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# Governance in the Water and Food Nexus

## Challenges and Opportunities in the age of Climate Change

A learning event under the project “Water  
Voices United: Strengthening Civil Society  
Organisations to Advance the Human Right to  
Water and Sanitation in Zambia”

Lusaka, 13 and 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024



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## Executive summary

The “Governance in the Water and Food Nexus” learning event, hosted in Lusaka, Zambia, from November 13-14, 2024, brought together stakeholders from civil society organizations (CSOs), policymakers, development partners, and sector specialists to address critical governance challenges in the water and food sectors. Organized under the “Water Voices United” project, the event looked at ***“how governance in the Water Food Nexus can be enhanced in face of climate change in such a way that both Human Rights – to Food and to Water – are not only preserved but advanced, also for future generations, and leave no one behind”***.

The event underscored that effective governance is fundamental to achieving equitable and sustainable access to water and food. Central to this governance framework are the Human Rights to Water and to Food and principles such as inclusion, accountability, and responsiveness. Discussions revolved around how these principles can be operationalized through integrated policy development, stakeholder collaboration, and adaptive management practices. Issues discussed included “Use of data for decision making”, “leave no one behind”, “sustainable financing” while overall emphasizing the need for responsible resource use and intergenerational equity, which integrates the needs of future generations into today’s decision-making.

A recurring theme was the impact of climate change on water availability, agricultural production, and nutrition outcomes. Presentations highlighted how declining water levels, due to climate-induced changes and furthered by population growth and water management challenges, threaten access to WASH services, food security and increase vulnerabilities for marginalized populations. These challenges are exacerbated by limited alignment of policies between the water and agricultural sectors, insufficient dialogue and coordination between the relevant stakeholders, and limited community participation in governance processes. The event showcased that while Zambia has made strides in addressing these issues through critical policy and programmatic frameworks and funding mechanisms like the Constituency Development Fund (CDF), systemic barriers, such as unequal resource distribution and fragmented decision-making, remain persistent.

Panel discussions provided a platform for cross-sectoral dialogue, identifying challenges, opportunities, and actionable solutions. Coordination gaps were discussed, highlighting the fact that many policies and mandates lack alignment across sectors, leading to inefficiencies and overlapping efforts. While national policies, guidelines and frameworks aim to guide coherent action, implementation on the ground often diverges due to varying interpretations and siloed approaches.

Another key aspect of governance which was discussed was around data and transparency. Where it was noted that a significant barrier to effective governance is the lack of accessible and reliable data. The need for digitalization and streamlined information systems was emphasized as essential to track climate change impacts, improve early warning systems, and enable evidence-based decision-making.

Governance in relation to sustainable financing was also further unpacked. Discussing the management of financial resources in a manner that is ethical, efficient, and effective. This to ensures that resources are utilized to support water and food governance systems while maintaining integrity and sustainability. Public-private partnerships and enhanced civil society advocacy were identified as crucial mechanisms to strengthen accountability and resource mobilization.

The event also explored pathways for transformative action, emphasizing stakeholder inclusion at all levels. Multi-stakeholder platforms were highlighted as effective tools for fostering dialogue and aligning



sectoral priorities, while targeted capacity building at local levels was deemed critical for driving grassroots advocacy.

As Zambia navigates climate-induced challenges, governance in the water and food nexus requires integrated, collaborative approaches to ensure equitable outcomes. The event concluded with a collective commitment to addressing systemic inefficiencies, fostering inclusivity, and enhancing policy coherence. By prioritizing transparent accountability frameworks, proactive data systems, and adaptive governance, Zambia can protect the rights to water and food while building resilience for future generations. This learning event serves as a first step in further discussing and potentially guiding such efforts, noting that sustainable progress is achievable through collective action and shared responsibility.



**Figure 1 – Group picture of participants in attendance of the Learning Event “Governance in the Water and Food Nexus in the Age of Climate Change”, Lusaka, 13 and 14 of November 2024**

## Programme for the event

Day 1 – 13 <sup>th</sup> November 2024	
08.00 – 08.30	Arrival and Registration
08.30 – 09.30	<b>National Anthem</b> <b>Prayer</b> <b>Opening Remarks</b> SNV Country Director (Acting): Maria Carreiro EU Delegation to Zambia: Njira Mtonga NGO WASH Forum Chair: Marlon Phiri Zambian National Farmers Union: Harad Lungu Ministry of Agriculture: Dr. Alex Kabwe Ministry of Green Economy and Economy: Kasanda Bunda Ministry of Water Development and Sanitation: Dr. Ngosa Howard Mpamba
09.30 – 09.45	Coffee Break & Group Photo
09.45 – 11.00	<b>Block 1 – Governance for the realization of the Human Right to Water and to Food in Zambia in the age of Climate Change: <i>key concepts, facts and figures</i></b> Governance for the Human Right to Water and Sanitation and to Food: Alison Rusinow (SNV) The status of Water in Zambia: Eng. Chisanga Kapacha (WARMA) The status of Food in Zambia: Dr. Chisela Kaliwile (National Food and Nutrition Commission) Climate Change in Zambia: Mr. Kasanda Bunda (MGEE) The Water and Food Nexus in the Age of Climate Change: Maria Carreiro (SNV)
11.00 – 12.30	<b>Block 2 – Data and evidence for decision making in Water and Food in face of climate change: <i>what data needs to be known and how best to use it?</i></b> Ministry of Water Development and Sanitation: Emma Ndlovu NGO WASH Forum: Nonde Lwatula Ministry of Agriculture: Dr. Chileshe Chewa National Food and Nutrition Commission: Dr. Chisela Kaliwile <b>Q&amp;A</b>
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch
13.30 – 15.00	<b>Block 3 – Financing for Effective Water and Food Governance in a context of climate change: <i>how to enhance effectiveness and sustainability of financing?</i></b> WaterAid: Chitimwa Chifunda Centre for Innovating Development: William Chilufya CSO SUN Network: Marjorie Chilufya Officer of the Auditor General: Mwenya Nachilima
15.00 – 15.15	Coffee Break
15.15 – 16.15	<b>Block 4 – Multi-stakeholder dialogue and coordination for improved governance on Water and Food Nexus: <i>how to converge diverse perspectives and competing priorities?</i></b> <b>Debating Game:</b> Solomon Mbewe (SNV)
16.15 – 16.45	Wrap up and Closure of the Day
Day 2 – 14 <sup>th</sup> November 2024	
08.00 – 08.30	Arrival and Registration
08.30 – 09.45	<b>Block 5 – Governance for Inclusion in the Water Food Nexus: <i>how to advance the Leaving no One Behind ambition in Governance in the Water and Food Nexus?</i></b> Vision Outreach Zambia - Hope Mwelaisha Zambian Youth Platform: Oscar Nyayiwa Nakonde federation for People with Disabilities: Martin Gondwe Lukupa Ward Councillor: Hon Elias Musonda

09.45 – 10.00	Coffee break
10.00 – 11.15	<b>Block 6 – Accountability in Water and Food Governance: <i>what opportunities and challenges in strengthening accountability for Public Institutions, Cooperating Partners, Civil Society, and the Private Sector</i></b> WASH Parliamentary Caucus: Hon. Twaambo Mutinta Zambia Climate Change Network: Salatiel Daka Chamber of Commerce (Zambia Breweries) – Bridget Bwembya Zambian National Farmers Union: Harad Lungu NGO WASH Forum: Nonde Lwatula Centre for Innovating Development- William Chilufya
11.30 – 12.30	<b>Key take aways and commitment from participants</b> SNV Water Sector Leader: Maria Carreiro
12.30 – 13.00	<b>Evaluation &amp; Session Wrap up</b> SNV Water Sector Leader: Maria Carreiro SNV Zambia Country Director: Lucy Fulgence

## Introduction

### Official Opening

Facilitation of the 2-day event done by Marjorie Mwale from the Ministry of Water Development and Sanitation.

