



All smiles at the Zwitile Project food distributions.  
Photo credit: Kudzai Gezi/ CRS

## CRS provides food relief to elnino-affected households in Matabeleland South Province.

In response to the food shortages posed by the el nino-induced drought affecting most of Southern Africa, CRS, through its implementing partner, Caritas Zimbabwe, Archdiocese of Bulawayo, provided immediate food assistance to 13 400 individuals under the Zwitile (*meaning do it yourself*). With support from USAID/BHA, Zwitile project is complimenting the government in 10 wards in Mangwe and Gwanda Districts, Matabeleland South Province to offer emergency food assistance in exchange to their labour. The project mobilized community members conserve and restore 1316 Ha of land in the two districts. They eradicated invasive plant species and closed up gulleys to increase rangelands, prevent further land degradation and reduce community water source siltation. Leveraging on the Zwitile Project, USAID-Funded activities, CRS is supporting the construction of two dams in Gwanda District by providing

the community members with the tools and materials they need for their community dam construction. This community-led initiative is expected to mitigate the impact of climate change by improving water security and, in turn, livelihoods and resilience in the area. The project participants working on the dam construction will also receive immediate food assistance to mitigate the impact of the current drought-induced food shortages. For every 60 hours of work, each project participant will receive 50kgs sorghum, 10kgs yellow split peas and 3.7 kgs of vegetable oil as compensation for labor contributed to the Zwitile Project works. The Zwitile Project is reinforcing community resilience while addressing immediate food needs.

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## Accelerating Water Improvement, Sanitation and Hygiene (AWISH) Project closes out.

The AWISH Project, which concluded in August 2024, significantly improved water access and sanitation in Murehwa District. This project prioritized the provision of safe water as well as the reduction of open defecation in 2 wards of Murehwa District. The project also subsidized the construction of over 40 latrines, reducing open defecation in the targeted wards in Murehwa Districts . Many households in the targeted wards relied on unprotected wells for water increasing the chances of spreading diarrheal diseases. It upgraded a borehole in Mavhurume village to a 3.6 km solar-powered piped water scheme and drilled a new solar-powered borehole in Maritini Village.

The Mavhurume piped water scheme has 6 communal water collection points and a total of 6 villages are benefiting from these two boreholes. These boreholes support two community nutrition gardens. These gardens have been fitted with drip irrigation systems. CRS, through its implementing partner, Caritas Archdiocese of Harare provided starter packs for these gardens to grow a variety of crops. The project participants practice communal agriculture where participants take turns to provide labour at scheduled times, harvest the crops as a group, share them equally for consumption, and sell any surplus for income.



Headman Frank Mavhurume of Mavhurume Village, Ward 16, Murehwa District posing next to the community nutrition garden . Photo by Tariro Mhute/ CRS

## Newly-Refurbished Dam enhances quality of life in Hurungwe District.

St Boniface lies in the driest part of Hurungwe District which is characterized by erratic rainfall and poor soils. Many wells run dry long before the next rainy season every year. Through community-based planning in the targeted wards, the resuscitation of the St Boniface dam was identified as a community development priority. CRS Zimbabwe, through its implementing partner, Caritas Diocese of Chinhoyi supported the building of a new dam wall for St Boniface, increasing the dam capacity from 35,000 cubic metres to 265,00 cubic metres. The community members provided the labor for their own dam wall construction. CRS supported them with tools and materials needed for the dam wall construction.

The dam serves more than 4100 people including pupils in the nearby schools. People from as far as 12 kilometers radius of the dam rely on the dam for water for domestic

purposes. This project put 2 hectares of a community garden under irrigation using water from the dam. The garden enhances family-level nutrition. The surplus produce is sold for income generation purposes. Currently one fishpond with 3,000 fish, has been established using water from the St Boniface Dam,. The project is set to establish another fish pond with a 5,000-fish capacity before close out.

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*"I am happy because I have gained skills in mesh wire making. I have clients lined up to buy some mesh wire from me, after I finish making this fence for our community garden "*

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The project has improved the skillsets of the project participants involved. The community constructed the dam under the guidance of qualified engineers and the participants have reported an improvement in their building and bricklaying knowledge and skills. In addition to this, the

youth under this project were trained to make mesh wire fencing and were also provided them with the relevant materials and machinery. They are making mesh wire fencing to protect their community garden from animals. The youths have the machinery and skills to continue working in the mesh wire fencing value chain after completing the community project.



