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Draft country programme document**

Zimbabwe

Summary

The draft country programme document (CPD) for Zimbabwe is presented to the Executive Board for discussion and comment. The draft CPD includes a proposed aggregate indicative budget of \$25,000,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and \$150,000,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2027 to 2031.

* [E/ICEF/2026/25](#).

** In accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/1, country programme documents (CPDs) are considered and approved in one session, on a no-objection basis. This draft CPD, and a costed evaluation plan, will be presented to the Executive Board for review from 9 to 29 June 2026. The final CPD will be posted to the Executive Board web page in English six weeks in advance of the 2026 second regular session and in the other designated languages four weeks in advance.

Programme rationale

1. Zimbabwe enters the 2027–2031 period guided by its Vision 2030¹ agenda and informed by the implementation of the National Development Strategy 2 (NDS 2), 2026–2030,² which prioritizes economic stabilization, human capital development, water security, climate adaptation, strengthened governance and the progressive devolution of functions and resources. With an estimated population of 15.2 million,³ including an estimated 7.4 million children, the demographic profile of Zimbabwe offers significant potential for accelerated human development. As an active member of the Southern African Development Community, the country continues to advance regional cooperation and integration as it progresses towards an upper-middle-income economy by 2030.

2. Zimbabwe has made significant progress in advancing child well-being, supported by strengthened policy and legal frameworks and expanded investments in the social sectors. Building on the gains under NDS 1 (2021–2025), including institutional reforms, infrastructure development and digital transformation, the country continues to implement a child-sensitive agenda despite structural and macro fiscal pressures, high public debt and declining external assistance (overseas development assistance declined by 23 per cent in 2025),⁴ which constrain the availability of financing for the social sectors. This impacts the pace and scale of service delivery, particularly at decentralized levels.

3. The devolution agenda is being implemented progressively, creating a foundation for improved local governance and service delivery, with continued strengthening of systems and capacities. Further efforts are needed to reinforce local capacity, enhance intergovernmental fiscal transfers, improve data utilization, and reinforce public financial management and accountability systems to ensure that districts can effectively deliver quality services for children and reduce disparities.⁵

4. A significant proportion of children experience overlapping vulnerabilities, facing combined deprivations in nutrition, health, learning, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and protection. Children living in rural areas, peri-urban informal settlements and border communities, children living with disabilities, adolescent girls and migrant children face significant barriers to accessing basic services. Social protection systems have expanded, although coverage gaps and adequacy constraints remain, including limited shock-responsiveness.

5. Zimbabwe has strengthened its normative framework around disability inclusion, notably with the passing of the Persons with Disabilities Act (Act No. 3 of 2025) and the National Disability Policy (2021), with enhanced coordination across government entities enabling implementation. Currently, nearly 1 in 10 Zimbabweans live with a disability.⁶ Children with disabilities face barriers to inclusive and accessible basic services driven by stigma, limited infrastructure and

¹ Government of Zimbabwe, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and Investment Promotion (MOFEDIP), Zimbabwe Vision 2030, 2018.

² Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC), ‘National Development Strategy 2 (NDS 2), January 2026–December 2030’, 27 November 2025.

³ Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT), Population and Housing Census Report, 2022.

⁴ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), A historic decline in foreign aid: Preliminary 2025 ODA data, 9 April 2026.

⁵ OPC, National Development Strategy 2, 2025.

⁶ ZIMSTAT, Population and Housing Census Report, 2022.

disability-disaggregated data, as well as insufficient coordination and resourcing at decentralized levels.⁷

6. While resiliency, anticipatory and mitigation capacities have been strengthened in recent years, Zimbabwe remains among the world's most climate-vulnerable countries. Children are exposed to climate and environmental hazards, with droughts, heatwaves, flooding and cyclones repeatedly disrupting essential social services.⁸ The 2024–2025 El Niño-induced drought, the worst in 40 years, increased food insecurity⁹ and heightened the risks of malnutrition, school dropout and child marriage.¹⁰

