

Case study of Idai Recovery Project in Zimbabwe

UNOPS impact for vulnerable people |
15 April 2024

In the restated strategic plan, UNOPS commits to deliver impact for the most vulnerable people. We present this case study to the Executive Board to illustrate the UNOPS contributions.

Executive summary

1. The Zimbabwe Idai recovery project (ZIRP) was designed to address both the immediate and medium-term recovery needs of the population affected by cyclone Idai. With complementary initiatives from the Government and eight other United Nations organizations, the project supported 600,000 people with health and education services, and rehabilitated community infrastructure and risk mitigation interventions. the project made primary contributions to Goal 1 'no poverty', and secondary contributions to Goal 2 'zero hunger', Goal 3 'good health and well-being', Goal 4 'quality education', Goal 5 'gender equality', Goal 6 'clean water and sanitation', Goal 8 'decent work and economic growth', and Goal 9 'industry, innovation and infrastructure'.

Funded by World Bank
US\$ 72 million

Main service line
**Project Management
Procurement
Infrastructure**



Context and project outline

2. Tropical cyclone Idai struck eastern Zimbabwe on 15 March 2019, unleashing heavy rains and powerful winds that triggered extensive flooding. The catastrophe led to a significant loss of life, and extensive damage to infrastructure, property, crops, and livestock, leaving 270,000 individuals in urgent need of humanitarian aid.
3. In response, the World Bank (WB) and Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) conducted a joint assessment known as the Zimbabwe Rapid Impact and Needs Assessment (RINA) in April 2019. The assessment informed the development of a comprehensive strategy for immediate recovery and long-term resilience building. Guided by the findings of the RINA, the Zimbabwe Idai recovery project (ZIRP) focused its efforts on nine districts severely affected by the cyclone, aiming to reach the population of 270,000 initially identified as in need. However, when the COVID-19 pandemic struck, the project's scope was expanded to provide food assistance, integrated healthcare, and services to address gender-based violence to a broader population.
4. ZIRP, a multi-sectoral emergency response and recovery project amounting to USD 72 million, was financed by the WB, managed by UNOPS, and executed by eight UN Agencies (WFP, FAO, WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNOPS, IOM, and UNESCO). UNOPS was appointed as the project manager responsible for disbursing the funds for a multi-agency effort structured into three components, and was responsible for the infrastructure delivery component. The project was implemented from 2019 to 2023.

