

Reimagining health sector coordination in Zimbabwe: innovation for UHC

Blog article

Towards Universal Health Coverage: An introduction to the Health Sector Coordination Framework (HSCF) in Zimbabwe

In the quest for universal health coverage, Zimbabwe has recognized the importance of coordination and collaboration within the health sector. The Ministry of Health and Child Care (MoHCC) has developed the Health Sector Coordination Framework (HSCF) with the goal of maximizing health outcomes among the people of Zimbabwe. The HSCF brings together all stakeholders, including government, donors, and civil society, to work together in the financing, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all health-related interventions. In this blog post, we will take a closer look at the HSCF, its objectives, and the collaborative elements that make it a key strategy in achieving the SDG3 targets in Zimbabwe.

Partnering for Success: The Importance of Collaboration in Achieving the SDG3 Targets in Zimbabwe

The path to universal health coverage in Zimbabwe is heavily dependent on coordination and collaboration within the health sector. The Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All (SDG3 GAP) signatory agencies are working together through national mechanisms in support of the National Health Strategy (2021-2025) towards Primary Health Care (PHC) under the leadership of the Ministry of Health and Child Care (MoHCC). Donors as the European Union, United States Government, United Kingdom, Ireland, France, Germany, Japan, the Global Fund, African Development Bank, and the World Bank are complementing the government's efforts with additional financial and technical support.

The government-led COVID-19 Response Coordination Platforms have ensured an effective whole-of-government, whole of society COVID-19 response, including the national COVID-19 vaccination roll-out. The SDG3 GAP partner agencies have demonstrated their commitment to coordination and greater alignment by working in close collaboration with the MoHCC and contributing to Intra-Action Reviews that have guided the finalization of the Multisectoral COVID-19 National Response Plans. They have played significant roles in the coordination structures and response pillars, for example, Points of Entry, Operational Support, Logistics Supply Chain System, and Lab Quality Assurance, Case Management, continuation of Essential Health Services, Vaccination Pillar, and Research Pillar. It is important to note that SDG3 GAP agencies have actively participated in these structures based on their comparative advantages, resulting in greater relevance and appropriateness of inputs to the response specific to those pillars.



Additionally, the Health Sector Coordination Framework (HSCF) was developed by the MoHCC with support from SDG3 GAP agencies in 2019-2020, following a recognition of the need for further alignment among development partners in the health sector response efforts, and based on the lessons learned and experiences with the National Health Strategy (NHS) development processes. Despite the initial development of the framework, its operationalization stalled due to the emergence of the pandemic, contextual dynamics, and financial constraints to support the key processes associated with the framework. The SDG3 GAP Recovery Challenge Funds have been instrumental in activating this coordination framework, which, though still in the early stages, presents a strong opportunity to improve partner collaboration and alignment in joint planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of health investments in PHC towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC). The HSCF would benefit from the full support of partners and capacity strengthening to ensure consistent conduct of the relevant business processes associated with the framework.

In summary, the collaborative efforts of various stakeholders including the government, donors, and civil society, along with the implementation of the Health Sector Coordination Framework (HSCF) are key strategies in achieving the SDG3 targets in Zimbabwe.

Joint Efforts for Better Outcomes: The Impact of SDG3 GAP Agencies in Zimbabwe's Health Sector

The joint efforts of the SDG3 GAP agencies have played a crucial role in improving coordination and collaboration in the health sector in Zimbabwe, leading to better outcomes related to the SDGs recovery. Key informants from the MoHCC have highlighted the benefits of the improved coordination and collaboration, including increased alignment of support received from development partners with national plans and strategies.

Through these efforts, the following results have been achieved:

- The National Health Strategy (NHS) 2021-2025 and Health Sector Investment Case: The SDG3 GAP agencies have collaborated to support the development of the NHS and its Investment Case, providing technical assistance, joint planning, financial assistance, and technical quality assurance.
- The COVID-19 Response Operational Plans, Vaccination Policy Guidelines, Statutory Instruments and Various Public Health Measures, Protocols for Prevention of COVID-19: These were achieved through a strong partnership and participation of SDG3 GAP agencies in the Government-led COVID-19 Response Coordination Platforms. Their efforts have contributed to the success of the observed COVID-19 containment in the country.
- The cross-cutting issues of gender equality and inequity: The work of the SDG3 GAP agencies has addressed the cross-cutting issues of inequity and gender equality in the health sector by including equity in health as one of the key priority areas of the NHS 2021-2025. For example, their efforts have ensured continuity of access and utilization of essential health services, such as sexual and reproductive health, family planning and gender-based violence prevention and response services, through the Multisectoral Mobile One Stop Centers (OSC) during the COVID-19 lockdown periods. These efforts have been led by UNFPA and UNWOMEN, in collaboration with civil society, to directly interface with the community. Additionally, the coordination platforms have tackled gender barriers exacerbated by COVID-19 in a coordinated approach, where all partners have collectively contributed to the Intra-Action Reviews.

The joint efforts of the SDG3 GAP agencies have played a vital role in improving coordination and collaboration in the health sector in Zimbabwe, leading to better



outcomes related to the SDGs recovery and addressing cross-cutting issues of equity and gender equality. These results have supported evidence-based decision-making, the rollout of national health strategies, and essential programs in the path towards Universal Health Coverage in Zimbabwe.

Moving forward

The Ministry of Health and Child Care (MoHCC) in Zimbabwe recognizes the need for effective collaboration within the health sector to improve the determinants of health and address challenges in maternal and child health, malnutrition, non-communicable diseases, and health security. To this end, the MoHCC has developed and seeks to implement a Health Sector Coordination Framework (HSCF) whose primary objective is to coordinate efforts by all stakeholders in the financing, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all health-related interventions to maximize health outcomes among the people of Zimbabwe. Through this HSCF, the MoHCC with the support of SDG 3 agencies, envisages efficiencies in the management and coordination of the available resources, reductions in duplication of efforts, stronger partner alignment and shared accountability. Additionally, the collaborative efforts of various stakeholders including the government, donors, and civil society, along with the implementation of the Health Sector Coordination Framework (HSCF) are key strategies in achieving the SDG3 targets in Zimbabwe. It is important for all stakeholders to continue to work together to achieve universal health coverage for the people of Zimbabwe.

Learn more about the efforts to achieve the SDG3 targets in Zimbabwe and the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Wellbeing for All (SDG3 GAP): <https://www.who.int/initiatives/sdg3-global-action-plan>

