



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

Swiss Cooperation Programme Zimbabwe and Zambia 2023–2026

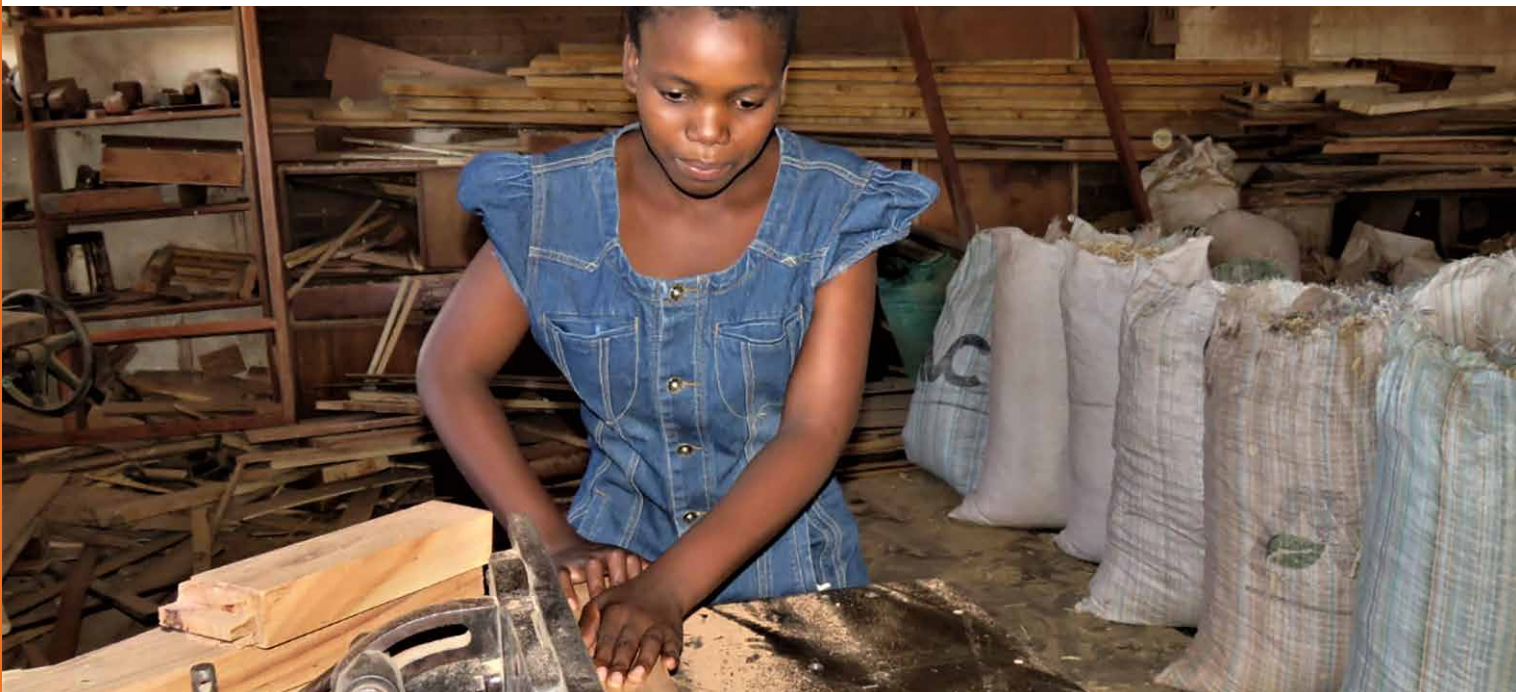
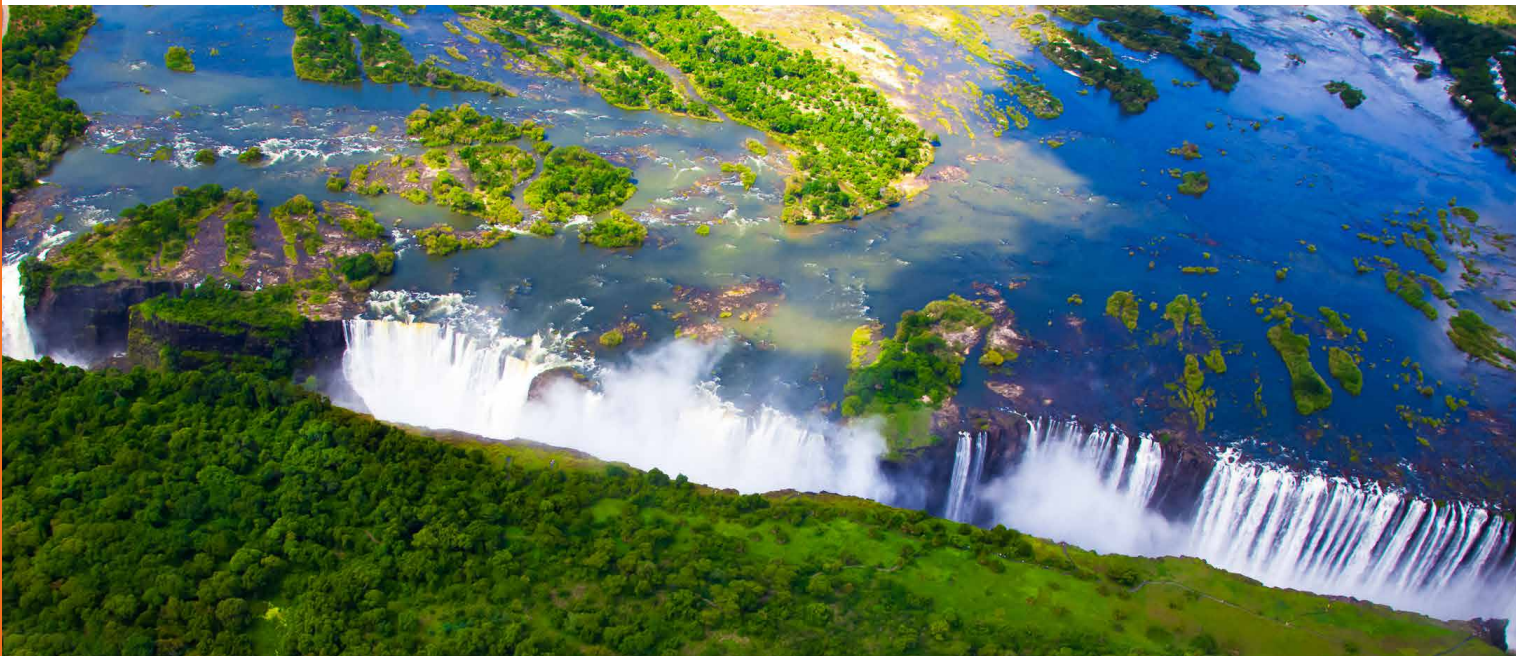


