Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

Hand-in-Hand
Initiative

Zimbabwe



HAND-IN-HAND INITIATIVE | 2026 INVESTMENT FORUM

IMPORTANT NOTES

Hand-in-Hand Initiative

FAO'S HAND-IN-HAND INITIATIVE

The investment opportunities presented in this document derive from government-led investment plans developed under FAO's Hand-in-Hand (HIH) Initiative. The Initiative supports countries in identifying high-impact agrifood system investments through a combination of data-driven territorial analysis, value chain assessments, and close collaboration with national counterparts. Using the Hand-in-Hand Geospatial Platform, the Initiative integrates geospatial, biophysical, and socio-economic data to identify priority "green zones" where agricultural potential and poverty incidence overlap, creating strong opportunities for transformative investment. Based on these analyses, national governments lead the development of investment plans that identify priority value chains, key bottlenecks, and potential investments required to accelerate agrifood system transformation. These investment opportunities aim to raise incomes, improve nutrition, and empower poor and vulnerable populations, while strengthening resilience to climate change and supporting the sustainable management of natural resources. The Initiative focuses on territories where targeted investments can generate the greatest impact in reducing poverty and hunger, contributing to progress towards Sustainable Development Goals SDG1 (No Poverty), SDG2 (Zero Hunger), and SDG10 (Reduced Inequalities), while balancing economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability.

IMPORTANT CLARIFICATIONS

The opportunities presented in this document are derived from government investment plans and reflect national development priorities identified through the Hand-in-Hand Initiative. FAO provides analytical and technical support in the identification and assessment of these opportunities and facilitates engagement with potential partners. The concepts presented are indicative and require further structuring and discussion with the relevant governments and potential investors. This document therefore presents a pipeline of government-prioritized agrifood investment opportunities that have been pre-screened using FAO's Hand-in-Hand analytical tools. FAO can support interested partners by facilitating technical exchanges and follow-up discussions with relevant government counterparts.

IMPACT TAGS

Investment cases are classified across four impact areas to highlight their primary development contributions and ensure comparability across countries and value chains.

Livelihoods	Income, productivity, jobs, and market access
Gender & Youth	Inclusion and opportunities for women and young people
Planet & Environment	Climate resilience and sustainable resource management
Digital	Use of technology to improve efficiency and access

ZIMBABWE

A resource-rich, reform-driven agrifood system attracting fast-growing private investment

KEY INVESTMENT SIGNALS

POPULATION

17.3M

(MILLION)

GDP

USD 45.7B

(BILLION)

AGRICULTURAL LAND

33.3M ha

(MILLION HECTARES)

INVESTMENT CASE

ABUNDANT NATURAL RESOURCES

- 10,600 dams with potential to irrigate 2 million hectares
- Six distinct agroecological zones support diverse farming systems
- Easy land access through partnerships and joint ventures
- Skilled, literate workforce (90% literacy rate)

STRATEGIC REGIONAL ACCESS

- Member of SADC, COMESA, ACP, AfCFTA and WTO
- Connects to 600 million consumers via road, rail and air
- Strategically positioned within the SADC and COMESA trade blocs
- Backed by bilateral and multilateral trade agreements

ENABLING BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

- Multi-currency system eliminates exchange-rate risk
- Dividends and profits are freely remittable
- Ongoing reforms strengthening the ease of doing business
- New secure land tenure and legal investment protection

ZIMBABWE: INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO

Scaling irrigation-led production and agro-processing to strengthen food security and unlock export growth

