

Trajectories of Inclusion Research Project Preliminary Research Findings, Zimbabwe



Prepared by the

Development Governance Institute
Dzivaguru House, 2682 Mainway Meadows
Harare-Zimbabwe

www.degi.co.zw; devgovernance.kc@gmail.com

+263 242 003664

Harare, January 2022 (with April 2026 edits).



Contents Page

REPORT SUMMARY	V
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 ABOUT THE STUDY	1
1.2 ZIMBABWE: A PROFILE	1
2.0 STUDY CITIES AND SETTLEMENTS	2
2.1 HARARE	2
FIGURE 1: MAP SHOWING HARARE SITES	3
2.1.1 HOPLEY	4
FIGURE 2: STUDY SITE, HOPLEY.....	5
2.1.2 HATCLIFFE EXTENSION	6
FIGURE 3: STUDY SITE, HATCLIFFE EXTENSION.....	6
2.1.3 BUDIRO 5 EXTENSION	7
FIGURE 4: BUDIRO 5 EXTENSION	8
2.1.4 CHURU FARM	8
FIGURE 5: CHURU FARM	9
2.2 MASVINGO	9
FIGURE 6: MAP SHOWING MASVINGO SITES	10
2.2.1 'OLD' MUCHEKE.....	10
FIGURE 7: OLD MUCHEKE	11
2.3.2 VICTORIA RANCH	11
FIGURE 8: VICTORIA RANCH.....	12
3.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS	13
3.1 SUMMARY OF THE METHODOLOGY	13
TABLE 1: FGD AND HOUSEHOLD SURVEY REACH	13
3.2 FGD FINDINGS	13
3.2.1 WATER	13
3.2.2 SANITATION	14
3.2.3 TRANSPORT.....	15
3.2.4 ENERGY	16
3.2.5 COMMUNICATION	16
3.3 HOUSEHOLD SURVEY FINDINGS	17
3.3.1 HOUSING.....	17
FIGURE 9: HOUSING TYPES ACROSS ALL SETTLEMENTS	17
FIGURE 10: HOUSING TYPES PER SETTLEMENT.....	17
FIGURE 11: LAND/ HOUSING DOCUMENTATION	18



FIGURE 12: DOCUMENTS FOR LAND/ HOUSING BY SETTLEMENT..... 18

FIGURE 13: DOCUMENTATION TYPE ACROSS ALL SIX SITES..... 19

3.3.2 WATER 19

FIGURE 14: DRINKING WATER SOURCES FOR THE SIX SITES. 19

FIGURE 15: AGENTS IN WATER PROVISION. 20

FIGURE 16: RANKING OF MAIN SOURCE OF DRINKING WATER IN TERMS OF QUALITY, ACCESSIBILITY AND AFFORDABILITY. 20

3.3.3 SANITATION 20

FIGURE 17: TOILET TYPES ACROSS ALL SITES..... 21

FIGURE 18: LOCATION OF THE TOILET. 21

FIGURE 19: AGENTS INVOLVED IN SANITATION PROVISION 22

3.3.4 ENERGY 22

FIGURE 20: ELECTRICITY AVAILABILITY 22

FIGURE 21: ENERGY SOURCES FOR LIGHTING AND COOKING. 23

FIGURE 22: AGENCIES ENGAGED FOR ELECTRICITY ACROSS ALL SITES. 24

3.3.5 TRANSPORT..... 24

FIGURE 23: TRANSPORT MODES BY SETTLEMENT. 24

FIGURE 24: SATISFACTION WITH ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF THE MAIN ROAD. 25

3.3.6 COMMUNICATION 25

FIGURE 25: ACCESS TO MOBILE PHONES. 25

FIGURE 26: ACCESS TO FINANCIAL SERVICES..... 26

4.0 CONCLUSION, POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND POSSIBLE STATE RESPONSES..... 26

4.1 CONCLUSION..... 26

4.2 POLICY IMPLICATIONS WITH POSSIBLE STATE RESPONSES 27

Abbreviations

CAHF	Centre for Affordable Housing Finance in Africa
CBO	Community Based Organisation
COVID19	Coronavirus Diseases 2019
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GCRF	Global Challenges Research Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RDC	Rural District Council
UN	United Nations
USD	United States Dollar
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
ZANU PF	Zimbabwe African National Union- Patriotic Front
ZESA	Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority
ZIMSTAT	Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency



Recommended citation

Chatiza K, Marewo M, Nyevera T, Chatiza E and Masimba G (2022 with 2026 edits) Preliminary Findings of the Trajectories of Inclusion Research Project, Zimbabwe Report



Report Summary

This report presents preliminary findings of the Trajectories of Inclusion Research Project in Zimbabwe, implemented by the Development Governance Institute between September 2020 and December 2021. The project forms part of a comparative, multi-country research initiative examining how low-income urban and peri-urban households experience inclusion and exclusion in access to essential infrastructure and services, with a particular focus on populations that are spatially and socio-economically “trapped.”

Purpose and Scope

The study responds to the rapid growth of informal and peri-urban settlements in Zimbabwe since the early 2000s and the state’s shifting, often ambivalent, response to informality. While mass evictions have receded, the report highlights the absence of sustained engagement to stabilise, service, or integrate these settlements. The findings were prepared to inform policy dialogue among national government, local authorities, civil society, development partners, and settlement residents.

Study Areas and Methodology

Research was conducted in six settlements across Harare (Hopley, Hatcliffe Extension, Budiriro 5 Extension, Churu Farm) and Masvingo (Old Mucheke and Victoria Ranch). These sites represent a spectrum of urban, peri-urban, informal, and post-eviction settlement trajectories, many of them located in administrative grey zones straddling urban and rural jurisdictions.

The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining 16 focus group discussions involving 152 participants and a household survey covering 3,209 respondents, complemented by secondary literature review and sustained engagement with state and community institutions.

Key Findings

1. Weak State Presence and Self-Provisioning

Across most sites, state and local authority involvement in infrastructure and service provision is limited, with Mucheke the notable exception due to its formal incorporation into municipal systems. In all other settlements, residents rely predominantly on self-provisioning, community organisation, NGOs, and informal arrangements to access water, sanitation, energy, transport, and housing. This reliance on self-help systematically excludes the poorest and reinforces inequality.

2. Tenure Insecurity and Housing Precarity

Despite multiple land acquisition pathways—including government allocation, cooperatives, party structures, and self-allocation—more than half of households lack formal documentation. Tenure insecurity discourages investment, sustains fear of eviction, and undermines access to formal services and credit. Detached housing dominates most sites, often with multiple households sharing single stands under insecure arrangements.



3. Chronic WASH Deficits

All settlements face serious water and sanitation challenges. Wells and boreholes—often located close to pit latrines or substandard septic tanks—are the primary water sources, creating high contamination risks. In formally reticulated areas such as Mucheke and Hatcliffe Extension, water supply is erratic, infrastructure is ageing, and overcrowding overwhelms systems. Hygiene risks are especially acute where up to 25 households share a single toilet. Solid waste management is effectively absent across all sites.

4. Poor Transport and Physical Connectivity

Except for Mucheke, settlements are poorly connected due to inadequate road infrastructure. Earth and gravel roads become impassable during the rainy season, limiting access to transport services, employment, education, and healthcare. Informal transport dominates, fares are high, and residents frequently walk long distances to reach transport hubs.

5. Severe Energy Poverty

Electricity access is extremely limited outside Mucheke, with 87% of surveyed households lacking grid connection. Households rely on mixed energy sources—solar and candles for lighting, and firewood or gas for cooking. High costs and shortages force some residents to use plastics and other hazardous materials for fuel, posing environmental and health risks, particularly for women.

6. Relatively Better Communication Access

Compared to other services, communication infrastructure is more accessible, with mobile phones widely used across settlements. However, network coverage remains uneven, and while mobile-enabled financial services are available to many, affordability, trust, and digital literacy constraints persist.

Overall Conclusion

The report concludes that trapped urban and peri-urban populations in Zimbabwe experience exclusion that is fundamentally structural, not incidental. Weak and fragmented governance, tenure insecurity, infrastructure backlogs, and reliance on self-provisioning combine to lock households into precarious living conditions. Community organisation plays a critical coping role but cannot substitute for systemic state engagement.

The overarching message is that these settlements are not transitional anomalies but enduring components of Zimbabwe's urban future. Addressing their challenges requires a shift from episodic, project-based responses toward integrated, long-term urban governance, infrastructure investment, and inclusive policy reform that recognises immobility as a planning reality rather than a failure.



1.0 Introduction

1.1 About the Study

This report captures research implementation progress and findings of activities conducted through December 2021. The 'Towards Trajectories of Inclusion: Making Infrastructure Work for the most Marginalized' (Inclusive Urban Infrastructure) started in September 2020. It is a 3-year research project being implemented in Zimbabwe, Somaliland (Africa), Bangladesh, and Sri-Lanka (Asia).

The research project's focus is on understanding inclusion/exclusion in systems of provision for essential services to low-income households. In Zimbabwe investigating inclusion/exclusion in poor urban settlements has become important arising from their increasing numbers post-2000. State responses to this phenomenon of rising informality have been mixed but generally characterised by a perceptible retreat from wholesale demolitions and evictions. Yet, the anti-informality rhetoric is juxtaposed with an inability to fully engage with the emergent settlements towards establishment settlement sustainability or resilience.

In terms of purpose this report was prepared for use with stakeholders in a policy seminar. The seminar was designed to provide an update to the city and national government stakeholders involved in settlement planning, development, and management alongside local stakeholders in the civil society, private and community sectors with a priority to residents of the six study settlements. The report provides a brief profile of Zimbabwe and findings from Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and a household survey. Insights shared in this report are drawn from secondary literature, a total of 16 FGD sessions reaching 152 participants and a survey that reached 3 209 questionnaire respondents.

