



# PROJECT FACTSHEET 2024

## SEED AND KNOWLEDGE INITIATIVE (SKI)



Zambia and Zimbabwe as other countries in Southern Africa have been progressively facing food shortages in the last couple of years due to the effects of drought, climate change, HIV/AIDS and the scarcity of resources among other issues. All this has contributed to an uncertain future for agriculture. More than 30 percent of the rural population in Zambia and Zimbabwe are food insecure and predictions are that the number will increase in the next few years. Seventy percent of the population in the two countries depend on rain-fed agriculture. The food insecurity impact is harshly felt by women and young children, who are most affected by crop failures, subsequent food shortages and malnutrition. Despite 80 percent of farmers' seed in the two countries being sourced from informal seed system, there is little recognition in terms of policy support for farmer-led seed systems. Smallholder farmers are by-and-large an un-organized sector, alienated from national and regional policy processes and purposefully excluded from decisions affecting their livelihoods – yet if they are supported, they have a better chance to adapt to climate change and produce more food for their families, improve their nutrition and have excess for sale.

### GOAL

The Seed and Knowledge Initiative (SKI) is addressing food insecurity and environmental degradation through the promotion of crop diversification and environment-friendly approaches. This is achieved through expanding support and the capacity of smallholder farmers, particularly women and youth, in agro-ecological farming and farmer-led seed systems. The project is also working to influence change makers and the production and utilisation of evidence to inform policy development and implementation in both Zambia and Zimbabwe.

### OBJECTIVES

1. Farmers are empowered to practice, spread and advocate for agro-ecology and farmer-led seed systems in their communities, districts and countries.
2. Changemakers are influenced by stronger movement for agro-ecology and farmer-led seed systems.

### TARGET

The primary target group are smallholder farmers and their households. In addition, the project has a secondary target group of farmers' associations and organisations, civil society organisations and policy makers at different levels, in particular those related to the Agriculture Ministry.

### KEY FACTS

#### ZAMBIA

48% of people live below poverty line  
35% of children are stunted  
Population: 19.6 million  
HDI: 154 / 191 (2021)  
Income Level: Low

#### ZIMBABWE

63% of people live below the poverty line  
27% of children have stunted growth  
Population: 15.6 million  
HDI: 146 / 191  
Income Level: Lower middle

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## KEY OUTPUTS FOR THE CURRENT PHASE

- 50'000 smallholder farmers, including 25'000 women and 5'000 youth, practice agro-ecology;
- 20'000 farmers access seed from seed exchanges and seed banks;
- 2'000 smallholder farmers, including 1'200 women and 200 youth are involved in advocacy campaigns;
- 10 advocacy campaigns coordinated (6 at national and 4 at regional level);
- 15 partner organisations and farmer organisations strengthened.

## RESULTS SO FAR

- The food security of participating farming communities improved: The Household Dietary Diversity Index has increased from 3 to 6.4 out of 8 food groups;
- The number of smallholders applying agro-ecology expanded from 3'900 to 24'600, including 13'778 women and 3'474 youth;
- The number of smallholders involved in seed exchanges and seed banks increased from 5'591 to 10'954;
- 147 recorded instances of supportive positions by decision makers for localized nutritious food and seed systems, agro-ecology and/or farmers rights;
- The share of women in decision-making positions at community and partner levels grew from 54% to 61%.



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## PROJECT INFORMATION

|                             |                                               |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Implementing Organisation   | Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa       |
| Geographical Coverage       | Zambia and Zimbabwe.                          |
| Main Donors                 | Switzerland, Bread for the World and Swedbio. |
| Duration of Current Phase   | 2023 - 2027 (Phase 3)                         |
| Budget of the Current Phase | CHF 4'154'000                                 |
| Start of the First Phase    | 2013                                          |

## Impressum

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