7. Zimbabwe has made significant progress in reducing maternal mortality from 651 to 212 deaths per 100,000 live births between 2015 and 2024, supported by investments in primary healthcare systems.¹¹ Eighty-three per cent of children have received three doses of diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus vaccine, while 7.5 per cent of children remain unimmunized, leaving them unprotected against childhood illnesses.¹² Child mortality is increasingly concentrated in the neonatal period, reflecting bottlenecks in primary healthcare. Neonatal mortality increased from 24 to 37 deaths per 1,000 live births between 1994 and 2024 and now accounts for more than half of all under-5 deaths.¹³ These largely preventable deaths are driven by prematurity, birth asphyxia and newborn infections, and reflect gaps in essential newborn care, infection prevention and control and continuity of care between facilities and communities.¹⁴ Proper maternal nutrition is a key factor in survival and early care, with only 33 per cent of women achieving adequate dietary diversity. Exclusive breastfeeding remains low at 42 per cent, while early initiation of breastfeeding is relatively high at 67 per cent.¹⁵ High rates of adolescent pregnancy (23 per cent),¹⁶ combined with a disproportionate HIV burden among adolescent girls and young women aged 15–24 years, further increase risks of adverse maternal and newborn health outcomes, including mother-to-child transmission of HIV.

8. Maternal, newborn and child health outcomes are compounded by undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies and the rising incidence of overweight and obesity, alongside unhealthy food environments for children. Limited access to safe water and sanitation lead to recurrent waterborne infections and remain major barriers, amid public health emergencies, including outbreaks of cholera, measles, typhoid and vaccine-derived poliovirus. While Zimbabwe has strengthened mechanisms and capacity to anticipate and respond to such emergencies, the impacts are borne disproportionately by districts facing multiple deprivations.

9. Early childhood education is prioritized nationally. At 87 per cent, Zimbabwe has attained high levels of net enrolment in primary education. However, access to and quality of basic education remain uneven. Grade 7 and Ordinary Level (O-Level) pass rates, currently at 48 and 35 per cent, respectively,¹⁷ fluctuate, while only 18 per

⁷ United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), *Formative Evaluation of UNICEF work on Disability Inclusion (2018–2022)*, 2023.

⁸ UNICEF, *Children's Climate and Environment Risk Index*, 2024.

⁹ Zimbabwe Livelihoods Assessment Committee (ZIMLAC), *2025 Rural Livelihoods Assessment*.

¹⁰ Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), *Zimbabwe: El Niño impact assessment highlights*, 2024.

¹¹ ZIMSTAT, *Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey (ZDHS) 2023–2024*, 2025.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ UNICEF, *Improving Newborn Survival in Zimbabwe*, 2024.

¹⁵ ZIMSTAT, *Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey*, 2025.

¹⁶ UNICEF, *Children's Climate and Environment Risk Index*, 2024.

¹⁷ Zimbabwe School Examination Council (ZIMSEC), 2025, <https://www5.zimsec.co.zw/exam-results-information/>, accessed on 29 May 2026.

cent of learners transition to upper secondary.¹⁸ The Basic Education Assistance Module, a national social protection programme to support access to education for vulnerable children, suffers delays in disbursements. Challenges related to teacher and infrastructure shortages are barriers to access.¹⁹ Financing for capital and operational expenditures is constrained as the education budget is heavily skewed towards salaries of up to 94 per cent in 2023,²⁰ with limited disbursement of the non-wage budget, reducing school capacity to maintain operations.

10. The adoption of the National Youth Policy and National Youth Empowerment Strategy for 2026–2030 will facilitate action to address key constraints in employment, economic and civic participation, and service access for young people. The rates of young people not in employment, education or training remain high, at 47.6 per cent (55 per cent for females)²¹ and opportunities for youth skills development and employment are limited and insufficiently aligned to market needs, notwithstanding investments in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), digital learning and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) expansion.

11. Whilst Zimbabwe has strengthened legal protections for children by raising the age of consent to 18 years, criminalizing child marriage and strengthening protections against sexual exploitation, protection risks remain and intersect with poverty and climate shocks. Sixty-four per cent of children experience violent discipline,²² and one in three girls were married before the age of 18 years.²³ Notwithstanding birth registration coverage of 57 per cent²⁴ and recent nationwide campaigns to further expand, digitalize and decentralize birth registration services, children without legal identity remain at risk of not accessing age-appropriate services.

