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**REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT**

DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND MITIGATION UNIT

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

**ON WHAT MITIGATION MEASURES THE DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND
MITIGATION UNIT HAS TAKEN IN RESPONSE TO THE 2024 DROUGHT
SITUATION AFTER IT WAS DECLARED A NATIONAL DISASTER**

BY HER HONOUR, THE VICE PRESIDENT, MRS. W.K. MUTALE NALUMANGO, MP

20th September, 2024

MADAM SPEAKER,

Allow me to thank you for the opportunity to issue a Ministerial Statement on the mitigation measures the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit has taken in response to the 2024 drought situation after it was declared a national disaster.

MADAM SPEAKER,

I wish to report to this August house that Government through the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit coordinated the development of the 2024 Food Security Drought Response Plan following the declaration of the drought as a National Disaster and Emergency by the Republican President on the 29th of February 2024.

This Response Plan was developed by a multi-sectoral team of experts drawn from state and non-state actors who are organized in six clusters for a coordinated response. In these clusters, the core interventions targeted at mitigating the drought's effects are outlined, and these will run until the next harvest in 2025.

MADAM SPEAKER,

To update the house, allow me therefore, to highlight the core interventions being implemented under each of the six response pillars in the eighty-four drought affected districts.

PILLAR 1: PROVISION OF IMMEDIATE FOOD ASSISTANCE

Under this pillar, the government is implementing interventions targeted at providing immediate life-saving and livelihood protection interventions in all the eighty-four drought affected districts.

In this regard, Government has released **41,485 Metric Tonnes** of maize to drought affected communities in the 84 districts across the country, of which as at 17th September, 2024, a total of **35,639.01 MT** has been distributed, with **829,700** households benefiting from the intervention.

The government is also providing Social Cash Transfers which is a programme aimed at reducing extreme poverty and the intergenerational transfer of poverty among beneficiary households. In the drought emergency period, this programme has been expanded to include all households that have been negatively affected by the impacts of the drought outside the normal Social Cash Transfer Programme. In addition, the Drought Emergency Cash Transfer programme is also being implemented to bolster the overall social protection intervention aimed at protecting the already vulnerable and preventing others from falling into the vulnerability bracket. As at **31st August, 2024**, **886,311** beneficiaries had been paid, with the total amount disbursed at **ZMW 1.8 billion**.

To facilitate availability of food in the affected communities, community maize sales have also been heightened. In this regard, **493**

community sales points are currently active in the target districts. A total of **130,375 Metric Tonnes** of maize has been sold through these sales points as at **17th September, 2024**. This maize has benefited **2,607,500** households.

Further, to stabilize market prices for, and availability of, mealie meal, government through the Zambia National Service has released **399,800 Metric Tonnes** of maize from the Strategic Grain Reserves for milling. Of this tonnage, **347,666.02 Metric Tonnes** has been milled and bagged into **11,125,318 by 25 Kilogram bags** of mealie meal for sale. Similarly, the Zambia Correctional Service has also drawn **84,105.41 Metric Tonnes** of maize from the Strategic Grain Reserves for the same purpose. Of this quantity, **77,626.41 Metric Tonnes** has been milled and bagged into **2,209,508 by 25 Kilogram bags** of mealie meal for sale in communities.

MADAM SPEAKER,

To cover the domestic maize production gap, the Government signed a Government-to-Government contract with the United Republic of Tanzania, to import 650,000 metric tonnes of non-GMO white maize. The imported maize from Tanzania is currently flowing into the country. In addition, the Food Reserve Agency has enhanced its operations and by 18 September 2024 had recorded 580,594 metric tonnes of total maize purchase receipts.

MADAM SPEAKER,

The government has also just initiated a cash for work programme in the eighty-four drought affected districts. In this programme, communities are undertaking labour intensive works such as drainage clearance, moulding of bricks, and road works. A total of **ZMW 2 billion** has been reserved for this programme. Works have since commenced and payments to beneficiaries will be made once the works are completed and certified within a specified timeframe which should not exceed a period of 10 days in a given month.

PILLAR 2: NUTRITION

Under this pillar, interventions under implementation involve the scanning for and treatment of Severe and Moderate cases of Acute Malnutrition among children, lactating and pregnant mothers across the 84 drought affected districts.

To date, **4,116,901** children have been screened for severe and moderate acute malnutrition. Of this number, **25,865** children have been treated for both cases of malnutrition. Treatment and prevention of malnutrition involves the provision of micronutrients and protein supplements to children, pregnant and lactating mothers.