INVESTMENT PLAN **ZIMBABWE**	INVESTMENT CASE **1. MAIZE**	INVESTMENT CASE **2. SOYBEAN**	INVESTMENT CASE **3. BLUEBERRIES**	INVESTMENT CASE **4. DAIRY**	INVESTMENT CASE **5. DAM**
IMPACT TAGS	IMPACT TAGS	IMPACT TAGS	IMPACT TAGS	IMPACT TAGS	IMPACT TAGS
INVESTMENT **USD 1.6 billion**	INVESTMENT **USD 468.0 million**	INVESTMENT **USD 402.7 million**	INVESTMENT **USD 23.7 million**	INVESTMENT **USD 71.4 million**	INVESTMENT **USD 680.0 million**
NPV **USD 736.8 million**	NPV **USD 182.4 million**	NPV **USD 96.8 million**	NPV **USD 41.5 million**	NPV **USD 38.6 million**	NPV **USD 377.5 million**
AVG IRR **21.2%**	IRR **22.0%**	IRR **19.0%**	IRR **24.0%**	IRR **21.0%**	IRR **20.0%**
DIRECT BENEFICIARIES **148.4 thousand**	DIRECT BENEFICIARIES **44.1 thousand**	DIRECT BENEFICIARIES **44.9 thousand**	DIRECT BENEFICIARIES **1.4 thousand**	DIRECT BENEFICIARIES **0.7 thousand**	DIRECT BENEFICIARIES **57.1 thousand**
INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES **1.3 million**	INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES **397.1 thousand**	INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES **404.5 thousand**	INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES **13.0 thousand**	INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES **6.4 thousand**	INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES **514.3 thousand**
AVG PER CAPITA INCOME INCREASE **+USD 3,440**	PER CAPITA INCOME INCREASE **+USD 1,095**	PER CAPITA INCOME INCREASE **+USD 1,456**	PER CAPITA INCOME INCREASE **+USD 9,800**	PER CAPITA INCOME INCREASE **+USD 1,020**	PER CAPITA INCOME INCREASE **+USD 3,827**
GHG IMPACT **+110.1 thousand tCO2-e**	GHG IMPACT **+51.2 thousand tCO2-e**	GHG IMPACT **+13.0 thousand tCO2-e**	GHG IMPACT **+1.8 thousand tCO2-e**	GHG IMPACT **+41.4 thousand tCO2-e**	GHG IMPACT **+2.7 thousand tCO2-e**

1. MAIZE

From rain-fed dependency to a resilient, irrigation-driven staple grain powerhouse

Hand-in-Hand Initiative

INVESTMENT PROFILE (INDICATIVE)

INVESTMENT
USD 468.0M
(MILLION)

NPV
USD 182.4M
(MILLION)

IRR
22.0%
(%)

RATIONALE

- Staple crop underpinning national food security and household nutrition
- Strong, government-backed demand from GMB and domestic millers
- Significant yield upside as irrigation and mechanization scale up
- Priority regions across Mashonaland East, Central, West and Manicaland

KEY BOTTLENECKS	PROPOSED INVESTMENTS(*)
1. Limited conveyance of water & siltation of dams	PPP — Water source infrastructure (USD 70.2 million)
2. Low irrigation coverage, rainfall-dependent production	PPP — Irrigation infrastructure (81,250Ha) (USD 187.2 million)
3. Low farm power, limited access to machinery	Private — Mechanization centers & equipment (USD 117.0 million)
4. Increasing incidence of pests and diseases	Private, PPP — • Seed breeding & improved varieties (USD 37.4 million) • Integrated pest & crop management (USD 23.4 million)
5. Declining soil fertility & high soil acidity	Private — Soil health management (USD 32.8 million)

SUSTAINABILITY BENEFITS

DIRECT BENEFICIARIES
44.1K
(THOUSAND)

INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES
397.1K
(THOUSAND)

PER CAPITA INCOME INCREASE
+1,095
(USD/PERSON)

GHG IMPACT
FAO EXACT CARBON TOOL
+51.2K
(THOUSAND tCO2-e)

Note: (*) Opportunities reflect government priorities identified through the FAO Hand-in-Hand Initiative and require further structuring with relevant public and private stakeholders.

2. SOYBEAN

Growing a reliable, home-grown source of cooking oil and stock feed for regional markets

INVESTMENT PROFILE (INDICATIVE)

INVESTMENT
USD 402.7M
(MILLION)

NPV
USD 96.8M
(MILLION)

IRR
19.0%
(%)

RATIONALE

- Strategic crop feeding domestic oil-pressing and stock-feed industries
- Import-substitution potential against significant unmet national oil demand
- Export potential into regional oilseed and soya meal markets
- Priority regions concentrated in Mashonaland West and Central

KEY BOTTLENECKS	PROPOSED INVESTMENTS(*)	
1. Low irrigation coverage, rainfall-dependent production	PPP	Irrigation infrastructure (48,718Ha) (USD 209.4 million)
2. Limited access to affordable seasonal finance	Private	Production finance support (USD 32.2 million)
3. Low mechanization, delayed planting & harvesting	Private	Mechanization centers & equipment (USD 88.6 million)
4. Inadequacy of soyabean seed	Private	Climate-resilient seed systems (USD 40.3 million)
5. Low soil fertility, poor nutrient management	Private	Soil diagnostics & fertility management(USD 32.2 million)

SUSTAINABILITY BENEFITS

DIRECT BENEFICIARIES
44.9K
(THOUSAND)

INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES
404.5K
(THOUSAND)

PER CAPITA INCOME INCREASE
+1,456
(USD/PERSON)

GHG IMPACT
FAO EXACT CARBON TOOL
+13.0K
(THOUSAND tCO2-e)

Note: (*) Opportunities reflect government priorities identified through the FAO Hand-in-Hand Initiative and require further structuring with relevant public and private stakeholders.