Tarisiro, aged 19, is one of the youths working to produce mesh wire fencing to protect the community garden at St. Boniface community garden. Photo by Kudzai Gezi/CRS

# Mutemwa Institution Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (MIWASH) Project enhances sanitation, nutrition, livelihoods and water security.

With funding from the Wallace Genetics Foundation, CRS is working to improve WASH and health and hygiene delivery practices in Catholic-run health facilities. CRS partnered Caritas Archdiocese of Harare, in implementing this project at Mutemwa Catholic Leprosy and Care Centre. The Centre had been facing water shortages which affected the day-to-day running of the centre. To address this challenge, the project installed a solar-powered system that is now supplying raw water from the community dam for agricultural purposes to the center, leaving the safe water from the center's boreholes to cater for domestic consumption and for use at the clinic. The raw water is used at the

center's public ablution facilities. The project also rehabilitated the 540,000-litre water reservoir at the center. The storage tank can hold 3 weeks' supply of water. Through this intervention the centre is now irrigating 3 agricultural plots with 2 running under drip irrigation that was installed by the project and the 3rd plot running under drag hoses. The crops from the garden are used for daily consumption by over 50 patients and staff at the centre. The excess produce is sold at the local market for income generation. The center, has been able to pay off electricity and council bills arrears from the profits of their garden. Currently, the center is expanding its garden and diversifying crops grown as there is



Talent Njenge, one of the gardeners at Mutemwa Leprosy Care Centre, showing crops from their garden.

now abundant water for this extra production.

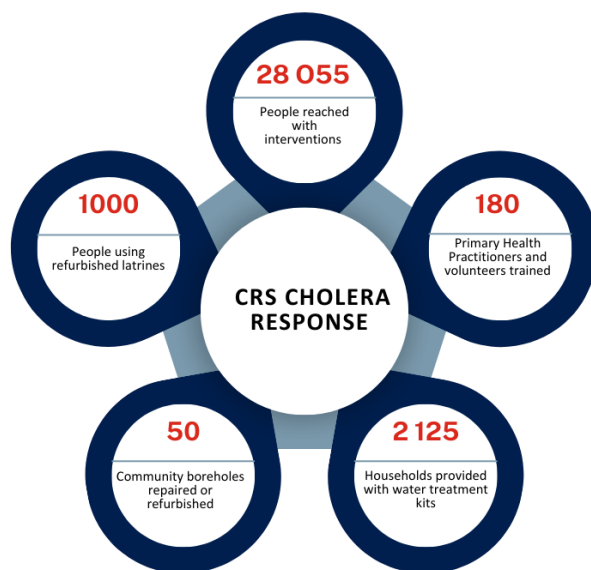
## CRS Responds to Cholera outbreaks in Buhera and Hwange Districts.

In response to a cholera outbreak in Hwange Urban, CRS partnered with the government through the Ministry of Health and Child Care, along with other District Water and Sanitation Committee (DWSSC) members and the Hwange Colliery Company, to launch a coordinated emergency response. This initiative followed another successful cholera response in Buhera District. In both projects, CRS collaborated with its

local partner, Caritas. Working together, CRS and its partners tackled the root causes of the disease's spread by investing in safe water provision. This included rehabilitating boreholes in Buhera and piped water systems in Hwange Urban, as well as adding water storage facilities to improve access to safe water and latrine usage during water rationing periods. Both projects featured a strong hygiene promotion

component, led by trained community health volunteers residing within the affected communities.

In Buhera, CRS also supported the local District Health Executive with medicines and equipment, including cholera beds, as part of the response. The combined efforts of CRS and its partners significantly contributed to reducing cholera morbidity and mortality.



## A multi-stakeholder platform endorses the Rangeland Management Guide

CRS convened a multi-stakeholder platform comprising government officials, donors, research institutions, universities, fellow development partners, and farmers to deliberate on the state of rangelands and their management in Zimbabwe. Rangelands are crucial resources in agro-based economies like Zimbabwe.