PILLAR 3: EDUCATION

Under this pillar, the school feeding programme has been enhanced, and is now covering all drought affected districts, with an additional **2,394,208** pupils being provided with meals and safe drinking water in **thirty-six (36)** districts which were not initially on the School Feeding

Programme before the drought. This is being implemented across the eight provinces (excluding Northern and Luapula) for a period of **180** days. The meals are being provided to pupils considered to be in early childhood education (**143,727**), primary school (**1,704,604**), and secondary school (**545,977**).

PILLAR 4: HEALTH

Under this pillar, government has heightened vaccinations against cholera, measles and polio. So far, a total of **227,500** persons have been vaccinated against Cholera with 4 years efficacy while **2,268,249** children have been vaccinated against Polio which requires a total of 3 doses at 1 month interval.

There is also heightened disease surveillance in the affected districts, while water quality is being monitored. Given the psychological impacts of the drought on the people, there is also heightened provision of mental health services.

PILLAR 5: ENERGY

I wish to report that the Country's power deficit now stands at **1,381 MW** of electricity. To mitigate this in the short-term, the government is importing **450 Mega watts** of electricity from the Southern African

Power Pool to support commercial activities, and facilitating the greening of **100,000** solar heaters.

Government is also installing 23 diesel generators producing **12.2 Mega watts** of electricity in strategic institutions such as markets and water utilities.

Further, a solar loan scheme has been introduced through the Public Service Micro-Finance company (PSMFC) to enable Civil Servants to access solar and other products affordably.

PILLAR 6: EARLY RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE BUILDING

Under this pillar, the focus is on building community resilience to shocks such as the drought we are responding to, and facilitation of recovery of the communities affected by the drought. The target sectors and their interventions under this pillar are as follows:

1) Water Resource Management and Development

Under this sector, the measures put in place include drilling of boreholes, enhancement of water permitting measures, and the construction and maintenance of dams in the drought affected districts to support agriculture, human, livestock and animal use. In the drought response plan, **770 dams** are earmarked for rehabilitation, so far, **90 dams** are being maintained in 2024 with progress at **87%**. In addition, six small dams are currently under rehabilitation.

The government is also currently constructing **16 out of a target 28 dams** small dams in the drought-affected districts, and progress for these ranges from **5 to 80%**.

I also wish to report that **270 of 500** non-functional boreholes are currently under rehabilitation. We have also initiated the installation of **424 out of 1500** target pipe water schemes.

Water permitting has also been enhanced by the Water Resource Management Authority. This is the issuance of ground and surface water extraction permits. Since the declaration a total of **310 water permits** have been issued out of the **312** applications that have been received after the declaration.

2) Livestock and Wildlife

Under this sector, there has been baling of hay to supplement livestock feeding and increased livestock and animal vaccinations against diseases such as Anthrax, Contagious Bovine Pleural Pneumonia and Rabies. As of **17th September, 2024**, a total of **744,350** animals have been vaccinated against Anthrax, **437,051** against Foot and Mouth disease, **543,175** against Contagious Bovine Pleural Pneumonia and **8,095** dogs have been vaccinated against Rabies. This has been undertaken in Southern, Western, North-western, Northern, Copperbelt, and Muchinga provinces.

3) Agricultural Production

Under this sector, farmers have been encouraged to plant early maturing maize varieties as well as Winter Maize production. The Government through the Republican President, His Excellency Mr. Hakainde Hichilema on March 24th, 2024 commissioned the harvest of Winter Maize at Sadote Farm in Mkushi Farm Block and flagged off the winter maize planting season as a way of beefing up the country's Strategic Reserves. Mobile grain dryers have also been purchased to facilitate the drying of the winter maize.

PILLAR 7: RISK COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Under this pillar, there has been heightened community awareness campaigns related to the six core pillars under the drought response plan. These include:

- 1) The airing of three-minute drought response updates on ZNBC News at 19:00 hours every day;
- 2) Sensitization of communities in rangeland protection;
- 3) Operation of a 24 hour and 7-day a week National Emergency Operations Center at DMMU to respond to drought-related inquiries from members of the public and to collect vital information related to the response by all actors involved.

MADAM SPEAKER,

In summary, the above measures are targeted at mitigating the adverse impacts of the experienced drought in the eighty-four districts across the country.

MADAM SPEAKER,

Allow me to reiterate that the above measures are still on-going and updates will be given as measures continue being implemented in all the 84 drought affected districts across the country.

I THANK YOU