### Opening remarks

#### **SNV – Ms. Maria Carreiro, Water Sector Leader and acting on behalf of Lucy Fulgence Silas, Country Director**

Ms. Carreiro of SNV Zambia opened the event by welcoming all participants and emphasizing its focus on governance challenges in the Water-Food Nexus amid climate change. She shared that SNV will soon celebrate its 60th anniversary, with impactful work in 8 provinces spanning youth employment, agri-food systems, renewable energy, and water. Marking decades of commitment to Zambia since 1965 despite the changing landscape. She discussed the "Water Voices United" project, supported by the EU and NGO WASH Forum, which empowers Zambian CSOs to advocate for the Human Right to Water. Stressing a nexus approach, she underlined the importance of balancing water resources for consumption, food, energy, and industry, aligning with Zambia's 2023 National Adaptation Plan. Ms. Carreiro encouraged participants to use the next two days to deepen discussions and enhance governance for equitable access to food and water.

#### **EU Delegation in Zambia – Ms. Njira Mtonga**

Ms. Mtonga of the EU Delegation in Zambia highlighted the timeliness and importance of the discussion on challenges in the Water, Energy, and Food nexus, in alignment with the EU's objectives. She highlighted the need to reduce trade-offs and build synergies, ensuring sustainable resource use without compromising the rights of future generations. She mentioned that effective governance and management systems are crucial, with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) playing a key role in safeguarding human rights. The current grant focuses on mobilizing partnerships and fostering collaboration, emphasizing that progress is unattainable without an empowered civil society. With competent stakeholders present, this event aspires to drive meaningful advancements toward realizing the right to water and sanitation.

#### **NGO WASH Forum – Mr. Bangwe Naviley, on behalf of Marlon Phiri, Board Chairperson of the NGO WASH Forum**

Mr. Bangwe of the NGO WASH Forum highlighted the role of the Forum together with its 40 member organisations within the Water Voices United project and that it is a transformative initiative aimed at upholding the fundamental rights to water and food. He emphasized the importance of integrated approaches to tackle the interconnected challenges within the Water-Food nexus. He also noted that this event is not only timely but also essential for fostering collaboration and innovation, providing a critical platform to advance these rights while addressing the complex issues we face today.



Figure 2 – Representative of the EU Delegation in Zambia, Ms. Njira Mtonga



### **Zambia National Farmers Union – Mr. Harad Lungu**

Mr. Lungu of the Zambia National farmers Union stressed the critical interdependence between water and food production, emphasizing the vulnerabilities exposed this year, including issues of water availability, quality, and unsustainable agricultural practices. Overuse, pollution, and resource scarcity have been compounded by floods and droughts, placing immense pressure on governance. The growing demand to sustain agriculture further exacerbates challenges, often leading to competition among institutions. While reform efforts are underway, the lack of comprehensive policies and siloed approaches by different government bodies, coupled with political and institutional conflicts, have hindered progress. The over-subscription of water resources remains a pressing issue that requires urgent attention. Mr. Lungu also highlighted the need to embrace bottom-up approaches like Water Users Associations at the catchment level and to strengthen institutions through capacity building. Sustainable financing, including green infrastructure and financing frameworks, is essential as well. Current inefficiencies, such as uniform water permit costs across varying uses, need to be addressed. Lastly, the tragedy of the commons underscores the urgency of sustainable water resource management to prevent long-term harm.

### **Ministry of Green Economy and Environment – Mr. Kasanda Bunda**

Mr. Bunda of the Ministry of Green Economy and Environment highlighted the significant impact of the current drought on food and water security, emphasizing their critical role as pillars of socio-economic development. The interdependence between water and food production was stressed, noting that water is essential not only for agriculture but also as a driver of economic growth. This gathering was described as timely, providing a platform to address these pressing challenges. The speaker acknowledged the government's efforts in establishing national frameworks such as the Green Growth Strategy, NAP, and NDC, alongside recent initiatives. However, funding water security remains a critical issue. They expressed optimism for enhanced collaboration, recognizing the Water-Food nexus as both a challenge and an opportunity.



Figure 3 – Representative of MGEE, Mr. Kasanda Bunda



## **Block 1: Governance for the realisation of the Human Right to Water and to Food in Zambia in the age of Climate Change: key concepts, facts and figures.**

### **Overview and introduction to the topic**

This block focused on setting the scene of the Governance learning event. Looking at defining governance and effective governance as well as unpacking the human rights to water, sanitation and food and the role of duty bearers and rights holders in upholding those human rights. Then key facts and figures were given on both Water and Food & Nutrition, as well as key concepts around climate change and climate change projections / scenarios for Zambia in the coming years.

#### **Presentation by Alison Rusinow, SNV Netherlands**

The presentation from Alison explored how effective governance supports the human rights to food and water, emphasizing the critical roles of both duty bearers and rights holders. It begins by defining these rights: the human right to water involves ensuring safe, sufficient, and affordable access for personal and domestic use. Key components include the availability of continuous supply, quality free from contaminants, physical accessibility, and affordability, particularly for low-income groups. Similarly, the human right to food focuses on access to nutritious, safe, culturally acceptable, and sustainably available food that allows individuals to lead healthy lives without fear of hunger. This right relies on consistent food availability, economic and physical accessibility, nutritional adequacy, and long-term sustainability.

When looking at the role of duty bearers and rights holders in both water and food we see a lot of overlap. Duty bearers—typically governments, local authorities, and public agencies—are tasked with fulfilling their responsibilities through infrastructure investment and maintenance, respecting rights by avoiding interference, and protecting access by enforcing regulations against contamination or third-party restrictions. On the other hand, rights holders, which include citizens and civil society organizations, are expected to engage actively in policy discussions, advocate for their rights, and claim these rights through legal mechanisms and by holding duty bearers accountable.

The presentation highlights the challenges that hinder the realization of these rights. In the water sector, vulnerable and marginalized communities face significant barriers to access, often exacerbated by climate change impacts such as droughts and altered rainfall patterns. Pollution from agricultural runoff and industrial activities further compromises water quality. Low water tariffs, while intended to make water accessible, sometimes undermine the financial sustainability of utilities, leading to disrepair and reliance on external funding.

The food sector encounters its own set of issues, including policy gaps, limited coordination across government ministries, and weak accountability structures. The effects of climate change, such as erratic rainfall and extreme weather, disrupt food production and heighten food insecurity, especially for smallholder farmers. Dependence on donor funding can impede the development of locally driven, sustainable food security initiatives.

Governance itself is described as the exercise of political, economic, and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs, ensuring public goods and services are provided while enabling citizens to express their interests and hold leaders accountable. This aligns with definitions by institutions like the UNDP and the World Bank, which focus on decision-making, transparency, and fair resource distribution.

The principles of effective governance, rooted in SDG 16, stress inclusivity, responsiveness, and transparency. The presentation further incorporates the 11 principles of effective governance endorsed by the Economic and Social Council, which outline the importance of competence, sound policymaking, collaboration, integrity, independent oversight, and participation. These principles emphasize the need for governance systems that are not only efficient but also inclusive, ensuring that no one is left behind and that future generations are considered in policy decisions.

Ultimately, the presentation underscores that effective governance is key to addressing societal challenges, upholding human rights, and building strong, adaptable institutions. This requires cooperation and trust-building among governments, the private sector, and civil society to meet the needs of all constituents, ensuring both current and future resilience in food and water security.

#### **Presentation by Eng. Chisanga Kapacha, WARMA**

Eng. Chisanga Kapacha from the Water Resources Management Authority (WARMA) presented a detailed overview of the current status of water resources in Zambia. The presentation outlined key facts and figures, highlighting the pressing challenges and measures being taken to manage and preserve the nation's water resources.

Zambia has been grappling with significant declines in both groundwater and surface water levels, a situation worsened by the 2023/2024 drought. This drought has heavily impacted various regions, including Lusaka, Southern, Eastern, and Copperbelt provinces, with Southern Province'simba district being one of the hardest hit, experiencing drops in groundwater levels as drastic as 52 meters. The WARMA Groundwater Outlook Report consistently shows a downward trend, indicating a need for deeper borehole drilling, with recommended depths now between 80 to 120 meters. To address these changes, WARMA advises adjustments in pump settings to tap into deeper aquifers.

Surface water resources have also faced severe strain. Major catchments such as the Zambezi, Kafue, and Luangwa have seen notable reductions due to insufficient rainfall. By August 2024, data from 169 monitoring stations across Zambia indicated a sharp decrease in surface water, with levels in some regions plummeting by approximately 54% in the second quarter and an average of 70% in the third quarter of 2024 compared to previous years. This decline in water availability poses substantial risks to the country's water supply, agriculture, and energy sectors, directly threatening Zambia's water and food security.