12. Limited social protection coverage exacerbates the risks of malnutrition, violence, child marriage and child labour. Just 1.5 per cent of the gross domestic product is spent on social protection²⁵ and only 49 per cent of the poorest households receive support.²⁶ Climate shocks strain family and community support systems, heightening risks of violence, exploitation and separation of children. Case management systems and the social service workforce face substantial capacity gaps, including low workforce density (about 2 social workers per 100,000 children)²⁷ and heavy caseloads. Siloed administrative data systems across sectors reduce the ability to map vulnerabilities, target services and monitor equity, including for children with disabilities. Civic participation in planning and budgeting remains limited.²⁸

13. Lessons from the evaluation of the current country programme (2022–2026)²⁹ reinforced the need to enhance support to domestic financing and accountability to ensure that national commitments translate into results for children at decentralized levels. The evaluation highlighted macroeconomic challenges, inadequate budget

¹⁸ Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2025 Primary and Secondary Education Statistics Report, 2025.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ World Bank, *Zimbabwe Public Finance Review*, 2025.

²¹ ZIMSTAT, Quarterly Labour Force Survey, 2025.

²² ZIMSTAT, Zimbabwe Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2019, 2020.

²³ ZIMSTAT, ZDHS, 2025.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion, 2025 Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, 2024.

²⁶ ZIMSTAT and World Bank, 2020.

²⁷ Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, *Zimbabwe Social Service Workforce Capacity Assessment, 2023* (forthcoming).

²⁸ International Budget Partnership, 2023 Open Budget Survey, 2023.

²⁹ UNICEF, *Evaluation of UNICEF Zimbabwe Country Programme (2022–2026)*, 2026.

execution and delayed district transfers as reasons for upstream normative gains not translating into improvements in local service delivery. Insufficient operational financing and a fragile district-level workforce created a “missing middle” that constrained scale-up. The Gender Programmatic Review (2026) showed that integrated, multisectoral approaches, especially those focused on adolescent girls, deliver results only where district systems are adequately resourced and accountable.

14. With the establishment of district-level institutional structures across sectors, Zimbabwe has a solid foundation for advancing outcomes for children at the national and decentralized levels. Children’s well-being is shaped by interconnected system factors, including social sector financing, local-level transfers and decentralized implementation capacity.³⁰ Strengthening workforce development, data integration, coordination and accountability will be important to enhancing service delivery outcomes. These insights shape the new programme’s strong focus on domestic financing, improved budget execution and strengthened accountability to empower decentralized systems to deliver inclusive, equitable and high-quality services.

Programme priorities and partnerships

15. The country programme is anchored in, and contributes to, the priorities of National Development Strategy 2, including human capital development, social protection, devolution and decentralization, governance reform and climate resilience. The programme contributes to Africa’s Agenda for Children 2040 and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. It responds to the concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and recommendations from the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. The programme is derived from and contributes to all pillars of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), 2027–2031, with UNICEF leading the pillar on human capital development. The country programme is fully aligned with the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2026–2029 and aims to support the Government in contributing to its Impact Results.

16. The country programme has four complementary programme components: child survival and early care; learning and skills development; integrated protection; and child rights governance. Marking a shift from previous country programmes that were sectorally organized and input-heavy, the new programme components form an interconnected response to the multidimensional conditions facing the children of Zimbabwe. It reflects a coherent investment in human capital development, resilience, social inclusion and governance reform, backed by sustainable financing and digital transformation that enables scale and long-term sustainability.

17. The country programme also emphasizes convergence of multisectoral interventions in high-deprivation districts, where multidimensional child poverty, climate exposure, weak infrastructure and social vulnerabilities intersect most severely. The district-convergent approach strengthens the link between upstream reforms and front-line service delivery, as well as service continuity during shocks, connecting primary healthcare, nutrition, learning, protection and social protection around the needs of the same child, their family and community.

18. The country programme builds on the trusted partnership of UNICEF with the Government of Zimbabwe, rooted in the long-standing presence, multisectoral mandate and proven record in supporting system strengthening at scale of UNICEF. Partnerships with the Government will remain central, particularly with the ministries

³⁰ Ibid.

responsible for health, education, youth, social welfare, finance, local government, land and water, justice and civil registration.

19. UNICEF will continue to play its convening role across ministries, United Nations entities, development partners and civil society, enabling integration of efforts essential to overcome fragmentation. Its comparative strengths in adolescent programming, evidence generation, anticipatory action and accountability to affected populations contribute to the ability of UNICEF to convene, while further enhancing national capacities to deliver inclusive, equitable and shock-responsive services.