Table of Contents

Foreword	3
Development Context	4
Political developments and security	4
Economic development, employment and income inequality	4
Social development and basic services	6
Environment and climate change	7
Swiss Foreign Policy Objectives and Donor Context	8
Swiss interests and added value	8
Donor landscape	8
Key Results and Lessons Learned	9
Key results 2018–2022	9
Lessons learned	10
Implications	11
Strategic Orientation of the Swiss Cooperation Programme 2023–2026	12
Swiss portfolio outcomes	12
Transversal themes	15
Culture for development	15
Programme Management and Implementation Modalities	16
Strategic Steering	18
Annexes	
Annex 1: Swiss cooperation programme at a glance	19
Annex 2: Map of Zambia	20
Annex 3: Map of Zimbabwe	21
Annex 4: Acronyms and abbreviations	22
Table 1: Indicative financial planning 2023–2026 (in CHF)	17
Table 2: Overview of monitoring system	18

Foreword

With its strong human and natural resources, a youth dividend, solid economic growth and relative peace Southern Africa bears a high potential for economic prosperity, social development and stability. On the other hand, important challenges remain, in terms of insufficient economic diversification, increased vulnerability through climate change, high rates of income inequality, endemic corruption and poor performance of key governance institutions. Switzerland wants to help leverage this potential in Southern Africa and contribute to an increased wellbeing of the population.

Switzerland has been engaged in Southern Africa since the early 2000s with a programme first based in South Africa, then expanded to several other countries. In 2016 the regional Swiss Cooperation Office moved from Pretoria to Harare, and merged with the Humanitarian Office that had been working out of the Swiss Embassy for a decade.

After more than twenty years of successful implementation of a regional approach and in alignment with the International Cooperation Strategy 2021–2024, the Regional Programme of Southern Africa (RPSA) was streamlined and reshaped to focus on the two countries, Zimbabwe and Zambia. The aim is to increase our impact through a concentration of resources and the exploitation of opportunities for direct exchange with national actors. This document is thus the first of its kind and presents the main action lines of this new focus.

The regional perspective will nevertheless be maintained, as Switzerland will keep a few regional flagship projects involving several countries and good practices from bilateral project implementation will be brought to scale and harnessed in policy dialogue within the SADC, counting on its strong political and convening role.

Over the past years Switzerland achieved important results through the two main pillars of the Regional Programme – sexual and reproductive health and food security. Strengthened food security and incomes, and improved health and resilience are kept as objectives. The new programme will develop a more comprehensive approach and cover additional areas such as job creation, support to private sector and climate change. It will also address the strengthening of health and food systems, as well as integrative value chains. A new outcome on accountable, participatory and inclusive governance seeks to achieve more integrated, systemic and sustainable change and better mutual social accountability. It can build on the experiences and trustful relations that the Swiss peace policy programme established with national institutions and partners since 2015.

Switzerland remains committed as a long-standing, reliable partner to work hand in hand with Zimbabwe and Zambia and the region more broadly, in its path of creating positive prospects for the present and future generations.



Patricia Danzi
Director-General SDC

Livia Leu
State Secretary FDFA

Development Context

The countries of the Southern Africa region are disparate in many ways, but they also share a common history and are highly interconnected – socially, politically, economically and environmentally – including as members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The region is relatively peaceful compared to other parts of Africa, and, with strong human and natural resources to build upon, it bears high potential in terms of economic development, prosperity and wealth. But for now, Southern Africa faces the highest rates of income inequality on the continent and low scores on many social indicators, a situation that has been further exacerbated by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the consequences of the war in Ukraine. Poverty, exclusion and weak governance pose threats to stability and sustainable development.

Zambia and Zimbabwe, two neighbouring states in Southern Africa, are landlocked countries, whose development prospects and global competitiveness are inextricably linked with regional integration and the progress of their neighbours. Zimbabwe in particular relies heavily on South Africa for trade, especially imports. Both countries aspire to reach upper middle-income status by 2030. In this respect, large cohorts of young people provide them an important but challenging opportunity to capitalize on the demographic dividend.

Political developments and security

From a governance perspective, achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Zambia and Zimbabwe remains work in progress. Both countries have continued to face vested interests, authoritarian and populist features and political intolerance and polarization. Such a long-lasting and uncondusive policy environment has hampered reforms for democratic state building and sound public finance management, especially in Zimbabwe where it has also cemented

Zambia gained independence in 1964. Since 1991, it has endured as a functioning multi-party democracy with relatively free and fair elections. 2021 saw a peaceful transition of power to the opposition. Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980. Politics have been dominated by one party while the opposition has repeatedly contested the outcome of elections.

weak social accountability and non-representative electoral and political processes.

Despite efforts to improve transparency and oversight, endemic corruption at all levels, and in key sectors of the economy, has severely jeopardized progress towards sustainable socio-economic development, and in Zimbabwe it has hampered much-needed foreign private sector investments in the economy. According to the 2021 Corruption Perception Index published by Transparency International, Zimbabwe and Zambia rank 157 and 117 respectively out of 180 countries.

Under these circumstances, key state institutions which lack political economic impetus coupled with weak capacities, are struggling to deliver on their mandates, thus impacting the rule of law. The situation of large groups of the population living in extreme poverty, in particular youth and women, has not received adequate attention and political elites have not managed to allocate the necessary funding to address their needs. Moreover, an increasing use of law enforcement and security forces for partisan political ends has affected state-citizen relations. In Zimbabwe, the political pressure on social and civic space has weakened confidence in public institutions.

Looking ahead, both countries have serious catching-up to do on governance and accountability. In Zambia, the latest election and the transition of power is encouraging for democracy and economic growth and a window of opportunity to bring about systemic change. In Zimbabwe, by contrast, optimism amongst the population following the removal of the country's long-term President Robert Mugabe in 2017 is fading due to financial and economic hardship, contested elections and pressure on the opposition.

Economic development, employment and income inequality

Both Zambia and Zimbabwe bear high potential in terms of economic development, prosperity and wealth, and are able to build upon good assets, in particular their vast natural resources. Zimbabwe also has a comparatively highly skilled population. Both governments have sought to diversify the economy and to increase foreign direct investment (FDI).

The outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020 led to reduced private



sector activity. However, throughout challenging times, and despite constraints to doing business and an only early stage of digitalization, the private sector has continued to provide goods and services and remains an actor to count on.