In his speech, Mr. Gunzvenzve from the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development emphasized the urgent need for up-to-date guidance on

rangeland management and commended CRS for addressing this gap by developing the first-ever rangeland management guide in Zimbabwe. Upon finalization, the manual will be used by lead farmers and extension workers in Beitbridge and will undergo another review after a year of use. The rangeland management guide will be scaled up to the national level to catalyze development outcomes and improve climate change coping strategies. This manual is one of the ways the agency is working to respond to the impacts of climate change

## Research sheds more light on non-farm livelihoods for youths in Zimbabwe.

The agency conducted a youth-led market assessment on non-farm livelihood pathways to improve food security as part of the Impumelelo Yabatsha Project in the Tsholotsho and Gwanda Districts of Zimbabwe. This Gender and Youth Activities (GAYA) initiative, supported by Save the Children USA, aims to deepen the understanding of youth inclusion and participation in non-farm livelihoods and food security initiatives. The findings from this research will be used to develop a toolkit to enhance meaningful youth participation in food security interventions.

The project prioritized inclusive youth selection and enrollment, selecting 80 youth to participate. These participants were trained in digital data collection and research design. After training, they began data collection, followed by data analysis and validation with the participant youths. The research results will be disseminated through a series of webinars and an in-person learning symposium. Research

results are also available from CRS upon request.



*Youth graduates posing after completing a digital data collection and research design course*

## CRS drives localization



CRS values partnerships and collaboration for compounded, holistic programming that improve lives and communities served by the organization. CRS Zimbabwe supported Caritas Zimbabwe to launch its national strategic plan for 2025-2030.

Using the capacity strengthening approach, the agency will support the following strategic areas: establishment of a business development unit for resource mobilization, rolling out business development and program quality standards and joint business development supporting Caritas Zimbabwe to PRIME. Read more about this launch [here](#).

### Safe and Dignified Programming

CRS cascaded the Partner Safeguarding Policy and Procedures (PSP) to all its implementing partners. 4 partners now have internationally compliant safeguarding policies and procedures in place. In addition to this, all partners were capacitated on conducting investigations of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. All participating staff attained UNHCR certification.

## 1 400 Households receive drought– tolerant seeds from the CRS anticipatory action program

In FY24, the agency implemented a climate change mitigation and adaptation project in Beitbridge District. To prepare for the 2023–2024 farming season, 1,400 households received drought-tolerant seed varieties, including sorghum, millet, lablab, and cowpeas, to adapt to changing rain patterns. Some of these crops have nitrogen-fixing properties, which improved the 139 hectares of land they were planted on.