In response to these challenges, WARMA has intensified efforts to ensure equitable access to water resources. Measures include speeding up the issuance of water permits, mapping water bodies and eco-sensitive areas to prevent encroachment, resolving water conflicts, licensing drilling services, raising public awareness through various media, and enforcing compliance with water permit conditions.

The presentation also emphasized the policy and regulatory framework guiding water resource management in Zambia. This framework aligns with the National Water Policy of 2010, Zambia's Vision 2030, the Eighth National Development Plan, and the Water Resources Management Act No. 21 of 2011. These policies, supported by WARMA's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, provide a structured approach to managing and conserving water resources effectively.

WARMA has implemented several interventions under the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) strategy to strengthen water governance. These interventions include collaborating with stakeholders to conduct awareness programs on water use efficiency, engaging large-scale water users such as the Zambia National Farmers Union and ZESCO Limited to promote sustainable practices, incorporating stakeholder feedback to address emerging challenges, and jointly implementing agreed-upon measures for effective water management.

In conclusion, the presentation underscored the critical nature of Zambia's current water challenges. Through coordinated policy efforts, active stakeholder engagement, and ongoing regulatory enforcement, WARMA is working to navigate these difficulties and secure sustainable water resources for the nation's present and future needs.

#### **Presentation by Dr. Chisela Kaliwile (National Food and Nutrition Commission)**

The presentation on the Status of Food and Nutrition in Zambia, including policies and strategies within the Water and Food Nexus provided an in-depth look at Zambia's current food and nutrition landscape, the challenges faced, and the policies and strategies in place to address these challenges in the context of climate change and its impact on water and food security. Water, though not a nutrient, is essential for nutrition and food security, influencing household purchasing power and access to adequate, nutritious food. Dr. Kaliwile emphasised the interconnectedness between water, food, and nutrition, highlighting the essential role of water in food production and human health. While Zambia has faced challenges like drought and poverty, access to clean water and the ability to purchase adequate food remain significant barriers to improving nutrition. Dr. Kaliwile then discussed various forms of malnutrition, such as stunting, wasting, and micronutrient deficiencies, citing survey data from 2020 and 2024. Stunting remains high, though there have been improvements in wasting, with current figures still under the World Health Organization's recommended threshold. The ongoing issue of anaemia, particularly among children, adolescents, and pregnant women, was also highlighted, stressing the need for better dietary diversity and adequate nutrient intake.

She further outlined Zambia's policy commitments to address malnutrition, including a \$30 annual expenditure for each child under five and efforts to reduce stunting, wasting, and childhood overweight. However, challenges remain, such as insufficient dietary diversity and low micronutrient intake, particularly in vulnerable populations. Despite these efforts, poverty, climate change, and inadequate food access continue to hinder progress. The importance of improving water and sanitation was further stressed, as well as enhancing food security through sustainable agricultural practices and better governance. Finally, Dr. Kaliwile called for more comprehensive strategies to address these interconnected issues, emphasizing the need for collaboration and targeted interventions to ensure better nutrition outcomes for Zambia's population.

### Presentation by Mr. Kasanda Bunda (Ministry of Green Economy and Environment)

Mr. Bunda outlined the projected impacts of climate change in Zambia, particularly focusing on the effects on weather patterns, water resources, and agriculture. Global climate models predict that by 2060, Zambia will experience a temperature increase of 1.2 to 3.4 degrees Celsius, leading to more frequent and intense weather events such as floods and droughts. There are also projections of reduced rainfall, which could significantly affect water availability and quality, as well as increase the frequency of climate-related diseases. These changes will have wide-ranging consequences on agriculture, water resources, human health, and food security, with vulnerable regions facing significant challenges.

The presentation also discussed the response strategies, including Zambia's National Adaptation Plan and Green Growth Strategy aimed at addressing these climate-induced threats. Key priorities include improving water security, enhancing agricultural resilience, and investing in infrastructure to cope with extreme weather events. The need for concerted efforts across various sectors is emphasized, with a focus on sustainable water management and increased collaboration with partners. It is clear that Zambia faces significant challenges in managing the impacts of climate change, but ongoing efforts to enhance resilience and reduce vulnerabilities offer hope for mitigating some of the negative effects.

Following the presentations, there was a brief Q&A session:

Q&A – Block 1: Governance for the realisation of the Human Right to Water and to Food in Zambia in the age of Climate Change: key concepts, facts and figures.	
Question/comment	Answer
<b>Climate planning</b> What does "normal to above" rainfall mean, and how does it impact planning?	It indicates a likelihood of receiving adequate rainfall, ensuring water availability for various needs.
<b>Nutrition and Food Fortification</b> Is the commission promoting micronutrient diversification?	Yes, efforts include fortifying salt with iodine and addressing issues like excessive iodine excretion. Policies and frameworks are being refined, with strategies underway to enhance implementation. Other initiatives include fortifying sugar with vitamin A and exploring fortification of cooking oil and maize meal.
<b>Nutrition and Food Fortification</b> How effective is the 200 Kwacha monthly allocation per household in ensuring food security during the drought?	It's challenging to monitor how the funds are spent, with an estimated 50-50 likelihood that they address food needs effectively. Recipients often prioritize other competing needs, reducing its impact on food security.
<b>Ecosystem Protection</b> What strategies are in place for stakeholder engagement and ecosystem protection?	Key strategies include stakeholder engagement, public awareness, and fostering collaboration. These efforts focus on receiving input for mitigation measures and aligning initiatives with stakeholder contributions. Collaboration opportunities are open to interested parties working within the mandate of water resource management.



## Block 2: Data and evidence for decision making in the Water Food Nexus

### Overview and introduction to the topic

Block 2 looked at the issues that need to be known and understood to support robust decision making to enhance Governance for climate resilience in the water and food nexus.

Understanding water as a critical resource is vital to both WASH and agri-food systems. Effective water management is a cornerstone for sustaining these systems, particularly as climate change introduces new challenges. With changing weather patterns and increasing demand, it's more important than ever to manage water resources wisely to ensure future availability for essential activities like drinking, sanitation, and food production.

Key areas of water data give us insights that are essential for informed decision-making. First, data on water quantity and quality helps us monitor surface and groundwater levels, track quality parameters, and assess the impact of land use in surrounding areas. This ensures that the water we rely on meets health and agricultural needs while remaining sustainable over time. Tracking usage and loss is another vital area. By understanding where water comes from, who is using it, how much is being withdrawn, and where losses occur, we can target inefficiencies and reduce waste, ensuring that resources go further. For agricultural systems, irrigation data is crucial. We need information on water inputs in agriculture to maximize efficiency, minimize waste, and reduce pollution from agricultural runoff. Better data on return flows, or water that goes back into the system after use, will help us see the full picture of water impact. Hydrological insights, like rainfall patterns, evapotranspiration rates, and groundwater recharge, are also essential for understanding the dynamics of our water resources. These metrics allow us to anticipate shortages or excesses and respond proactively. Finally, climate data and modelling provide projections for potential changes in water availability. This data gives us the predictive insights we need to prepare for future challenges, helping both WASH and agri-food systems adapt to evolving climatic risks.

Data disaggregation plays a critical role in promoting inclusivity in both WASH and agri-food systems. By breaking down data into segments, such as female-headed households or small-scale farmers, we can identify how these groups access and benefit from resources, ensuring that no one is left out. Disaggregating data helps reveal disparities and highlights where targeted support is needed, ultimately promoting more equitable access to water resources.

Equally important is the effective use of water data for decision-making. When we leverage comprehensive water data, we can drive better planning, make strategic investments, and manage risks across sectors. This data-driven approach not only builds resilience but also enables us to make informed choices that can sustain and optimize water use over time.

### Panel discussion

Through a panel discussion the above-mentioned issues were further unbundled. The panel consisted of the following people:

- Emma Ndlovu from the Ministry of Water Development and Sanitation
- Nonde Lwatula from the NGO WASH Forum
- Eng. Chisanga Kapacha from the Water Resources Management Authority
- Dr. Chisela Kaliwile from the National Food and Nutrition Commission
- Dr. Chileshe Chewa from the Ministry of Agriculture

The panel discussion began by addressing a pressing question: what specific data gaps hinder progress in these interconnected domains? This inquiry set the stage for a rich exchange of ideas about the challenges and potential solutions in data collection, integration, and application.

