

The cover features a central map of Zimbabwe in a dark blue silhouette, set against a background of large, overlapping geometric shapes in green, yellow, black, and red. A flagpole with the Zimbabwean national flag is positioned in the lower right, with the flag waving. The flag has horizontal stripes of green, yellow, red, and black, with a white triangle at the top containing a golden bird and a red star.

ZIMBABWE'S HEALTH SECTOR

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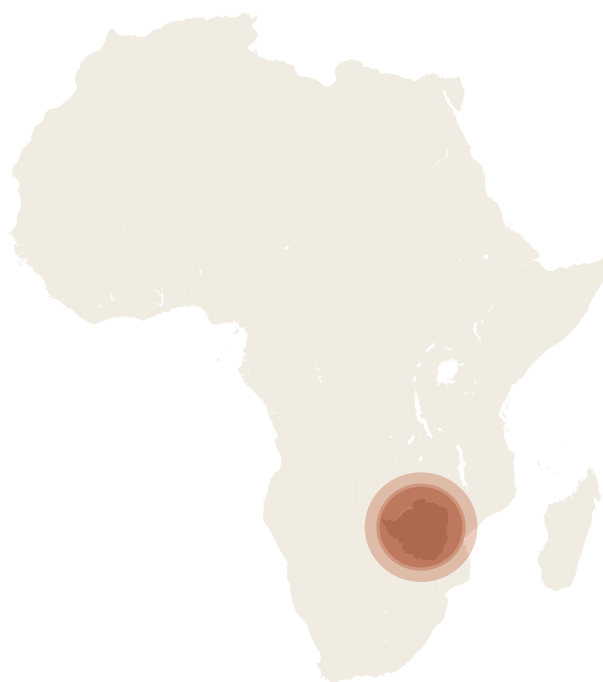
1. Country Overview

The Republic of Zimbabwe is located in the southern part of Africa. The country is landlocked with South Africa on the south, Zambia on the north, Botswana on the west, and Mozambique on the east. Harare, formerly Salisbury, is the capital city of Zimbabwe and sits on an elevation of 4,865 feet. The country achieved independence in April 1980 after a prolonged British colonial rule, followed by a white-dominated minority rule ^[1].

Zimbabwe can be divided into six different regions by the amount of rainfall. Some areas exclusively cultivate corn and tobacco while others are good for mixed farming (wheat, millet, sorghum, barley, cassava), forestry, and grazing livestock.

As of 2019, the country's population was 14.65million. Of the population, 68.2 percent is below the age of 29, indicative of the large young working populous. The country has 16 official languages reflected in its 2013 constitution, including English, Chewa, Chibarwe, and Kalanga, among others. The vast majority of Zimbabweans speak Shona and Ndebele which are both Bantu languages. More than four-fifths of Zimbabweans are Christians, with Apostolic accounting for half of them ^[1].

Zimbabwe signed the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) in 2020 to improve trade among African countries. The country is a part of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) which aims for economic integration. Zimbabwe also has bilateral trade agreements with South Africa, Namibia, and Botswana ^[2].



1.1. Key Country Statistics



61 years
Life expectancy
at birth, 2019



Negative 6.2
GDP growth (annual
percentage), 2020



37.2% Exports
as a percent of
GDP, 2020



38.8% Imports
as a percent of
GDP, 2020



Top three export products,
2019: Gold (**\$1.72Billion**),
Raw Tobacco (**\$438Million**),
Ferroalloys (**\$231Million**)



Top three import products, 2019:
Refined Petroleum (**\$1.35Billion**),
Delivery Trucks (**\$135Million**),
Packaged Medicaments (**\$133Million**)



\$0.8 Billion
surplus
Balance of
trade, 2019

2. COVID-19

Zimbabwe recorded its first COVID-19 case on the 20th of March 2020. As of 20th January 2022, Zimbabwe had 227,695 COVID-19 cases of which 5,280 have perished and 211,582 recovered ^[6].

People are mandated to wear face masks in the public and observe the social distance. Stricter COVID-19 measures were announced by the government of Zimbabwe on 1st December 2021; every person arriving in Zimbabwe is required to have a negative PCR test taken within the previous 48 hours, businesses are to be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. only, a curfew is in place from 9 p.m. to 6:00 a.m, businesses are to operate at a maximum of 50 percent of staff on-site with the rest teleworking, restaurants, bars, and night clubs may serve vaccinated persons only and public gatherings are not to exceed 100 people.

