Background

The Republic of Zimbabwe, is a landlocked country in Southern Africa, bordered by Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa, and Zambia. It is a lower-middle income country with a GDP per capita of US $1,744 (2021) and has a population of 16 million (2021).

Key points

- Zimbabwe has a high burden of communicable and non-communicable disease (NCDs), with the latter making up 39% of deaths in 2019.
- Zimbabwe had 1.2 million people receiving antiretroviral therapy in 2021 and has almost achieved the 95-95-95 goals for HIV, reaching 96-96-93 in 2021.
- Zimbabwe has not yet met the 90% target coverage rates for vaccination in children, reaching 86% with the third dose of DTP-containing vaccine and 85% with the first dose of measles-containing vaccine in 2021. The country should consider implementing catch-up strategies for vaccination.
- Zimbabwe has improved its child survival rates between 2015 and 2021, however it is not yet meeting the SDG targets for neonatal or under-five mortality rates.
Communicable diseases

**Malaria**

Malaria remains a public health problem in Zimbabwe with an estimated 342,543 cases in 2021 (at an incidence rate of 21.4 cases per 1000 people), resulting in 876 deaths. Zimbabwe’s malaria incidence rate has been fluctuating but has been generally declining since 2015. In 2021, the incidence rate was below the target of the Global Technical Strategy for Malaria.

**Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS**

In 2020, the estimated TB burden was 29,000 cases (incidence rate of 181.3 per 100,000 people), of which 16,019 TB cases (55%) were diagnosed. The mortality rate of TB cases (all forms, excluding HIV) has increased since 2015, from 7.9 to 13 per 100,000 population in 2021. The TB mortality rate among HIV-positive people has fallen from 35 to 33 in the same period.

Progress has been made on the 95-95-95 goals, although treatment rates are relatively low:

- 96% of people living with HIV that know their status.
- 96% of people living with HIV who know their status are on treatment.
- 93% of people living with HIV and on treatment who are virally suppressed.

Approximately 1.2 million people were receiving antiretroviral treatment in 2021.

**Neglected tropical diseases**

Zimbabwe is endemic for four of the five NTDs amenable to preventive chemotherapy through mass drug administration (MDA), namely lymphatic filariasis, soil-transmitted helminthiasis, schistosomiasis, and trachoma. In 2020, no one was targeted or treated with MDA.

Other notable NTDs that remain endemic are chromoblastomycosis and other deep mycoses, human Africa trypanosomiasis (*rhodesiense*), leprosy, tae-niasis and cysticercosis, and rabies.

Non-communicable diseases

NCDs are a significant health problem in Zimbabwe. The age-standardised mortality rate across four major NCDs (Cardiovascular Disease, Chronic Respiratory Disease, Cancer and Diabetes) was 822 per 100,000 in males and 701 in females in 2021.

Zimbabwe has implemented initial efforts on the NCD progress indicators related to NCD policy and plan, tobacco taxes, and tobacco smoke free/pollution, however progress has been more limited on tobacco health warnings, tobacco advertising bans, tobacco media campaigns, alcohol advertising restrictions, alcohol taxes, trans fats policies, marketing to children and physical activity guidelines.

Childhood Immunization

Zimbabwe’s coverage rates of vaccination in children have historically been fairly high, although still not reaching the 90% target coverage rates. In 2021, the third dose of DTP-containing vaccine reached 86%, while the measles vaccination coverage for the first dose was 85%. Zimbabwe experienced outbreaks of measles and rubella in 2021.

In 2021, there were an estimated 66,300 under-immunised children and 33,150 zero-dose children. Zimbabwe should consider the implementation of appropriate catch-up vaccination strategies to protect these populations from vaccine-preventable diseases and reduce the probability of outbreaks in the future.

Child survival

Based on the UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME) estimates, the under-5 mortality rate has fallen from 61 to 50 per 1,000 live births between 2015 and 2021, remaining above the SDG target of 25 per 1,000 live births. The neonatal mortality rate decreased from 28 to 25 per 1,000 live births in the same period, exceeding the SDG target of 12.

Broad disease outlook

The country has a high burden of both communicable (such as malaria, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS) and non-communicable disease (NCDs). The latter was estimated to have caused 39% of deaths in 2019.

Zimbabwe
Zero dose children 33,150 Under-immunized 66,300

WUENIC estimates show that vaccination coverage bounced back to 2018 levels after a dip in 2020.

Measles and Rubella outbreaks remain public health problems in Zambia with the most recent outbreak in 2020 when the coverage level dipped.

HIV AND TUBERCULOSIS

1.2 million people receiving antiretroviral therapy in 2021
84% Treatment success rate for HIV-positive TB cases
50% of children (aged < 5 years) household contacts of bacteriologically-confirmed TB cases on preventive treatment

4.1% Domestic funding for TB
31% Domestic funding for HIV

Malaria incidence in Zimbabwe compared to GTS targets shows a fluctuating but reducing incidence pattern since 2015.

EXPANDED PROGRAMME ON IMMUNIZATION IN CHILDREN

- Measles

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2015</th>
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<tr>
<td>ZERO DOSE</td>
<td>33,150</td>
<td>66,300</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDER-IMMUNIZED</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tbody>
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ITN use in children under five years 9% and 2% use of ACTs among those with fever for whom care was sought and received a finger or heel prick

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NCD PROGRESS INDICATORS

- Achieved
- Partially achieved
- Not achieved/Unknown

NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES

Endemic NTDs requiring Preventive Chemotherapy (PC)
- Lympathic filariasis
- Soil-transmitted helminthiasis
- Onchocerciasis (non-endemic)
- Schistosomiasis

PC-NTDs treatment in 2021
0 targeted for MDA
0 treated with MDA

OTHER MAJOR NTDs

- Chromoblastomycosis and other deep mycoses
- Taeniasis and cysticercosis
- Rabies
- Human Africa trypanosomiasis (rhodesiense)
- Leprosy
- Snakebite envenoming