The panellists outlined critical data gaps that undermine targeted interventions. While existing efforts like Demographic and Health Surveys offer valuable insights, such as the percentage of households with access to clean water, they lack integration with other data, such as proximity to healthcare facilities or child nutrition outcomes. This disconnect can result in resources being allocated to areas of lesser need, leaving vulnerable communities underserved. Compounding these challenges are the effects of climate change on soil biodiversity and crop nutrient content, which remain under-researched due to the high costs of geospatial mapping and nutrient analysis.

Improving data quality and accessibility was another focal point. Localized, context-specific data was championed as more effective than generalized global datasets, particularly for addressing localized issues such as poor water quality. The panellists advocated for centralized and interoperable data systems, enabling organizations to share resources and avoid duplicating efforts. Examples such as water quality management initiatives and digitized dam data platforms illustrated progress, though barriers like outdated systems, limited resources, and paper-based processes persist.

Collaboration emerged as a recurring theme, with speakers emphasizing the need for unified platforms and cross-sectoral data sharing. They highlighted the transformative potential of digital tools, while stressing the importance of training personnel to interpret and use data effectively. However, the panellists also acknowledged the significant barriers to effective data use, including inadequate resources, reliance on outdated datasets, and a lack of institutional capacity.

Policy alignment and advocacy were identified as essential for addressing these challenges. By aligning national policies and establishing shared data repositories, stakeholders can enhance transparency and enable real-time access to critical information. Advocacy for funding and political will was deemed vital to sustain and expand these efforts.

The session concluded with a forward-looking discussion about translating data into actionable policies. The speakers reflected on the shared responsibility of various sectors to harness data for unified decision-making, emphasizing that integration and alignment are key to addressing these complex issues. As one panellist aptly summarized, "It's not enough to talk about challenges. We must understand, align, and act." Despite the complexity of the task, the panellists expressed a shared commitment to bridging gaps and building systems capable of driving meaningful change.

Following the panel discussion, there was a brief Q&A session:

Q&A –	
Question/comment	Answer
How to enhance trust in accessing data? There are quite some data sets around, but having access to that data is an issue.	Forum: Trust can be built through initiatives such as collaborative events like this one. Additionally, formal processes, such as submitting written requests, can help facilitate data sharing, but the focus should be on fostering mutual understanding and openness.
How can we reduce the cost of collection data (in terms of synergies and techniques)	WARMA: Self-operational data systems can reduce collection costs, but vandalism of these systems has driven

	<p>expenses up. Preventing such incidents is essential to maintaining cost efficiency.</p> <p>NFNC: Digitizing data systems can significantly lower costs by enabling pre-analysis of data quality. Digital systems allow for identifying anomalies or fluxes early on, reducing unnecessary field interventions.</p>
Ensuring data quality and acceptance at various levels requires clear, standardized methodologies. How to obtain this?	<p>MWDS: Aligning with international practices for water data collection ensures reliability and acceptability of the data. Following globally recognized standards strengthens the credibility of the datasets.</p>
	<p>A panellist emphasized that the traditional view of civil society researchers “sitting under a tree” is outdated and not reflective of the innovative approaches currently employed in research.</p>



## Block 3: Financing for Effective Water and Food Governance in a context of climate change

### Overview and introduction to Block 3

Block 3 looked at the challenges and opportunities for sustainable, coherent and adequate financing on the Water Food Nexus.

Governance around financing entails managing financial resources in a manner that is ethical, efficient, and effective. This approach ensures that resources are utilized to support water and food governance systems while maintaining integrity and sustainability. It involves three key dimensions: sustainable financing, coherent financing, and adequate financing, each of which addresses critical aspects of resource management.

Sustainable financing is about securing financial systems that can support continuous development without exhausting future resources. This involves a long-term focus, ensuring that resources for water and food governance are maintained over time. To achieve this, self-renewing mechanisms, such as revenue-generating initiatives like water tariffs, are implemented to sustain sector operations independently. Furthermore, sustainable financing requires adaptability to change, ensuring that funds remain available to address challenges posed by climate change, economic fluctuations, or other external shocks.

Coherent financing emphasizes the alignment of financial investments with broader policies and goals to maximize their impact and avoid inefficiencies. Investments in water and food governance must align with national and international strategies, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), ensuring no conflicts or gaps between sectors. By adopting integrated approaches, cross-sectoral collaboration is promoted, enabling water, food, energy, and environmental policies to work in synergy. Strategic coordination further ensures that funding sources—whether from government budgets, international aid, or private investments—are harmonized, complementing rather than duplicating each other.

Adequate financing ensures that resources are both sufficient and well-targeted to meet the demands of water and food security. This requires allocating enough funds to cover essential activities, including infrastructure development, maintenance, capacity building, and emergency responses. Strategic distribution of resources ensures they reach the sectors and sub-sectors most in need, reflecting the realities on the ground. Moreover, equitable distribution prioritizes marginalized and underserved communities, fostering inclusive development and resilience. Timely availability of funds is also crucial, as delays in financial accessibility can hinder both immediate and long-term projects.

Together, these principles create a robust framework for managing financial resources in water and food governance. Sustainable, coherent, and adequate financing ensures that systems remain resilient, equitable, and effective in addressing current needs while preparing for future challenges.



## Panel discussion

Through a panel discussion the above-mentioned issues were further unbundled. The panel consisted of the following people:

- Chitimbwa Chifunda from WaterAid
- William Chilufya from Centre for Innovating Development
- Marjorie Chilufya from CSO SUN Network
- Mwenya Nachilima from the Auditor General

The panel discussion provided a rich narrative exploring the intricate challenges and promising opportunities associated with financing and governance in the water and food nexus. Panellists from diverse sectors shed light on the complex dynamics of sustainability, coherence, and adequacy in resource allocation, drawing from their professional experiences and organisational perspectives.

The conversation revealed several critical hurdles. One of the primary challenges identified was the fragmented nature of sectoral efforts. One of the speakers pointed out that water management often operates in silos, leading to inefficiencies and missed collaborative opportunities. This segmentation is further strained by climate-induced pressures, such as erratic rainfall and outdated infrastructure. Similarly, another panellist noted the persistent underfunding of the water sector, which, despite recent improvements, continues to lag behind other sectors like education and health in budget allocations. This fiscal imbalance limits the sector's capacity to adapt to growing demands and climatic disruptions.

Coordination gaps emerged as another significant obstacle. Ministries claim alignment, yet discrepancies between water and agriculture policies often undermine collective goals. For instance, water strategies may inadvertently conflict with agricultural ambitions, such as boosting production, due to misaligned priorities and insufficient data-sharing mechanisms. Challenges also extended to the nutrition sector, where funding shortages for targeted programmes and the dominance of ultra-processed foods overshadow efforts to promote healthier, indigenous diets. One of the panellists emphasized how market barriers, including high taxation and limited access, further stifle the growth of locally produced foods.

Amid these challenges, the panel also spotlighted various opportunities to transform financing and governance approaches. Progress in budget allocations and the establishment of community development funds (CDFs) were lauded as steps toward empowering grassroots initiatives. These funds provide local communities with a platform to address their water and climate resilience needs directly, fostering a bottom-up approach to sustainable development.

Long-term investment plans targeting water and food systems were highlighted as another promising avenue. It was emphasized that the potential of these programmes to mobilize resources across economic and social sectors, contributing to holistic and sustainable growth. Enhanced interministerial collaboration was deemed critical for ensuring policy coherence and integrating local projects into broader development strategies. Panellists also championed the potential of local food systems, advocating investments in the



processing, packaging, and marketing of indigenous foods to improve public health, reduce non-communicable diseases, and support small-scale farmers.

However, opinions diverged on the state of coordination. While the representative from the Auditor General's Office argued that alignment with national development plans is improving, others pointed out persistent gaps in decentralising financing to align with local planning processes. Grassroots empowerment and community involvement were underscored as essential to bridging these divides, with panellists advocating for more inclusive consultation mechanisms and a shift away from top-heavy governance structures.

The discussion concluded with a collective call to action. Simplifying procurement processes, establishing robust accountability mechanisms, and fostering cross-sectoral collaboration were proposed as practical solutions to the identified challenges. Panellists stressed the need for greater transparency, capacity-building for proposal development, and more effective integration of climate funding to address global challenges such as water and food insecurity.