Meanwhile, after two years of deep recession, GDP in Zimbabwe grew by 6.3% in 2021, which mirrors an exceptionally good agriculture season, relaxing of COVID-19 restrictions and a relative stabilization of prices and the exchange rate. In Zambia, the growth rate was expected to reach 3.1%. Agriculture, mining, tourism and, in Zambia, manufacturing, continue to be the main pillars of the economy.

Triggered by hyperinflation, the Zimbabwean dollar was dropped in 2009 and a temporary multi-currency platform was introduced with the US dollar as the main currency. In 2019, a “new” Zimbabwe dollar was introduced. But confidence in the local currency is weak and a highly distorted parallel currency market has emerged that has exacerbated inequalities. By July 2020, inflation reached a staggering 837 percent (y/y). After a relatively stable period, inflation spiked again to 257 percent in July 2022.

Over the years, both Zambia and Zimbabwe have experienced high and rising public debts that have contributed to severe backlashes on social spending. In light of financial turbulences connected to the change in government in 2021, Zambia

was forced to declare insolvency with regard to servicing its foreign debts. Fortunately, the international community has signalled help to clear its arrears. In Zimbabwe, on the contrary, debt relief has remained hostage to the political impasse between the government and the international community and a lack of engagement due to sanctions, concerns about human rights and land reform.

Around 70 percent of the population of Zambia and Zimbabwe depends on agriculture for food, income and employment. More than half live in underserved rural areas where agriculture is based on rain-fed small-scale farming rather than large-scale high-value commercial crops. Informal work and self-employment are prevalent in agriculture and, more broadly, food systems, which means that incomes are volatile, social benefits are either scarce or non-existent, working hours are long and legal protection is weak. Lack of access to relevant skills, finance, productive assets and viable markets hinder productivity and value addition, and prevent informal sector workers from engaging in more gainful economic opportunities.

Weak governance and shocks have fuelled un- and under-employment, with youth being more likely to be among the working poor than the general population. The COVID-19 shock hampered access to agricultural inputs, and millions of people found themselves with reduced incomes, with dire consequences for women, young people and small and medium-sized enterprises, in particular in urban areas. Labour migration opportunities have declined due to political and



economic challenges in South Africa, which has impacted vital remittances. As a result, income inequality is high¹, not just between rural and urban areas, but increasingly within urban areas as well. 49% of Zimbabweans and 54% of Zambians live in extreme poverty.

Looking ahead, despite both countries' high potential, economic growth rates are likely to stagnate at a low to mid one-digit level in both countries. Public debts will continue to consume a considerable percentage of national budgets, thus putting social spending at risk. On a positive note, potential youth entrepreneurs are open to introducing innovations and are a pillar of hope for prosperous economies. New opportunities could also arise from growing regional integration. Global supply bottlenecks and increasing prices of commodities at the global level could benefit shorter supply chains with more value addition at the local level. In 2021, the Government of Zambia adopted a private-sector friendly approach, the implementation of which remains to be seen. The Zimbabwean economic situation will greatly depend on how the government manages to combine short-term crisis management with longer-term structural reforms.

1 GINI index (World Bank estimate): Zimbabwe: 50.3 (2019); Zambia: 57.1 (2017). Zambia has the fourth-highest Gini index in the world.

Social development and basic services

Both rural and urban poor in Zambia and Zimbabwe have limited access to health, education and nutrition, which has particularly affected the wellbeing of women and young people as well as of vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities and people living with HIV.²

Significant progress has been made in attaining key health targets such as the 90:90:90 UNAIDS targets for HIV epidemic control.³ However, funding has fallen short of the Abuja Declaration annual target of allocating 15% of national budgets to healthcare. Moreover, the health sectors have been crippled by weak policy frameworks, a shortage of healthcare workers due to meagre salaries and considerable brain drain due to foreign recruitment and erratic electricity and water supplies. Services are generally substandard and national insurance schemes are far removed from the realities of the population.

The public health systems of Zambia and Zimbabwe have struggled immensely to cope with the double burden of

2 Zimbabwe ranks 150th in the Human Development Index which positions 189 countries according to their progress on health, education and income, and Zambia 156th. Human Development Report 2020. HDI value (2019): Zimbabwe (0.571) and Zambia (0.584).

3 90% of all people living with HIV knowing their HIV status; 90% of all people with diagnosed HIV infection receiving sustained antiretroviral therapy (ART); 90% of all people receiving ART having viral suppression.

communicable and non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Uncontrolled NCDs, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), maternal and child health, family planning and gender-based violence (GBV) remain persistent challenges, especially for young men and women. In addition, COVID-19 added strain on the health systems as funds were diverted and because limited mobility and school closures hindered the delivery of and access to critical (youth-friendly) health information and services. Stigma towards the still considerable number of people (especially youth) living with HIV also remains a problem.⁴ Increasing poverty, food insecurity, lack of economic perspectives and COVID-19 have also taken a toll on the mental health and psychological wellbeing of the population.

Whereas the Zimbabwean education system used to be one of the strongest in the region, nowadays education outcomes are generally poor in both countries, especially in rural public schools, and have further suffered during the pandemic. During prolonged school closures, pupils with insufficient access to online learning alternatives were most affected and have fallen behind. The vital food and nutrition security support that schools provide became unavailable. Post-pandemic, parents are demotivated to invest their meagre household incomes in school fees and related costs, especially for girls. In this regard, Zambia made a considerable step towards equality by abolishing school fees.

Flows of money, goods and services, information and knowledge between rural and urban areas have intensified as a result of growing small and medium-sized towns. They play an important role in employment generation and for ensuring more predictable incomes and decent livelihoods. These rural-urban interlinkages have also helped mitigate chronic food insecurity, which has soared due to different kinds of shocks (the economic impact of COVID-19 and, especially in Zimbabwe, inflation and dependence on imports). Urban areas have become increasingly vulnerable because of the lack of decent jobs and sufficient incomes. Social protection systems, including support provided by families and communities, are inadequate and increasingly under pressure.

Looking ahead, multi-dimensional poverty will likely remain pervasive in large parts of the low-income population segments in Zambia and Zimbabwe, with poor women and young people bearing the brunt. Despite further government measures and international cooperation, many people who lack access to basic services and rights will continue to struggle in their daily lives. Without stronger institutional and societal resilience to shocks – including environmental calamities further exacerbated by climate change – many others will also be left behind. Robust systems for social protection are needed more than ever.

⁴ World Bank: Prevalence of HIV, total (% of population ages 15–49) in Zimbabwe: 11.9% (2020); in Zambia 11.1% (2020). HIV prevalence rates in Zambia (15–24): 4.1%; in Zimbabwe (15–24): 4.6%.

Environment and climate change

The potential for economic growth in Zambia and Zimbabwe is closely linked with the development of their natural resources. Policy frameworks and institutional set-ups for managing environmental challenges are in general quite robust. The main problem relates to the implementation and enforcement of existing legislation and policies, hampered by weak coordination and cross-sectoral cooperation.

Zimbabwe's coal mines and power projects and deforestation in Zambia are large sources of greenhouse gas emissions. They are, together with unsustainable farming practices, in particular in large-scale commercial farming units, harming the environment and accelerating degradation.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) classifies Zambia and Zimbabwe as fragile contexts. Both countries have entrenched high levels of vulnerability, due to natural disasters and the potential for internal conflict. In particular the rural and urban poor, women and youth, are less and less resilient to shocks.

At the same time, the negative effects of climate change are growing, marked by an increase in extreme weather events such as flash floods, droughts, heatwaves and storms. With exceptions, such as in 2020–2021, poor rainfall seasons are becoming the norm.

Combined with weak governance and insufficient preparedness, climate change further exacerbates damage on physical assets, degraded ecosystems and reduced output from key economic sectors. Furthermore, climate shocks have impacted crop and livestock production, especially for households that rely on rain-fed agriculture, resulting in food, nutrition and water insecurity and reduced income.

For lack of preparedness, even predictable weather variations have frequently developed into emergencies, with severe impacts on livelihoods and a worsening of widespread chronic poverty. Humanitarian interventions have been able to alleviate deficits temporarily, but they are less sustainable in the long term than enhancing (ecosystem-based) resilience and establishing social support systems to respond to future shocks.

Looking ahead, climate change effects and environmental management challenges, to which Zambia and Zimbabwe are exposed with a certain regularity, are threatening to undermine poverty reduction gains and the achievement of development goals. The population of Zimbabwe is particularly vulnerable. Future climate-related shocks could especially slow agriculture and energy production given the countries' dependency on rain-fed hydropower generation and further degrade the environment.

Swiss Foreign Policy Objectives and Donor Context

Swiss interests and added value

Switzerland's engagement in Southern Africa dates back to 1960s. By 2005, a Swiss regional programme emerged covering Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, Lesotho and Eswatini, based on the potential for scaling up successful initiatives in food security and HIV prevention, as well as the prospect of influencing policies at SADC level.⁵ Switzerland is perceived as a neutral country without colonial history in Africa, and thus has been able to build constructive and partnership-based relations in international cooperation. It is known for its long-term commitments, respect for international law, political coherence and adaptability.

Switzerland is considered a legitimate and reliable partner with good knowledge of the Southern Africa region as well as flexibility to combine development cooperation with humanitarian aid. With its expertise Switzerland has been able to carve out comparative advantages in its areas of intervention. Complemented by political experience and credibility in promoting a peaceful and democratic transition to stability in Zimbabwe, it has contributed to improving people's lives through increased food security and reduced new HIV infections. The relocation of the Swiss Cooperation Office from Pretoria to Harare in 2016 was a strong signal of Swiss commitment towards the Zimbabwe government.

Switzerland's International Cooperation Strategy 2021–2024 shifted Switzerland's geographical focus to Zimbabwe and Zambia. Safeguarding Zimbabwe and Zambia against destabilization, further socio-economic deterioration and conflict is in line with Swiss international commitments and long tradition of promoting humanitarian principles, peace and human rights. The Swiss and Swiss-based private sector is also active in this region : in Zimbabwe Switzerland remains the largest European investor through multinational companies in food processing, construction material, fuels, manufacturing, logistics and agriculture, whereas in Zambia, Swiss companies are present in sectors linked to the downstream of natural resources.

⁵ Separate bilateral Swiss cooperation programmes are in place for South Africa (SECO only) and Mozambique (SDC and SECO).

Donor landscape

Neither Zambia nor Zimbabwe are amongst Africa's largest recipients of official development assistance (ODA). In 2019, net ODA for Zambia totalled USD 987.0 million; for Zimbabwe USD 912.7 million. The United States, the World Bank, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the European Union (EU) and Sweden are the top five development partners in Zambia. The United States, the Global Fund and the EU are also among the top five in Zimbabwe, alongside the United Kingdom and UNICEF.⁶ A considerable amount of bilateral ODA has been directed to the health and population sectors, social infrastructure and services in both countries. 21% of bilateral ODA for Zimbabwe was allocated as humanitarian aid. Switzerland is a relatively small donor in financial terms in both countries, but notably one of only few bilateral donors in Zimbabwe where many traditional donors have left or reduced their support due to concerns about the political situation.

Switzerland participates in the relevant donor working groups in both countries and the Zambian and Zimbabwean governments are increasingly involved in pooled funding mechanisms. There is a general hesitancy amongst donors to work through government systems or provide direct budget support.

⁶ OECD-DAC Aid at a Glance.

Key Results and Lessons Learned

Key results 2018–2022

The Swiss Regional Cooperation Strategy for Southern Africa 2018–2022 aimed to make a difference to people's livelihoods and to contribute to peace, poverty reduction and sustainable development through regional policy advocacy and implementation of development programmes in Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Eswatini. To this end, it had a very strong focus on two thematic priorities, food security and HIV/SRHR, with a particular emphasis on smallholder farmers, women and youth. Switzerland also contributed to the promotion of peaceful elections and prevention of electoral violence, and supported political dialogue, national reconciliation and human rights activities in Zimbabwe.

In the area of food security, Swiss-supported interventions aimed to enhance crop diversity, strengthen integrated seed systems, increase income-generating activities along agricultural value chains and improve disaster preparedness, response and recovery. Key results stemming from Swiss support include:

- Exemptions in commercial seed laws and other Swiss-supported initiatives allowed for an unimpeded development of farmer seed systems and increased access to improved seeds and diverse crops for 32,000 smallholder farmers, including in Malawi and Zimbabwe.
- A new Zimbabwe Irrigation and Mechanization Policy strengthened ownership and transferred management of irrigation schemes to smallholders.
- In Zambia, the integration of a weather index insurance into the government's Farm Input Subsidy Programme reached an additional one million farmers.
- The operationalization of the SADC Regional Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis (RVAA) system assisted SADC Member States in gathering information on and responding to food insecurity needs.
- Building upon cash transfers, 46,000 rural households in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi benefitted from testing and the scaling up of context-specific risk management solutions. In Zimbabwe, resilience programming was expanded to urban areas.