20. UNICEF will work closely with other United Nations entities through joint programmes on maternal and newborn health, food systems, foundational learning, child protection, social protection, governance, gender equality and climate resilience. International financial institutions and bilateral partners will support reforms in social sectors, decentralization, public finance and climate adaptation. Engagement with civil society, academia, youth networks and the private sector will foster innovation, strengthen accountability, enhance service delivery and expand climate-smart and digital solutions.

21. UNICEF will advance a set of change strategies to achieve scale and impact for children, grounded in independent advocacy, policy dialogue, evidence generation and capacity development. Drawing on its global technical leadership, UNICEF will help to strengthen national and subnational systems through sustainable domestic financing, improved budget execution and effective decentralization. This will be complemented by equity-focused, multisectoral delivery converging in high-deprivation and climate-exposed districts, alongside enhanced accountability, data integration and local implementation capacity. Gender equality between girls and boys and adolescent-centred approaches will be embedded across programme components to address the structural drivers of vulnerability. Climate-resilient and shock-responsive service delivery will be prioritized to ensure continuity during crises. UNICEF will play a catalytic and convening role, leveraging partnerships and co-financing to scale up sustainable solutions through national systems beyond programme resources.

Child survival and early care

22. The child survival and early care programme component aims to support children, particularly the most vulnerable, to benefit from a resilient primary healthcare system that delivers quality reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and nutrition, early childhood care and climate-resilient WASH services across the life course, with a focus on the first 1,000 days. The programme is aligned with UNSDCF outcomes 2 and 3.

23. UNICEF will support the Ministry of Health and Child Care to strengthen primary healthcare systems, prioritizing districts with the highest neonatal mortality rates and overlapping vulnerabilities, including food poverty, stunting and large numbers of zero-dose children, in line with national prioritization frameworks. The component will support the delivery of a minimum integrated package of child survival and early care interventions, including those that address the underlying determinants of child survival across the continuum of care through:

(a) Facilities that provide quality maternal and newborn care, care for small and sick newborns, early initiation of breastfeeding, HIV services, micronutrient supplementation and climate-resilient facility WASH services;

(b) Communities that promote postnatal follow up, exclusive breastfeeding, nutritious first foods and nurturing care for young children, immunization defaulter tracing and timely referrals to facilities;

(c) School and adolescent platforms that promote nutrition and anaemia prevention and menstrual hygiene management, with linkages to sexual and reproductive health services for adolescent girls.

24. Across the continuum of interventions, UNICEF will promote: maternal and adolescent nutrition to prevent low birthweight; quality of diets through food systems actions; expansion of immunization services, particularly among zero-dose children; and reduction of infections from waterborne diseases through climate-resilient integrated WASH interventions, including in peri-urban and informal settlements. Community engagement and social and behaviour change approaches will be scaled up to improve care seeking, infant and young child feeding and utilization of essential services.

25. While strengthening essential child survival services across facility and community platforms, UNICEF will catalyse partnerships to support the Government to strengthen policy, financing, accountability, supply chains, health workforce capacity and the use of digital health and data systems, particularly building on the electronic health records of Zimbabwe, while promoting provinces and districts to prioritize interventions based on local data. Shock-responsiveness of primary healthcare systems will be strengthened to ensure continuity of essential services in emergencies, including through strengthened emergency preparedness and anticipatory action.

Learning and skills development

26. This component aims to support children and young people, especially the most vulnerable, to access and remain in quality, inclusive and safe learning and skills development opportunities, acquiring foundational learning and skills for life and work. The programme is aligned with UNSDCF outcomes 1 and 3.

27. UNICEF will collaborate with the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to strengthen the system to expand equitable access for children to early childhood, primary and lower secondary education, including to out-of-school children through flexible learning pathways, and for adolescents and youth to skills development opportunities. Through advocacy to increase public financing, alternative financing mechanisms and public-private partnerships and facilitating inter-ministerial coordination, UNICEF will support:

(a) The expansion of the community early childhood education and TVET centres, particularly in rural and climate-vulnerable districts;

(b) National scale-up of the early warning system to prevent dropout;

(c) The multisectoral approach to facilitate access to learning by adolescent girls;

(d) Climate-resilient infrastructure for schools;

(e) Linkage to social protection to ensure that children with disabilities, children at risk of violence, child marriage or harmful practices are supported to remain in school.