Ultimately, the dialogue underscored that overcoming these hurdles requires a concerted effort from all stakeholders. By addressing systemic inefficiencies, reallocating resources strategically, and empowering local communities, the water and food nexus can become a cornerstone of inclusive, sustainable development.

Following the panel discussion, there was a brief Q&A session:

Q&A –	
Question/comment	Answer
<b>You mentioned a decrease in financing for the water sector from domestic resources. Have you analysed trends in other financing sources, such as private sector funding or international sources like GCF? Could you provide a complete picture of financing in this sector?</b>	We are aware of the challenges around domestic financing for the water sector. While our analysis has primarily focused on public finance, we are currently working on a study to look at alternative sources of financing, including private sector investments and international funds. Additionally, we are examining the financing allocated within different line ministries to better understand how resources are distributed across sectors.
<b>How do we ensure better implementation of projects? There seems to be a disconnect between the financing plans and the execution of projects. How can we finance community infrastructure effectively by involving the communities themselves in the process?</b>	Implementation is a critical challenge. Reliance on contractors for government projects often leads to inefficiencies. However, when we involve local communities, as we did with the water project in Livingstone, costs are lower and the outcome is more successful.
<b>Regarding global climate finance, accessing funds such as GCF has been challenging. Do we need to rethink our approach and perhaps collaborate on integrated projects that connect food and water security?</b>	Accessing climate finance like GCF is difficult, and we have faced similar challenges. A potential solution could be to create integrated proposals that highlight the links between food and water security. By presenting comprehensive, interconnected projects, we could improve our chances of securing funding and making a bigger impact on these critical issues.

**How can we improve the planning process at both the national and local levels to ensure financing is channelled effectively, especially in terms of community needs and priorities?**

The planning process must be more inclusive and transparent. While Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) are an important tool, only 30% of districts currently have them in place. More work is needed to ensure that all districts have access to these plans and that the resources allocated align with local priorities. Tracking funding across ministries is also essential for understanding the complete picture of financial allocation and ensuring that resources are being used efficiently.

## Block 4: Multi-stakeholder dialogue and coordination for improved governance on Water and Food

### Overview and introduction to Block 4

Block 4 looked at how multi-stakeholder coordination can be enhanced to advance effective governance in the Water and Food Nexus. The deepening of the discussion was done through a debating game. The purpose of the game was to encourage participants to explore the ideas emerging from the event and possibly to challenge their own internal views on the topic.

#### Debate

Participants were put in two teams: the team arguing in favour of the Statement or the team arguing against the Statement. Three participants were chosen to form an 'honourable jury'.

And the participants were to debate the following Statement:

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*Effective collaboration at the water and agri-food nexus is unachievable because stakeholders remain constrained by their own sectoral mandates and priorities.*

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The objective: to convince the jury of the position of the group.

#### Issues emerging from the Debating

Different issues emerged from the rich (and sometimes heated) debate and can be summarised as follows.



The challenges to effective collaboration among stakeholders arise from fragmented policies, mandates, and strategies. Ministries prioritize advancing their individual agendas and interpret National Development Plans (NDPs) differently, focusing only on what aligns with their specific mandates. While they may work under the same pillars, their key performance indicators differ, complicating coordination.

Accountability issues further hinder harmonization, as aligning these diverse policies and mandates demands significant resources. Trust within collaborative groups is elusive due to competing interests, power struggles, and ego clashes. Additionally, gaps in legal frameworks and a focus on comparative advantage among players exacerbate the difficulties in fostering unified action.



Effective multistakeholder dialogue requires a clear focus and shared understanding of the issues or problems, ensuring a common goal without erasing diversity. Inclusion is key—every stakeholder matters, and the right actors must have a seat at the table. While differences are inevitable, they should be addressed collaboratively to find sustainable solutions.

Conflict resolution is vital, as challenges will arise during discussions. Interdependence among stakeholders fosters the development of meaningful solutions. Collaborative leadership should be encouraged, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities built on trust and accountability. Promoting shared learning ensures all parties advance together toward climate resilience and shared development goals.

#### **Jury deliberation:**

After deliberations, the panel of judges declared the **Agree group to be the winners** based on the clarity and substance of their argument. The team won a field / learning trip to an AWARE project location, probably late January 2025 (and those that did not win were then also invited of course).



## Block 5: Governance for Inclusion in the Water Food Nexus

### Overview and introduction to block 5

This block looked at issues around advancing the Leaving no One Behind ambition in Governance in the Water and Food Nexus.

In the intro it was highlighted that access to water and food is not just a necessity; it is a fundamental human right. However, achieving this requires more than just recognition, it demands deliberate efforts toward inclusion and equity. Progressive realization of these rights means ensuring that no one is left behind. To do so, we must first identify those at risk of being excluded and understand the reasons why.

The principle of 'nothing about us without us' is key. All stakeholders in the water and food nexus must be recognized, and vulnerable groups must be actively involved in decision-making, policy formulation, and practice. For instance, if water bodies are overexploited for agricultural purposes, it's the vulnerable populations who are most affected, and their voices need to be heard in these critical decisions.

Recognizing differences among communities is another essential step. Policies must be integrated and intentionally designed to address the specific needs of vulnerable groups. For example, the allocation of Constituency Development Funds (CDF) should be based on gaps identified in constituencies. Likewise, food security initiatives, such as household food security packs, should prioritize families with children under two years old, as they are among the most vulnerable.

A critical principle is 'do no harm.' This means making conscious and proactive efforts to ensure that no one suffers negative consequences, even unintentionally, from actions taken to improve water and food access. For instance, when water is diverted upstream for irrigation purposes, this should not come at the cost of compromising the quality of drinking water downstream.

In addition, empowerment is crucial. This involves enhancing the voices of marginalized groups and ensuring their meaningful participation in policymaking and discussions related to water and food issues. Vulnerable groups must be actively encouraged to contribute to discussions in platforms where the water and food nexus is addressed. Their involvement is not just a moral imperative, it's the key to crafting sustainable, inclusive solutions.

Lastly, the concept of intergenerational inclusion was introduced. This principle calls for the consideration and integration of the interests, needs, and rights of both current and future generations in all decision-making processes, policies, and practices. Intergenerational inclusion emphasizes the importance of creating solutions that are sustainable over time. It requires us to take actions today that not only address the needs of the present but also ensure that the resources and opportunities available



to future generations are not compromised. In essence, it is a call to balance immediate priorities with long-term responsibilities, fostering a legacy of sustainability and equity for those who will inherit the outcomes of today's decisions.

## Panel discussion

Through a panel discussion the above-mentioned issues were further discussed. The panel consisted of the following people:

- Hope Mwelaisha from Vision Outreach Zambia
- Martin Gondwe from the Nakonde Forum for People with Disabilities
- Honourable Elias Musonda the Lukupa Ward Councillor
- Oscar Nyayiwa from the Zambian Youth Platform

The panel discussion centred on the key requirements for inclusion in the water and food nexus and the broader challenges of participation, coordination, and resource allocation. Stakeholder engagement emerged as a primary theme, emphasizing the need for active and diverse participation across sectors. Panellists agreed that including all key players, from policymakers to marginalized groups like persons with disabilities (PWD), is essential. Inclusion should extend beyond tokenism, ensuring that solutions are co-created and decision-making processes involve all relevant voices.

When evaluating Zambia's progress on political coordination and participation, the panel recognized some strides but highlighted significant gaps. PWD, particularly in rural areas, still face barriers in accessing resources and services. Representation does not equate to meaningful inclusion, and there was criticism of weak political will and the over-centralization of resources and decision-making in Lusaka. Integrated planning at both national and regional levels was identified as critical, with the panel urging civil society to hold the government accountable to international commitments.

The allocation of Constituency Development Funds (CDF) raised concerns about fairness and effectiveness. While funds are equally distributed among constituencies, their use often fails to align with local needs due to a disconnect between technocrats and communities. This mismatch highlights the need for more participatory decision-making processes to ensure resources address on-the-ground realities.

From the rights holders' perspective, there was a call for inclusive governance starting at the community level. Greater civic competence and accountability mechanisms were deemed necessary to transition citizens from passive subjects to active participants. Collaboration at the grassroots level was also underscored as a vital step toward breaking down silos and fostering collective action.

