

Zimbabwe



Since we began working in Zimbabwe, during the 2008–2009 cholera epidemic, International Medical Corps has delivered quality health and nutrition services in food-insecure rural areas while improving nutrition and helping to reduce the spread of waterborne diseases by promoting and implementing

proper water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) practices among underserved populations.

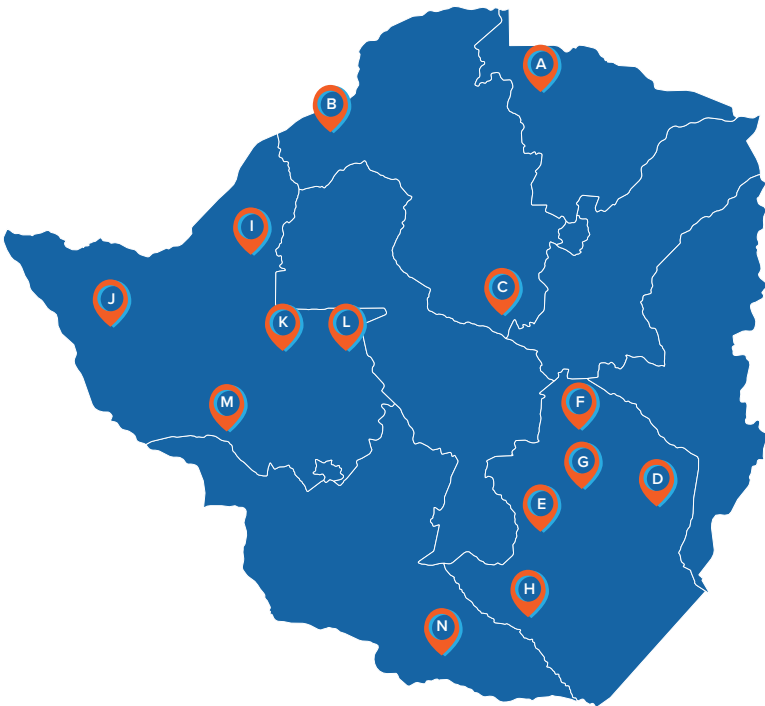
In 2013, we increased our development-oriented programming as part of a consortium in which International Medical Corps led the health, nutrition and WASH components. Today, our teams continue to improve maternal and child health, nutrition and WASH in communities and health facilities while strengthening local healthcare systems, training local healthcare workers, and improving overall self-reliance through community engagement.

Zimbabwe’s health delivery system continues to face challenges caused by a severe economic downturn in 2000, when health personnel left the country in droves to seek work in more stable economies.

The rates of newborn and maternal mortality are well above the World Health Organization (WHO) targets for sustainable development, as are the ratios of doctors and nurses to the general population.

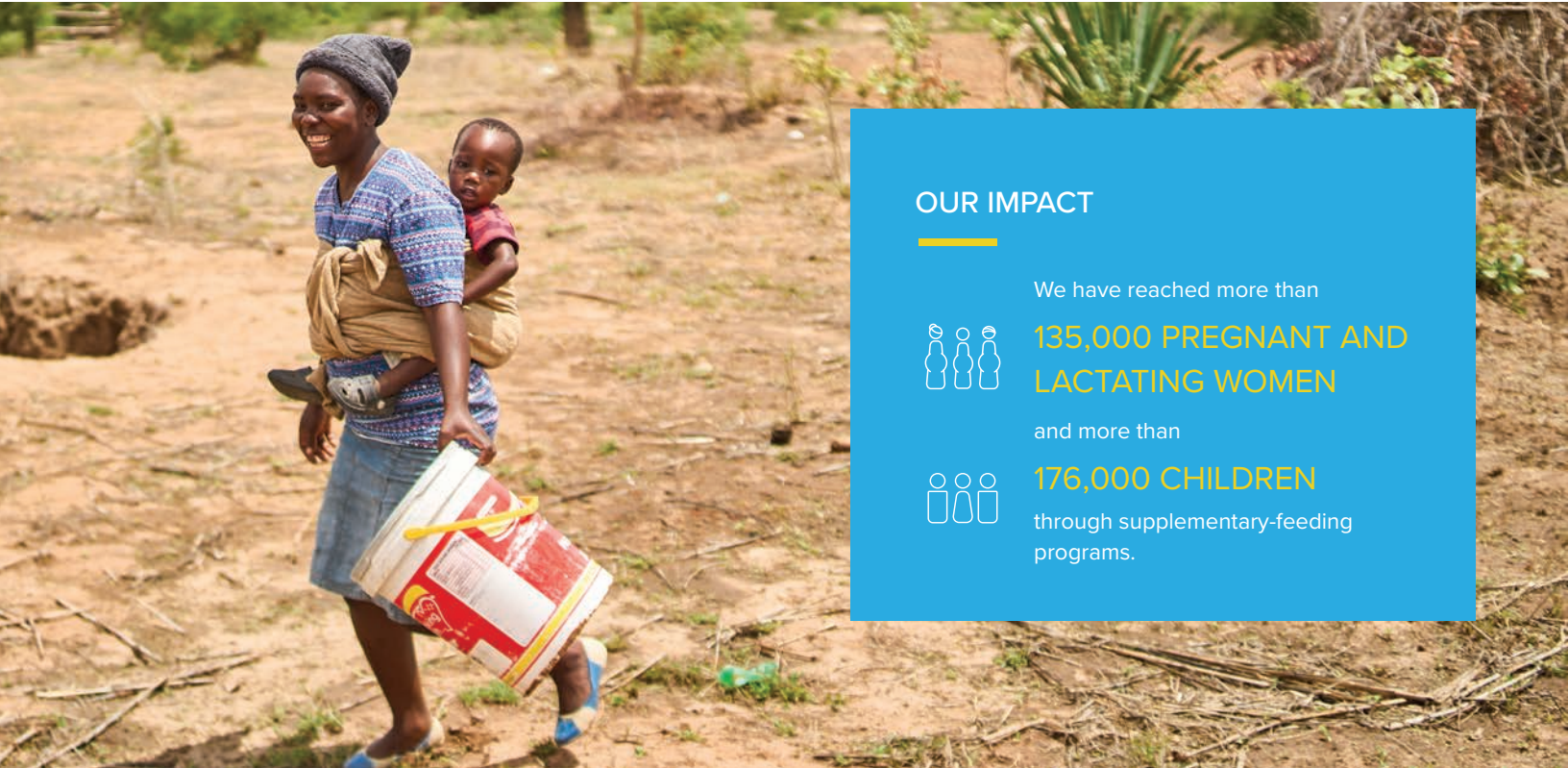
Access to WASH services in Zimbabwe remains challenging for many in both urban and rural communities. Access to basic drinking-water and sanitation services in rural Zimbabwe has increased minimally since 2020. Approximately one-third of the population lacks access to a private, sanitary facility in which they can relieve themselves or practice basic hygiene afterward, and WASH services in Zimbabwe’s healthcare facilities are extremely limited. As a result, Zimbabwe has been grappling with outbreaks of diarrheal disease, including cholera, since February 2023.

Drought and flooding exacerbate these challenges. Decreased access to clean water negatively affects nutrition and increases the incidence of multiple diseases. Cyclones, droughts and floods also present significant challenges to the people and infrastructure of Zimbabwe. Recent extreme weather events—from Cyclone Idai in 2019 to Cyclone Freddy in 2023—have caused considerable damage in Zimbabwe. If these environmental hazards continue unchecked, their compounded effects on food security, health, nutrition and infrastructure may further delay improvements in the country’s life expectancy, which currently stands at approximately 62 years.



WHERE WE CURRENTLY WORK

MASHONALAND CENTRAL PROVINCE	MASVINGO PROVINCE	MATABELELAND NORTH PROVINCE
A MBIRE DISTRICT	D BIKITA DISTRICT	I BINGA
	E CHIVI DISTRICT	J HWANGE
	F GUTU DISTRICT	K LUPANE
MASHONALAND WEST PROVINCE	G MASVINGO RURAL DISTRICT	L NKAYI
B KARIBA DISTRICT	H MWENEZI DISTRICT	M TSHOLOTSHO
C MHONDORO-NGEZI DISTRICT		MATABELELAND SOUTH PROVINCE
		N BEITBRIDGE DISTRICT



OUR IMPACT



We have reached more than
135,000 PREGNANT AND LACTATING WOMEN



and more than
176,000 CHILDREN
through supplementary-feeding programs.