Switzerland also focused its activities on improving youth access to SRHR services and their protective behaviour towards HIV/AIDS. Key results from Swiss supported regional programmes include:

- SADC Member States endorsed integrated and multi-sectoral HIV/SRHR policies which they proceeded to adapt to national contexts and to implement – e.g., Strategy for SRHR in the SADC Region 2019–2030; SADC Model Laws on Child Marriage and Gender-based Violence; Minimum Package of Services and Harmonized M&E Framework for Orphans, Vulnerable Children and Youth; and the Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL) Framework.
- Over 10 million adolescents and youth were reached with in- and out-of-school comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) programmes and through social and behavioural change communication. Over 4.8 million adolescents and youth benefitted from integrated HIV and SRHR services. Thanks to increased knowledge and skills, more than 2.3 million young people adopted protective sexual behaviours.
- Psychosocial support (PSS) was recognized as essential for increasing adherence to antiretroviral treatment and coping with disasters and was firmly placed on the social development agenda. An average of two million children were supported every year (including targeted efforts in the aftermath of Cyclone Idai).
- During COVID-19, Swiss financing piloted innovative interventions such as self-care models and flexible delivery of antiretroviral therapy in Zimbabwe to help minimize the impact of a lack of access to health centres for services and to cut down on transport costs.
- Over 7,000 youth were directly engaged in dialogues on climate change risks and intersections with SRHR, with another 13,000 indirectly benefiting.
- Policy advocacy (both regional and national) based on locally implemented good practices is not enough to bring results to scale. Beyond seeking to influence policy formulation, more focus is needed on promoting effective policy implementation, including through adequate budget allocations and addressing harmful social norms.
- Building resilience and unlocking economic opportunities are vital due to the myriad of challenges facing the social sectors. Switzerland has largely approached resilience through the lens of climate change. New approaches, innovation and new types of partners are called for. The pandemic has highlighted the need for programmatic flexibility to reimagine the provision and continuation of basic services and ensure that social assistance systems are not only in place, but capable of delivering in the face of external shocks.
- Interventions focusing on food production alone are not sufficient for improving livelihoods and food security. A broader approach to food systems and rural-urban linkages, with a focus on enhancing the added value of economic activities, is more promising.
- Addressing HIV and SRHR without taking other determinants of health into account has its limitations and needs to give way to an approach from a broader health and socio-economic perspective, in particular through emphasizing the integrated delivery of quality health services. Provision of PSS as one such service, which Switzerland has championed since the early 2000s, is a primary example given the importance of psychosocial wellbeing as a determinant of resilience to harsh circumstances.
- Fundamental governance challenges such as public sector accountability and civic participation cannot be addressed solely through a transversal approach. A twin-track approach with mainstreamed and targeted interventions is more promising. In this regard, there is room to deepen collaboration with all actors and instruments of Swiss international cooperation, including with other Swiss programmes in the region where there are interesting opportunities for cross-fertilization.

Lessons learned

The following lessons are of particular importance for the Swiss Cooperation Programme for Zimbabwe and Zambia 2023–2026:

Implications

The transformation of the Regional Cooperation Strategy for Southern Africa 2018–2022 into a two-country cooperation programme for Zimbabwe and Zambia is regarded as a chance to better anchor Swiss cooperation in fragile and fluid national contexts and to demonstrate greater local impact on wellbeing and livelihoods, human rights and democratic participation.

Building on existing partnerships, accumulated expertise and lessons learned as well as past successes, Swiss bilateral cooperation will further develop and implement a focused portfolio of programmes to address new challenges and seize opportunities in the political, social and economic spheres, including in support of recovering from COVID-19. Compared to previous programme cycles, Switzerland will:

- *Expand* work in urban areas – especially in selected secondary towns – and strengthen linkages with surrounding rural areas.
- *Reach out beyond* smallholder farmers and adolescents to benefit a wider target population, with a strong focus on equal opportunities for poor youth and women to thrive, as well as ensuring that marginalised populations (people with disabilities, orphans, people living with HIV, etc) are not left behind in service delivery and resilience building interventions. It is especially essential to foster linkages

amongst health, education and skills development in order to address the specific vulnerabilities of young people, improve their income opportunities and eventually their livelihood. When needed and appropriate, specific studies will be mandated to better define and assess the needs of the target groups.

- *More prominently feature* resilience within the portfolio, with a larger understanding of the different origin of the shocks (climate change induced, socio-economic, political).
- On the basis of the current engagement in the promotion of peace and human rights, gradually *expand the portfolio* in the area of good governance, including possibly rule of law and preservation of democratic civic space, financial and economic governance and/or decentralisation, with an initial focus on Zimbabwe.
- *Broaden* Swiss long-term support for HIV services to a wider array of strengthened quality integrated health services, social protection and disaster risk reduction (DRR) measures for long-term impact.



Strategic Orientation of the Swiss Cooperation Programme 2023–2026

As an overall goal, Switzerland will support efforts to **increase the well-being of the populations of Zambia and Zimbabwe and to reduce their vulnerability to climate change and other shocks, underpinned by citizen engagement and accountable and resilient public institutions.**

SWISS PORTFOLIO OUTCOMES

Swiss portfolio outcome 1: The rural and urban poor, in particular youth and women, develop and access opportunities that lead to improved food security and predictable and higher incomes

Outcome 1.1: Agricultural production and value chains of nutritious crops are strengthened and climate-resilient

Outcome 1.2: Economic opportunities and (self) employment are increased, especially in food systems

IC strategy sub-objective 2: Promoting innovative private sector initiatives to facilitate the creation of decent jobs

IC strategy sub-objective 3: Addressing climate change and its effects

IC strategy sub-objective 7: Strengthening equitable access to quality basic services

IC strategy sub-objective 9: Strengthening and promoting human rights and gender equality

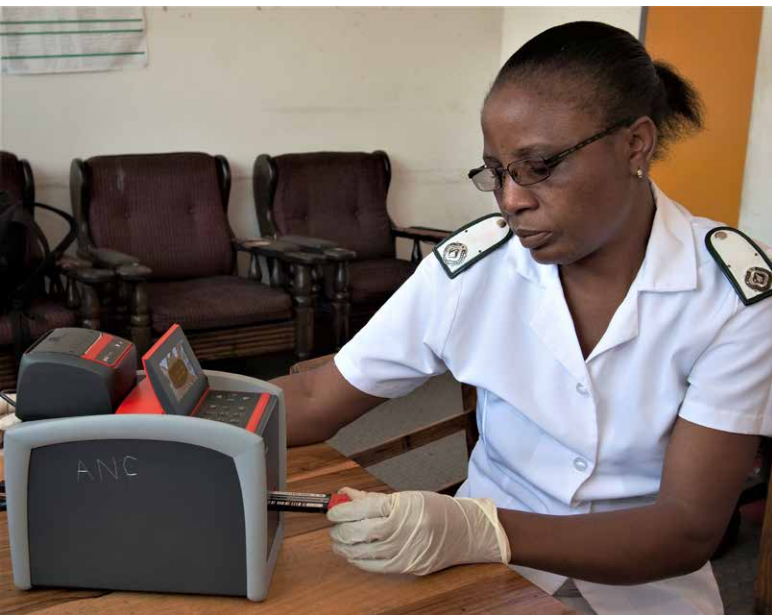
To achieve this Swiss portfolio outcome, the programme will address key challenges faced by smallholder agricultural producers and other value chain actors by incentivizing and supporting market actors to address prevalent market failures and bottlenecks (Outcome 1.1). The focus will be on value chains of selected climate-resilient and nutritious crops that have the potential to benefit women and youth, and climate-friendly agricultural techniques. An emphasis will be placed on building on and strengthening interlinkages between rural, peri-urban and urban areas. Moreover, the programme will enable poor people, and especially youth

