SMALLHOLDER FARMERS IN ZAMBIA BUILDING RESILIENCE & GROWING OPPORTUNITIES TOGETHER

Implemented by Development Aid from People to People in Zambia, in cooperation with WFP.

***Implemented in**: Southern, Eastern, Central, North-Western and Lusaka provinces of Zambia*

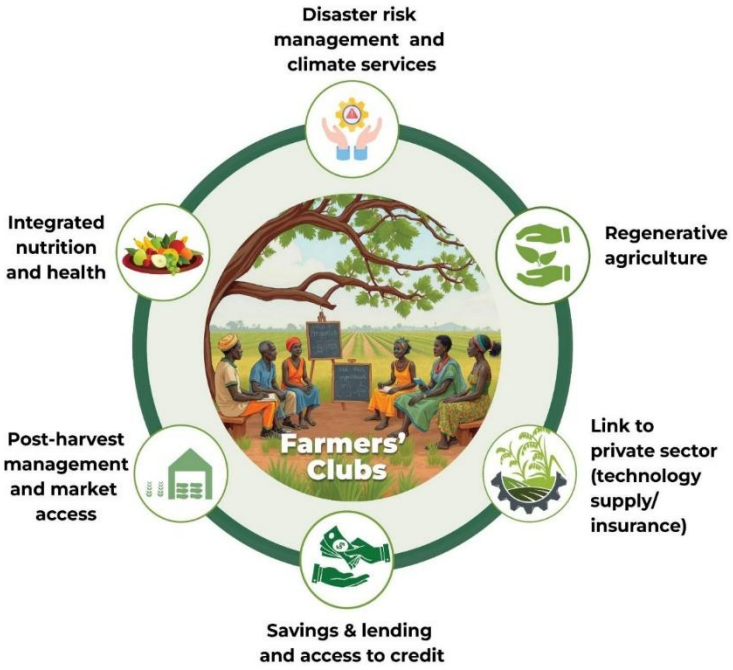
Currently reaching over 63,000 farmers organized in 1,183 Farmers' Clubs.

A community-based approach to smallholder agriculture

Connecting farming, finance, climate services, markets, nutrition and health—enabling farmers to improve production, protect livelihoods and strengthen household wellbeing.

DAPP Zambia's Farmers' Clubs organise smallholder farmers to learn from one another, improve farming practices, strengthen livelihoods and build resilience to climate change-related risks. The model connects farmer organisation with climate-smart production, financial inclusion, climate information, nutrition and access to markets.

Farmers organise themselves in clubs of around 40 members, subdivided into core groups of 10 each headed by a Lead Farmer. The structure creates a platform for peer learning, farmer-to-farmer support and collective action.



Climate-smart farming and regenerative agriculture: Members learn and apply conservation agriculture and other improved practices, while diversifying production through crops, livestock, irrigation and appropriate mechanisation.

Climate services: Locally trained Rain Gauge Minders monitor rainfall and share observations with fellow farmers and the Zambia Meteorological Department to support informed decisions.

Aggregation and market links: Locally based aggregators and Farmer Service Centres link farmers with inputs, buyers, storage, medium-scale aggregators and off-takers, including through a digital market system.

Integrated community support: The model connects with government extension, health and community structures, including community health volunteers and Care Groups, helping to link agriculture with nutrition and wellbeing.

Reducing Post-Harvest Losses: Training in improved storage, drying of fruits and vegetables, and stronger aggregation facilities helps farmers preserve produce and reduce losses after harvest.

Nutrition Farmers' Clubs: integrate nutrition education, nutrient-rich crop production, cooking demonstrations and community health structures to improve household diets and nutrition practices.

Savings and financial inclusion Savings groups support financial literacy, resource pooling and planning. Linkages with private lenders and available finance mechanisms help farmers invest in productive assets.

From farming to resilience – Evidence of results and partnership

RESULTS AND PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

Market access and aggregation | 2024/25 farming season

20,113
farmers serviced by aggregators across agricultural projects

500
aggregators trained from among club members

1,478mt
crops aggregated across agriculture projects

US$ 813,000
reported value of aggregated crops





Aggregators are identified by their communities and provided with specialized training alongside basic tools and equipment. The project facilitates their integration into private sector supply chains for both input procurement and output marketing. Transactions are partially conducted digitally via the Maano app. To ensure sustainability, high-performing aggregators are linked with microfinance institutions to scale their businesses and expand marketing support to fellow farmers.







Private Sector Partnership includes	
Off-takers:	Mt Meru, Chroma Milling, Maina Chabota, Good Nature Agro (GNA), Teddy Chilala, COMACO and Griffins.
Agro Stockiest:	Farm Serve, Vitalite, Jacana Foundation, and AgLeaseCo .
Seed Companies:	Zamseed, Lake agriculture, Corteva, Good Nature Agro, Seedco and Afriseed.
Financial Institutions:	Vision Fund and Agora
Insurance Companies:	Mayfair Insurance and ZEE PRE

RESULTS AND PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

POST-HARVEST FARMING

Post-harvest losses in Zambia reach up to 30% for cereals and higher for perishables. To cut these losses, the project trains smallholder farmers in hermetic storage through use of PICS bags and low-cost preservation techniques for example through use of solar dryers for fruits and vegetables.