28. Improving foundational learning will be a major focus, strengthening policy, financing and institutional systems. UNICEF will support the generation and use of evidence on alternative sustainable education financing, the roll-out of the Zimbabwe Early Learning Assessment for Grade 2 learners, the development of new national learning assessments for Grade 5 and the re-engagement of Zimbabwe with regional learning assessment platforms. UNICEF will promote classroom-level remediation and inclusive education programming for learners who are falling behind, advocating

with the Government to enhance teacher training in learner-centred pedagogies. Digital learning and STEM opportunities will be scaled up through national platforms like the Learning Passport, mobile science laboratories and digital libraries. These platforms will improve access to high-quality content, particularly for girls who face multiple barriers to participating in STEM subjects.

29. UNICEF will collaborate with the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Development and Vocational Training to strengthen youth employability by expanding market-relevant and scalable skills development pathways, with a strong emphasis on digital and technology-enabled skills and improving transitions from learning into meaningful, dignified livelihoods. Mobilizing the Government, private sector, development partners and youth networks, the programme will scale up innovative platforms, such as youth innovation hubs, and strengthen TVET pathways to ensure alignment of learning outcomes and skills with labour market needs. Digital and green skills will be prioritized, along with entrepreneurship skills that provide opportunities for income generation. UNICEF will continue to foster school business units, resource-generating ventures that finance school-based initiatives such as solar-powered boreholes, nutritional gardens and school infrastructure enhancement, while equipping learners with agricultural and entrepreneurship skills. The units will be scaled up to include TVET centres as income-generating and practical skills development platforms that can strengthen employability for young people, including through linkages with local agrifood markets.

Integrated protection

30. The integrated protection programme component aims to protect children, especially the most vulnerable, from abuse, neglect and exploitation, while increasing their access to adequate, integrated, shock-responsive social protection services. The programme is aligned with UNSDCF outcomes 3 and 5.

31. UNICEF will collaborate with the Registrar-General's Office under the Civil Registry Department to enhance the civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) system as a central thrust in strengthening the national protection system across legal identity, prevention and response services, justice systems, social protection and case management. UNICEF will support legal reform, including the alignment of the Births and Deaths Registration Act with constitutional and international standards, and promote digitalization of the CRVS to improve coverage and interoperability with health and social protection systems. Community-based birth notification will be expanded, with targeted outreach to vulnerable groups.

32. Violence prevention will focus on scaling up evidence-based positive parenting programmes and working with traditional, religious and community leaders at scale to promote community-led efforts to prevent child marriage and other harmful practices. The programme will strengthen systems for the early identification, screening and referral of all cases of violence against children, including abuse, exploitation and neglect, across health facilities, schools and community structures. The national Victim Friendly System and the Pre-Trial Diversion Programme will be expanded to ensure child-friendly justice for survivors of abuse and for children in conflict with the law. Judicial and forensic capacities will be strengthened to address both offline and online forms of violence. These interventions will be delivered through policy advocacy, partnerships, national system strengthening and enhanced professionalization of the social service workforce, amplifying delivery effectiveness through shared intervention pathways between child protection and social protection services.

33. UNICEF will support the strengthening of a comprehensive social protection system designed to address child vulnerabilities resulting from poverty, enhancing the

shock-responsiveness of the system, particularly in climate-affected districts. Support will be provided to renew the Social Protection Framework and development of a social protection act. The national Social Registry will be updated and digitized to improve targeting, coverage and interoperability with basic services sectors, while grievance and redress mechanisms will be strengthened where cash transfers can be provided. Efforts by the Government to strengthen the efficacy of existing social protection programmes will be supported, reinforcing linkages with other social services such as the Basic Education Assistance Module. Modelled interventions will demonstrate how nutrition-, disability- and protection-sensitive cash transfers can reduce child deprivations and provide the building blocks for the design of a universal child benefit.

34. The social service workforce will be strengthened through revised case management guidelines, improved supervision and mentoring, enhanced front-line capacity and harmonized referral pathways that connect child protection and social protection systems. Inter-agency collaboration among the relevant United Nations entities will ensure coherent support for children on the move, survivors of gender-based violence, children with disabilities and vulnerable households.

Child rights governance

35. The child rights governance programme component aims to support children, especially the most vulnerable, to benefit from strengthened national and subnational systems that plan, budget and improve access and delivery of coordinated, accountable and climate-resilient social services. The programme is aligned with UNSDCF outcome 4.