and women, to access and develop economic and (self-) employment opportunities and incentivize private sector actors to expand these opportunities, especially in food systems (Outcome 1.2).

Key interventions to achieve these outcomes include facilitating access to new financial and insurance products and services and strengthening market-relevant and soft skills (including the promotion of diversified and nutritious diets). Furthermore, Switzerland will promote the adoption of drought-tolerant crops, agro-ecological farming practices and access to clean energy. It will provide cash transfers to foster investments in productive activities and support the development and improvement of market linkages.

By strengthening agricultural production, increasing decent jobs and incomes and improving food security, Switzerland will contribute to SDGs 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 13 and 17 in Zambia and Zimbabwe.





Swiss portfolio outcome 2: Quality service delivery and shock-responsive systems contribute to improved health and resilience, especially of women, youth and other marginalized populations

Outcome 2.1: Primary health care quality integrated services are delivered, in particular for sexual and reproductive health

Outcome 2.2: Shock-responsive social protection and disaster risk reduction systems are in place and strengthened

IC strategy sub-objective 5: Providing emergency aid and ensuring the protection of civilians

IC strategy sub-objective 6: Preventing disasters and ensuring reconstruction and rehabilitation

IC strategy sub-objective 7: Strengthening equitable access to quality basic services

Instead of pursuing SRHR exclusively through an HIV lens, Switzerland will broaden its scope by emphasizing the delivery of a wider array of quality services in an integrated manner and by giving greater attention to the ability of the health care system to deliver these services. At the same time, Switzerland will seek to put in place and strengthen shock-re-

This Swiss portfolio prioritizes the health and resilience of women and young people, as well as other vulnerable and marginalized populations currently, or at risk of being, left behind such as people living with disability, orphans and vulnerable children, people living with HIV, sex workers and LGBTQI people.

sponsive systems to build the resilience of target groups to climate-induced and man-made disasters which have significantly impacted their ability to move out of poverty.

Applying a multi-sectoral approach, cooperation under this particular Swiss portfolio outcome will therefore identify gaps and strategic entry points for integration of services and improving access to quality primary health care services, in particular SRHR, for example through education systems and communities (Outcome 2.1). Switzerland will also support and strengthen the shock-responsiveness of formal and informal social protection and DRR systems, including better targeting and delivery of social assistance and improved reliability of data (Outcome 2.2).

Key interventions to achieve these outcomes include engagement in policy advocacy for better quality and integrated health service delivery as well as for more domestic spending on social protection and DRR mechanisms. To this end, specifically, Switzerland will generate and disseminate data on vulnerabilities. Furthermore, Swiss cooperation will support capacity development in the health, social protection and DRR systems and strengthen health education and referral.

By supporting quality health service delivery and shock-responsive systems, Switzerland will contribute to SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 10, 13 and 17 in Zambia and Zimbabwe.





Swiss portfolio outcome 3: Civil society and state institutions engage in more accountable, participatory and inclusive governance

Outcome 3.1: Public institutions effectively deliver services in an accountable way and in respect of human rights

Outcome 3.2: Citizens, specifically youth and women, increasingly participate and influence decision-making

IC strategy sub-objective 8: Preventing conflicts, promoting peace and respect for international law

IC strategy sub-objective 9: Strengthening and promoting human rights and gender equality

IC strategy sub-objective 10: Promoting good governance and the rule of law and strengthening civil society

Human rights and democratic governance are essential components of long-term development and peace. Countries with ineffective government institutions, widespread corruption and weak rule of law are more likely to experience conflict and criminal violence. To strengthen democratic governance and human rights in Zimbabwe and later on also in Zambia, in line with the Guidelines on Human Rights 2021–2024, Switzerland will support selected national and local-level government entities and independent oversight institutions to deliver on their mandates in an accountable manner and in respect of human rights (Outcome 3.1). Furthermore, citizens’

fundamental rights are the foundation for managing and mitigating conflict, promoting economic growth and safeguarding human dignity. Switzerland would therefore also like to see communities empowered and driving their own future, and to this intent will actively promote the participation of especially women and youth in decision-making, including in business and economic-related areas (Outcome 3.2).

Key interventions to achieve these outcomes include anti-corruption efforts and building the technical and human resource capacities of independent oversight institutions. In Zimbabwe, it will promote civil society participation in healing and reconciliation processes and strengthen mechanisms for credible, transparent and inclusive general elections. In the mid-term, additional strategic reflections will be required to develop clear priorities, and identify where Switzerland has good entry points, knowhow, experience and leverage.

By supporting democratic governance and human rights, Switzerland will contribute to SDGs 4, 5, 10, 11 and 16 in Zambia and Zimbabwe.



The three Swiss portfolio outcomes are strongly interlinked. On the one hand, improving livelihoods and wellbeing under Swiss portfolio outcomes 1 and 2 indirectly leads to empowerment and more civil society influence in decision-making. On the other hand, focusing on human rights, access to justice, accountable and transparent governance, credible, transparent and inclusive elections and the rule of law are critical levers for efficient and accountable public institutions and engaged citizens, which are key ingredients for job creation, food security and effective basic service delivery.

Transversal themes

Governance, gender and climate change are systematically incorporated and emphasized in all Swiss programming as transversal themes. In addition to being a Swiss portfolio outcome with targeted interventions, governance continues to be used as an entry point to ensure that Swiss cooperation with governmental and non-governmental actors brings about systemic change at the respective portfolio level.

Gender equality is a central component of all Swiss cooperation programmes, and an aspect that Switzerland continuously strives to strengthen in its policy advocacy and programming and capacity building for implementing partners. Gender-transformative approaches in Zambia and Zimbabwe aim to reduce unequal power relations and promote inclusive civic participation. Interventions are tailored to the

particular needs of women and men and results reported in a gender-disaggregated manner.

