

Stand by Partner Support
Zambia Country Office

Post Title: WASH Emergency Specialist (Flood response)

Location: Lundazi, Zambia

Duration: 6 months

Reporting to: WASH Specialist, CEED

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background:

Zambia is increasingly vulnerable to climate-driven hazards, including floods and disease outbreaks, which threaten water security, public health, and infrastructure. On December 29–30, 2025, Lundazi District in Eastern Province experienced heavy, windy rainfall that caused severe flooding. This disaster led to the collapse of the Lundazi Dam wall, washed away the Mpamba and Mwase bridges, submerged the district's water treatment plant, and destroyed numerous households along the Lundazi riverbank. Approximately 50 households were completely submerged, 250 more collapsed, and 50,000 people impacted with numbers expected to rise due to ongoing rainfall. Essential food, non-food items, and farming inputs were damaged, leaving the communities highly vulnerable.

The flooding also resulted in the submergence and shutdown of the Eastern Water and Sanitation Company Limited (EWSC) Water Treatment Plant, causing extensive damage to critical infrastructure, including the water intake structure, electrical control panels, pumps, and chemical dosing equipment. Water production was immediately suspended, disrupting the supply for all EWSC customers in Lundazi District.

Flooding in Zambia is not an isolated event; it is part of a broader pattern of climate variability that increases the frequency and severity of natural disasters. These hazards often coincide with disease outbreaks, such as cholera, which remains a significant public health risk during the rainy season. Currently, UNICEF has a dedicated Standby partner supporting the ongoing cholera outbreak response, while this request is for an additional Standby Partner to focus exclusively on flood response.

UNICEF is working with national and sub-national authorities to strengthen emergency preparedness, risk assessment, and capacity building. Our strategic approach emphasizes reinforcing government leadership, promoting inter-agency coordination, and ensuring sustainable, system-strengthening interventions for the most vulnerable populations. This assignment will enhance the capacity of Lundazi District, MWDS Provincial, and ESWC to respond to floods and related hazards, while aligning with sector-wide resilience efforts.

In this context, UNICEF Zambia is seeking a WASH Emergency Specialist with experience in flood response and urban water utilities to ensure a coordinated and effective flood response by the commercial utility and other partners.

Purpose of the assignment:

Under the overall guidance of the Chief of the WASH Section, and the direct management of an international WASH Output lead, the WASH Emergency Specialist will support government agencies, commercial utilities, and non-governmental partners in responding to floods and preventing waterborne diseases in affected areas, ensuring a coordinated and effective WASH response.

More specifically the WASH specialist is expected to lead on the following:

Program Design and Strategic Planning:

- Support EWSC and district officials conduct needs assessments for WASH responses in communities and institutions affected by or at risk of flooding, producing timely and actionable reports.
- Provide technical assistance to develop integrated emergency WASH response plans specifically tailored for flood situations, ensuring alignment with national disaster risk reduction strategies and climate resilience priorities.
- Enhance the capacity of Lundazi District, MWDS Provincial, and EWSC to effectively respond to floods and other related hazards.
- Collaborate with the Health, Social and Behavior Change (SBC), Nutrition, Child Protection, Social Policy and Education sections
- Assist in the development and regular updating of the WASH Flood Response, including detailed supply planning

Contribute to resource mobilization by developing concept notes and proposals for donors

Systems Strengthening and Implementation:

- Support interventions that reinforce urban and rural water systems, including collaboration with the EWSC to ensure uninterrupted service delivery during the flood emergency.
- Establish and strengthen partnerships with government and non-governmental organizations to facilitate a cohesive and effective flood WASH response.
- Support the implementation of UNICEF's flood-specific WASH response, including water quality monitoring and treatment, distribution of supplies, provision of WASH services, and behavior change communication—coordinated with other UNICEF teams.
- Provide technical guidance to government, commercial utilities, NGOs, and private companies to ensure high standards in flood prevention and response.
- Maintain regular communication with the UNICEF country office on flood response developments and contribute to relevant reporting mechanisms.
- Safeguard public health by ensuring access to safe drinking water, proper sanitation, and safe hygiene practices, in alignment with UNICEF's Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies (CCCs) and humanitarian standards.

Capacity Building and Risk Assessment:

- Enhance institutional capacity at national and sub-national levels for emergency preparedness related to floods, including training on risk assessment and contingency planning for flood scenarios.
- Identify capacity gaps in the WASH sector's flood response by reviewing assessment and monitoring tools and standard operating procedures (SOPs) relevant to flood situations.
- Organize training and orientation sessions for government agencies, commercial utilities, and implementing partners to strengthen response capacity specifically for flood emergencies.
- Develop recommendations and budgets/proposals for infrastructure upgrades to improve access to safe WASH services for populations at risk of flooding.
- Coordinate with MWDS and WASH partners to identify funding sources and stakeholders for necessary infrastructure improvements to enhance resilience against flood impacts.
- Strengthening existing UNICEF KfW and EU funded support to commercial utilities in the flooded locations, especially regarding water quality treatment capacity building.

Monitoring, Coordination and Knowledge Management:

- Establish strong monitoring frameworks and improve coordination mechanisms among government, UN agencies, and NGOs to ensure harmonized, evidence-based response.
- Actively monitor flood response activities supported by UNICEF through field visits, surveys, and partner engagement to assess progress and quickly address any challenges that arise.

- Contribute to reporting mechanisms for UNICEF's response to flooding by leading program monitoring visits and document results.
- Monitor and report on the use of emergency programme resources, ensuring compliance with allocations, organizational procedures, donor commitments, and accountability standards
- Prepare progress reports for management, donors, and partners to keep everyone informed.
- Document lessons learned for future learning and improved future responses.
- Ensure UNICEF's efforts are coordinated with local, sub-national, and national authorities, participating in relevant coordination meetings.
- Support government-led coordination mechanisms efforts, maintain regular updates to the 5W Matrix and partner coverage maps, and provide periodic updates on the flood response (daily/weekly situation reports, Sitreps, etc.).

Location and Duration

- Expected start date: 10 January 2026
- Duration: 6 months
- Location: Based in Lundazi with an expectation to work across the country.

Qualifications

Education:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Master's degree in public health, water engineering, hydrogeology, WASH, Disaster Risk Management, or a related field; OR an undergraduate degree in these fields combined with 10 years working in the WASH sector.
Experience:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In-depth technical knowledge of WASH interventions specifically focused on Flood Response and Commercial Water Utilities.• Relevant experience in a UN system agency or organization is an asset.• A minimum of 8 years of emergency experience• Proven track record in managing water supply and treatment operations, particularly involving water treatment plants and alternative supply options during emergencies.• Experience collaborating with both public and private Urban Water Supply Management, especially in the context of climate-related disasters.• Experience working in low- and middle-income countries as part of interdisciplinary teams.• Strong coordination and monitoring skills, with demonstrated ability to engage with government and inter-agency platforms.• Experience writing proposals and donor reports.
Language Requirements:	Fluency in English (verbal and written) is required.

Approved by UNICEF Representative: