



STORIES OF HOPE AND RESILIENCE

Impact stories from the Zimbabwe Idai Recovery Project

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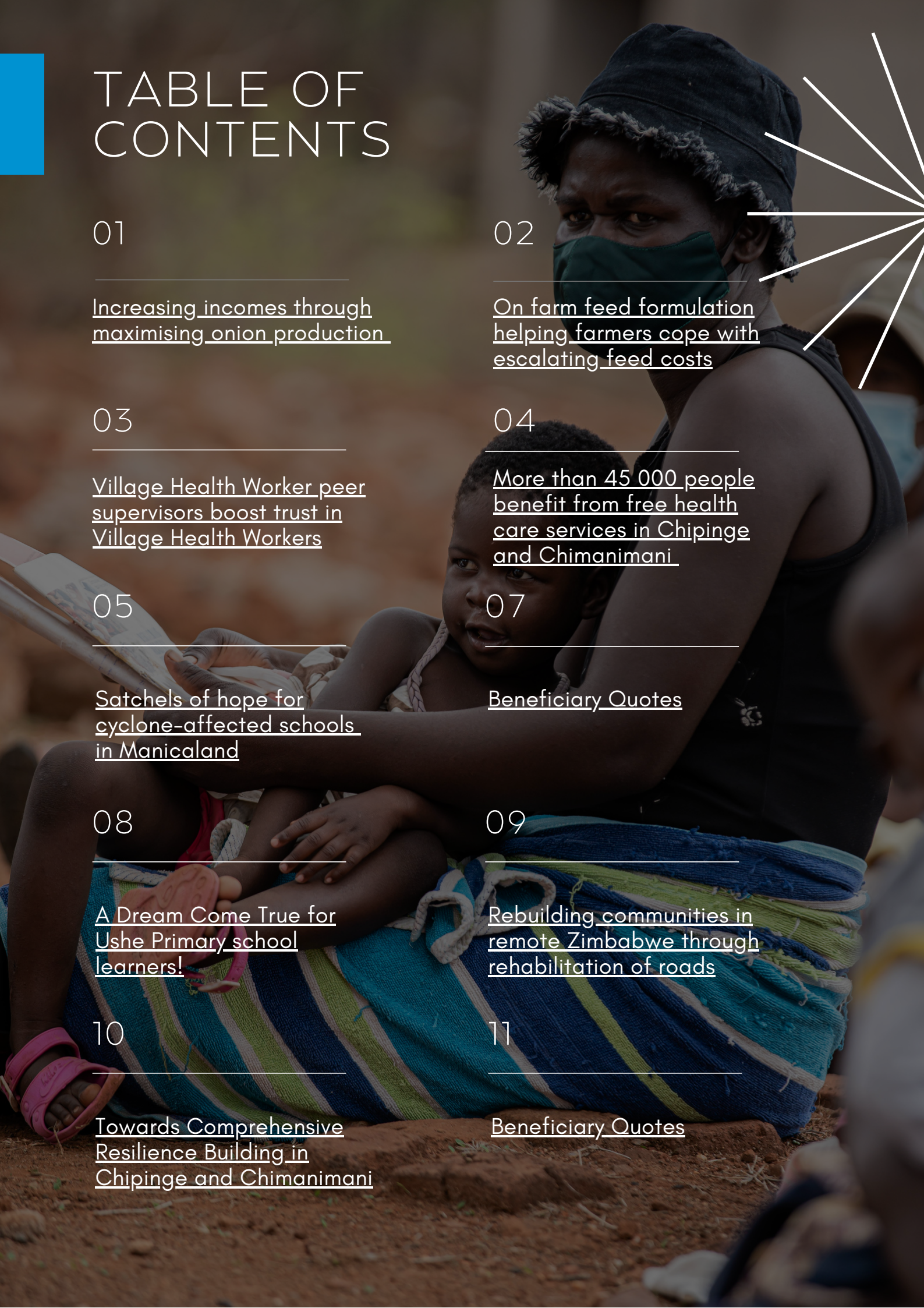
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FOREWORD

The recovery and resilience building interventions for the communities in 9 districts of 3 provinces in Zimbabwe; who were affected by Cyclone Idai, would not have been possible without the generous support from the World Bank. After conducting the Rapid Impact and Needs Assessment in conjunction with the Government of Zimbabwe, the World Bank sought a model of engagement within the context of Zimbabwe's non-accrual status which would allow for quick delivery of emergency response, for cyclone affected communities. In addition to emergency response, the project would have to develop systems that build longer term preparedness and resilience. This meant a project design that provided:

- an integrated multi-sectoral solution
- a multi-phased mix of early recovery & medium-term reconstruction interventions
- and therefore multiple implementing partners

It is against this background that the World Bank engaged UNOPS to take on the full project management role, with technical support provided by 8 other specialized UN Partners through UN-to-UN agreements; under one grant for the Zimbabwe Idai Recovery Project (ZIRP). This 4-year \$72mil project funded by the World Bank is unique in that it is the first time the WB has engaged one UN agency to manage a "consortium" of 8 UN agencies under One Project - One Team approach. UN agencies through joint effort are integrating their activities and leveraging each other's comparative advantage which can be difficult to implement but translates to a multiplied and greater impact for cyclone affected communities.

ZIRP has provided a multi-sectoral response to the natural disaster addressing immediate recovery needs and transitioned to medium term recovery, thus covering the nexus and ensuring sustainability and resilience. It is a flexible framework which has allowed effective and efficient response to the needs of the community in line with the priorities of the Government. For instance, when the COVID-19 pandemic hit Zimbabwe, ZIRP reprogrammed the activities under its sectors to provide critical PPE supplies, and build the capacity of health facilities for case management and disease surveillance. ZIRP has demonstrated how collaboration and coordination within UN agencies' specialist areas can amplify the benefits to vulnerable communities.

More than two years into ZIRP, it is proving to be a viable model through which to extend economies of scale to donors through coordinated UN engagement while providing a framework for resilience building for vulnerable communities in Zimbabwe. We acknowledge the work of the UN agencies and their technical partners without whom the project would not be successful- FAO, IOM, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNOPS Community Infrastructure, WFP and WHO. We appreciate as well the work of implementing partners who have the boots on the ground for some of the UN agencies- Africa Ahead, CAFOD, Care, Christian Care, FACT, LEAD, Mercy Corps, Musasa, Oxfam, WHH and World Vision. As at 31 December 2021, IOM, WFP and WHO had completed interventions under their sectors.

These and many untold stories of impact would not be possible without collaboration of these partners, with support from the Government of Zimbabwe. We continue on till project completion and delivery of all objectives, always as ONE PROJECT-ONE TEAM

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INCREASING INCOMES THROUGH MAXIMISING ONION PRODUCTION

Every winter, farmers in Bwerudza irrigation in Chipinge district grow onions but their yields per unit area has always been very low. In addition, the farmers used to grow onions with very large bulbs and thick necks that were not favoured by the market. The same type of onions were also difficult to cure. A training needs identification exercise for the Bwerudza irrigation farmers, carried out in conjunction with the Agricultural Technical and Extension Services (Agritex), also showed that onion production was lagging behind yet it had a lot of potential for improving farmers' livelihoods in the irrigation scheme.

Under the revitalisation of crop productivity, FAO intervened by training 23 farmers on onion production. The training covered the whole value chain of the crop from input procurement, nursery planting and management, field transplanting and crop management up to marketing of the crop.

Practical demonstrations and follow-ups to individual farmers' fields were included in the training. The farmers were also assisted to procure onion seeds, fertilisers and chemicals.

After an onion planting demonstration, the farmers planted the onion seeds within one week and managed to raise very good seedlings, something that they had never achieved before. Before the FAO intervention, farmers used to plant an average of 2 plants per square meter but after the training, they planted an average of 67 plants per square meter. This high plant population resulted in farmers achieving both high yields and good sized bulbs that are more preferred by the market. The farmers also managed to achieve a very good selling price of US\$2 for 15-20 bulbs as a result of the good quality and high demand. The onions were harvested early before all other onion farmers in the country could harvest their crops.

Mrs Agnes Sithole, and one of the best farmers in the scheme said "Before the FAO training on onion production, I used to get about US\$300 from one boon (300 square meters) of onions. This season I managed to get US\$1,000 from one boon. I planted onions on seven boons and used the money from onion farming to construct a shop which is now at window level and also to pay school fees for my child at the university".



Agnes Sithole,
Bwerudza Irrigation
Scheme, Chipinge

ON FARM FEED FORMULATION HELPING FARMERS COPE WITH ESCALATING FEED COSTS

Chipinge district- Samson Mutsago (43) from ward 4, Mugari village, is one of thousands of farmers who were facing challenges of feeding their cattle, after Cyclone Idai destroyed maize and groundnuts crops while grazing areas were washed away by heavy rains. Samson says that the FAO intervention in providing fodder crop inputs and training in feed formulation has helped them to save their cattle from starvation.

“We did not know that crops can be grown to feed livestock, but since we started growing lablab our cattle are now healthier,” Samson Mutsago. “Before learning about on-farm feed formulation I struggled to provide supplementary feeds for my livestock and as a result I lost 3 steers. I currently have 4 healthy cows and a steer,” he added.

Samson indicated that with the knowledge and skills he acquired from FAO he can now produce and preserve feeds for their livestock sustainably.

“I find farm feed formulation to be more sustainable than buying commercial feeds which are very expensive. My cattle are in very good condition and I am not expecting any poverty related deaths. In addition there is no hustle of gathering cattle, as they now come back on their own to get the supplementary feed.”

Samson is one of 12,900 smallholder farmers that received 10kg maize seed, 15kg lab-lab seed. From the inputs, farmers like Samson managed to produce enough herbage that will last up to the end of the 2021/2022 rainy season. He also managed to harvest 20kg of lab-lab seed which he will plant in the next cropping season.

Two of Samson’s cows are in-calf and he is expecting them to birth healthy calves since the cattle are provided with adequate feeding supplements. Now that his cattle head is growing, Samson is planning to sell one of his cows, to buy inputs for the 2021/2022 cropping season, pay school fees and look after his wife and five children.



Mr and Mrs Mutsango admiring their cattle feeding on fodder they preserved.

“

Before learning about on-farm feed formulation I struggled to provide supplementary feeds for my livestock and as a result I lost 3 steers. I currently have 4 healthy cows and a steer

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VILLAGE HEALTH WORKER PEER SUPERVISORS BOOST TRUST IN VILLAGE HEALTH WORKERS

Chimanimani, Zimbabwe – It is early morning and Masiwa Sikangata neatly arranges her medicine cabinet comprising basic commodities including ORS, Zinc, gloves, digital thermometers, a malaria kit, facemasks, pills, a MUAC tape, a scale and a thermo scanner for COVID -19 screening next to her prized maroon cement bench in her yard in Zimbabwe's Chimanimani district. She then sits to talk to a domestic violence survivor who has found a safe space there.

Meanwhile, a mother with a child down with a fever is among patients, mainly pregnant women, and new mothers, streaming in and the bench turns into a diagnostic and treatment center. Later, the 66-year-old uses the bench as a study corner while preparing for her next task: going out to provide supportive supervision, on job mentoring and data quality audits to fellow Village Health Workers (VHWs).

"I take my time to plan on the topics to cover before I go out," she said, referring to her work as a peer supervisor. She peruses through a book on danger warning signs for pregnant women. "I train the VHWs on the basics, how they should approach people at their homestead to establish rapport, how to handle pregnant women, I tell them that what is not written is not done, so I ensure that they keep proper records of all the work they do and ensure that they complete the VHW data tools correctly..."

Peer supervisors such as Sikangata received extra training and were chosen for their diligence and commitment to work and willingness to support others.

They follow up on their peers and ensure procedures are standardized. They also cascade information they garner from refresher courses to VHWs under their supervision while remaining on call to offer any help in case where a VHW may call for urgent information or other assistance. They also monitor, observe, and encourage colleagues to adhere to community -based service delivery guidelines and protocols. In Chimanimani and nearby Chipinge district ravaged by Cyclone Idai in 2019, VHWs are the first focal point within their communities and for many other people who live kilometers away from the nearest health facilities. Under ZIRP, 983 new VHWs were recruited, trained and deployed in cyclone affected districts covering all aspects of essential community-based health care including sexual and gender-based violence, child safeguarding and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse including COVID-19. The refresher training was also extended to all existing 4,276 VHWs to ensure a sustainable district wide approach to delivery of early recovery health service support to every citizen in the affected districts.

The peer supervision programme was introduced in 2014 and was further modified following the ratification of the National Community Health Strategy by the Government of Zimbabwe. The initiative has continued to grow under the ZIRP with an additional 812 peer supervisors working to strengthen skills and competencies of VHWs to sustain the capacity of the current community based primary health care system and to effectively meet the needs of communities they are serving in 8 cyclone affected districts.

Under ZIRP, VHWs receive support such as training, allowances, bicycles, uniforms, and basic medical supplies that they use in their day-to-day work. For Sikangata, such support came in handy last year when she nearly quit in 2020 amid pressure from two fronts. Her daughter was horrified after witnessing Sikangata handle a life threatening, severe case of malaria and demanded that she stop the work.

In a village with 30 children for example we may get one or two being referred to the clinic, the rest are attended to by VHWs in the community. Before the peer supervision programme, community members did not quite trust the VHWs competencies so they would still come to the hospital. With the ongoing technical support from the UNICEF Community Health Team, the intervention has moved from strength to strength mostly evidenced by the increasing number of children and mothers identified and followed up by VHWs,
Violet Paivha, a nurse at Gudyanga clinic.

Then the COVID-19 pandemic hit and hosting people in her home or doing home visits was viewed as a grave risk. "I cried and decided to quit," she said, as she reflected on how she nearly left community health work that she started as an HIV caregiver in 2005 before joining the VHW corps in 2010.

Then the idea of a bench hit her. From the money she had saved from her ZIRP allowances, Sikangata bought two bags of cement for US\$20 and paid US\$10 to a builder to construct a bench on the periphery of her yard.

"To avoid too much talk and to ensure safety I decided to set up this bench. I no longer must consult people inside my home especially when it is raining or cold, given the COVID- 19 challenges and the need to maintain physical distance. My clients are very much comfortable with this arrangement and they feel safe. If My daughter later called and said 'Mom, I heard you have a bench outside, that's good you can continue'," she said.



"I can now do the work I love till I die. It wouldn't have been possible without ZIRP support. "The commitment shown by Sikangata highlights the tenacity of the people chosen to be peer supervisors, as well as the VHWs they supervise.

MORE THAN 45 000 PEOPLE BENEFIT FROM FREE HEALTH CARE SERVICES IN CHIPINGE AND CHIMANIMANI

Chimanimani, Zimbabwe– Over the past two years more than 45 000 people in the Cyclone Idai affected communities have benefited from free integrated health services provided by WHO, UNICEF, UNOPS-CI and UNFPA under the Zimbabwe Cyclone Idai Recovery Project (ZIRP). On one hand UNICEF and WHO trained village health workers (VHWs) on essential health information, basic maternal, newborn and child health services. The VHW have been instrumental in mobilizing communities to come and access the services provided by WHO. On the other hand, UNFPA has been providing gender-based violence services in partnership with Musasa Project and FACT, while UNOPS-CI has supported the procurement of vehicles, medical equipment and sundries, and the rehabilitation of health centers.

According to Dr Tapiwa Nyamangodo, the Clinical supervisor for the project, cyclone affected communities are still suffering and in need of medical care. However, most of these people cannot afford to travel long distances to the clinics or even to pay for the services, the free assistance from the ZIRP programme has made a difference.

More than two years after the devastating Cyclone Idai hit Chimanimani, communities are still trying to pick up the pieces of their lives. For Takemore Mufuya, that journey has not been easy. After losing her husband and child in the disaster, she struggled to take control of life again.

Like many other survivors of Cyclone Idai, Takemore struggled with ill health until she was diagnosed of high blood pressure at one of the WHO mobile outreach clinics under the ZIRP.



World Bank country manager for Zimbabwe Marjorie Mpundu commended the implementation of the programme which she said had been instrumental in bringing health services closer to the people.

"One of the things we tried to do was help communities restore health services that were available originally before the cyclone. We are rehabilitating basic health service structures like the clinics and I am happy that this programme has integrated health, COVID-19 response but more importantly the GBV aspects. This is a good way of offering one stop health and social support to the community and helping them respond to the calamity that they faced," she said.

Besides the clinical services, the project has supported the Government of Zimbabwe's COVID-19 response as well as training of health care workers on healthcare management.



"Once I started taking my medication, I became a different person. I can now work to put food on the table for my children and I have received counselling which has helped me to finally accept my loss and start healing emotionally," Takemore said.

SATCHELS OF HOPE FOR CYCLONE-AFFECTED SCHOOLS IN MANICALAND

"When I did not have this bag, I did not bring food to school because I did not have a place to put the food, so I would come here and watch other people eat. So I think it has helped me a lot because now I am eating," says Tawananyasha Tonzwana. Tawananyasha, a grade seven pupil at Bvumba Primary School, was now used to going to school without food because he did not have a place to put his lunchbox and he could not carry it in plastic bags either as it was not safe for him.

However, one blue backpack delivered under the Zimbabwe Idai Recovery Project (ZIRP) through UNICEF, changed this for the better, for him and many other students in the 9 ZIRP districts.

"I am very happy that I have this backpack because my mother could not afford to buy one. My bag has given me confidence. I had felt discouraged when the others would laugh at me and the plastic sack I was using (to carry my food). I had even thought about dropping out of school," Yolanda Marume, a pupil at another school in Buhera adds.

Yolanda's school, Marume Primary School, was among 130 institutions supported by ZIRP to establish temporary learning spaces following the disaster.

Marume Primary received 2 tents and 4 'School-in-a-Box' kits. Each kit enables 1 teacher and up to 40 students to set up a makeshift classroom anywhere. The school also received Early Childhood Development (ECD) kits along with recreation and primary education kits covering subjects such as mathematics, science, and geography.



The UNICEF backpacks dubbed the satchels of hope, were a morale booster for the 430 Marume Primary School students, according to deputy headmaster, Thomas Karidza.

“Disaster struck when the Cyclone hit. We had one classroom block destroyed and our enrollment was affected. The welfare of teachers was also affected including teaching duties. Due to two years of challenges, students began to lose interest in being at school,” said Principal Karidza.

He added: “However, this is no longer the case thanks to the Zimbabwe Idai Recovery Project and UNICEF. Our enrollment has increased by 20% compared to the Cyclone year. Every parent wants to bring their child to the school where they will be given a backpack. The students feel encouraged to come to school.”

Yolanda’s geography teacher, Dzinorevei Taurai, commends ZIRP, the World Bank, and UNICEF for ensuring a conducive learning environment for both learners and their teachers.



A makeshift classroom at Marume Primary School

“We received teaching materials such as atlas globes, wind vanes, and electric kits. The school did not have the means to provide these items for the students. For the best learning experience, children need to see and use the utensils while executing projects. They learn better through a combination of theory and practice. Now we can provide that thanks to the Zimbabwe Idai Recovery Project,” the educator shares.

As part of the Back-to-School reintegration plan, ZIRP has also provided hygiene kits to cyclone-affected schools in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The World Bank-funded project continues to assist with the safe return to quality learning for students like Yolanda.

It will be a long road to recovery, but the backpack and school supplies now bring only positive laughter to the students' lives. With the right support, they can achieve their aspirations so that their future children will never know how it feels to lack a backpack.



The School-in-a Box kit is a portable classroom carrying supplies for up to three month

BENEFICIARY QUOTES

01

LOVEMORE MBOKO

Maunganidze Irrigation Scheme Chairperson

"Our boreholes are being rehabilitated as promised through the solarisation programme by our partner UNOPS. We also received a perimeter fence that is 4.1km long. I want to thank our donor World Bank because the lives of those who are working at the scheme have now changed for good. FAO also came with inputs for farmers since we had lost everything after the cyclone."



02

MIRIRO GUDYANGA

Matezwa Village, Chipinge

"My son could barely open his eyes; the diarrhea was severe, and he was weak. I had lost hope until Sekuru utano quickly noticed that it was diarrhea and he quickly managed it saving me the time and transport money to go to the clinic"



03

MR MURECHERWA

School Head, Bumba Primary

"Our learners are now learning in a prepared environment. We thought Cyclone Idai was a big problem, fortunately we were able to use the same material to curb for COVID-19 as well. We were given some tents and some handwashing facilities and soap."



A DREAM COME TRUE FOR VUSHE PRIMARY SCHOOL LEARNERS!

The Sustainable Development Goals or Global Goals are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all". The SDGs were set up in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and are intended to be achieved by the year 2030. Goal Number 4 focuses on "Quality Education". Despite huge strides that have been made in the provision of quality education by the Government of Zimbabwe, natural and man-made hinderances negatively undermine the achievement of quality education in most schools in Zimbabwe. Climate change induced disasters, such as Cyclone Idai caused extensive damages to school infrastructure in a number of schools.

In Masvingo Province, Vushe Primary school had several classroom blocks damaged by the Cyclone. The situation was compounded by the destruction of the toilets within the school. Twenty squat-holes collapsed due to the heavy rains and fierce winds that were experienced due to Cyclone Idai. The school was left with only 15 squat-holes for a school enrolment of 895 pupils, placing the toilet:pupil ratio at 1 to 60 against a national standard of 1:20.

Further, the Cyclone brought about a serious water crisis. The school relied on a community borehole which is more than 5 kilometres from the school. The nearest option was an unprotected shallow unprotected well which is about a kilometre from the school.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the protocol was to wash hands frequently- an impossible task for the students at Vushe Primary School. ZIRP brought much needed relief to the school. The Build Back Better concept guided the implementation of the project activities and the school saw construction of the Girl-friendly, Menstrual Hygiene Management compatible latrines with mirrors inside, screen doors and tapped



water handwashing facilities inside the toilets. The toilet-pupil ratio has reduced to a manageable 1:26. The project also drilled a 60m deep borehole within the school premises. Both pupils and teachers can now access safe water from the water point. Now pupils can devote their time to learning unlike in the past when pupils would travel long distances to fetch water for use in the school. The group hand-washing facility and increased ablutions have eliminated the long queues that would form at break times.



The School Head, Mrs Meketilda Matenga, summed up the ZIRP project interventions as "A WASH Dream Come True" which will ensure that Vushe Primary school will not be left out under the SDG Goal Number 4 of Quality Education.

REBUILDING COMMUNITIES IN REMOTE ZIMBABWE THROUGH REHABILITATION OF ROADS



Infrastructure is never about just construction. It's about connecting communities and providing access to economic opportunities and social services. Rehabilitating roads in remote cyclone-affected communities under the World Bank funded Zimbabwe Idai Recovery Project (ZIRP), UNOPS in Zimbabwe has witnessed the transformative impact that rebuilding road networks has on communities.

One such road, Ruwedza, in Chimanimani District, connects 2 villages to the only satellite primary school in the area. The two villages have no secondary school so students walk 3kms to Mkombiwami Secondary School. The nearest health center for this community is the Mutambara Mission hospital which is 28kms away. The rugged terrain makes it impossible for villagers to develop shorter routes so they follow the main road. Access to this community was cut off so much that the National COVID-19 vaccination program had excluded them as there was no means of reaching them.

UNOPS began work on this road in March 2020 under the labor based modality. To date 155 community workers have been employed with US\$25,560 in wages. Since the road was rehabilitated, Mutambara Mission hospital was able to send a vaccination team to the Ruwedza community, giving them access to

this vital shot against the raging pandemic. The vaccination team was accompanied by the ZIRP-supported mobile outreach clinic providing basic healthcare services free of charge.

"These communities survive on farming, and were really struggling as they could not procure inputs or take their produce to the market. They had been reduced to subsistence farmers, producing only enough to provide for their families," explains Felida Nkhoma who engages the communities on UNOPS values and mobilises community workers.

"Now that cars can travel to our village, I saw the opportunity to open a tuckshop and sell groceries in the village using the money I am making working on this road with UNOPS", a community worker Juliet Tsarara (aged 58) exclaims. "When my contract ends, I will still have a source of income to look after my family". Teachers and government officers in the area are now able to easily collect their salaries in Chimanimani or travel to Mutare town to spend their earnings. The restoration of road access has revitalised the communities and built their resilience against future shocks.

TOWARDS COMPREHENSIVE RESILIENCE BUILDING IN CHIPINGE AND CHIMANIMANI

Zimbabwe had never before experienced a disaster to the magnitude of Cyclone Idai. Recovering from the effects of such a natural disaster takes time and requires an integrated approach from various stakeholders including the government, developmental partners as well as UN agencies. UNESCO through the initiative Comprehensive Resilience Building in Chipinge and Chimanimani is implementing initiatives aimed at reducing the vulnerability of communities to flooding and landslides.