The Climate, Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction Integration Guidance (CEDRIG) tool of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) will be utilized as the guiding instrument for integrating climate change across the portfolio. Switzerland's focus is on addressing underlying causes of vulnerabilities and promoting adaptive capacity. It will thus invest in climate change adaptation and mitigation and ensure that service delivery and social protection systems are responsive to climate and other shocks. Through its interventions, Switzerland will stress the importance of emergency preparedness and capacities of the governments of Zimbabwe and Zambia. Improved environmental management will be promoted, as well as agriculture techniques and clean energy technologies that ensure the sustainable utilization of natural resources.

Culture for development

A new Swiss art and culture programme will be developed with one percent of SDC's budget for Zambia and Zimbabwe. The promotion of arts and culture will open additional opportunities to engage with young people and to create the awareness of communities and decision-makers for important topics.



Programme Management and Implementation Modalities

Swiss whole-of-government approach: Switzerland's international cooperation actors will explore new opportunities for collaboration and synergies to accelerate the achievement of the Swiss outcomes. In particular, better synergies in line with respective mandates will be sought. Moreover, SDC relevant thematic programmes funded at the global level may add to the implementation of this cooperation programme. SECO does not have plans for interventions in the near future, although Zimbabwe and Zambia will be eligible for some of its regional/global programmes as well.

Partners: Switzerland will work with a broad range of partners depending on the contexts and on their presence and competences. The Swiss Cooperation Programme for Zimbabwe and Zambia 2023–2026 will rebalance Switzerland's long-term engagement at the regional level in favour of support for local actors and implementation on the ground.

A key new element of this cooperation programme is anticipated closer collaboration with the central and local governments in Zambia and Zimbabwe. Alignment with national development plans and closer coordination will promote ownership and sustainability of Swiss-supported interventions, but also emphasize the role of governments as duty bearers accountable for their actions.

Three categories of regional engagement for achieving Swiss outcomes:

- Support for SADC mechanisms and SADC-led initiatives implemented by third parties without a specific country attribution
- Support for institutions with a regional scope on topics related to Swiss priorities where earmarking is not possible or does not make sense
- Support for multi-country projects with earmarked funding for activities in Zimbabwe and Zambia where Switzerland is part of a regional steering committee and focuses on domestication at national level

Switzerland will continue working with United Nations agencies, specifically in the areas of humanitarian aid, strengthening democracy and sensitive health issues (such as SRHR) as well as with large NGOs and academia, where feasible. Switzerland also recognizes the comparative strengths of contextually embedded local civil society organizations (CSOs) and civil society movements for effective advocacy work and for countering shrinking political and civic space, especially in Zimbabwe.

Collaboration with the private sector as dialogue partners, as stakeholders in market systems development and as project implementers and co-financiers is key for bringing development results to scale and for innovation, and Switzerland will further reflect on potential private sector partners, on the modalities of private sector partnerships and their compatibility/complementarity with interventions aimed at the public sector. Given close connections between parts of the local private sector and the political elite in Zambia and Zimbabwe, partnerships will be carefully assessed through a PEP (politically exposed persons) lens.

Regionality: Zimbabwe and Zambia are highly connected with other countries in the Southern Africa region. They face similar opportunities and challenges. Therefore, Swiss cooperation will continue to pursue projects and programmes with a regional scope in exceptional cases, when there is potential to influence regional policies at SADC level and the projects are complementary to national-level activities within the Swiss portfolio. Regional engagements must be coherent and synergetic with the Swiss portfolio outcomes and the added value of a regional approach must be based on clear arguments and evidence.

Development partners' coordination: To implement the present cooperation programme, and for increased development effectiveness, Switzerland will give more attention to donor working groups and active engagement in selected project steering and advisory committees. Well-functioning project steering and advisory committees are cost-effective platforms for Switzerland to guide project implementation, to build direct relations with senior government representatives and other development partners, and to promote the representation of project beneficiaries.

Direct Commitments in Zambia and Zimbabwe by Swiss Federal Offices					
Financial Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total 2023–2026
FDFA – SDC – South Cooperation	28,000,000	27,000,000	25,000,000	25,000,000	105,000,000
FDFA – AAF – Peace + Human Rights	580,000	100,000	–	–	680,000
Total funds	28,580,000	27,100,000	25,000,000	25,000,000	105,680,000

Table 1: Indicative financial planning 2023–2026 (in CHF)

Digitalization: Improved access to digital technologies and effective use of data and digital systems can be powerful tools in the quest to enhance public sector efficiency, effectiveness transparency and accountability; to increase social benefits – e.g., improved health and increased resilience; and to create jobs and raise private sector productivity. Across all portfolio outcomes, Switzerland will build on the digital transformation accelerated by the pandemic and seek to harness the full potential of digitalization.

Financial flows and resources: In terms of financial flows, Switzerland will continue to consider contributions to multilateral organizations, international and national NGOs and CSOs for programmes that are in line with the objectives of this cooperation programme and explore options for contributing to pooled and trust funds, including those co-chaired by government, and impact-focused blended finance facilities. Switzerland will also keep the option to award mandates, in particular in conjunction with interventions where other development partners are not active.

SDC and the Peace and Human Rights Division (PHRD) of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) have committed funds for implementing the **Swiss Cooperation Programme for Zimbabwe and Zambia 2023–2026, amounting to an estimated total budget of roughly CHF 105 million** (see Table), a yearly average of CHF 26 million during the four-year programme cycle. PHRD’s budget extends to 2024, after which the programme will be phased out. The tentative allocation of funds will fluctuate around 65% for Zimbabwe and 35% for Zambia. In addition, Zimbabwe and Zambia will benefit from SDC thematic programmes funded at the global level, for example through core contributions to international and multilateral organizations and initiatives active in the two countries. Additional Humanitarian aid interventions are also possible in case of disaster or crisis in one of the two countries.

Human resources: The SDC team at the Swiss embassy in Harare consists of three expatriates and five thematic programme officers, complemented by a shared communication officer and administrative-accounting staff. A further expatriate and local officer are in charge of the peace and human rights endeavours in Zimbabwe. Switzerland has no physical

representation in Zambia. However, frequent visits and virtual means will ensure the necessary level of direct engagement and work at the local level. Swiss and local staff will cultivate a culture of learning, knowledge sharing, skills’ development and innovation management and actively participate in SDC global thematic knowledge networks.

Communication: Communication will be used to actively shape the way Switzerland is perceived in Zambia and Zimbabwe. Targeted communication activities in both traditional and social media platforms will be used to showcase Switzerland’s strengths, values and positions and to explain its international engagement, especially in development cooperation.

