

DECEMBER 2025

ANNUAL REPORT

EMAS CANADA

ZIMBABWE-GUTU MISSION HOSPITAL



Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3

PROJECT OVERVIEW

3

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

4

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

5

IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

10

LESSONS LEARNED

12

LOOKING AHEAD

13

CONTACT INFORMATION

14

Executive Summary

During the reporting period, EMAS Canada supported a range of initiatives at Gutu Mission Hospital focused on improving access to care. These included specialist outreach camps in gynecology and dentistry, infrastructure upgrades, and efforts to strengthen governance and operational oversight. The activities highlighted the hospital's critical role in meeting healthcare needs in the district and the demand for specialist services that exceed current capacity. However, the expanded programming revealed gaps that need to be addressed. Lessons learned around governance, infrastructure planning, and management will require additional resources for program oversight.

Project Overview

Gutu Mission Hospital (GMH) is a secondary referral hospital in Gutu, Masvingo Province, Zimbabwe. As a mission hospital and critical referral centre, it serves approximately 250,000 people supported by a network of 30 satellite clinics across the district. Maternity is the hospital's busiest ward, averaging 1700 births annually. The hospital operates within a challenging environment marked by aging infrastructure, limited access to specialist services, equipment shortages, and unreliable power and water supply.

EMAS Canada, in partnership with national medical specialists, is contributing to strengthening the hospital's capacity to deliver safe and timely care for mothers and newborns in the district.

Project Objectives

The primary objective of the project is to strengthen maternal and newborn healthcare services at GMH. This will be achieved by:

1

BUILDING THE CAPACITY
OF HEALTH WORKERS IN
GUTU DISTRICT TO
PROVIDE EMERGENCY
MATERNAL AND
NEONATAL CARE

2

IMPROVING RELIABILITY
OF ESSENTIAL
INFRASTRUCTURE
(WATER, POWER,
CLINICAL SPACES)

3

EXPANDING ACCESS TO
SPECIALIZED CLINICAL
SERVICES

4

FUNDRAISING AND
COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT TO RAISE
AWARENESS ABOUT
GUTU MISSION HOSPITAL

These objectives will contribute to GMH becoming a comprehensive obstetric centre of excellence in the district.



Activities & Achievements

In August, an EMAS team visited Gutu Mission Hospital. The mixed specialty team from Canada and the United States of America included: Peter Agwa, Robert Clark, Sandra Clark, Laura Cranna, Chishuvo Mandivenga and Gumisai Mutume. Supporting the team was a local Zimbabwean dentist, Dr. Freeblessing Murahwa and paediatric and obstetrics/gynaecology consultants, Drs. Anil and Shalini Cherian from India.

Specialist Camps

To address gaps in access to specialized care, EMAS supported a gynecological outreach camp in collaboration with the Zimbabwe Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (ZSOG). Specialists from Harare and Masvingo worked alongside GMH staff to deliver surgical services over a three-day period. A total of 40 women received care, including procedures such as hysterectomies, myomectomies, and other gynecological interventions. Patients came from the local community and the wider Gutu district, while others came from different provinces, some traveling significant distances. This highlighted both the reach of the camp and the unmet demand for specialized services.

The camp provided relief for patients while significantly reducing the financial burden associated with accessing care. In addition, the surgeries helped ease patient backlogs at the provincial level and reduced the need for long-distance referrals and travel. This demonstrated the broader impact of the camp and the value of bringing specialized services closer to communities.

Capacity Building and Staff Support

As part of the gynaecological camp, local staff received specialty training to support continuity of care. Training focused on obstetric and gynecological surgical techniques, and pre and post-operative care of patients undergoing major surgery. This approach emphasized sustainability by strengthening local expertise and reinforcing leadership and ownership within the hospital. Staff reported increased confidence and efficiency in care delivery.

Clinical Outreach

Dentists from Zimbabwe and Canada collaborated to provide dentistry services at GMH. Although the hospital has the physical space for dentistry, there is no specialized dental expertise at GMH to run these services independently. The dental clinic served over 120 people over 5 days, with most requiring extractions. A number of patients sought care but could not be accommodated due to timing and resource constraints. This outreach clinic highlighted the scale of the need and the significant gap in access to oral healthcare in Gutu.

The outreach was designed to pilot dental services with the long term goal of building the capacity of GMH to host and sustain dental clinics on its own in the future.

Medical Supplies and Equipment

EMAS facilitated the procurement and delivery of essential medical equipment, prioritized in consultation with hospital leadership. Equipment support included:

- Scrubs
- BP machines
- Oximeter
- Laryngoscopes

These investments were intended to strengthen the hospital's capacity and reduce reliance on outdated or insufficient equipment.