The duty bearer's role was addressed as well, with an emphasis on humility and listening to community voices. It was noted that only through genuine coordination can the principle of "leaving no one behind" be realized. Regarding the "do no harm" principle, the panel acknowledged the challenges of managing water as a scarce resource. Responsible use and balanced management across stakeholders with competing needs were highlighted as critical to ensuring sustainability.

Ultimately, the discussion called for stronger collaboration, policy adjustments, and community-driven governance to uphold the rights to water, food, and sanitation while safeguarding the sustainability of shared resources.

Following the panel discussion, there was a brief Q&A session:

Q&A –	
Question/comment	Answer
Comment was made on ensuring the inclusion of persons with disabilities (PwD) in water resource planning, particularly in the placement of boreholes during times of drought. It was noted that while many boreholes with hand pumps are being constructed, they often remain inaccessible for PwD due to poor design. This was followed by concerns raised about the fencing of private properties that restrict community access to shared water resources, such as rivers. The speaker commended efforts by organizations like WARMA to address this issue but questioned the broader practice of fencing off natural water sources that should be accessible to all.	N/A
The conversation shifted to the sector's persistent blame culture, where stakeholders often deflect responsibility. Duty bearers, in particular, were criticized for their resistance to feedback and their reluctance to acknowledge criticism. CSOs were urged to play a stronger role in bridging the gap, advocating for government accountability, and working collaboratively to amplify grassroots concerns. The speaker emphasized that CSOs, given their proximity to on-the-ground realities, have a vital role in uniting voices to push for meaningful change.	N/A
The inclusion of children and youth in decision-making processes was addressed. A question was raised about whether environmental issues, such as climate change and water management, are being integrated into school curricula. The idea was compared to the successful incorporation of topics like sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) into education programs. The panel underscored the importance of partnering with the Ministry of Education to ensure that young people are not only educated on these issues but also empowered to participate in shaping sustainable environmental policies.	N/A



## **Block 6: Accountability in Water and Agri-Food Governance: Strengthening the Role of Public Institutions, Cooperating Partners, Civil Society, and the Private Sector**

### **Overview and introduction to block 6**

This block looked at how the government, civil society, CPs and businesses be better held accountable for making water and food systems fair and sustainable.

In the intro it was mentioned that in order to achieve meaningful progress and ensure accountability within and across the water and food sectors, several key elements are essential. Firstly, clarity of roles and mandates is vital. Defining and assigning roles with precision prevents overlap and inefficiencies. It ensures that every actor understands their responsibilities in advancing fair and sustainable systems, thereby fostering a more cohesive approach to problem-solving.

Transparent policy and regulatory frameworks play a central role as well. Policies and regulations must be enforced transparently, holding all stakeholders accountable. These frameworks should promote equity, prevent exploitation, and mandate the responsible use of resources. The result is a balanced approach that benefits both communities and ecosystems. Equally important are transparent accountability mechanisms. By establishing robust monitoring systems rooted in data collection, analysis, and reporting, we can ensure a thorough assessment of each actor's performance, impact, and adherence to sustainability standards. These mechanisms create a continuous feedback loop, driving fairness and resilience in the system.

In addition, Public-Private Partnerships present a powerful opportunity for collaboration. Such partnerships, when structured with clearly defined accountability measures, can deliver innovative and sustainable solutions. Mutually binding agreements ensure that private-sector participation aligns with public interests and long-term sustainability goals.

Proactive Civil Societies also play a critical role. Civil society organizations provide an independent voice, monitoring and advocating for transparency and fairness. By reporting misconduct, amplifying marginalized voices, and promoting oversight, they hold public and private entities accountable. Finally, ethics and standards form the backbone of accountability frameworks. Ethical water management practices prevent scarcity and support agriculture, while sustainable farming methods protect water resources from pollution. Together, they safeguard essential resources for both current and future generations.

By embedding these principles into decision-making and operational processes, we can build systems that prioritize sustainability, equity, and resilience, ensuring that the water and food nexus serves the needs of all stakeholders, now and in the future.

### **Panel discussion**

Through a panel discussion the above-mentioned issues were further discussed. The panel consisted of the following people:

- Honourable Twaambo Mutinta as MP from the WASH Parliamentary Caucus
- Salatiel Daka from the Zambia Climate Change Network
- Mwenya Nachilima from the Auditor General

- Nonde Lwatula from the NGO WASH Forum
- William Chilufya from the Centre for Innovating Development

The panel opened with a reflection on accountability, exploring the diverse responsibilities held by different stakeholders. Hon. TM emphasized that as a Member of Parliament, accountability extends both to the people and to holding the government to account, especially on critical issues like water and food, which are fundamental needs rather than political matters. Other panelists, such as representatives from ZCCN, CfIC, AG, and the NGO WASH Forum, echoed this sentiment. They described their roles in being accountable to the public, donors, governments, and their respective organizations. While acknowledging the weight of this responsibility, the panel also recognized the challenges it brings, particularly in balancing the expectations of different groups.



The discussion shifted to opportunities for improving governance within the water and food nexus. ZCCN highlighted the lack of coordinated efforts across sectors such as energy, health, water, and food, despite their interdependencies. This disconnect presents an opportunity to align policies and practices to better address the overlapping challenges posed by climate change. Similarly, CfIO pointed out the natural overlap between ministries, such as agriculture and water, but noted that sectoral silos often prevent collaborative solutions. For example, the absence of "water" in agricultural policy demonstrates a gap that urgently needs addressing. Policy coherence and alignment were underscored as essential for yielding meaningful results.

Several challenges emerged throughout the discussion. AG representative noted that their office produces reports with recommendations for the government but lacks the power to enforce follow-up actions. This disconnect often leads to repeated issues in subsequent years. Hon. TM highlighted a different dimension of the problem: the lack of investment in changing community mindsets. He observed that while resources exist, communities often make poor investment choices, such as prioritizing livestock without addressing water needs, due to inadequate information and guidance. This highlights the need for decentralization and empowering communities with knowledge that connects water and food systems to broader health and livelihoods.

The conversation also touched on policy inconsistencies and governance gaps. Hon. TM mentioned the pending Climate Change Bill and emphasized the need to align legislation with the interconnected challenges of water, food, and climate change. Without coherence, policies risk being ineffective or counterproductive. The AG representative called for more accessible dissemination of audit findings, including translating them into local languages to ensure inclusivity. However, they acknowledged resource limitations as a barrier to achieving this goal.

When discussing mechanisms for improving collaboration, the panel identified several solutions. CfIO proposed establishing a multi-stakeholder platform similar to those in the energy sector, which has proven effective in fostering cooperation. The NGO WASH Forum emphasized the importance of public dialogue and participatory governance, while AG suggested increasing awareness of existing reports to inform policy and practice. ZCCN stressed the need for enhanced legal and regulatory frameworks, urging lawmakers to consider the inputs of CSOs in policy development. Hon. TM advocated for framing water and food issues in ways that resonate with the most vulnerable populations, emphasizing that investment in water can solve multiple challenges simultaneously.

The discussion concluded with panellists agreeing that accountability mechanisms must foster collaboration among stakeholders, bridging gaps between sectors and ensuring that policies are responsive to real-world challenges. Greater public participation, improved regulatory frameworks, and stronger partnerships between governments and civil society were identified as critical steps for advancing the water and food nexus in the age of climate change.