Strategic Steering

The Swiss Cooperation Programme for Zimbabwe and Zambia 2023–2026 will be subject to regular monitoring in order to keep track of the effectiveness and efficiency of the Swiss portfolio and its relevance to intended beneficiaries. Monitoring serves the three-fold objective of (1) evidence-based programme steering; (2) accounting for results; and (3) continuous learning.

Monitoring the cooperation programme is the responsibility of the Swiss embassy. The monitoring system emphasizes national and Swiss portfolio results, whereby achievements of Swiss cooperation are understood as a contribution to achieving national objectives. Monitoring focuses on change at the level of outcomes (institutional and societal change).

The implementation of the cooperation programme is monitored at four different levels (see Table 2):

- i) Development of the wider country contexts and sector-specific relevant contexts;
- ii) Progress towards selected national development outcomes;
- iii) Achievement of Swiss outcomes (Annex 2), including against Thematic Reference Indicators (TRIs) and Aggregated Reference Indicators (ARIs) that allow Switzerland to communicate on achievements across priority countries in an aggregated manner;
- iv) Embassy performance assessed along selected programme management dimensions.

Among other data gathering instruments, monitoring builds on externally commissioned surveys, annual reports by implementing partners and stakeholder and beneficiary consultations. A mid-term review of the cooperation programme will be conducted after two years.

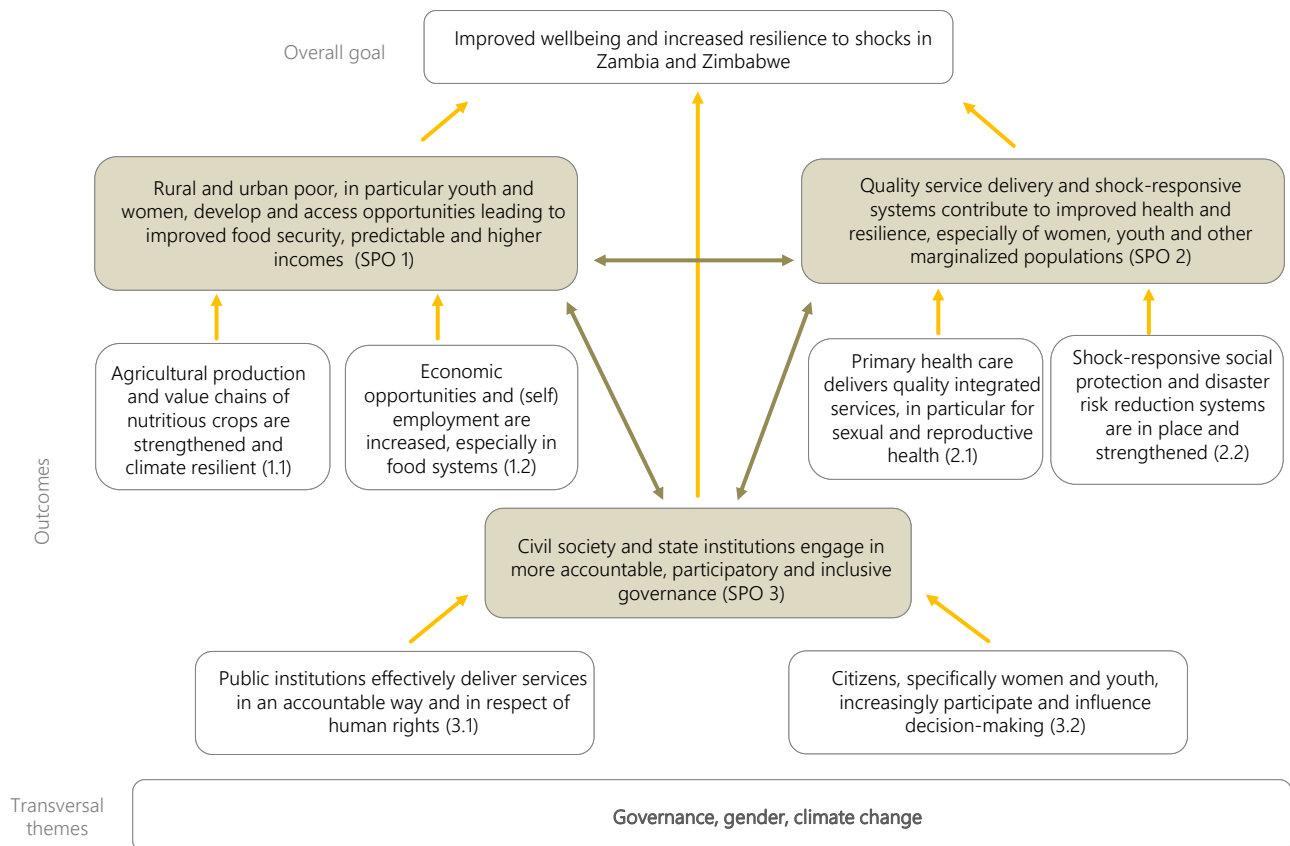
	<i>Level</i>	Focus area	Instrument	Periodicity
(i)	Country context	Overall country context as relevant to Swiss cooperation programme	Monitoring System for Development-related Changes (MERV) Political report Economic report HR report	At least annually (October)
(ii)	Country results	Progress towards country development and humanitarian outcomes included in the Swiss cooperation programme results framework	Annual report	Annual review (October)
(iii)	Swiss portfolio results	Achievement of Swiss outcomes included in the Swiss cooperation programme results framework against selected indicators and contribution to country outcomes	Annual report Reviews, evaluations and studies	Mid-year review (May/June) Annual review (October)
(iv)	Management results	Achievement of management results included in the Swiss cooperation programme results framework in support of efficient and effective programme implementation	Annual report Office management report Financial reports/audits Internal controls system report	Annual review (October)

Table 2: Overview of monitoring system

Annex 1: Swiss cooperation programme at a glance

Swiss Cooperation Programme for Zimbabwe and Zambia 2023-2026

Overview



Annex 4: Acronyms and abbreviations

CEDRIG	Climate, Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction Integration Guidance
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease
CSE	Comprehensive sexuality education
CSO	Civil society organization
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
FDFA	Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
GBV	Gender-based violence
LGBTQI	Lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer and intersex
MSD	Market systems development
NCDs	Non-communicable diseases
NGO	Non-governmental organization
ODA	Official development assistance
PSS	Psychosocial support
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SRHR	Sexual and reproductive health and rights

Imprint

Editor:
Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC
3003 Bern

Design:
Mark Manion, Communication Arts

This publication can be downloaded from the website
www.sdc.admin.ch/publications.

Bern, 2023