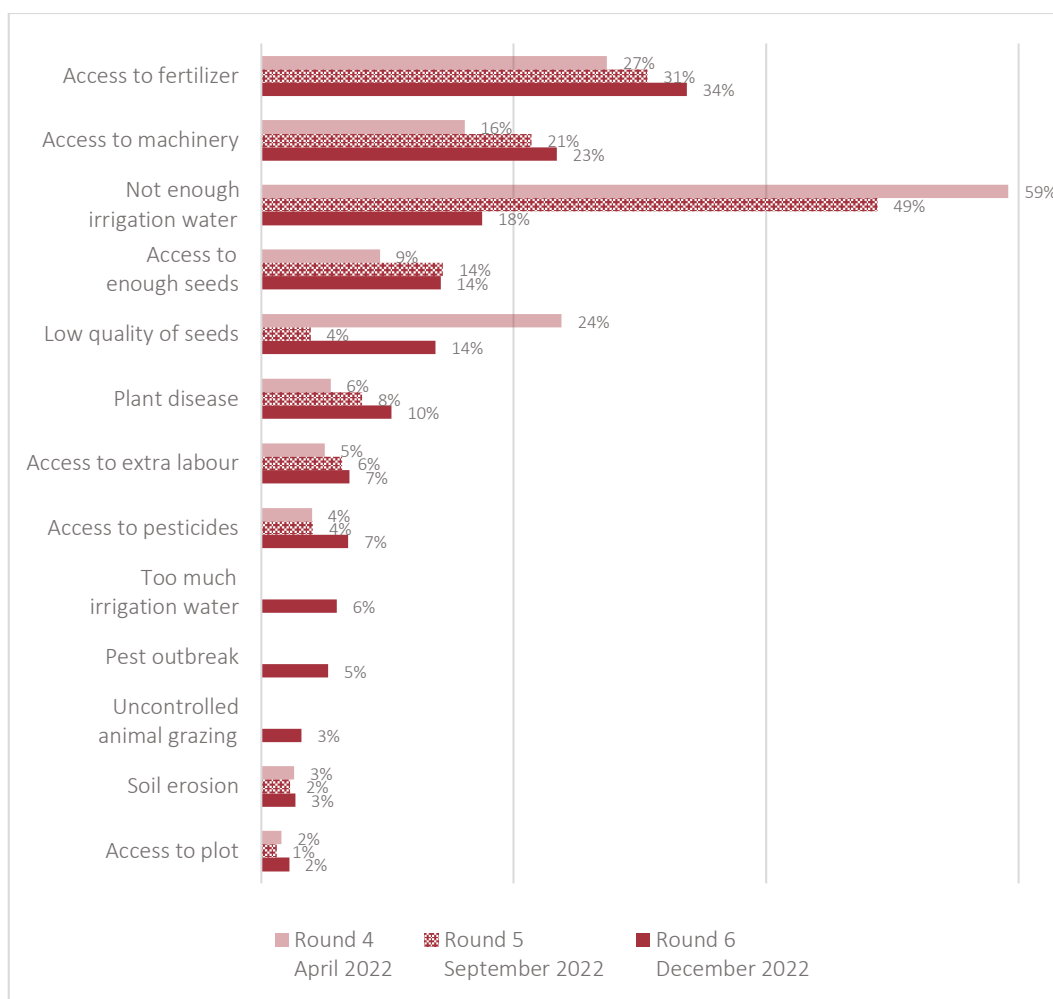
Source of data: FAO. 2023. Zimbabwe: DIEM-Monitoring assessments results (April, September and December 2022). In: *FAO Data in Emergencies Hub*. Rome. Cited 2 February 2023. data-in-emergencies.fao.org

Crops

The survey was conducted in the middle of the main cropping season during the planting stages. As is typical in Zimbabwe, the primary source of crop irrigation largely remains rainfed agriculture (84 percent). Thirty-eight percent of farmers reported that they planted the same area as in a typical year, 30 percent said they planted slightly less area, 20 percent said they planted slightly more, 4 percent planted a lot more and 8 percent planted a lot less. The projected La Nina conditions (above-average rainfall) may have led to the planting areas remaining normal. The Midlands and Mashonaland provinces reported a high number of farmers with a drop in area planted. About 63 percent of crop producers reported facing difficulties in crop production (down from 83 percent in the last round).

The major production difficulties faced by producers this season were in relation to input access. Approximately 14 percent of crop producers reported difficulties in accessing enough seed, 14 percent reported difficulties accessing quality seeds, 34 percent reported difficulties accessing fertilizers, 23 percent had difficulty accessing machinery, tools and animals for ploughing and 18 percent reported that they did not have enough irrigation/rain water. These crop production difficulties continue to affect the planted areas, yield and production.

