

FOOD DESK REPORT

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Introduction

This monthly report provides a consolidated update on the progress made by the Food Desk in advancing the ICLEI Fresh Food Project in Lusaka, with a particular focus on preparatory activities undertaken at Chilenje Market. During the reporting period, the Food Desk coordinated key groundwork, including stakeholder consultations, market infrastructure assessments, trader sensitization, and alignment of local processes with the project's fresh food safety and hygiene objectives. The report also incorporates insights gained from an exchange visit to Lizulu Market in Lilongwe, where ICLEI Africa has successfully implemented a similar initiative. The visit provided practical lessons on effective market transformation approaches, which are expected to guide and strengthen the implementation at Chilenje Market. This report highlights the achievements recorded, lessons learned, challenges encountered, and priority actions for the next phase.

Project Highlights

1. Exchange Visit to Lizulu Market, Lilongwe

- Two Food Desk Coordinators conducted a learning visit to Lizulu Market, a busy fresh food trading centre in Lilongwe, to observe the ICLEI Fresh Food Project in action.
- Lizulu Market features high daily foot traffic, diverse fresh produce vendors, and serves as a key source of affordable food for surrounding communities.
- The coordinators engaged with market leadership, Lilongwe City Council officials, and ICLEI Africa representatives to understand operational approaches, stakeholder collaboration, and innovations applied.
- Notable interventions at Lizulu Market include:
 - Construction of trader shelters throughout the market, providing organised and shaded trading spaces.
 - Establishment of a manure compost centre, which converts organic market waste into high-quality manure sold to local farmers.
- Lessons learned particularly on waste-to-resource strategies will inform the preparatory and implementation of waste management activities at Chilenje Market.



Figure 1. Participants in the waste management training



Figure 2. Market shelter installed throughout the market



Figure 3. Waste facility for organic manure/fertilizer

2. Launch of the ICLEI Fresh Food Project at Chilenje Market, Lusaka

- The ICLEI Africa Fresh Food Project was officially launched at Chilenje Market, marking the end of interventions to improve fresh food access, hygiene, and trader organisation in Lusaka.
- Stakeholders present included the Mayor, ICLEI Africa representatives, market leadership, traders, local authorities, community members, and project representatives.
- Key launch activities and improvements include:
 - Stakeholder sensitisation on fresh food handling and hygiene practices.
 - Improvement of drainage systems to prevent waterlogging and maintain market cleanliness.
 - Establishment and organisation of waste management areas for efficient handling of market waste.
 - Upgrading of the water reticulation system to ensure reliable access to clean water for traders and customers.
 - Rehabilitation of market toilets to improve sanitation and hygiene for traders and visitors.
- Insights and lessons from Lizulu Market were shared to guide local adaptation.

- The launch positioned Chilenje Market as a model for structured, hygienic, and sustainable fresh food trading in Lusaka.



Figure 4. Improved waste separation area



Figure 5. Improved water reticulation, 13 taps were added to the lone existing tap in the market



Figure 6. Waste bins added at the toilet area



Figure 7. From left to right: Councilor Luka Phiri Roma Ward 20i, Luke Metelerkamp from ICLEI Africa, Her Worship the Mayor Ms. Chilando Chitangala and Chilenje Ward 8 Councilor Reuben Mwenya officially cutting the ribbon to launch the project



Figure 8. Waste management “Market Clean” mural Keep Chilenje

Conclusion

The reporting period of November has seen significant progress in advancing the ICLEI Fresh Food Project, both through preparatory and launch activities at Chilenje Market in Lusaka and the exchange learning visit to Lizulu Market in Lilongwe. The interventions at Chilenje Market including the construction of trader shelters, designation of fresh food zones, improvement of drainage and water reticulation systems, organization of waste management areas, and rehabilitation of toilets have laid a strong foundation for a cleaner, more organised, and sustainable fresh food trading environment.

In addition to project coordination, the Food Desk has been actively supporting ICLEI Africa in coordinating a research initiative related to the **ReMark Fund**. Once launched, the ReMark Fund is expected to provide between USD 5 million and 10 million to support the refurbishment of up to 10 selected markets in Lusaka. The learnings and experiences from Chilenje Market will provide valuable insights for the design and implementation of future interventions under this fund.

Overall, the Food Desk continues to play a pivotal role in ensuring that the project not only meets its immediate objectives but also contributes to longer-term improvements in market infrastructure, hygiene, and trader livelihoods, while positioning Lusaka for expanded investment and support under initiatives like the ReMark Fund.