

Climate change lusaka

Lusaka, the capital city of Zambia, has an estimated population of 2.5 million. With an annual population growth rate of 4.8% (2000-18), it is projected to grow to 4.3 million by 2030 (UN DESA 2018). Climate variability and change is partly contributing to Lusaka's rapid growth, as poor agricultural productivity in Zambia's rural areas is leading to rising urban migration (Thurlow et al. 2012).

Lusaka is characterised by dramatic contrasts between modernist formal areas and impoverished informal parts of the city, which are home to over half of Lusaka's population (Chitonge and Mfunze 2015). However, climate impacts experienced in Lusaka cut across this formal-informal divide, in the form of water shortages, power outages, flooding and disease outbreaks, especially cholera triggered by flooding and poor sanitation.

Most of Lusaka's electricity comes from hydropower generation. Roughly 40% of the water supplied to Lusaka by the Lusaka Water and Sewerage Company (LWSC) is sourced from the Kafue River, some 50 kilometres from the city, and the remaining 60% is extracted from groundwater (Simukonda et al. 2018). However, the LWSC is only able to supply roughly 52% of the water demand from Lusaka's rapidly growing population and industry. The remaining 48% is drawn directly from groundwater by private individuals and companies (FRACTAL 2019).

Based on the experience of working to integrate climate risk information into the Lusaka Strategic Plan 2017-21, four key lessons emerged that may be of use to planners, decision-makers and researchers in other cities grappling with how to mainstream climate into urban development strategies.

In conclusion, these lessons will need to be taken forward within Lusaka, where the next challenge is to translate the Strategic Plan into an Integrated Development Plan that provides spatial specificity as to how the ambitions and priorities laid out in the Strategic Plan will be implemented. In parallel, strategies for addressing climate and water risks in high risk settlements are being pursued through the Lusaka Water Security Action and Investment Plan.

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