The project also supported 15 farmers in establishing their own woodlots of

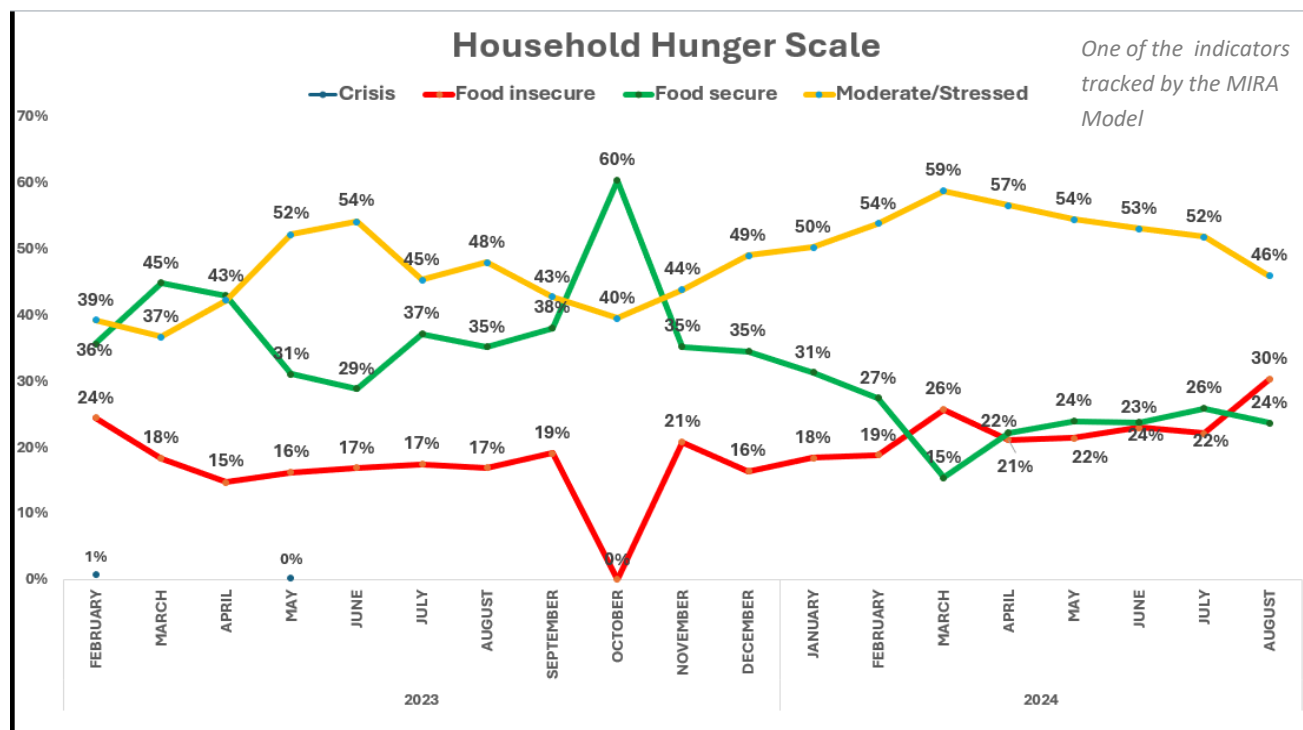
fast-growing trees, ranging from a quarter to half a hectare in size. These woodlots will significantly reduce river siltation and land degradation by preventing soil erosion. Additionally, 2 hectares of fast-growing trees were planted in communal woodlots. The leaves from these trees provide good fodder, and the trunks offer easy-to-grow firewood alternatives.

Furthermore, the project enhanced the goat value chain in Beitbridge District. The Lupfumo Farmer Learning Center was supported with 90

Matabeleland Goat breeding stock. This center allows farmers to conduct research and learn best practices from each other, which they can replicate on their own farms. Goat rearing remains one of the most viable value chains for income generation in the district, providing milk and meat, which are rich sources of protein for improved nutrition.

