



# CLIMATE JUSTICE

EVIDENCE-BASED STUDY IN ZIMBABWE  
SUMMARY REPORT



Impact of Agribusiness on Communities and Zimbabwe's  
Ambitions to Meet the Paris Agreement Targets in the  
AFOLU & IPPU Sectors

# Summary

ActionAid Zimbabwe acknowledges that the neoliberal economic structures in place today are failing both the environment and the people, exacerbating climate injustices. Communities are at risk from the adverse consequences of climate change because they lack the resources to adapt to it and are forced to pay for the false solutions that have been promoted by those who benefit from the situation by avoiding taking genuine action. Among these deceptive solutions are investments in fossil fuels and huge agribusiness initiatives.

These actions not only expose communities to the increased negative effects of climate change, but they also prevent the country from meeting its Paris Agreement targets for reducing greenhouse emissions, as outlined in the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Uses (AFOLU) and Industrial Processes and Product Use (IPPU) sectors. The study by ActionAid Zimbabwe outlined: 1) the difficulties faced by communities because of agribusiness, 2) how agribusiness is contributing to greenhouse gas emissions, 3) the major players of agribusiness in Zimbabwe including funders and their funding priorities, 4) the legal framework and policies including initiatives supported by the government that impact agribusiness and support sustainable agriculture alternatives. The report also offers suggestions for reducing the effects of agribusiness operations on communities and the achievement of NDCs.

## Keywords

- Agribusiness,
- Climate Justice,
- Climate Change,
- Nationally Determined Contributions,
- Agriculture,
- Forest, and Other Land Use (AFOLU),
- Industrial Processes and Product Use (IPPU)

# Description of The Problem

The climate continues to change at an unprecedented rate because of human impacts such as our overreliance on and consumption of fossil fuels, as well as agricultural activities such as agribusiness. As the effects of climate change worsen, these impacts disproportionately affect marginalized groups, amplifying inequalities and undermining sustainable development across all regions (high confidence). Zimbabwe continues to face life-threatening recurrent natural disasters most emanating from unmitigated emissions from industry and agribusiness, the impact of these climate-induced hazards is becoming more glaring on women. The 2022 IPCC report on climate change adaptation and vulnerability report indicated that, on average, climate disasters kill more women than men, expose women and girls more to socio-economic and psychological suffering, and lower the life expectancy of women more than men, yet most women (70%) work in the agriculture value chain. Indigenous peoples are also affected in a differentiated manner. Persons with disabilities in Zimbabwe contribute about 9% and are also affected differently. Furthermore, in most climate disasters, more than 75% of the people who suffer the most (loss and damage) and need humanitarian assistance are women and children.

The droughts and floods, which are already affecting the availability, accessibility, quality, and quantity of the country's water resources, are expected to continue due to climate change. Such floods in low-lying areas such as Tsholotsho have increased the vulnerability and exposure of communities. Davis and Hirji (2014) indicate that Zimbabwe's risk could rise 32% to 86% by 2100 if adaptation measures are not taken. A recent report by UNICEF (Climate, Energy, Environment and Children Strategy, 2021) noted that Zimbabwe is ranked very high (in the top three in Southern Africa) in the 2021 Global Climate Risk Index, and the latest evidence indicates that the country will continue to warm through 2080. The warming is projected to be most significant in the western and southern sections of the country, including Masvingo, Matabeleland North and Matabeleland South Provinces. The ongoing warming has had a severe impact on agricultural productivity, affecting other critical sectors of the economy.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Zimbabwe is an agro-based economy- with agriculture contributing 36% of the Gross Domestic Product in 2021. Agriculture is the backbone of Zimbabwe's economy and underpins the economic, social, environmental, and political lives of most of the people of Zimbabwe. Agricultural activities provide employment and income for 60-70% of the population, supply 60% of the raw materials required by the industrial sector and contribute 40% of total export earnings. Agriculture is viewed as a significant sector in driving climate change adaptation and mitigation in Zimbabwe, and it has been recognized as such in both the country's initial and updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) pledges to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Zimbabwe's revised NDC published in 2021 indicates that the Agriculture Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU) sector is the highest Green House Gas (GHG) emitter at 54%. This demonstrates the country's reliance on agriculture, as well as its high vulnerability to climate-induced shocks that influence production and productivity.

# Summary of Key Findings

The fertilizer and agrochemical industries are identified as one of the main contributors to GHG emissions under the AFOLU and IPPU sectors in Zimbabwe. Most of the energy used in industrial agriculture comes from fossil fuels (transport) (ground and air), refrigeration, mechanization, production, or lighting) and this has caused increased GHG emissions therefore threatening NDC targets. AFOLU alone contributes 54% of GHG emissions whilst Agriculture alone without FOLU contributes 21% mostly from mechanisation and livestock production. Currently, about 32% of fertilizer and chemicals supplies are produced locally, while about 68% are imported. Zimbabwe has a well-developed fertilizer industry whose ownership structure is cross-linked but dominated by big corporations with foreign share ownership.