TRAINING HEALTHCARE WORKERS

International Medical Corps trains district-level health staff and community health workers (CHWs) on how to:

- ▶ prevent chronic malnutrition;
- ▶ screen for acute malnutrition;
- ▶ promote maternal and newborn nutrition;
- ▶ prevent and respond to environmental health risks; and
- ▶ implement WASH and healthcare projects.

To reduce health-facility-acquired infections, our staff has trained nearly 600 frontline healthcare workers on infection prevention and control (IPC).

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH SERVICES

To reduce maternal and newborn mortality rates in Binga and Nkayi districts of Matabeleland North, International Medical Corps constructed eight, and rehabilitated 10, waiting-mother homes. At Nkayi and Binga hospitals, we established two nutrition gardens that provide vegetables for pregnant mothers. We also trained more than 40 health staff and nearly 300 CHWs on infant and young-child feeding (IYCF) practices.

Since 2013, International Medical Corps has promoted care groups in Binga, Bulilima, Gwanda, Hwange, Lupane, Mangwe, Nkayi and Tsholotsho districts. Our staff trains CHWs to adopt IYCF and other care practices to promote nutrition for pregnant and lactating women, and children, during the critical period between conception and a child's second birthday. We also are teaching CHWs how to integrate environmental hazard content into health and nutrition messaging.

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

Since 2017, International Medical Corps has supported all districts in Bulawayo Metropolitan, Matabeleland North and Matabeleland South provinces by improving access to WASH



facilities and providing training sessions on modern WASH behaviors and practices, including water conservation. Our teams have rehabilitated nearly 300 waterpoints, and solarized nearly 80 community waterpoints (boreholes and springs). Our work since 2017 to improve the supply of clean water has created access for more than 80,000 community members. Between 2020 and 2023, we conducted WASH rehabilitations in nearly 40 healthcare facilities, using the WHO's Water and Sanitation for Health Facility Improvement Tool to improve the quality of care and IPC practices.

International Medical Corps is the provincial focal point for WASH in Matabeleland South, where—in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Child Care—we helped develop the official WASH in Healthcare Facilities guidelines for Zimbabwe. Our work has improved access to water in nearly 50 healthcare facilities in Matabeleland North and Matabeleland South.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

International Medical Corps works with community health clubs (CHCs) to promote health and hygiene education and proper WASH practices. We have trained approximately 100 environmental health technicians on health and hygiene; they have trained more than 1,400 community-based facilitators—who in turn have reached more than 29,000 CHC members. Our promotion of integrated internal savings and lending among CHCs to finance latrine construction has led to the construction of more than 2,600 latrines. We have also worked with more than 10,000 community-level volunteers to promote complementary feeding practices, maternal nutrition and optimal hygiene practices. To date, we have reached more than 300,000 people with messages on optimal nutrition.

EXTREME WEATHER

International Medical Corps implemented an innovative, integrated WASH and nutrition project in Gwanda District designed to strengthen community resilience to extreme-weather shocks and stresses. The intervention promoted a low-water-use, nutrition-sensitive approach to agriculture that enhances dietary diversity while raising awareness of drought-adaptive practices at the community level. Implemented in collaboration with key technical government departments, the project directly sensitized more than 4,740 people on climate adaptation practices. In addition, we counseled nearly 250 caregivers on IYCF practices and established two 1-hectare community nutrition gardens, supported by water from two high-yielding boreholes.



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A pre-eminent first responder since 1984, International Medical Corps delivers emergency medical and related services to those affected by conflict, disaster and disease, no matter where they are, no matter what the conditions. We also train people in their communities, providing them with the skills they need to recover, chart their own path to self-reliance and become effective first responders themselves.

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