Between the 2015 baseline and Phase II 2021**,** the WFP's R4 Rural Resilience Initiative in Southern province **successfully reduced post-harvest losses from 49% to 14.2%. DAPP Zambia was a key implementing organisation in the R4 Rural Resilience Initiative in Southern Province Zambia Phase I to Phase III**

LIVESTOCK FARMING/FARMER RANGE MANAGEMENT

Improved Livestock Husbandry: Train smallholder farmers in modern livestock management practices, focusing primarily on small ruminants and poultry, alongside piggery management. This includes capacity building in fodder production to ensure year-round feed security.

Breed Improvement Interventions: Establish community-based goat breeding centers and design accessible, affordable financing or purchasing mechanisms to help smallholder farmers acquire improved breeds for cross-breeding.

Decentralized Veterinary Services: Select and train Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs) to provide localized, accessible, and timely veterinary support and extension services.

Aquaculture Development: Deliver comprehensive training and technical support to establish and manage productive community/ small holder fish ponds.

Market & Supply Chain Linkages: Facilitate the creation of community-owned veterinary input outlets while strengthening commercial market linkages for diverse livestock products through the local aggregators

Between 2015 baseline and 2025 endline**,** the R4 Rural Resilience Initiative in Southern province documented that over 50% of the 17,835 small holder farmers' main income was from sale of livestock







Integrated Nutrition

Nutrition is integrated into Farmers' Clubs activities through:

Cooking demonstrations to promote healthy meal preparation.

Care Groups established in coordination with Neighbourhood Health Committees and local health facilities, led by trained Nutrition Champions.

Agro-nutrition training to build smallholder capacity in cultivating and utilizing nutrient-dense crops.

Through these targeted project interventions, the child pictured achieved a **significant weight recovery, increasing from 5.7 kg to 9.6 kg** in just a few months.



Reduced Coping Strategy Index (RCSI): The R4 endline score was **4.2**, significantly outperforming the country-level average for drought-affected areas in 2025 (11.1).

Acceptable Food Consumption Score (FCS): While the country-level average dropped to **45%** in 2025 due to climate shocks (El Nino), the R4 endline cohort achieved an exceptional **92.8%** acceptable score.

REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE,NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND ECO SYSTEM BASED ADPTATION

Landscape Restorations & Climate-Smart Practices: Trained farmers in integrated landscape management, catchment protection, and regenerative agriculture—specifically focusing on conservation agriculture including organic compost production, agroforestry and reforestation.

Sustainable Forest Governance: Established and trained Community Forest Management Groups (CFMGs) alongside localized training and engagement of Forest Guards to secure woodland ecosystems.

Livelihood & Agricultural Diversification: Expanded smallholder income and nutrition channels by integrating legumes, small livestock, small-scale irrigation, and climate-resilient forest commodities such as honey (non-timber forest products) and wild fruits.

Clean Energy Adoption: Mitigated local deforestation pressures through the construction of over 2,500 fuel-efficient firewood-saving stoves in 2025.







R4 Results:

Widespread Conservation Adoption: The Risk Reduction pillar achieved an outstanding **99% adoption rate for conservation agriculture** (such as minimum soil disturbance), improving soil moisture retention across target fields.

88 percent of farmers diversified income

82.1 percent of farmers were enrolled in insurance

CLIMATE SERVICES AND EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS

Working in collaboration with Zambia Metrological Department (ZMD), under Ministry of Green Economy and Environment has installed 152 Manual Rain Gauge and 54 Automated Weather Stations (AWS).

Locally trained Rain Gage Minders manage the manual rain gages and provide information to fellow farmers and to the Zambia Metrological Department



R4 Results: 75 percent of farmers used rainfall data to optimize planting decisions by the end of the project.

SAVING FOR CHANGE

Internal Savings and Lending Groups (ISLGs) operate as vital sub-structures within the Farmers' Clubs framework, playing a critical role in strengthening smallholder climate and economic resilience.

Successful groups are linked to micro credit providers.



R4 Results: 72 percent of female headed households and 65 percent of male headed households participated in saving schemes.

MECHANISATION

Milk Aggregation: Cooling tanks at community collection hubs to prevent spoilage.

Portable Solar Pumps: Mobile solar irrigation kits for flexible, low-cost dry-season farming.

Tractor Ripping: Mechanical land preparation using conservation rippers via a localized fee-for-service model.







INTEGRATED, MULTI-SECTORAL PARTNERSHIP

Public sector	Private sector	Development partnership
Ministry of Agriculture; Green Economy and Environment; Zambia Meteorological Department; Ministry of Community Dev. and Social Services; and other relevant government entities	Input suppliers, seed companies, financial institutions, insurance providers, aggregators and off-takers.	DAPP Zambia works with the **World Food Programme** and other partners to support farmer-led resilience and rural livelihoods.