The fertilizers and crop chemicals applied by commercial farmers tend to find their way to the water bodies, affecting the quality of water and making it expensive to treat the water. The climate-vulnerable communities downstream suffer from additional polluted water bodies.

Current agricultural legal, and policy framework and practices, for instance, the Seeds Act [Chapter 19:13] enacted in 1971, Seeds Regulations and Seeds (Certification Scheme) Notice 2000, and Plant Breeders' Act [Chapter 18:16] criminalize the sharing of open-pollinated seed varieties amongst farmers in the community advancing the monopoly over the production, processing, labelling, and marketing of certified seed in Zimbabwe. This does not allow the propagation of seeds undermining indigenous knowledge systems and practices thereby contributing to climate injustice and compromising resilience building.

Due to the patriarchal nature of Zimbabwean rural communities, very few women own land and they are traditionally marginalized from access to agricultural finance as they do not always meet the requirements by banks such as proof of income and collateral. Furthermore, Section 4 of the Communal Land Act vests all communal land in the President and Section 6 of the same Act empowers the President to make additions or subtractions from any communal land. Where interests of agribusiness and communities clash, the communities have been disadvantaged in favour of agribusiness activities a good example is the case of the Chilonga Community in Chiredzi.

# Summary of Key Findings (... Cont'd)

**Table 1:** Zimbabwe's national policies that promote the agriculture sector including agribusiness.

Act/Policy	Objectives	Impact on Agribusiness
Constitution of Zimbabwe	Provides for environmental rights in section 73.	All agricultural practices such as agribusiness shall not reverse the constitutional gains and aspirations by causing environmentally, economically, and climate-unfriendly hazards or inequalities.
Vision 2030	Seeks to transform Zimbabwe into an upper-middle-income economy by 2030. To attain Vision 2030, there is a need for stakeholders from all sectors of the economy to incorporate resilience in the policies, strategies, and investments.	Continued mechanization of agriculture to achieve the goal, the long-term effect could be a nation that might be a recipient of loss and damage due to climate-induced climate shocks.
National Environmental Policy and Strategies	Aims to avoid irreversible environmental damage, maintain essential ecological processes, and preserve the broad spectrum of biological diversity to sustain the long-term ability of natural processes to meet the basic needs of the people, enhance food security, reduce poverty, and improve the general standard of living of Zimbabweans	With the increased need for profits, agribusiness has entered virgin lands for increased production causing either displacements or environmental degradation e.g., Chilonga and Chisubanje
Zimbabwe Agriculture Policy Framework (2019-2030)	To provide policy guidance and direction on how to promote and support the sustainable flow of local and external investment and resources necessary to transform the agricultural sector through increased and sustained agricultural production, productivity and competitiveness.	As the demand for food security increases, just transitions in agriculture are likely going to be overlooked as businesses and the private sector search for profits
National Climate Policy and National Climate Change Response Strategy Low Emissions Development Strategy (LEDS)	Aims to enable Zimbabwe to establish the legal structures to regulate businesses in climate-related matters and enable them to reduce their GHGs. The main objective of the policy is to guide climate change management in the country, enhance the national adaptation capacity, scale up mitigation actions and facilitate the domestication of climate-related global policies	Limited adaptation and mitigation capacity by both farmers and the nation at large would mean failure to meet targeted NDCs

# Summary of Key Findings (... Cont'd)

**Table 2:** Common crops driving industrial/agribusiness agriculture in Zimbabwe.

Crop	Major Agricultural Regions	The area covered by Ha	Output (tonnes) 2022 Season	Source of Funds, Funding Institutions, Support	Producers
Wheat	Agroecological Regions 2,3,4 Mashonaland (38%) Midlands (17%) Masvingo (13%) Mashonaland West (11%) Manicaland (7%)	80,000	120 000 Tonnes (Pvt Sector)  20 000 (Presidential Scheme)	Denote Enterprise Crop Link Intergram StayWell	CFU Crop Producers Association ZFU ZNFU
Tobacco	Agroecological Regions 2 and 3	29,000,000	Mass Sold (Kgs) (2022): 252,603,251kg	China National Tobacco Cooperation Zimbabwe Government Tian Ze Brazil Government	Zimbabwe-China Tobacco Cooperation ZFU ZNFU
Sugarcane	Agroecological region 4 and 5 (Triangle, Hippo Valley, Mwenezi)	34.5 net ton (2022)	2021-22 average farm cash income: \$190,800 per farm (91% higher than the 2013-14 Average)	Triangle Tongaat Hullet	Goldstar Tongaat Hulett Hippo Valley Estates

