Systemic Approach to Inclusive Markets (SAIM)

Factsheet - Zambia

Background

Since the 1960s, Zambia has been a haven to refugees escaping conflict in surrounding countries. The Angolan War impelled the first large flow of refugees into Zambia in the late 1960s. Mayukwayukwa camp was established in 1966 and Meheba in 1971. In the early 1990s, conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda and Burundi triggered further movements of refugees into Zambia. At the time of the ILO-UNHCR market assessment in mid-2015, Zambia hosted over 50,000 refugees from Angola, Burundi, DRC and Rwanda.

The UNHCR developed the Strategic Framework for Local Integration of Former Refugees in Zambia to assist the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) to advance durable solutions for refugees who seek to integrate locally. 1,000 Angolan families in each of the two camps now qualify for permanent local integration. These former Angolan refugees are joined by one thousand Zambian families who qualify for land in Meheba and five hundred who qualify in Mayukwayukwa. Each of the families, Angolan and Zambian, has been allocated five hectares of land in the integration areas set aside in the two camps.

While access to land offers a real opportunity for livelihoods improvement to the former Angolan refugees, they are broadly economically marginalised, making it difficult for them to be self-reliant and meet their day-to-day survival needs. Following decades of being confined to remote refugee settlements, the former refugees have often relied on donor assistance and are mainly excluded from the mainstream Zambian economy with few opportunities for economic empowerment.

On a national level the biggest challenge to development in Zambia remains rural poverty and the widening gap between the rich, residing mainly in towns and urban areas and the poor, in rural communities such as Meheba and Mayukwayukwa resettlement areas. Employment in Zambia is marked by disproportion between rural and urban areas especially in the area of informal employment that reaches 96% of all the employed persons. Agriculture consists primarily of subsistence farming and consumes 71% of the workforce.

Problem analysis

The ILO-UNHCR assessment conducted in 2015 identified the agricultural sector as the focus sector for livelihood promotion strategies. Specific value chains that were found to hold potential for employment creation and integration of refugees were maize, beans and vegetables in Meheba, and cassava and groundnuts in and around Mayukwayukwa settlement areas. However, refugee farmers are resource constrained and lack tools as well as access to high-quality agricultural inputs such as good seeds, crop protection products and fertilizers.

Whilst the former refugees are largely farmers and hence possess the basic skills to cultivate and grow different crops as well as rear livestock, they lack the skills to cope with the fairly harsh climatic conditions as well as to compete with other producers on the market. More modern farming techniques and

technologies and better knowledge on how to cope with poor soil fertility, pests and diseases would allow them to increase productivity and achieve optimum yields.

The main markets accessible to refugee farmers are those in the refugee settlements. These markets suffer from low demand as the general refugee population does not have significant disposable incomes, in particular in Mayukwayukwa settlement were economic activity overall is low. For both Mayukwayukwa and Meheba, better market opportunities exist nearby. In the case of Mayukwayukwa, some unsatisfied demand for agricultural products exists in the nearby towns Kaoma and Mongu. In the case of Meheba, increasing demand for agricultural products exists in the nearby town Solwezi and in particular in nearby mines where economic activity is booming and mining workers fuel demand for food items. However, in both cases, access to these markets is hampered by poor infrastructure, a lack of information of producers about current market trends, prices and requirements, and lack of capacity to meet requirements in terms of volumes and quality of products and consistency of supply. Furthermore, producers are currently poorly organized, leading to high transaction costs and low bargaining power.

Recommendations

Following the assessment, detailed action plans were developed for Meheba and Mayukwayukwa settlement areas to strengthen access of farmers to high-quality inputs, increase know-how on the use of these inputs and modern farming techniques, and facilitate improved access to markets. Main recommendations of these action plans can be summarized as follows:

For Meheba:

- Strengthen access to inputs and know-how on how to use inputs correctly by organizing promotion days for suppliers to showcase their products and explain their support services, and train local input dealers to provide training to farmers in the use of improved seeds and fertilizers

- Facilitate better market linkages for farmer refugees organizing market days at the entrance to Meheba, coordinate planting, harvesting and aggregating products at collection points for loading and transportation to district markets, and strengthening linkages between Meheba farmers and procurement companies supplying mines and institutions.

- Provide training in improved methods of maize, bean and vegetable cultivation and harvesting, including rainy-season vegetable cultivation.

For Mayukwayukwa:

- Strengthen access to inputs by supporting interested local agro-dealers to establish input supply points within Mayukwayukwa and training them to stock and sell improved cassava plants and groundnut seeds

- Strengthen access to markets by organizing cassava and groundnut farmers into out-grower schemes led by private sector firms such as Mutawanda Agro and JNC Milling in Kaoma whereby firms provide credit and inputs and receive portion of the final product.

- Provide training for farmers in the use of lime, manure and inoculum and in conservation agriculture and agro-forestry practices and in improved cultivation methods