Geo-hazard maps which outline areas prone to natural disasters mainly floods and landslides were produced with a bid to reduce vulnerability at community level.

The maps are also being used to propose initiatives that reduce community vulnerability to disasters.

In addition, to ensure school safety is improved in the districts, a multi-hazard school safety assessment was conducted for 15 schools in Chimanimani using the UNESCO VISUS (Visual Inspection for Defining the Safety Upgrading Strategies) methodology. In one of the schools assessed, Chikukwa Primary School, one of the classroom blocks had developed cracks which the authorities fear may lead to the collapse of the building.



School teachers learning the VISUS methodology

“The classroom block is in a very bad shape. Those cracks on the walls are a serious matter. The cracks developed during Cyclone Idai.” Said the deputy headmaster of the school. “With the tremors we are experiencing whose epicentre is in Mozambique the building may end up collapsing if no action is taken.” He added. The school was discouraged from using the block however due to lack of classrooms to accommodate the children they have continued using the block posing a risk to the students. The VISUS methodology helps assess schools using a holistic, multi-hazard approach that considers five aspects: site conditions, structural performance, local structural criticalities, non-structural components, and functional aspects. The methodology has also been improved to consider outbreak of disease such as COVID-19.

To support long-term resilience building, a new Chimanimani Biosphere Reserve was proposed in close collaboration with national, provincial, district and

community stakeholders. As a result a community-led, full-fledged nomination file was developed and submitted by national authorities to the UNESCO Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme for evaluation and endorsement by the International Coordinating Council (ICC) of the programme in June 2022. Biosphere reserve is a UNESCO concept that promotes solutions reconciling the conservation of biodiversity with its sustainable use. They are learning areas for sustainable development under diverse ecological, social and economic contexts, touching the lives of more than 250 million people across the world. During the validation workshop held on 23 September 2021 the stakeholders who are now fully appreciating the importance of an area being designated a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve status expressed their desire to see Chimanimani being nominated a biosphere reserve. The benefits of the Biosphere will extend to neighboring Mozambique.

BENEFICIARY QUOTES



CHIEF SAUROMBE

Chimanimani

"This biosphere reserve is going to help the community to conserve their resources and it is also going to create an ownership awareness that the community funds their own resources in Chimanimani."

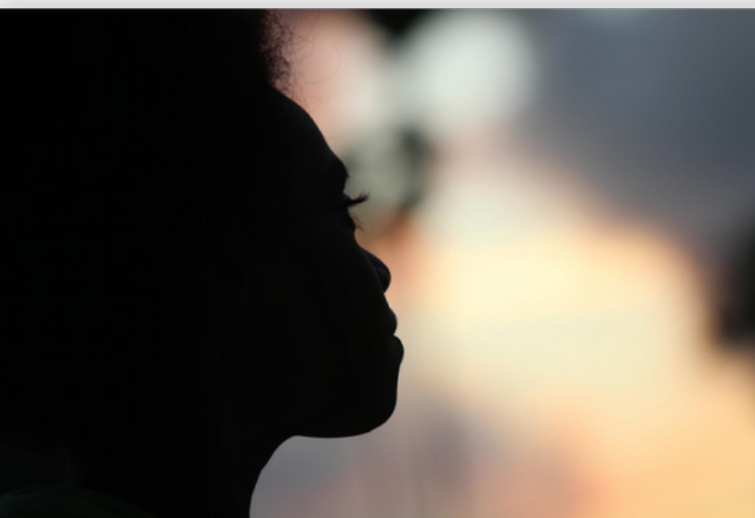


TAKARINDWA GARI

Matezwa Village, Chipinge

"UNOPS looked beyond my disability and made me contribute meaningfully to my community's development through employing me. I am forever grateful."

*Takarindwa (left in the picture) was born with cerebral palsy. He has difficulties walking, he also does not have full function of his hands and his speech is impaired



GBV SURVIVOR

Chimanimani

"I was at the verge of committing suicide until I got someone who listened to me earnestly and reminded me that there was so much to live for. I stopped blaming myself for what had happened to me. The Musasa (UNFPA implementing partner) counsellor was so patient and this saved my life"