3. BLUEBERRIES

Building a climate-smart, export-ready blueberry industry for premium global markets

INVESTMENT PROFILE (INDICATIVE)

INVESTMENT
USD 23.7M
(MILLION)

NPV
USD 41.5M
(MILLION)

IRR
24.0%
(%)

RATIONALE

- Premium export crop with strong, growing demand in global markets
- Favorable counter-seasonal supply window valued by international buyers
- Emerging access to new markets across Asia, SADC and COMESA
- Priority regions across Mashonaland and Manicaland provinces

KEY BOTTLENECKS	PROPOSED INVESTMENTS(*)
1. Limited irrigation infrastructure	PPP — Irrigation systems (drip irrigation, water weirs) (USD 5.9 million)
2. Inadequate pack house & cold-chain capacity	Private — Pack houses & cold-chain facilities (USD 4.7 million)
3. High establishment costs limiting expansion	Private — Greenhouses & production infrastructure (USD 3.4 million)

SUSTAINABILITY BENEFITS

DIRECT BENEFICIARIES
1.4K
(THOUSAND)

INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES
13.0K
(THOUSAND)

PER CAPITA INCOME INCREASE
+9,800
(USD/PERSON)

GHG IMPACT
FAO EXACT CARBON TOOL
+1.8K
(THOUSAND tCO2-e)

Note: (*) Opportunities reflect government priorities identified through the FAO Hand-in-Hand Initiative and require further structuring with relevant public and private stakeholders.

3. BLUEBERRIES (cont'd)

Building a climate-smart, export-ready blueberry industry for premium global markets

INVESTMENT PROFILE (INDICATIVE)

INVESTMENT
USD 23.7M
(MILLION)

NPV
USD 41.5M
(MILLION)

IRR
24.0%
(%)

RATIONALE

- Premium export crop with strong, growing demand in global markets
- Favorable counter-seasonal supply window valued by international buyers
- Emerging access to new markets across Asia, SADC and COMESA
- Priority regions across Mashonaland and Manicaland provinces

KEY BOTTLENECKS	PROPOSED INVESTMENTS(*)
4. Limited domestic processing, fresh-export dependence	Private — Processing plants & value addition (USD 3.6 million)
5. Dependence on imported planting material & inputs	Agricultural inputs (seedlings, substrates, agrochemicals) (USD 3.8 million)
6. Labor-intensive operations constraining expansion	Private — Mechanization (tractors, sprayers, planters) (USD 2.3 million)

SUSTAINABILITY BENEFITS

DIRECT BENEFICIARIES
1.4K
(THOUSAND)

INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES
13.0K
(THOUSAND)

PER CAPITA INCOME INCREASE
+9,800
(USD/PERSON)

GHG IMPACT
FAO EXACT CARBON TOOL
+1.8K
(THOUSAND tCO2-e)

Note: (*) Opportunities reflect government priorities identified through the FAO Hand-in-Hand Initiative and require further structuring with relevant public and private stakeholders.

4. DAIRY

Closing Zimbabwe's milk supply gap through modern, integrated dairy value chains

INVESTMENT PROFILE (INDICATIVE)

INVESTMENT
USD 71.4M
(MILLION)

NPV
USD 38.6M
(MILLION)

IRR
21.0%
(%)

RATIONALE

- Sizeable and growing domestic demand for fresh and processed dairy
- Strong potential to substitute imports and expand regional exports
- Genetic and health interventions to lift smallholder productivity
- Priority regions across Manicaland, Mashonaland East and Midlands

KEY BOTTLENECKS	PROPOSED INVESTMENTS(*)
1. Shortages of quality pasture	PPP — Irrigation for pasture (center pivots & equipment) (USD 21.4 million)
2. Deficit of quality livestock feed	Private — Feed & fodder development (USD 14.3 million)
3. High milk losses from inadequate cooling/collection	Private — Milking parlors & cold-chain infrastructure (USD 12.9 million)

SUSTAINABILITY BENEFITS

DIRECT BENEFICIARIES
0.7K
(THOUSAND)

INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES
6.4K
(THOUSAND)

PER CAPITA INCOME INCREASE
+1,020
(USD/PERSON)

GHG IMPACT
FAO EXACT CARBON TOOL
+41.4K
(THOUSAND tCO2-e)

Note: (*) Opportunities reflect government priorities identified through the FAO Hand-in-Hand Initiative and require further structuring with relevant public and private stakeholders.