## CRS cascades the Monthly Interval Resilience Analysis (MIRA) Model.

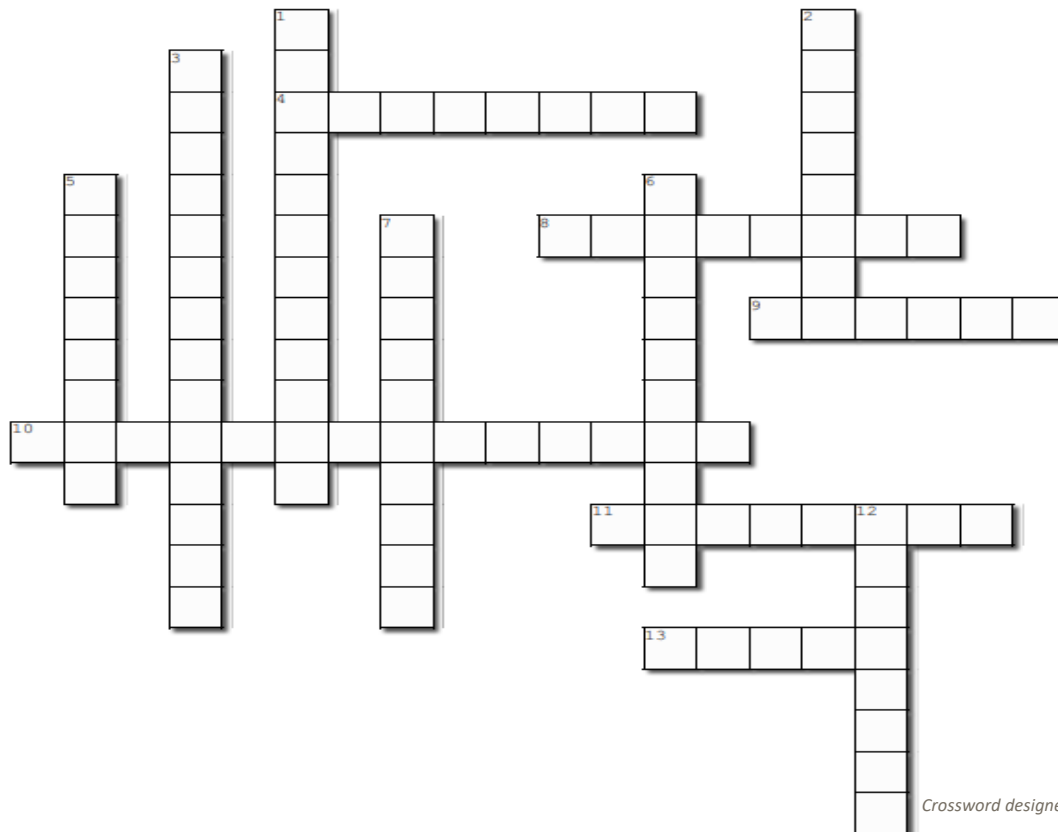
CRS is scaling up a food security security trends across geographic areas districts on a monthly basis. This data has resilience monitoring model in 3 Districts and other information relating to been pivotal in developing personalized in Zimbabwe. The Monthly Interval household resilience and coping and context-appropriate food security Resilience Analysis (MIRA) is a data mechanisms. Currently, MIRA is being resilience projects in the CRS Zimbabwe collection and analysis scheme to Beitbridge, Gwanda and Mangwe Country Program. measure and predict resilience among districts with technical assistance from households prone to food insecurity one Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency to two months ahead of time. The MIRA (ZIMSTAT) and Cornell University. model collects information on shocks Currently, data is being collected from and stressors, household level resilience 775 sentinel households across 30 (Coping Strategies), household food enumeration areas in 18 wards of the 3



# Accountability and Feedback.

Effective accountability and feedback remains a priority in the CRS Zimbabwe program. There is a variety of channels that the agency uses to receive feedback. Currently, there are 2 toll-free lines in use– one is for Econet network service subscribers and the other one is for Netone network service provider subscribers. All the agency’s implementing and sub-recipient partners are mandated to setup a help desk during all their project monitoring site visits to cater for in-person feedback. Each help desk has a staff member to attend to in-person feedback as well as a suggestion box. CRS uses internet-based feedback channels too. Currently, the agency collects feedback through social media on WhatsApp, Facebook and X platforms. When feedback has been received, it is captured on the YouTrack database. YouTrack is the agency feedback and complaints database. This database analyses feedback data into different categories such as request for information, appreciation of service, safeguarding and protection whistleblowing and request for information and request for individual project assistance. It allows the user to refer cases for further action as well as track case progress after referral. This database also allows the user to assign cases to appropriate project managers for feedback management. Urgent feedback such as child abuse or safeguarding whistleblowing are forwarded directly to the organization’s safeguarding focal person for quick and efficient management. CRS Zimbabwe can be reached on, tollfree **080101** (Netone subscribers only) OR **0774994469** (Econet subscribers only) OR via WhatsApp on **0774994469**

Enjoy the accountability and feedback crossword puzzle (*all the answers can be found in the passage above*):



*Crossword designed by Kudzai Gezi/CRS*

**Clues** (*answers on the bottom left corner*)

## **Across**

- 4. CRS social media-based feedback channel
- 8. CRS Feedback database
- 9. One of the CRS toll-free network service providers
- 10. Answerability
- 11. A phone number that is free for the caller to use
- 13. To treat in a harmful, injurious, or offensive

## **Down**

- 1. Actions taken to protect the rights of people who come in contact with the organization.
- 2. A structured collection of categorized information
- 3. Reporting abuse or fraudulent or illegal activity
- 5. Complaints, compliments and comments
- 6. \_\_\_\_ box (a container where people can leave comments)
- 7. \_\_\_\_ or compliments.
- 12. Act of directing someone to a different service provider for more info or help

# FY 2024 in pictures



Catholic Relief Services | 95 Parklane Kenyan Embassy, Harare, Zimbabwe | [crs.org](http://crs.org) |  
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