

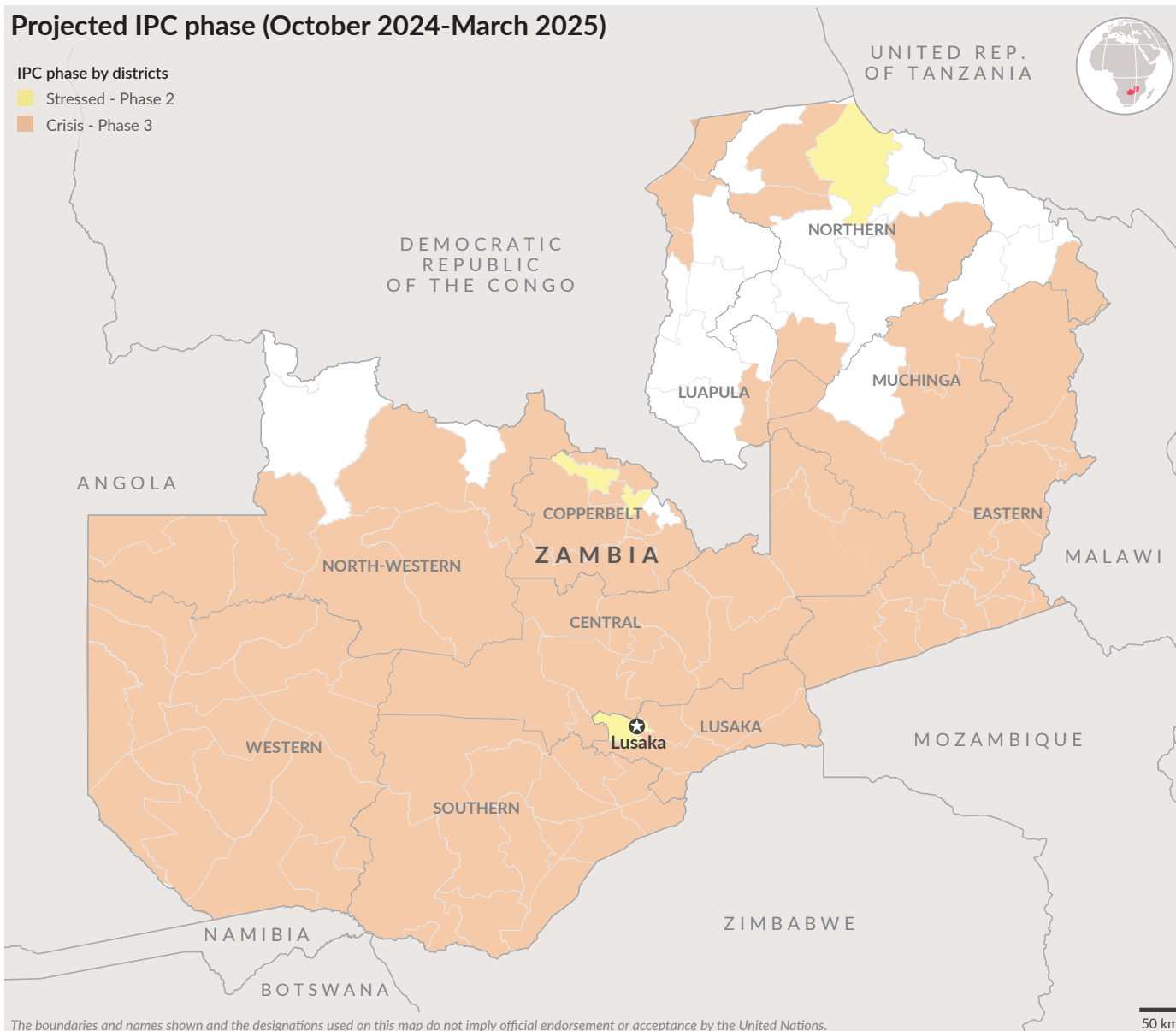
Zambia is dealing with a complex humanitarian crisis driven by weather extremes, the persistent threat of a cholera outbreak, and knock-on effects on the economy.

Since the Government declared the drought a national disaster on 29 February 2024, food insecurity has exacerbated protection risks. The Integrated Food Security Classification (IPC) [report](#), released in October, indicates that in the projected period October 2024-March 2025 the estimated number of people in Zambia facing acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) will rise from **4.95 to 5.83 M**. Refugee-hosting areas are affected as well: [the districts of Kalumbila in North-Western Province](#) (where Meheba settlement is located), [Kaoma in Western Province](#) (Mayukwayukwa settlement) and [Nchelenge in Luapula Province](#) (Mantapala settlement) are expected to be in **IPC 3**.

UNHCR is supporting the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (MCDSS) as co-lead of the Protection Sector under the overall drought response coordination of the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit (DMMU) in the Office of the Vice President.

UNHCR is coordinating the implementation of the protection component of the OCHA Central Emergency Response Fund – Rapid Response (CERF) for Zambia, with life saving protection for refugees, their host communities and other people impacted by the drought. UNHCR is complementing the CERF allocations through additional financing, using reprogramming and ad hoc emergency funds. CERF partners include government (MCDSS), an international NGO (Action Aid Zambia - AAZ), a refugee-led international NGO (Braveheart) and a national NGO (Lifeline Childline Zambia - LLCZ). Protection interventions focus on community-based protection, case management, and cash assistance.

Projected IPC phase (October 2024-March 2025)

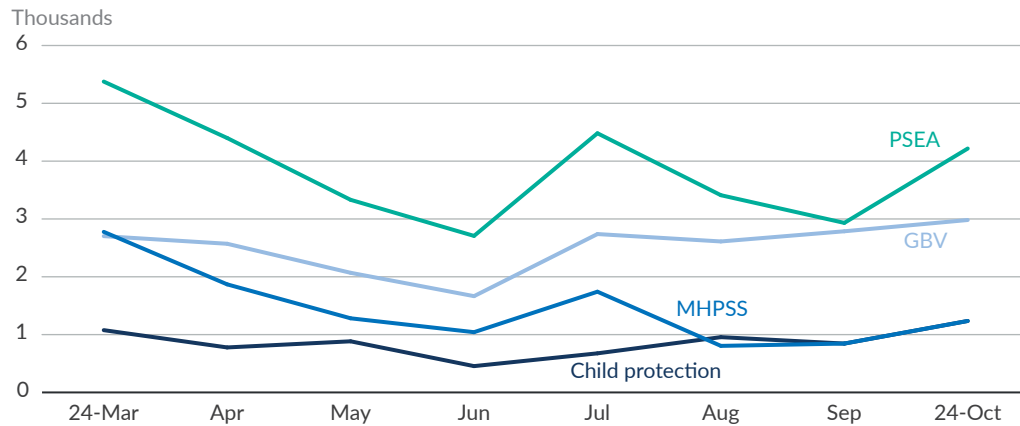


AAZ is conducting community mobilization on emergency preparedness and response as well as on gender-based violence (GBV) – to increase understanding and use of referral pathways to national systems. Participants are members of refugee leadership structures, child and youth care-workers, GBV monitors, and community development workers from Community Welfare Assistance Committees (CWACs). Implementation is taking place in **Mayukwayukwa**, its surrounding communities in **Kaoma district**, and the **districts of Luampa, Senanga, Sikongo, Shangombo and Sioma** (Western Province). In **Shangombo and Sioma** awareness raising initiatives were conducted in market places. Meanwhile, Brave Heart is training community members from Meheba refugee settlement on child protection and GBV.

With LLCZ's nationwide tollfree numbers recording increased reports of GBV and sexual exploitation and abuse, protection referrals as well as GBV and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) related interventions have been prioritized by the Protection Sector. Calls relating to child protection and psychosocial support have had a spike as well.

During the height of the drought crisis, from **March to October 2024**, call volumes exceeded **60,000**, with **70%** of these calls raising concerns around GBV and SEA. Requests for mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS) made up **16,7%** of the calls, while **10%** related to child protection issues.

Protection related calls to LLCZ call-center (Mar - Oct 2024)



Further, UNHCR's cash assistance programme, providing cash for basic needs and delivered via mobile money, reached **1,390 vulnerable refugee households** across **Meheba, Mayukwayukwa, and Mantapala** settlements as well as **Lusaka, Ndola and Kabwe** urban areas. MCDSS-led cash distributions for vulnerable host community households will follow. These interventions aim to support both refugees and host communities to meet their basic needs without resorting to **negative coping strategies**.

People reached - Case management and Community Mobilization in Western Province (Oct. 2024)