Following the panel discussion, there was a brief Q&A session:

Q&A –	
Question/comment	Answer
How much do you value the perspectives of rights holders, and what importance do you assign to their input?	Rights holders at the local level play a critical role in demanding the right actions and priorities. However, their accountability is also essential. As a Member of Parliament, I have taken steps like writing grant proposals for local organizations to help address their needs. But there is a shared responsibility—we must ensure that both communities and stakeholders "walk the talk" to bring about meaningful change.
How can we ensure that the information being provided to communities is effectively received and utilized, given the lack of coordination among stakeholders?	One of the key challenges is the lack of coordination in how information is delivered. Often, communities are overwhelmed by disjointed efforts—different messages or programs are introduced without coherence. This calls for introspection among all stakeholders to improve alignment and communication. We need a more organized approach to ensure that the resources and knowledge shared with communities truly address their needs.
When AG mentioned tariffs and how Commercial Utilities (CUs) are operating at a loss, how can policies be adjusted to reflect progressive insights?	Our audits revealed that all Commercial Utilities are struggling financially, with many operating at a loss. NWASCO had previously proposed necessary changes to the tariff-setting mechanism, which falls within their mandate. However, political interference has prevented these changes from being implemented. Even though these adjustments are stipulated under the Water Act, there is insufficient political will to make them a reality.
Given the challenges in tracking budget allocations, particularly around climate change, how can this process be made more transparent and accessible?	Budget tracking is indeed a significant challenge, especially when monitoring progress on climate change initiatives. One key solution lies in advocating for the implementation of the Access to Information Bill. The more we demand transparency, the more likely it is that this information will

	be made available. Strengthening advocacy efforts around this bill is essential to ensure better public access to critical budget data. Additionally, it's important to consider the government's borrowing plan, as it forms an integral part of the budgeting process.
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## Event key learning highlights, next steps & wrap-up

After all block sessions, the event was nearing its completion. A revisit of the reasons for the event was given as well as some additional background to remind ourselves of the overarching question of the event:

*“How can Governance in the Water Food Nexus be enhanced in face of climate change in such a way that both Human Rights – to Food and to Water – are not only preserved but advanced, also for future generations, and leave no one behind?”*

### Key learning highlights

Per block the key learning highlights were given, these were as follows:

#### Block 1 – Key concepts, facts and figures

- Food and Water as Human Rights of which the Government is the duty bearer
- Good Governance is Effective, Inclusive, and Accountable towards Rights Holders
- Surface and groundwater levels are rapidly and significantly declining
- Sufficient food is available but low dietary diversity, poor soil quality and limited access to water (and to safe water) is impacting nutrition status
- Climate change is expected to exacerbate particularly in agro-ecological areas 1 and 2, with increased droughts and floods
- Climate change is essentially a Water Security crisis, and competing uses (for energy, agriculture, industry and domestic consumption) need to be better managed to minimize crop and livestock failure, as well as to ensure safe water access and sanitation

#### Block 2 – Data: what needs to be known and understood to support robust decision making to enhance Governance for climate resilience in the water and food nexus?

- The nexus does not need more data but rather an alignment and an integration of the available data – institutional coordination and mainstreaming is the answer
- Digitalization of all data entries/system is critical to ensure live and reliable information that is particularly critical for early warning systems that we cannot do without in a context of climate change
- Capacity development at the sub-national level is necessary for sense making and effective use of the available data for decision making
- All mandated institutions need to develop a higher-level vision, above their own mandates, anchored in a shared objective they all contribute to

#### Block 3 – Financing: what are the challenges and opportunities for sustainable, coherent and adequate financing on the Water Food Nexus?

- Sustainability through a cost based, life cycle approach
- Coherence through policy alignment on the nexus and avoidance of duplications
- Adequacy of financing through integrated prioritization and evidence-based decisions
- Public budgeting for WASH has been proportionally decreasing and is far below the 0,5% GDP investment agreed under the eThekweni declaration of 2008
- Absolute figures are higher, expenditure higher and alignment with plans is increasing
- Public financing decisions heavily drive the food and water nexus, e.g. Subsidizing crops, how local producers and processors are taxed, where dams are built
- Financing remains fragmented and siloed, and overall investments are hard to track
- Absorption capacity is very low, also due to ineffective systems (procurement)
- Decentralized funding opportunities (CDF) are not, in practice, decided at local level



**Block 4 – Multi-stakeholder collaboration: how can multi-stakeholder coordination be enhanced to advance effective Governance in the Water and Food Nexus?**

- Finding the shared goal and working together towards it, from each institutions' mandate and responsibility
- Align understanding of issues and language used, for clear communication
- Identifying the policy gaps, inadequacies and contradictions and working to bridge those
- Build on overarching goals and ambitions of key documents, like the NDP and the NAP
- Constructive dialogue and collaboration, coherence in practice
- Bringing all key stakeholders to the table, with particular attention to the most vulnerable ones
- Acknowledge, respect and value differences in perspectives and mandates
- Address conflicts in a constructive manner
- Invest also informally in building relationships and advance the dialogue

**Block 5 – Inclusive Governance in the Water and Food Security Nexus: what are its key parameters and how is Zambia fairing in meeting these?**

- Leave no One behind
- Do no Harm
- Nothing about us without us
- Intergenerational justice
- Being in the room is not enough; participation is not enough; what is needed is that the concerns put forward are effectively taken into account
- Apply co-creation at all levels, for policy, planning, implementation and monitoring
- How decision makers, including traditional authorities, allocate resources and make decisions without consultation, needs addressing

**Block 6 – Accountability: How can the government, civil society, CPs and businesses be better held accountable for making water and food systems fair and sustainable?**

- Clarity of roles and responsibilities
- Transparent and coherent policies and regulatory frameworks
- Effective accountability mechanisms
- Sustainable and fair public private partnerships
- Proactive and well-organized civil society is critical
- Rules and regulations are clear and robust, but accountability is limited (ineffective use of funds is reported but not acted on, Gov to Gov accountability is low, political interference)
- Increase enforcement and compliance of all stakeholders with existing policies, roles and responsibilities
- Rights' Holder understanding of issues and roles requires improvement

**Next steps – what's next?**

The team has outlined several key activities and initiatives moving forward:

1. A proposal to visit an AWARE project location in late January 2025, offering an experiential learning opportunity for the stakeholders. This visit aims to foster engagement and connect participants more closely with real life challenges in the nexus and how these can be addressed.
2. Development of a comprehensive learning event report to capture insights and lessons from the event.
3. Investigate Climate Financing related opportunities, such as a the Global Environmental Facility

4. Continue to pursue further engagements through the WASH Parliamentary Caucus, most immediately on the climate change bill that is currently under discussion
5. The NGO WASH Forum is to strengthen its advocacy efforts by reaching out to traditional leaders, such as Chiefs, to amplify efforts at the community level.
6. Expand participation in the nexus discussions and learning by involving other key ministries, such as Education and Health, ensuring a more integrated and inclusive approach to addressing WASH and climate-related challenges.

## Closing and wrap-up

In the wrap-up the intrinsic connection between the climate crisis and water was highlighted, framing the former as fundamentally a water crisis. This is driven by challenges such as water scarcity, excess water, and pollution, compounded by overlapping issues in many regions. Consequently, addressing the climate crisis requires a systems-level nexus approach, focusing on the interdependence of water, food, and energy systems.

In agriculture, this means not only considering how much water is needed but also understanding the impact of farming practices on water availability and quality. Decisions about crops, irrigation methods, and chemical use must account for their downstream effects on water resources. Similarly, water management must go beyond mere supply considerations, factoring in extraction methods, environmental impacts, and equitable distribution.

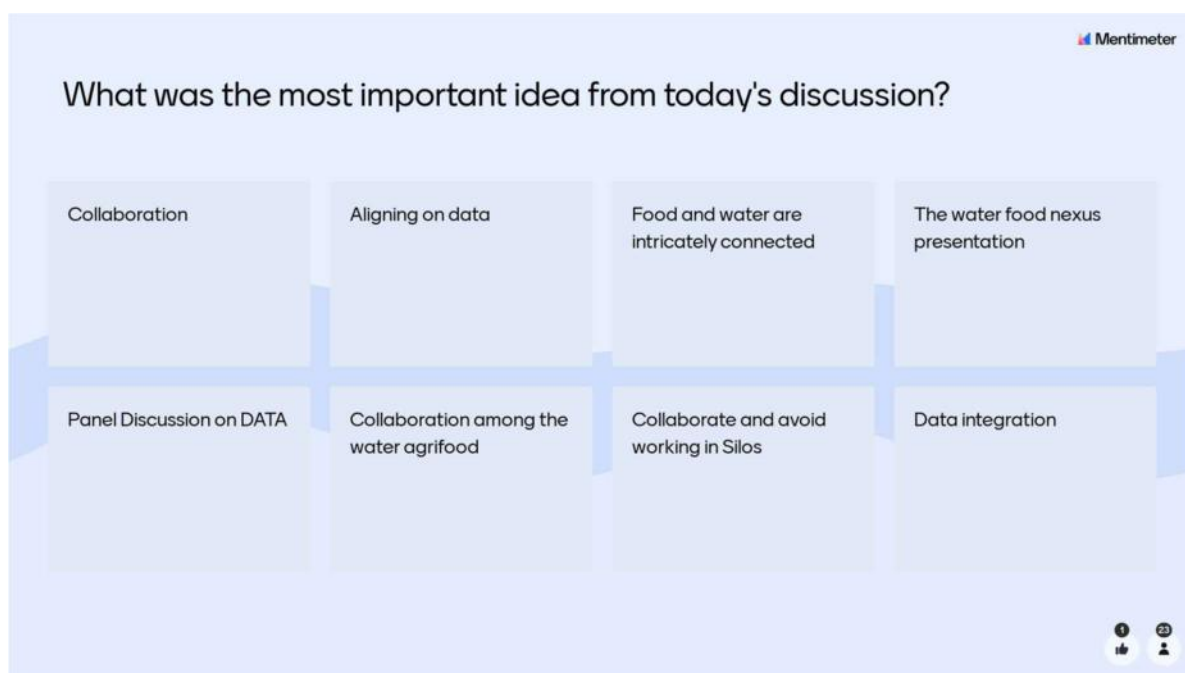
It was emphasized that water loss and pollution, including from sanitation systems, undermine both human health and environmental sustainability. A comprehensive approach demands collaboration across sectors and inclusive decision-making processes that involve all stakeholders: farmers, policymakers, industries, and communities alike.