As of 19th January 2022, 21.53 percent and 6.45 percent of the population were fully vaccinated and partially vaccinated respectively, against COVID-19 translating to 27.98 percent of the total population.

3. Health Overview

Healthcare is provided by the Ministry of Health and Child Care. In Zimbabwe, 86 percent of the health facilities are in rural settlements while the remaining are situated in urban areas. Of the health services provided in rural areas, 68 percent comes from mission hospitals and clinics. The health system in Zimbabwe is decentralized, divided into four levels (order: highest -lowest level) ^[10]:

- Quaternary Level- Six central hospitals.
- Tertiary Level – Eight provincial hospitals in each province
- Secondary Level – 63 hospitals in the districts
- Primary Level – comprises rural hospitals, health centers, and clinics ^[10].

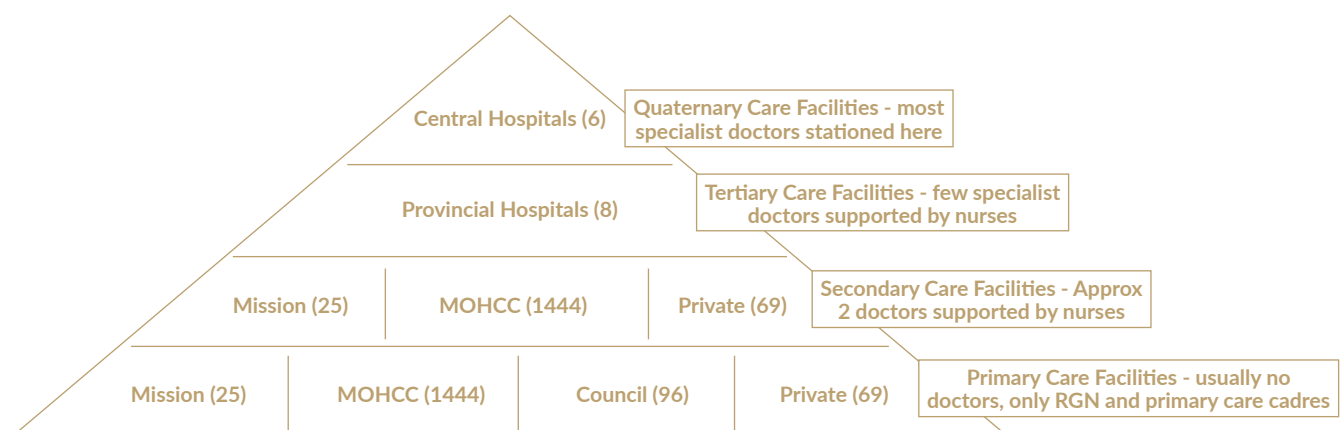


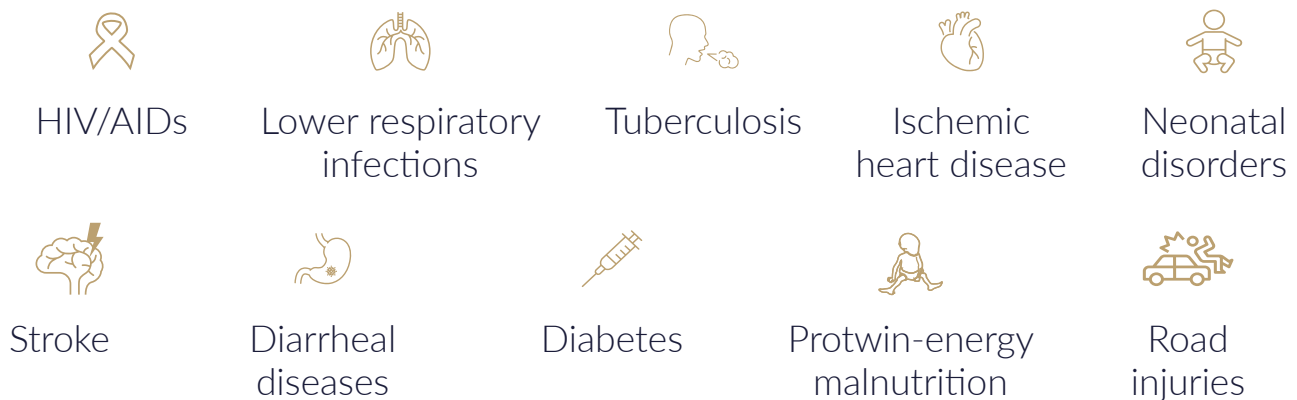
Figure 1: Health service structure in Zimbabwe. Adapted from Zimbabwe National Health Financing Policy 2016 ^[11].