4. DAIRY (cont'd)

Closing Zimbabwe's milk supply gap through modern, integrated dairy value chains

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(MILLION)

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RATIONALE

- Sizeable and growing domestic demand for fresh and processed dairy
- Strong potential to substitute imports and expand regional exports
- Genetic and health interventions to lift smallholder productivity
- Priority regions across Manicaland, Mashonaland East and Midlands

KEY BOTTLENECKS	PROPOSED INVESTMENTS(*)
4. Limited processing capacity	Private — Mini-processing plants & transport systems (USD 8.6 million)
5. Low genetic potential & disease outbreaks	PPP — Breeding stock improvement & animal health (USD 7.1 million)
6. Lack of specialized forage harvesting equipment	Private — Forage mechanization (hay cutters, balers) (USD 7.1 million)

SUSTAINABILITY BENEFITS

DIRECT BENEFICIARIES
0.7K
(THOUSAND)

INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES
6.4K
(THOUSAND)

PER CAPITA INCOME INCREASE
+1,020
(USD/PERSON)

GHG IMPACT
FAO EXACT CARBON TOOL
+41.4K
(THOUSAND tCO2-e)

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5. DAM AS AN ECONOMIC DRIVER

Transforming the Tugwi-Mukosi Dam into an integrated engine for irrigation, energy, industry and tourism

INVESTMENT PROFILE (INDICATIVE)

INVESTMENT
USD 680.0M
(MILLION)

NPV
USD 377.5M
(MILLION)

IRR
20.0%
(%)

RATIONALE

- Multi-sector hub spanning irrigation, fisheries, agro-processing and tourism
- Reliable hydropower and bulk water to unlock surrounding growth centers
- Diversifies farmer incomes through commercial fisheries and agro-industry
- Anchors rural development in the Masvingo growth corridor

KEY BOTTLENECKS	PROPOSED INVESTMENTS(*)
1. Foundational dam civil works (underpins all components)	Dam infrastructure (USD 300.0 million)
2. Limited irrigation infrastructure, rain-fed dependency	Private — Irrigation development (USD 150.0 million)
3. Underexploited dam fisheries resources	Private — Fisheries production (USD 20.0 million)
4. Most produce sold in raw, unprocessed form	Private — Rural Agro Industrial Park (USD 85.0 million)

SUSTAINABILITY BENEFITS

DIRECT BENEFICIARIES
57.1K
(THOUSAND)

INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES
514.3K
(THOUSAND)

PER CAPITA INCOME INCREASE
+3,827
(USD/PERSON)

GHG IMPACT
FAO EXACT CARBON TOOL
+2.7K
(THOUSAND tCO2-e)

Note: (*) Opportunities reflect government priorities identified through the FAO Hand-in-Hand Initiative and require further structuring with relevant public and private stakeholders.

5. DAM AS AN ECONOMIC DRIVER (cont'd)

Transforming the Tugwi-Mukosi Dam into an integrated engine for irrigation, energy, industry and tourism

INVESTMENT PROFILE (INDICATIVE)

INVESTMENT
USD 680.0M
(MILLION)

NPV
USD 377.5M
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RATIONALE

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- Reliable hydropower and bulk water to unlock surrounding growth centers
- Diversifies farmer incomes through commercial fisheries and agro-industry
- Anchors rural development in the Masvingo growth corridor

KEY BOTTLENECKS	PROPOSED INVESTMENTS(*)
5. Limited reliable electricity supply	Private — Hydro power plant (USD 35.0 million)
6. Limited access to safe, reliable water	PPP — Water treatment & distribution (USD 60.0 million)
7. Untapped tourism potential, limited infrastructure	PPP — Tourism estate (USD 30.0 million)

SUSTAINABILITY BENEFITS

DIRECT BENEFICIARIES
57.1K
(THOUSAND)

INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES
514.3K
(THOUSAND)

PER CAPITA INCOME INCREASE
+3,827
(USD/PERSON)

GHG IMPACT
FAO EXACT CARBON TOOL
+2.7K
(THOUSAND tCO2-e)

Note: (*) Opportunities reflect government priorities identified through the FAO Hand-in-Hand Initiative and require further structuring with relevant public and private stakeholders.

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Click here to see full Investment Note:

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