36. UNICEF will support the Government to invest in national data systems that enable evidence-based policies and programmes and enhance accountability towards and the reporting on child rights. This includes national monitoring of NDS 2, the Sustainable Development Goals and treaty obligations, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the universal periodic review. National surveys, including Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), poverty assessments and climate vulnerability studies, will support evidence-based decision-making, and enhanced administrative data integration and interoperability across sectors will facilitate the use of data towards improving services for children. Citizen feedback mechanisms and child participation platforms will be strengthened to improve accountability and public engagement.

37. UNICEF will support the Government to strengthen how national and local systems plan, finance and account for investments in children through child-friendly budgeting, as well as legal and policy reform. This includes child-friendly budgeting that improves equity and efficiency of allocations and spending on child-focused priorities, budget analyses for social sectors and advocacy for intergovernmental fiscal transfers to subnational levels. UNICEF will support the parliamentary oversight on budget execution. These interventions will be delivered through high-level advocacy and partnerships with Parliament, the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works, international financial institutions and private-sector partners.

38. UNICEF will support national and local authorities to integrate climate risk-informed planning, multi-hazard preparedness, anticipatory action and crisis modifiers into social sector programmes. Emphasis will be placed on developing resilient WASH systems, including water quality monitoring and increased availability of safe water. Through climate-resilient delivery systems, multisectoral coordination will be prioritized and alignment ensured across the WASH, nutrition,

health, education, protection and social protection sectors to maintain service continuity during shocks. Partnerships with climate finance institutions will be pursued to expand financing for resilient, inclusive basic services.

Programme effectiveness

39. This programme component will ensure high-quality, coherent, accountable, integrated and results-driven delivery across the country programme, as follows:

(a) Evidence-based planning, monitoring, data analytics, evaluation, learning and feedback from affected populations will ensure strategic alignment and adaptive programming;

(b) Programme coordination will support overall coherence of the four programme outcomes, focusing on integrated programme delivery, district-level coordination and strong risk-informed management;

(c) Advocacy and communication will provide strategic positioning and visibility for children;

(d) Social and behaviour change will promote the meaningful participation of communities, youth and civil society in planning and accountability processes;

(e) Partnerships with Government, United Nations entities, donors, international financial institutions, civil society, the private sector and academia will be mobilized to leverage influence and resources for children;

(f) The humanitarian–development–peace linkages will be reinforced, embedding anticipatory action, multi-hazard preparedness and continuity of essential services;

(g) Investments in digital transformation and innovations will enable more efficient tracking of equity gaps and service delivery;

(h) Strengthening supply and logistics systems, local production, and last-mile distribution will ensure that commodities reach the most vulnerable children, including during climate shocks.

Summary budget table

<i>Programme component</i>	<i>(In thousands of United States dollars)</i>		
	<i>Regular resources</i>	<i>Other resources</i>	<i>Total</i>
Child survival and early care	6 500	58 000	64 500
Learning and skills development	3 000	37 000	40 000
Integrated protection	3 500	20 000	23 500
Child rights governance	5 000	20 000	25 000
Programme effectiveness	7 000	15 000	22 000
Total	25 000	150 000	175 000

Programme and risk management

40. This CPD serves as the primary accountability framework to the Executive Board for results and resources. Managerial accountabilities at the country, regional and headquarters levels follow established programme and operations policies. Programme implementation will be undertaken with the Government through annual workplans. As part of the United Nations country team, UNICEF will contribute to UNSDCF implementation, including leading key results areas such as human capital development.

41. UNICEF integrates disaster risk reduction and climate-adaptive approaches across its programming and maintains preparedness to meet the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action. The programme will strengthen anticipatory action and continuity of essential services during shocks. Enterprise risk management will guide mitigation measures related to macroeconomic pressures, climate shocks, supply constraints, digital disruptions, workforce gaps and humanitarian crises. Across the United Nations system, UNICEF will apply joint risk-mitigation measures, including the harmonized approach to cash transfers, strengthened accountability to affected populations, zero-tolerance measures on sexual exploitation and abuse and greater environmental sustainability in operations.