Health is financed through a blend of four resources; prepaid private, out-of-pocket, government health spending, and development assistance for health (DAH). In 2018, the major source of health funding was DAH which translated to 22.60 USD per person.

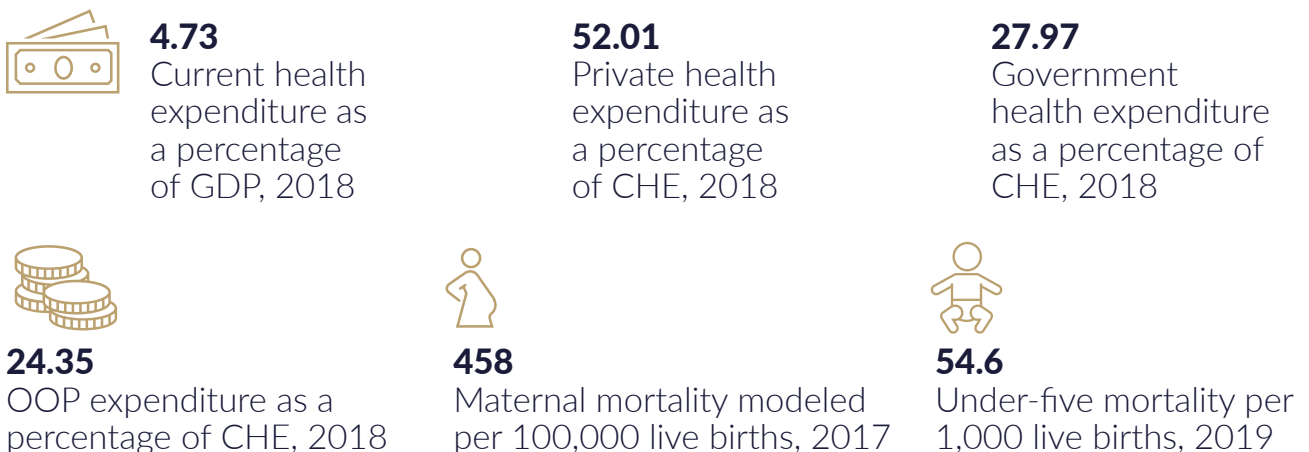
The country has been in the process of forming its National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) to realize the government's efforts in achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC). Zimbabwe was set to have rolled in January 2020 however, the pandemic and mixed reactions within the government may have stalled its implementation [12]. Additionally, the available literature does not indicate the status of the insurance policy. There are, however, other forms of pooling health funds in Zimbabwe through private insurance which only covers 10 percent of the population, Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) obtained through taxes and budget support, and other domestic and external pooling of funds [11].

With regards to Human Resources for Health (HRH) Zimbabwe is far below the World Health Organisation's (WHO) threshold of 23 doctors, nurses per 10,000 populations. In 2015, they had 300 junior doctors working in government health facilities which translated into 1.6 physicians and 7.2 nurses per 10,000 [10].

Top 10 causes of death [13]