Figure 3: Crop production difficulties (percentage of crop producers)



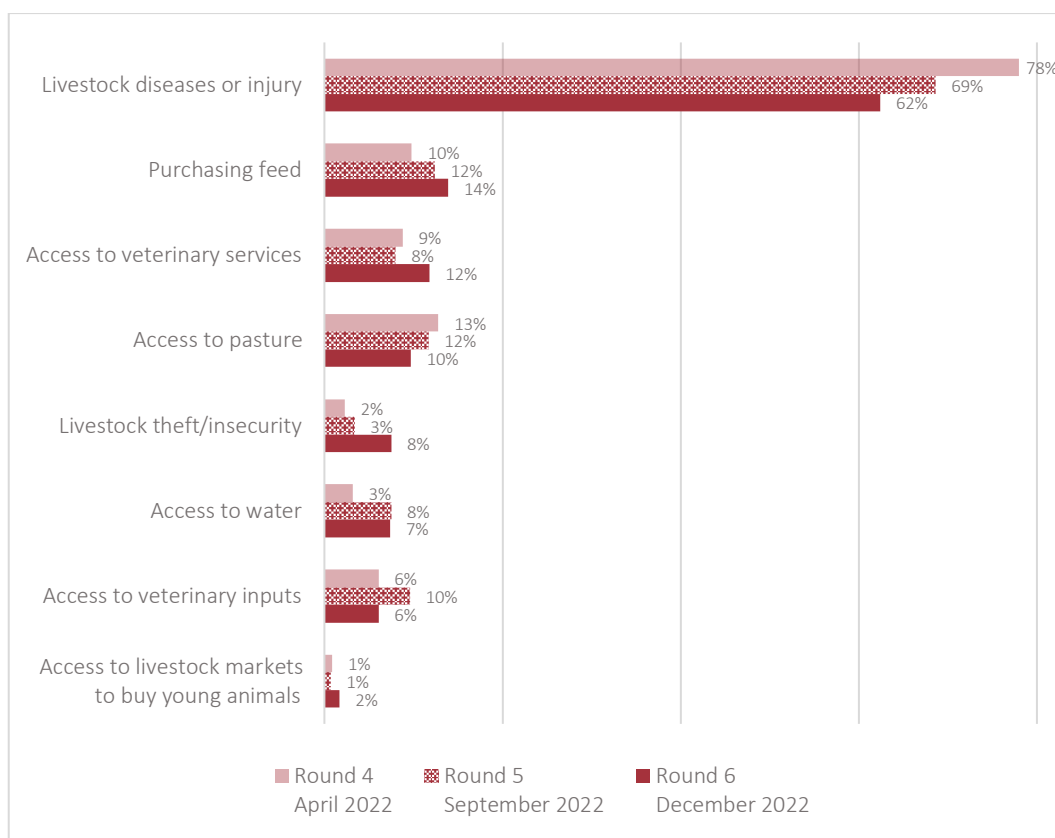
Source of data: FAO. 2023. Zimbabwe: DIEM-Monitoring assessments results (April, September and December 2022). In: *FAO Data in Emergencies Hub*. Rome. Cited 2 February 2023. data-in-emergencies.fao.org

Livestock

The main livestock produced included poultry (54 percent, up from 51 percent during the last round), cattle (21 percent, down from 27 percent) and goats (17 percent, down from 19 percent). Approximately 63 percent of livestock producers reportedly faced difficulties in the 3 months preceding the survey (up from 62 percent in the last round). According to the survey, livestock production was affected mainly by diseases and death (62 percent, down from 69 percent during the last round), difficulty purchasing feed (14 percent, up from 12 percent), access to veterinary services to curb transboundary diseases (12 percent, up from 8 percent) and access to pasture (10 percent, down from 12 percent). About 42 percent of livestock producers faced difficulties in selling their livestock and livestock products.

The main sales difficulties encountered by producers were low selling prices (37 percent, down from 40 percent in the last round), payment delays (36 percent) and a lack of demand from usual buyers (18 percent). Sales difficulties impact livestock producer income levels and may lead to a decrease in food security status.

Figure 4: Livestock production difficulties (percentage of livestock producers)