Monitoring, learning and evaluation

42. In partnership with the Office of the President and Cabinet, country programme monitoring will draw on the results and resources framework and on the costed evaluation plan. Regular joint field monitoring and periodic reviews with the Government will assess progress towards planned results and inform course corrections. UNICEF will support government capacity at the national and subnational levels to strengthen surveys and administrative data systems, enhancing the collection and strategic use of data for evidence-based planning for children. Evaluation plans will prioritize systems strengthening, resilience, digital innovations and integrated service delivery, while strengthening national evaluation systems and capacities for child-focused evaluations.

43. As a member of the UNSDCF monitoring and evaluation working group, UNICEF will support joint workplanning, field monitoring, use of UN INFO, performance reviews and joint evaluations of UNSDCF with the United Nations and the Government. Progress will be monitored with the Office of the President and Cabinet through data generated across implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages of the supported initiatives.

Annex

Results and resources framework

Zimbabwe – UNICEF country programme of cooperation, 2027–2031

<p>Convention on the Rights of the Child: Articles 1–45</p> <p>National priorities: Sustainable Development Goals 1–17. National Development Strategy 2</p>
<p>United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) outcomes involving UNICEF: By 2031, all people, especially those at risk of being left behind:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> benefit from inclusive and sustainable economic growth, improved macroeconomic stability, expanded fiscal space, increased access to decent work; are food and nutrition secure, climate resilient and benefit from sustainable energy, sustainable natural resource management, and are equipped to mitigate and respond to disasters; benefit from strengthened, integrated health, nutrition, education, and social protection systems that deliver equitable, quality, inclusive, skills-enhancing, and shock-responsive services; benefit from effective, accountable, responsive, data-driven and devolved governance institutions, systems and services that uphold human rights standards, promote inclusive participation, adhere to the rule of law and foster social cohesion; are free from all forms of violence, actively and meaningfully engaged in development processes, and enjoy equal rights and opportunities across economic, political and social spheres.
<p>Related Impact Results of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2026–2029: 1–5</p>

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
2, 3	1. By 2031, children, especially the most vulnerable, benefit from resilient and equitable primary healthcare, nutrition and climate-resilient WASH systems that deliver	<p>Neonatal mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)</p> <p>B: 37 (2024) T: 25</p> <p>Under-5 mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)</p> <p>B: 69 (2024) T: 45</p> <p>Percentage of infants who receive 3 doses of diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis vaccine</p>	<p>Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey (ZDHS)</p> <p>ZDHS</p> <p>WHO/UNICEF Estimates of National Immunization</p>	<p>Primary healthcare systems strengthened to provide integrated newborn and child health services</p> <p>Government systems have increased capacity to prevent</p>	<p>Ministry of Health and Child Care (MOHCC), Food and Nutrition Council (FNC), National AIDS Council (NAC), Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanization and Water Resources Development (MAMWRD),</p>	6 500	58 000	64 500

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
	integrated, quality newborn, child health, early childhood care and nutrition services.	B: 87% (2024) T: 90%	Coverage (WUENIC)	malnutrition, provide nurturing care, improve diets and practices and extend access to a minimum package of early care and nutrition interventions in vulnerable districts. Climate-resilient transformative WASH systems are improved to prevent waterborne diseases for children and communities. Integrated programme delivery, coordination, partnerships, and data systems are strengthened	local government, Department of Civil Protection. International financial institutions (IFIs) United Nations entities Civil society organizations (CSOs), Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) networks, academia.			
Zero dose children B: 7.5% (2024) T: 5%		WUENIC						
Exclusive breastfeeding rate B: 42% (2024) T: 60%		ZDHS						
Prevalence of stunting in children under 5 years of age B: 24% (2025) T: 20%		Zimbabwe Livelihoods Assessment Committee						
Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex B: 71% T: 80%		MICS						
Percentage of children under 5 years of age with diarrhoea who received oral rehydration solution and zinc B: 15% T: 50%		ZDHS						
Proportion of health facilities with basic WASH services		District Health Information System (DHIS)						