Additionally, financial support was provided for the final steps of electrical and plumbing fittings and works to operationalize an autoclave machine.



Facility Assessment

One of the long-term visions of the project is to attract permanent specialists and partners to serve at the hospital. Drs. Anil and Shalini Cherian visited the facility to assess its readiness and viability as a potential centre of excellence. The comprehensive assessment included infrastructure, hospital management, governance and the day-to-day operational processes. The focus was to gain a broader picture of the local health system and examine how the hospital was interconnected with surrounding clinics, referral pathways and community health needs. This systems-level understanding was important in identifying both strengths and gaps.

From the assessment, it was clear that the appropriate structures, processes, and support systems need to be strengthened and put in place first to ensure sustainability and long-term impact.

Infrastructure

Reliable access to water remains a critical constraint to hospital operations and service delivery. In response, EMAS supported hydrogeological survey and the drilling of a borehole to explore a sustainable solution to this challenge. Subsequent assessments indicated that the site was not suitable due to limited groundwater yield. Discussions are ongoing to identify alternative approaches to addressing the hospital's water needs.

Governance

A need for stronger governance mechanisms was identified to support more dedicated oversight of hospital operations. EMAS supported the drafting of a proposed governance structure to streamline accountability and decision-making processes. The initial recommendation was to establish a Board of Directors for the hospital. However, following review by the Church, this was adapted to a Project Management Team (PMT) model to oversee project implementation and coordination. PMT membership and terms of reference are being finalized.



Fundraising Activities

Ride for Gutu Mission Hospital

The Ride for Gutu Mission Hospital is an annual event in Ontario, Canada, focused on raising funds for activities at the hospital. In 2025, the ride raised over \$65,000, exceeding its target by 8%. A total of 20 cyclists participated; the largest group since the ride's inception in 2022. Funds raised were allocated to clinical outreaches, staff training and infrastructure upgrades (see clinical outreach and specialist camps)

The Great Zimbabwe Ride

This year, a local ride, The Great Zimbabwe Ride was also held in Gutu. The ride was led by the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe in collaboration with Cycling Zimbabwe and EMAS Canada. Approximately 50 cyclists participated, raising USD \$10,000. In addition to contributing toward the purchase of an ambulance, the ride played a significant role in community engagement and awareness across Masvingo Province. A medical camp was hosted as a pre-ride activity to strengthen community connection to the hospital and raise its profile. Over 700 people received free consultations and medications during the camp.

Impact Highlights

Patient Testimonial



This program helped a number of people. It showed that there were many people who had challenges that needed the interventions we received. The procedures are typically expensive - making them inaccessible. When we look at the number of people who came for the surgeries, it showed that all these people really needed the help. I want to thank those who organized this program, and the doctors who came from Harare and Masvingo as well as the local doctors, for helping us.

I had a myomectomy - a procedure I didn't think I would ever have done. Initially, when I was told that I had fibroids, my first thought was that my uterus would be removed. This really troubled me. When the doctors came, they explained that I could remove the fibroids and keep everything intact. This is exactly what happened. I was really happy that I could keep my uterus.

The doctors and staff were all very patient in performing the surgeries. Out of all the patients, I didn't hear of a single one that had challenges. All their procedures went well.

I wish this program could be repeated so that others can also receive the help. There were a number of women who didn't get the opportunity. I hope that more people can get help because some people don't have the money and even raising funds for such procedures takes time.