The need for effective governance was again brought to the fore, with it hinging on robust data systems, digitalization, and institutional coordination. Access to live and reliable data is critical for climate resilience, enabling early warning systems and evidence-based decision-making. However, fragmented systems, inadequate local decision-making capacities, and insufficient investment impede progress.

Key points for future and further attention include fostering collaborative governance that addresses conflicts, enforces accountability, and prioritizes inclusivity. Policies must align across sectors, ensuring that choices in one domain (e.g., energy or agriculture) do not negatively affect others. Empowering civil society to monitor and advocate for sustainable practices is also essential.

One of the event's key takeaways is the need to adopt a holistic approach to managing the water-food-energy nexus. Participants are urged to reflect on how their actions and policies impact water quality, availability, and future generations. The event concludes with a challenge to attendees: take home the insights, act on them, and commit to driving structural change in their respective spheres of influence.

## Evaluation



Mentimeter

### What was the most important idea from today's discussion?

The need to have harmonized indicators and an information management system that leverages data from different sectors	Having an expert panel to elaborate issues	Strengthening governance of finance for water and food nexus	Accountability in water and food Nexus
Collaboration in water and food nexus	Collaboration	Collaboration and coordination is a must	Statistics from WARMA. 53% reduction of groundwater in southern province.

1 20

Mentimeter

### From today's topics, which aspects should be discussed in more depth next time?

Finance	How can we harmonies our challenges	Moving from co-ordination to collaboration	Financing
Financing	Governance	Collaboration in financing	Financing

6 31

Mentimeter

From today's topics, which aspects should be discussed in more depth next time?

Financing of water	Finance and sustainability	Collaboration Coordination All data	Implementation strategies need to be interrogated
Financing	Warma issues	Financing	Financing for effective water and food governance

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Mentimeter

From today's topics, which aspects should be discussed in more depth next time?

Implementation	Climate resilience in water safety plans for implementation strategies	Financing	Data and evidence and how to use it
Financing	Data and Evidence for Decision making-Very Key in tailoring solutions.	Data collection	Implementation mechanism

6 31



## Appendix 1: List of participants

	Name	Organisation
1	Rodney Katongo	Africa Access Water
2	Mwenya Nachilima	Auditor General
3	Michael Phiri	Baraka Community Partnerships
4	Amanda Mallaghan	Borda
5	William Chilufya	Centre for Innovative Development
6	Lusayo Chikumbi	Centre for Innovative Development
7	Marjory Chilufya	CSO SUN
8	Chrissy Mupuchi	DAPP
9	Precious Mutale	ENVAROS
10	Hon Elias Musunda	Kasama Council
11	Kingfred Simwinga	Keepers Zambia Foundation
12	Dr Emmanuel Chileshe	MFL
13	Chileshe Chewe	Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock
14	Nesho Ngosa	Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock Kabwe (Driver for Dr Chileshe)
15	Kasanda Bunda	Ministry of Green Economy and Environment
16	Gibson Chingwalala	Ministry of Water Development and Sanitation
17	Emma Ndhlovu	Ministry of Water Development and Sanitation
18	Marjorie Mwale	Ministry of Water Development and Sanitation
19	Mulima Yeta Chikanga	MoA
20	Hon Twaambo Mutinta	MP WASH Parliamentary Caucus
21	Obed Kawanga	Network for Environmental Concerns and Solutions
22	Chisela Kalwile	NFNC
23	Martin Gondwe	NFPD
24	Nonde Lwatula	NGO WASH Forum
25	Bangwe Naviley	NGO WASH Forum
26	Yamikani Mwanza	Official Photographer for the event
27	Andrew Mutonyi	Oxfam
28	Nelson Vusa	PPHPZ
29	Shikande Kawanga	PPHPZ
30	Tessa Hakantu	Salvation Army
31	Kunda Besa	Sanitize
32	Chilufaya Chileshe	SDG2 Advocacy Hub
33	George Mazambani	Shambayi Initiative Foundation
34	Maria Carreiro	SNV
35	Sharon Roose	SNV
36	Kundanaji Mwamulima	SNV
37	Edgar Chaamwe	SNV
38	Solomon Mbewe	SNV
39	Kondwani Mumba	SNV
40	Susan Chisapi	SNV
41	Davy Ngoma	SNV
42	Lauren Muchemwa	SNV

43	Costa Chitanda	SNV
44	Rejoice Lunga	SNV
45	Alison Rusinow	SNV
46	Robson Nyirenda	SNV
47	Shumba Tafadzwa	SNV
48	John Masinde	SNV
49	Lucy Fulgence	SNV
50	Alex Mwila	SNV
51	Philemon Zimba	SNV
52	Cloffas Nyagumbo	SNV
53	Oscar Nyaywa	The Youth Platform
54	Kafula Daka	Ukanzipalile Integrated Project
55	Evelyn Nachilimina	Vision Outreach Zambia
56	Hope Mwelaisha	Vision Outreach Zambia
57	Idess Siame	WARMA
58	Chisanga Kapacha	WARMA
59	Adamson Sakala	WaterAid
60	Angel Phiri	WaterAid
61	Isaac Samunete	World Vision
62	Salatiel Daka	Zambia Climate Change Network
63	Lydia Chibambo	Zambia Climate Change Network
64	Stephen Nyirenda	ZHAP
65	Clara Banda	ZHAP
66	Harad Lungu	ZNFU

## Appendix 2: Presentations

Block 1 – Governance for the realization of the Human Right to Water and to Food in Zambia in the age of Climate Change: key concepts, facts and figures



Block 1\_Governance Presentation SNV.pdf  
Block 1\_Governance Presentation NFNC.pc  
Block 1\_Governance Presentation MGEE.pc  
Block 1\_Governance Presentationatation WARM

Block 2 – Data and evidence for decision making in Water and Food in face of climate change: what data needs to be known and how best to use it?



Block 2\_Evidence and Governance.pdf

Block 3 – Financing for Effective Water and Food Governance in a context of climate change: how to enhance effectiveness and sustainability of financing?



Block 3\_Financing and Governance.pdf

Block 4 – Multi-stakeholder dialogue and coordination for improved governance on Water and Food Nexus: how to converge diverse perspectives and competing priorities?



Block 4\_Multistakeholder Er

Block 5 – Governance for Inclusion in the Water Food Nexus: how to advance the Leaving no One Behind ambition in Governance in the Water and Food Nexus?



Block 5\_Inclusion and Governance.pdf

Block 6 – Accountability in Water and Food Governance: what opportunities and challenges in strengthening accountability for Public Institutions, Cooperating Partners, Civil Society, and the Private Sector



Block 6\_Accountability and

Event key learning highlights, next steps & wrap-up



SNV WVU LE  
Governance Water Fo

**Contact SNV Zambia**

7 Nkanchibaya Road, Rhodespark  
Lusaka  
PO Box 31771  
Zambia  
+260 211 255 174  
[zambia@snv.org](mailto:zambia@snv.org)  
[snv.org](http://snv.org)