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
		B: 60% (2024) T: 90%						
1, 3	2. By 2031, more children and young people, especially the most vulnerable, access and remain in quality, inclusive and safe learning and skilling opportunities, acquiring foundational learning and skills for life and work.	Grade 7 pass rate B: 48% (2025) T: 62%	ZIMSEC	Education and learning systems strengthened to provide more children and young people with equitable access to adequate basic education and skilling opportunities. Education and learning systems have strengthened capacity to ensure that more children and young people acquire foundational literacy and numeracy and transition to the next level. Education and learning systems ensure that more young people acquire the skills and opportunities needed for life and work.	Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MOPSE), Ministry of Youth Empowerment and Development and Vocational Training, Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development, MAMWRD, Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare (MPSLSW), Ministry of Skills Audit and Development, provincial and district education structures. IFIs United Nations entities	3 000	37 000	40 000
		Ordinary Level pass rate B: 35% (2025) T: 46%	ZIMSEC					
		Transition rate between primary and lower secondary education B: 78% (2025) T: 85%	MOPSE					
		Not in education, employment or training (NEET) rate (15–24 years) B: 48% (2025) T: 40%	ZIMSTAT					

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
					CSOs, Engineering Council of Zimbabwe, private sector.			
3, 5	3. By 2031, more children, especially the most vulnerable, are protected from abuse, neglect and exploitation and access adequate, shock-responsive and integrated protection services.	Children under 5 years of age birth registration coverage B: 57% (2024) T: 75%	ZDHS	Civil registration systems provide increased access to birth registration and legal identity for all children Protection systems provide increased access to inclusive prevention and response services for children at risk of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. Social protection systems deliver improved, child-sensitive and shock-responsive services for vulnerable children.	MPSLSW, Ministry of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs and Cultural Heritage, Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing, Judicial Service Commission, Magistrates' Courts. IFIs United Nations entities CSOs, disability organizations, religious/traditional leaders, youth networks, Rights Commissions.	3 500	20 000	23 500
		Children accessing integrated social protection B: 700 000 (2025) T: 1 700 000	MOPSLSW					
		Children receiving violence response services B: 120 000 (2025) T: 320 000	MOPSLSW					
		Percentage of poor and vulnerable households receiving social assistance B: 37% (2025) T: 50%	ZIMSTAT					

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
				The social service workforce and integrated case management system are strengthened to deliver coordinated, timely and effective protection services for children at risk.				
1–5	4. More children, especially the most vulnerable and in targeted geographic areas, benefit from strengthened national and subnational systems that plan, budget, and improve access and delivery of coordinated, accountable and climate-resilient social services.	Percentage of children who live in multidimensional poverty B: 61% (2019) T: 40%	ZIMSTAT	National institutions have improved capacity to generate, analyse and use child-focused data through interoperable systems to monitor child rights, strengthen accountability, enable risk-informed planning and reporting. Institutions have strengthened capacity to allocate resources to child-sensitive priorities, implement	Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Local Government and Public Works, Ministry of Environment and Climate, ZIMSTAT, Auditor General, Parliament, Provincial and Metropolitan Councils, Local Authorities. IFIs United Nations entities private sector, CSOs, academia.	5 000	20 000	25 000
Percentage of children vulnerable to multiple climate and environmental hazards B: 43% (2024) T: 35%		Ministry of Environment, Climate and Wildlife						
Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education, health and social protection) B: 35% (2025) T: 35%		UNICEF Budget Briefs						

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
				<p>child-friendly budgets and public finance reforms.</p> <p>Government has the capacity to deliver equitable, climate-resilient services, with enhanced coordination and operational capability to prevent, anticipate and respond to climate, environmental and disaster related risks.</p>				
-	5. The country programme is efficiently and effectively coordinated and managed to achieve results for children.	<p>Percentage of management and programme indicators on track</p> <p>B: 79% (2025) T: 100%</p>	Internal UNICEF reports	<p>Programme coordination.</p> <p>Advocacy, communications and partnerships.</p> <p>Planning, monitoring, reporting, data and research.</p> <p>Evaluation.</p> <p>Engage families and communities on</p>	<p>Office of the President and Cabinet, ZIMSTAT.</p> <p>United Nations entities.</p> <p>Private sector, CSOs, academia, media.</p>	7 000	15 000	22 000

<i>UNSDCF outcomes</i>	<i>UNICEF outcomes</i>	<i>Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)</i>	<i>Means of verification</i>	<i>Indicative country programme outputs</i>	<i>Major partners, partnership frameworks</i>	<i>Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)</i>		
						<i>RR</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>Total</i>
				social norms and practices. Humanitarian action. Operational support.				
Total resources						25 000	150 000	175 000

* Outcome indicator aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework indicator.