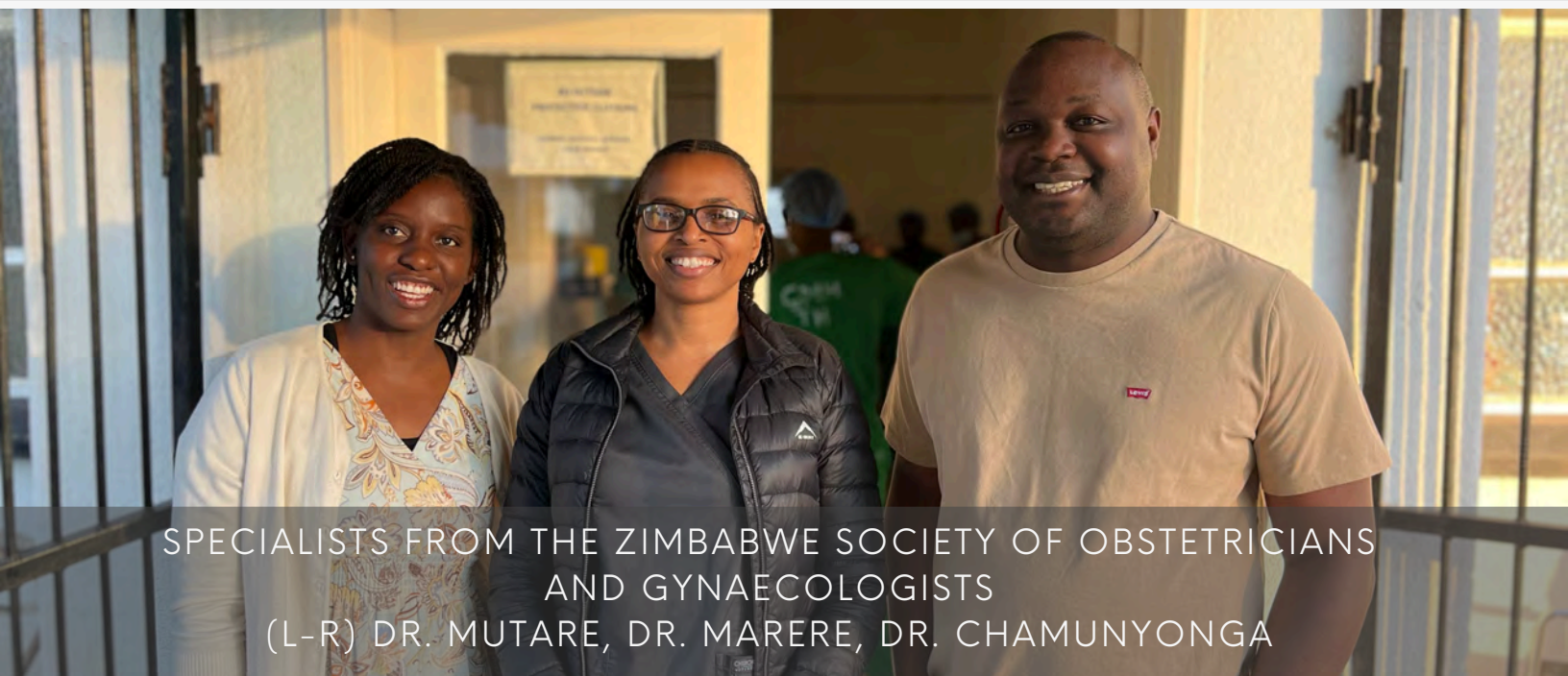




SURGICAL TEAM IN THEATRE



SURGICAL TEAM



SPECIALISTS FROM THE ZIMBABWE SOCIETY OF OBSTETRICIANS
AND GYNAECOLOGISTS
(L-R) DR. MUTARE, DR. MARERE, DR. CHAMUNYONGA

Lessons Learned

As the number and scope of activities increased, the work offered insight into areas for improvement within management and hospital systems. In 2025, gaps in leadership capacity and day-to-day operational readiness were more apparent. The experience reinforced what had previously been advised about “boots on the ground” to support coordination. These lessons showed through practical challenges, such as equipment not being fully ready for planned activities and some inefficiencies in supply planning. Moving forward, there is a need for stronger systems and clearer roles before implementing activities. The borehole initiative highlighted the need for more robust and transparent hydrogeological assessments. While initial assessments were completed, additional site validation is essential before implementation.

Moving forward, the focus will be on consolidating these lessons to create the conditions necessary for sustainable growth of the programs and improved service delivery.



Looking Ahead



CLINICAL OUTREACH

In the upcoming year, the team will continue to prioritize clinical outreach activities and specialist camps, including the planning of another gynaecological surgical camp. The camps will be complemented by ongoing training initiatives. Efforts are also underway to support Zimbabwean dentists to organize and deliver dental outreach clinics at GMH throughout the year, building local capacity and continuity of care.

2023



INFRASTRUCTURE

Targeted infrastructure upgrades will continue, with particular attention to addressing ongoing water challenges at the hospital.

2024



FUNDRAISING

The Ride for Gutu Mission Hospital, scheduled for September 2026, will support these priorities and ensure resources are aligned with identified hospital needs.

2025



GOVERNANCE

As the new governance structure takes shape, EMAS looks forward to engaging within this framework and aligning future activities accordingly. Strengthened oversight and clearer processes are expected to improve coordination and efficiency across initiatives. This foundation will pave the way for smoother implementation and continued progress in the year ahead.

2026



Contact Information

Project Leads

Peter Agwa - peter@emascanada.org

Chishuvo Mandivenga - chi@emascanada.org

Websites

emascanada.org/where-we-serve/zimbabwe/zimbabwe-gutu/

ride.emascanada.org

gutumissionhospital.org

Social Media

Instagram: [@ride.emascanada](https://www.instagram.com/ride.emascanada)