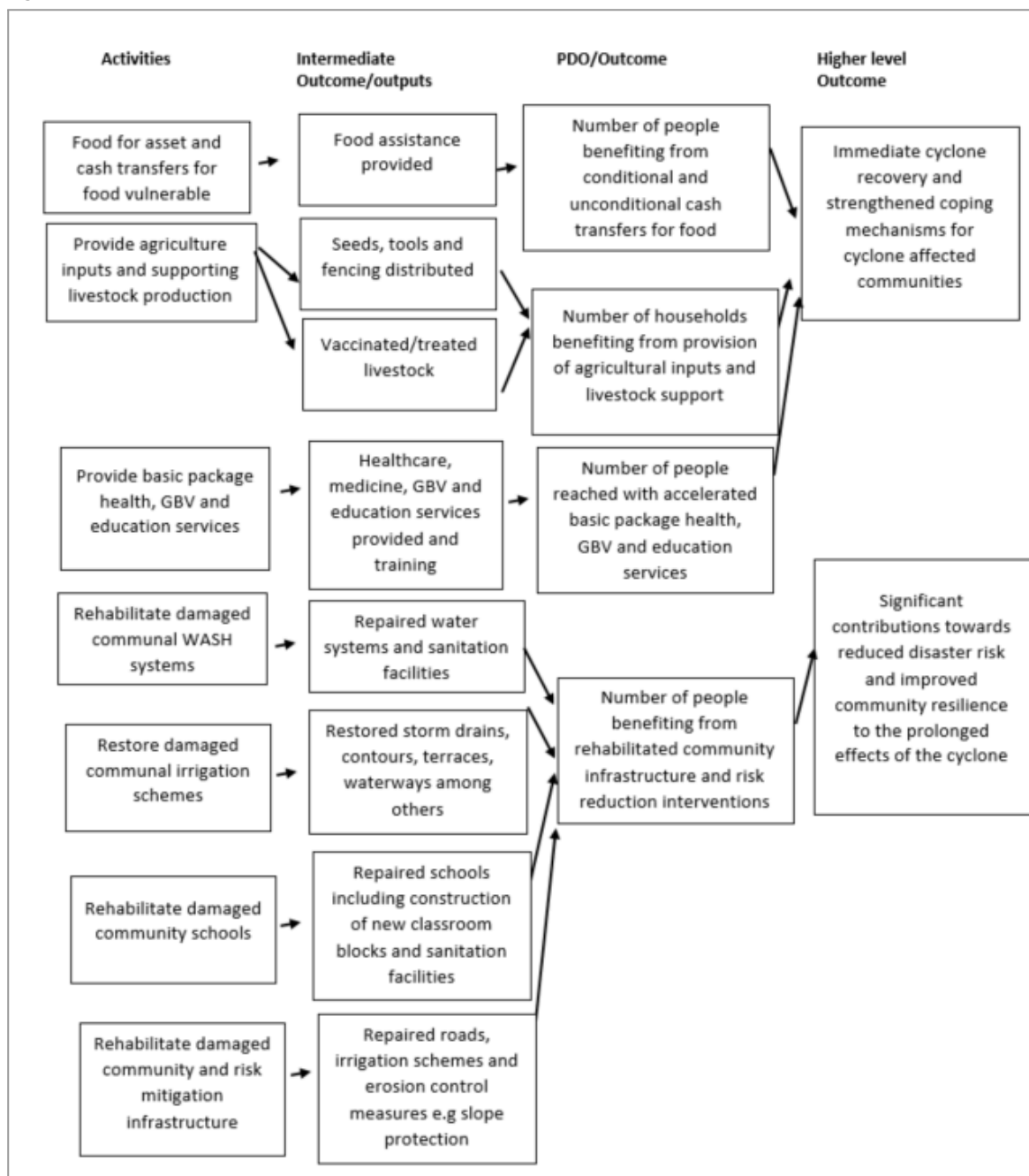
Project Objective

A harmonized multi-sector and partner recovery operation focused on social welfare and community interventions in Zimbabwe in the wake of Cyclone Idai

Theory of change

5. The project was structured with a phased approach, strategically addressing both short-term and medium-term objectives. Illustrated in the theory of change (**Figure 1**), the core activities are focused on alleviating food insecurity, enhancing access to healthcare and education services, and fostering resilience within the community.

Figure 1.



Contributions

Outputs

- The project achieved the majority of its targets with high satisfaction ratings for delivery quality upon completion, as assessed by the World Bank. Over the project duration (2019-2023), key outputs included: i) emergency food assistance reaching **239,324 individuals** (140% of target); ii) agricultural crop and livestock support services benefitting **22,000 smallholder farmers** (100% of target); iii) treatment and vaccination of **3,044,003 livestock** (103% of target); iv) provision of healthcare and gender-based violence support to **661,635 people** (106% target); v) rehabilitation of **six irrigation schemes**, enhancing agricultural production (87% of project target); vi) rehabilitation of **482 water supply systems** (100% of project target) and **3,789 sanitation facilities** (111% of project target); and construction of **seven schools, four health facilities** (100% of project target), **11**

community access roads (92% of project target), and **one market** (100% of project target), thus improving access to social services for cyclone-affected communities.

Contributions to outcomes

7. The project made significant contributions to two outcomes outlined in the UN Cooperation Framework.
8. Outcome 1 aimed to enhance equitable and quality social services and protection. Over **88,000 learners** gained improved access to education through the construction of 7 schools and provision of teaching materials. Healthcare services were also enhanced, benefiting **2,843 healthcare workers** and equipping **four health facilities** with advanced medical equipment and ambulances. Moreover, approximately **41,800 households** gained increased access to clean water through installation of **482 community water supply systems**, while hygiene conditions were improved for over **3,789 households** through the construction of **3,789 sanitation facilities**.
9. Outcome 2 aimed to enhance environmental stability and food systems; and outcome 3 aimed to ensure inclusive and sustainable economic growth with decent employment opportunities. Notable achievements included improved crop production for **2,320 households** through **63 community gardens**, generating earnings close to USD 15,320. Additionally, **906 irrigation scheme farmers** saw increased yields, resulting in USD 1,845,540 from cumulative crop sales.
10. The rehabilitation of **11 community access roads** improved access to markets and social services for **94,553 people**. Economic opportunities were created for **355 women market vendors** through the construction of a safe agro-market, while employment opportunities benefited **5,220 community members**, resulting in USD 666,575 in wages provided from the infrastructure development works.

Project Impact Overview

Equitable Social Services and Protection

- **Schools constructed:** 7
- **Learners benefited:** 88,000
- **Healthcare workers supported:** 2,843
- **Health facilities equipped:** 4
- **Community water supply systems installed:** 482
- **Improved sanitation facilities:** 3,789 households

Environmental Stability and Food Systems

- **Community gardens established:** 63
- **Households benefiting from improved crop production:** 2,320
- **Earnings from crop sales:** US\$ 15,320
- **Irrigation scheme farmers with increased yields:** 906
- **Cumulative crop sales revenue:** US\$ 1,845,540

Inclusive Economic Growth and Employment Opportunities

- **Community access roads rehabilitated:** 11
- **People benefiting from improved access:** 94,553
- **Women market vendors supported:** 355
- **Safe agro-market constructed**
- **Community members employed:** 5,220
- **Wages provided:** US\$ 666,575

Likely contribution to impact: Poverty alleviation, food security, healthcare access and infrastructure development in Zimbabwe