**Table 3:** Zimbabwe's agriculture initiatives, funders, and their funding priorities.

Agriculture Initiative/Program	Name of Funding Institution/Source	Funding Priorities
Zimbabwe Agricultural Development Trust (ZADT)	Created by SNV Netherlands, 'The Development Organisation and Humanistic Institute for Development Cooperation (HIVOS)	The primary purpose of the fund is to contribute to the recovery and improvement of the smallholder farming sector and improve the food security and incomes of rural households in Zimbabwe.
ZADT launched the Credit for Agricultural Trade and Expansion (CREATE) fund	Funding from DANIDA and the British Embassy	Provides loan capital to banks that lend to value chain actors who have direct linkages with smallholder farmers. The fund is for value chain actors operating under input, output and processing windows in the agricultural sectors.
Agro Initiative Zimbabwe	TechnoServe	A national business plan competition. The program supports promising ideas in agriculture by awarding capital prizes and technical assistance to small- and medium-sized businesses that include smallholder farmers in their supply chains and can serve as models for the broader industry.

# Summary of Key Findings (... Cont'd)

**Table 3:** Zimbabwe's agriculture initiatives, funders, and their funding priorities. (... Cont'd)

Agriculture Initiative/Program	Name of Funding Institution/Source	Funding Priorities
AFC Bank (largest lending bank)	Ownership is split between the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Agriculture.	AFC has three subsidiaries that support the farming sector in Zimbabwe. These include the Landbank, AFC insurance and AFC leasing. The Landbank is responsible for disbursing both commercial and concessionary loans to farmers and small-scale companies that are involved in climate-smart technologies such as seed drills. Grant financing for climate-proofed pfumvudza intwasa program provided to smallholder farmers. Also involved in providing tillage and harvesting facilities on a lease basis and weather-indexed insurance for farmers.
Enhanced Agriculture Production and Productivity Programme	Commercial Bank of Zimbabwe Bank (Private ownership)	As of 2021, the bank supported the program with over UD\$ 70 million to help farmers purchase inputs, working-capital, and pay for services such as electricity.
Innscor Africa through its subsidiary companies- National Foods Limited - 100% National food properties - 100% Breathway Food Caterers - 100% Red Seal Manufacturers - 100% National Foods logistics - 50% ProBrands -100% In 2015 Simbisa was incorporated as a whole subsidiary of Innscor. Zimgold- 100% Colcom - 100% Texas Meats - 100%	Private ownership	According to the Ministry of Finance will invest US\$53 Million in Zimbabwe in 2023 targeting new categories such as sorghum for beer production
Ministry of Agriculture through its national budget pronouncement allocated in 2023	Government of Zimbabwe	Ministry of Agriculture the biggest vote of US\$343 million targeting grain production, horticulture, business advisory, extension services, agricultural research, animal diseases prevention and control, agricultural engineering and mechanization, water and sanitation, irrigation development and rural development.
Government of Zimbabwe	International developmental assistance	US\$975 million was reached in 2021. Some of the development partners to contribute to this amount are the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) with US\$67.43 million, the African Development Fund; US 25.65million, OPEC for International Development; US 15million, the Zimbabwe Resilience Building Fund (US 95million), Foreign Commonwealth Development Office Livelihoods and Food Security Programme; 45 million pounds, European Union supported Zimbabwe Agricultural Growth Programme (ZAGP); 40Million Pounds and Afrexim Bank

# Recommendations

Strategic Issue	Recommendation
<b>NDC Implementation (AFLOU &amp; IPPU sectors)</b>	There is a need for the implementation of sustainable solutions (circular economy) that include reduce, reuse, repair and recycle. This must be seen throughout the value chain especially the seed production industry and agri-waste management sector.
	There is a need to promote Renewable energy sources in the whole agribusiness value chain. Actors in the fertilizer and agrochemical companies should prioritize investments in adopting energy efficiency mechanisms in their production processes.
<b>Legal Framework, Legislation, and Policies</b>	There is a need to review and align Zimbabwe's legal and policy framework to reflect on current trends and challenges posed by climate change and proffer climate justice solutions for example the Seed Act and in the proposed Climate Bill and Carbon Credits Framework.
<b>Funding institutions and priority areas</b>	There is a need to shift funding from climate-harming farming practices initiatives such as agribusiness to sustainable agriculture alternatives such as agroecology. A good example is the government support program of Pfumvudza.
<b>Cross-Cutting Issues:</b>	
<b>Research</b>	There is a need for specific studies focusing on sustainable farming models for each agroecological region since they are heterogeneous and continuously shifting because of changes in the climate.
<b>Capacity Building</b>	There is a need for deliberate studies to be undertaken that prioritize climate justice interventions for women and youth. There is a need to promote and domesticate global recommendations by the government on key NDCs and COP negotiations promoting agroecology and other sustainable agriculture practices.
<b>Climate Justice Movement Building</b>	There is a need to train women, girls, and disabled persons among other vulnerable groups on advocacy to enable them to demand climate justice.
	Facilitate the building or strengthening of a collective civil society alliance or coalition that will push lobbying and advocacy national initiatives and campaigns on climate justice in the interest of communities



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