



Save the Children

ZIMBABWE

THE GARDEN TRUST

Overview

Between 2013 and 2022, Save the Children in Zimbabwe (SC) and The Garden Trust's integrated Food Security, Nutrition, Health, and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) program reached over **50,000 children and their communities** in Binga and Kariba districts, increasing food and nutrition security, improving hygiene and Infant & Young Child Feeding practices (IYCF), and increasing access to health services, clean water, and sanitation.

Phases 1 – 5 (2013 – 2018) of the program were implemented in Binga district, and Phases 6-8 (2019 – 2022) of the program were implemented in Kariba district. Both districts contend with high levels of food insecurity, poor access to clean water, poor access to quality health care, and high risk of disease outbreak. These factors, in addition to limited knowledge of IYCF, nutrition, and hygiene practices, contribute to high levels of malnutrition. SC and The Garden Trust program addressed each of these factors for a more impactful nutrition intervention. Throughout each phase of the program, community gardens and nutrition centers were established, alongside new or rehabilitated water supply systems, where community members learned about 'Healthy Harvests' and good agronomic practices, safe harvesting, and proper food handling and storage. Positive health, nutrition, and IYCF practices were promoted through Mother-to-Mother Care Groups and *Padare* (Men's Groups), facilitated by trained Community Health Workers. Children were regularly screened for malnutrition, and those suffering malnutrition received quality care by health workers who participated in integrated management of acute malnutrition training and mentorship. Finally, Ministry of Health micronutrient supplementation and immunization services, were scaled up.

Of many notable achievements, the program improved infant and young child feeding practices, including a 28% increase in the number of children 0-6 months being exclusively breast-fed; and reduced malnutrition, including an 8.5% decrease in stunting rates.

Phase 8 Summary

Between March and October 2022, The Garden Trust Program improved health and nutrition behavior practices and increased access to quality health and agriculture services among 29,892 people in the most remote and hard-to-reach areas of Kariba district. **20,510 children (10,665 girls and 9,845 boys) under five years of age were reached with immunization services, micronutrient supplementation services, and growth monitoring/malnutrition screening services.** One solar-powered piped water scheme and two community nutrition garden centers were developed, where 82 beneficiaries were trained in Healthy Harvest or IYCF. 99 health workers in 9 rural health facilities received training and mentorship on integrated management of acute malnutrition, and 60 village health workers were supported to provide caregiver support to 43 Mother-to-Mother Care Groups and 1,046 men participating in *Padare*.

Major Achievements throughout the Program

- Improvement in infant feeding practices
 - Between 2015 and 2017 (Phases 2-4), the percentage of children under five years of age receiving the minimum acceptable diet in the targeted wards in Binga increased from 0% to 12.2%. During the same period, the percentage of children receiving a diversified diet increased from 8.9% to 16%.
 - Exclusive breastfeeding for children aged 0-6 months increased from 50% in August 2018 to 78% in July 2019 in Binga (Phase 5), and from 23.1% in November 2019 to 56.3% in November 2020 in Kariba (Phase 6).
- Reduction in malnutrition
 - The prevalence of stunting in the targeted wards in Binga dropped significantly between 2015 and the program's Endline Assessment in 2017 (Phases 2-4), from 26.6% to 18.1%.
- Improvement in management of acute malnutrition
 - During phase 5 of the project (August 2018 – July 2019), when 85.1% of people in Binga needed food aid during an El Nino-induced drought and economic crisis, SC supported health facilities and village health workers to conduct malnutrition screenings for over 85% of the district's children under five for population. During the period, Binga was the only district in Zimbabwe where more than 80% of children under five were screened.
 - In 2017 (Phase 4), the cure rate of children treated for malnutrition increased from 78% to 93%, and can be attributed to SC's introduction of the mobile health Community Management of Acute Malnutrition platform, which improved early detection, referral, and follow-up of malnourished children.

In the News

[Save the Children champions Nutrition](#), The Chronicle.

[Using indigenous knowledge systems to mitigate malnutrition](#), The Herald.

[Integrated Nutrition and WASH Project Transforms Binga Fortunes](#), Health Times.

Stunting in Binga, ZFM Stereo:



Stunting Binga News.mp3

Success Story

Accordance is a healthy child. His mother, Ruth, feeds him and his three siblings a four-star diet consisting of all nutrients essential for a child's growth. In the past, Ruth did not know the importance of providing her children a balanced diet and would feed them a diet of porridge and sadza [maize meal]. Thanks to The Garden Trust program, Ruth now has the knowledge and access to healthy foods for her children to grow up healthy and strong.

"Accordance has never suffered any malnutrition-related illnesses. I have learnt to feed him well with the locally available resources.

I am grateful to Garden Trust for the establishment of the nutrition garden and provision of clean and safe water. We are now able to access fruits and vegetables for diverse diets because we grow them on our own."



Under The Garden Trust, Ruth joined a Mother-to-Mother Support Group facilitated by the local Village Health Worker (VHW). During support group sessions, Ruth and other mothers were trained on proper IYCF practices, like exclusive breast feeding for children under six months, complementary feeding for children 6-59 months, and healthy diets for pregnant women. The VHW also encouraged Ruth and other mothers to take their children for routine immunizations, which are were not widely taken in the community. Accordance and Ruth's other children have now been vaccinated against measles and polio, diseases that are on the rise in southern Africa.

The Garden Trust also facilitated the establishment of a community nutrition garden and a solar powered piped water scheme for improved access to safe and clean water for household use, livestock, and the garden. Ruth is a proud member of the water point committee, which was trained on management and maintenance of the water scheme, and she maintains 13 beds in the nutrition garden to grow butternut, eggplant, carrots, okra, tomatoes, and other vegetables that contribute to her



The Nutrition Garden in Kariba

family's dietary diversity. At the garden and Mother-to-Mother Support Group, Ruth learned how to prepare healthy meals for her children, and how to preserve vegetables through methods like sun-drying. Ruth also participated in a cooking competition, where she was tasked with preparing different balanced meals for children of all different age groups!

Ruth is grateful for the support she received under The Garden Trust program. Her children now have access to healthy and diverse food.

Ruth encourages other mothers and caregivers to join Mother-to-Mother Support Groups to learn about infant feeding, the four-star diet, and the importance of routine immunizations to eradicate malnutrition and to curb preventable childhood illnesses like measles and polio.



Ruth prepares grains in her granary.