3.1 Key Health Statistics [14]

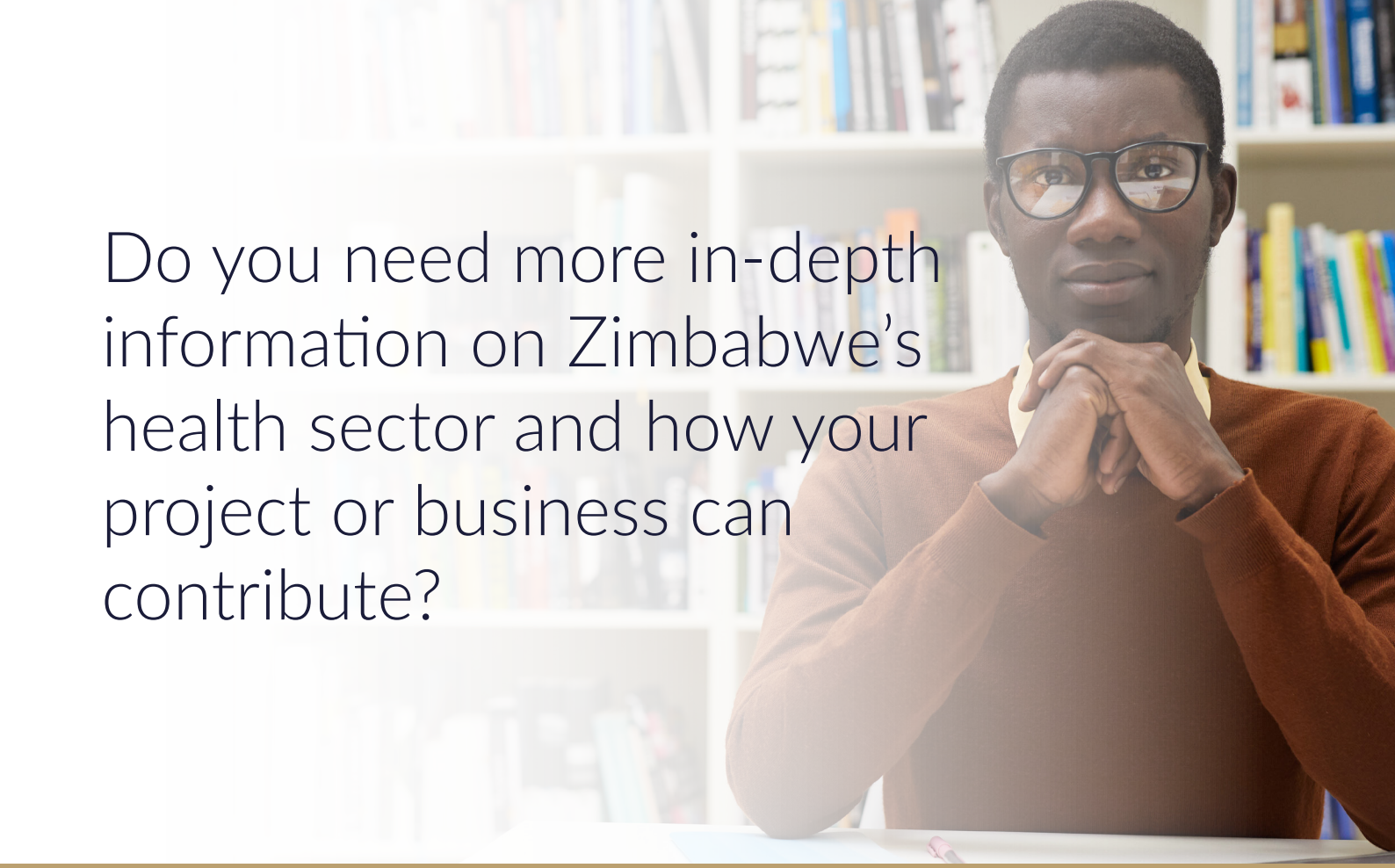


4. Key challenges faced by the private sector

- The cost of transportation is high due to the landlocked state of the country, making the distribution of medical supplies difficult and expensive.
- The purchasing power of most people is weak due to widespread extreme poverty.
- Zimbabwe is facing serious socio-economic problems, a situation that has resulted in various challenges in health institutions, including critical shortages of drugs and manpower like doctors and nurses.

5. Key opportunities for the private sector to invest in

- The government institutionalized stakeholder participation in healthcare delivery through the national health strategy and other health programs to encourage Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) [15].
- Investing in off-grid IT solutions to reach diverse populations.
- The government is currently rolling out national health insurance. This can be a great the health actors to work together and provide incentives to ensure healthcare for all in the country.



Do you need more in-depth information on Zimbabwe's health sector and how your project or business can contribute?

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 (+254) 704 838 150
(+254) 700 014 557

 www.ahb.co.ke
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 New Rehema House
Rhapta Road, Westlands,
Nairobi, Kenya

 info@ahb.co.ke

 P.O. Box 49874 - 00100
Nairobi, Kenya