Likely contributions to impact

11. The project's impact spans across various Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In terms of poverty eradication and promoting decent work (**Goal 1**), community workers found employment, with wages provided for the labour hours. The project provided emergency food assistance, supported smallholder farmers with agricultural services, and rehabilitated irrigation schemes and micro-watershed schemes, benefiting farmers and individuals, respectively (**Goal 2**). In promoting good health and well-being, the project served people with comprehensive healthcare and gender-based violence response services (**Goal 3**).
12. Additionally, earners received education supplies, and schools were rehabilitated, benefiting learners (**Goal 4**). To advance gender equality, women accounted for community workers, and women vendors benefited from the construction of a safe agro-market (**Goal 5**). The project also contributed to clean water and sanitation, benefiting households through the restoration of water and sanitation services (**Goal 6**). Moreover, in fostering industry, innovation, and infrastructure, the project rehabilitated community access roads, health facilities, schools, water points, irrigation schemes, micro-watershed schemes, and an agro-market (**Goal 9**).

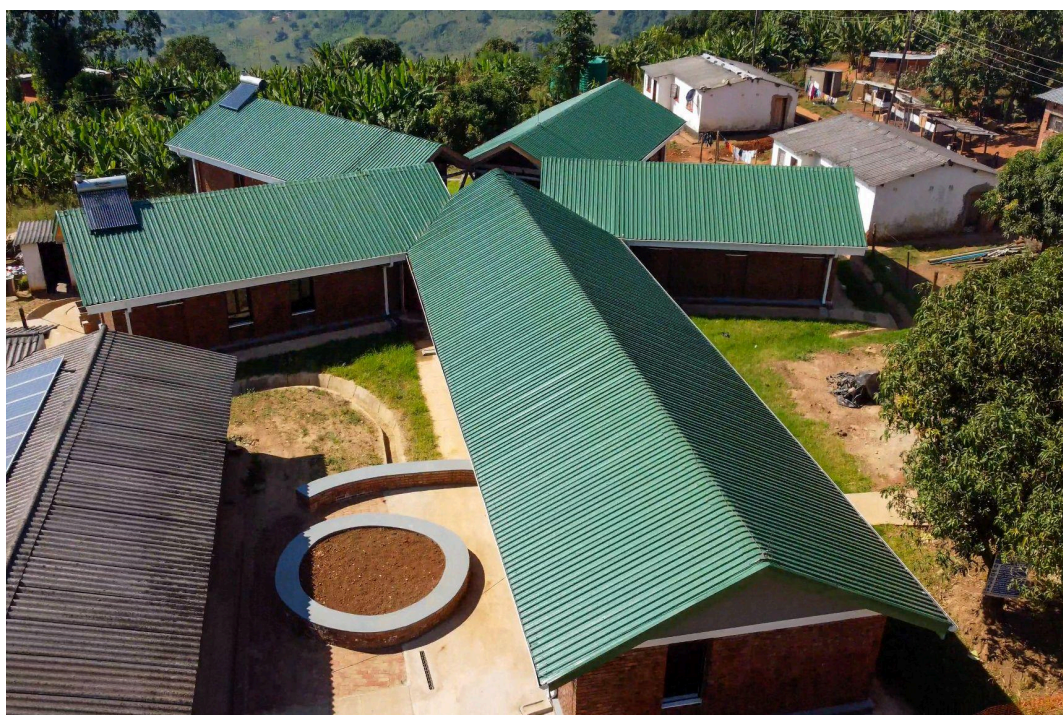
Sustainability considerations

13. The project activities were strategically aligned with national development strategies and priorities, ensuring synergy and coherence in its implementation. Emphasizing community ownership throughout, the project focused on building the capacity of local structures to sustain the gains achieved. Community infrastructure, rehabilitated or constructed, was accompanied by detailed operation and maintenance manuals, which were handed over to empower communities for long-term sustainability. Additionally, the establishment of early warning and risk information systems will bolster climate adaptation planning, mitigating the severity and costs associated with climate change disasters. Investments in essential infrastructure such as schools, water systems, roads, and health facilities not only reduced isolation but also enhanced productivity and lowered costs. Furthermore, these initiatives provided vital access to basic social services and markets, fostering overall development and resilience within the communities.

Lessons learned

14. Throughout the project implementation, the team learned key lessons, including the importance of dedicated personnel, data disaggregation, improved supervision, adequate resources, and effective partnerships among UN Agencies for successful and efficient project delivery. Below are key insights:
 - a. **Strengthening project management and donor dialogue:** Robust project management systems and consistent dialogue with donors helped identify programmatic opportunities, assess resource effectiveness, and enable quick decision-making and adjustments as needed.
 - b. **Prioritizing health, safety, and environmental standards:** Consistent monitoring, oversight, mentoring, and leadership are essential to upholding health, safety, and environmental safeguards, ensuring project quality and compliance.
 - c. **Fostering effective inter-agency collaboration:** The effective partnership among UN Agencies facilitated cost-effective and efficient project delivery, offering a valuable model for collaboration and coordination within the UN system for future projects.

Snapshot



*Newly constructed
Mutsvangwa
Maternity Clinic in
Chimanimani
District, Zimbabwe
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Chivige*