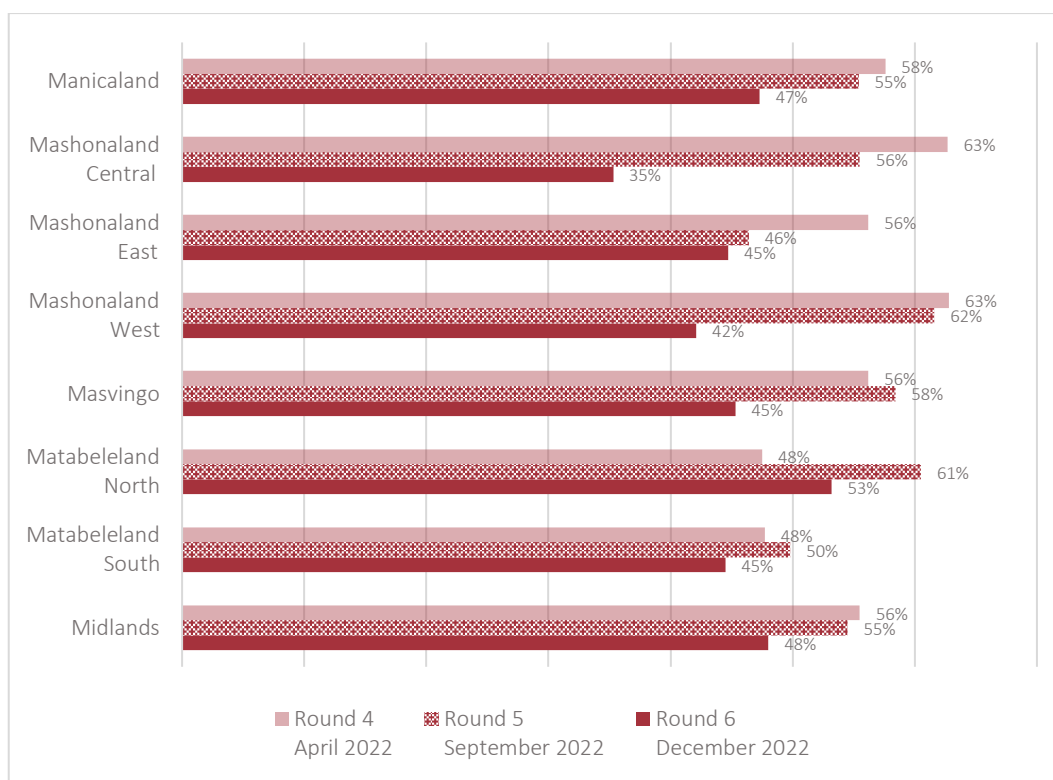
Source of data: FAO. 2023. Zimbabwe: DIEM-Monitoring assessments results (April, September and December 2022). In: *FAO Data in Emergencies Hub*. Rome. Cited 2 February 2023. data-in-emergencies.fao.org

Food Security

Income shocks and difficulties concerning crop production and livestock affect the food consumption patterns of households that rely on agricultural livelihoods. About 29 percent of households ran out of food during the 30 days preceding the survey (down from 37 percent during the previous round). Approximately 22 percent of households reported being hungry but could not eat (down from 28 percent) and 14 percent could not eat for a whole day in the 30 days prior to the survey (down from 17 percent). The majority of households had a high dietary diversity (57 percent) while 36 percent were medium and 7 percent low. The prevalence of recent severe household food insecurity was 5 percent (slightly less than the last round). According to FIES, the prevalence of recent moderate or severe household food insecurity was at 45 percent (down from 55 percent in the last round).¹ Concerning household livelihood coping strategies, the majority of households were using emergency strategies (33 percent, down from 46 percent last round), followed by stress (22 percent, up from 17 percent) and crisis strategies (16 percent, up from 15 percent). Approximately 30 percent of individuals surveyed had no coping strategy in place (up from 21 percent).

¹ FIES results are subject to change. The country scale will continue to evolve over additional rounds of data collection allowing for more consistent comparability across rounds.

Figure 5: Moderate or severe RFI (percentage of households)



Source of data: FAO. 2023. Zimbabwe: DIEM-Monitoring assessments results (April, September and December 2022). In: *FAO Data in Emergencies Hub*. Rome. Cited 2 February 2023. data-in-emergencies.fao.org

Despite noticeable improvements in 2022 – with fewer households facing moderate to severe food insecurity in December compared to April and September – over 50 percent of households in Matabeleland North still faced moderate to severe recent food insecurity in round 6.

Needs

Approximately 92 percent of households reported a need for assistance in the 3 to 6 months post-survey (down from 94 percent in the last round). The main needs reported for this period included inputs for crop and vegetable production (52 percent), food (35 percent), cash (32 percent) and livestock feed (25 percent). Mashonaland Central province had the highest proportion of households requiring support. The study also noted that, in the 3 months prior to the survey, 80 percent of households had not received any assistance.

Recommendations

Short-term recommendations (1–6 months)

- > Because farmers reported a reduction in planted area compared to a typical year, efforts should be made to reverse this trend. Early warning information on dry spells and excessive rainfall needs to be broadcast to crop producers to improve production practices as the season progresses. Attention should be directed towards providing inputs and strengthening the input market system.
- > In light of households reporting a need for input, cash and food assistance, there is an urgent need to develop cash assistance programmes to aid immediate food needs as well as prepare for the next cropping season.

Medium/long-term recommendations (6 months and beyond)

- > Continue strengthening income security programmes to accelerate recovery post COVID-19.
- > Increase pest and disease surveillance and containment, especially concerning the African armyworm (Mashonaland Central), fall armyworm (in most locations, especially Masvingo), quelea birds, grasshoppers (Manicaland and Mat North), yellow aphids (Masvingo) and stalk borer and the spotted borer in Midlands.
- > Livestock productivity programmes should focus on fair markets, especially in the poultry sub-sector.



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