The research project builds on a previous GCRF funded research in the same four African and Asian cities^{1 2} (the Unknown City Research Project). Implemented between 2016 and 2018 the Unknown City Research Project highlighted the overwhelming significance of housing tenure for marginal urban residents. This current research is integrating an action research component to support strategic interventions to help address causes of exclusion. The action research is being done in collaboration with *in-situ* community organisations.

1.2 Zimbabwe: A Profile

Zimbabwe is a constitutional democracy, independent since April 1980 and run by a three-tier government system with national, provincial/metropolitan, and local authority tiers. A two-chamber Parliament of Zimbabwe³, the Judiciary and Independent Constitutional Commissions⁴ work alongside the Executive in exercising state functions. Zimbabwe's estimated 14 million⁵ reside in 10 administrative provinces (8 Rural and 2 Metropolitan Provinces⁶), 92⁷ local authorities and 1958 administrative wards represented by elected Councilors.

¹ Colombo in Sri Lanka and Dhakar in Bangladesh

² Harare in Zimbabwe and Hargeisa in Somaliland

³ 350 member strong Upper House with 80 Senators and 270 Lower House with 270 Members, <https://www.parlzim.gov.zw/about-parliament/how-parliament-is-structured>

⁴ These are the Human Rights, Gender, Electoral, Peace and Reconciliation, Media and Anti-Corruption

⁵ Last Census of 2012 put the population at 13 061 239, <https://www.zimstat.co.zw/wp-content/uploads/publications/Population/population/census-2012-national-report.pdf>

⁶ Mashonaland Central, East and West, Manicaland, Matabeleland North and South, Masvingo and Midlands (rural), Harare and Bulawayo (urban)

⁷ 32 Urban Councils (8 cities with Harare being the Capital City, 8 Municipalities, 12 Town Councils and 4 Local Boards) and 60 Rural District Councils



Zimbabwe is 32% urban and 68% rural. Its population is relatively young with 40% under 15 years and 5% over 65 years. ZIMSTAT (2017⁸) classifies 99.7% of the population as being of African ethnic origin. Despite having 16 official languages (including English) and the local vernacular dialects also defining ethnicity, the cocktail called Shona⁹ dominates with above 80% followed by Ndebele around 14%. The country's GDP is USD43.2 billion (World Bank 2021¹⁰). Zimbabwe's economy has suffered extensive decline since the mid-1990s leading to high levels of poverty and unemployment. International poverty (below USD1.90/day) rose from 21% in 2011 to 39.5% in 2019 with the expectation that it will rise further to 42.3% due to COVID19 (World Bank 2021¹¹).

National government Ministries, state-owned enterprises and local authorities are the principal providers of basic services including land administration. The UN, development banks, local and international development organisations, private sector organisations, faith-based and other community-based organisations complete the mosaic of service provider institutions in urban and rural Zimbabwe. Growing humanitarian and economic challenges have seen the second layer of actors becoming more visible than the principal (state) duty bearers. This state incapacity explains why trunk or large-scale services in water, sanitation, road, energy, transport, and communication have lagged. As a result, the country faces service backlogs.

Housing shortage is estimated at 1.3 million units (CAHF 2020¹²), 17% live as lodgers, potable water coverage reaches 81% while 22% of the population lacks toilet facilities and 68% use wood for cooking energy (ZIMSTAT 2017). Installed energy generation capacity is 2300MW with a national peak demand of 1700MW yet current production is 850MW, that is 50% of peak demand and 37% of installed capacity. The country's electrification is at 42% (Government of Zimbabwe 2020¹³) with urban areas at 83% while rural areas are at 13%. Because 50% of energy is hydro, the vulnerability of the country to frequent droughts has seen low generation capacity, which explains an average of up to 18 hours of load shedding (Ibid).

Droughts have also affected raw water supply with some settlements drying up in terms of reticulated water supply and wastewater disposal. In informal settlements self-provisioning dominates and residents of these spaces can generally be classified as off-grid. Most rely on water from make-do wells and often inadequately managed on-site sanitation generally inappropriate for densely populated areas.

2.0 Study Cities and Settlements

The 3-year study is being carried out in the two of cities of Harare and Masvingo. The primary city is Harare and the secondary city is Masvingo.

2.1 Harare

Harare is Zimbabwe's capital. It's 2021 population was estimated at 2 140 485¹⁴ and 2 898 380 for the Metropolitan which includes Epworth and Chitungwiza. As such, Harare makes up 75% of the Metropolitan Province's population. Further, it has a daytime population that almost doubles

⁸ Inter-Censal Demographic Survey, 2017

⁹ This combines Zezuru, Karanga, Ndau, Manyika, Korekore, Budja and many other dialects spoken in the Mashonaland, Manicaland, Midlands and Masvingo Provinces

¹⁰ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.PP.CD?locations=ZW>

¹¹ Sub-Saharan Africa: Macro Poverty Outlook, Country by Country Analysis and Projections for the Developing World, Spring Meetings 2021

¹² Centre for Affordable Housing (2020) Africa Finance Yearbook, 2020. Zimbabwe

¹³ 2020 Zimbabwe Infrastructure Investment Program, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development

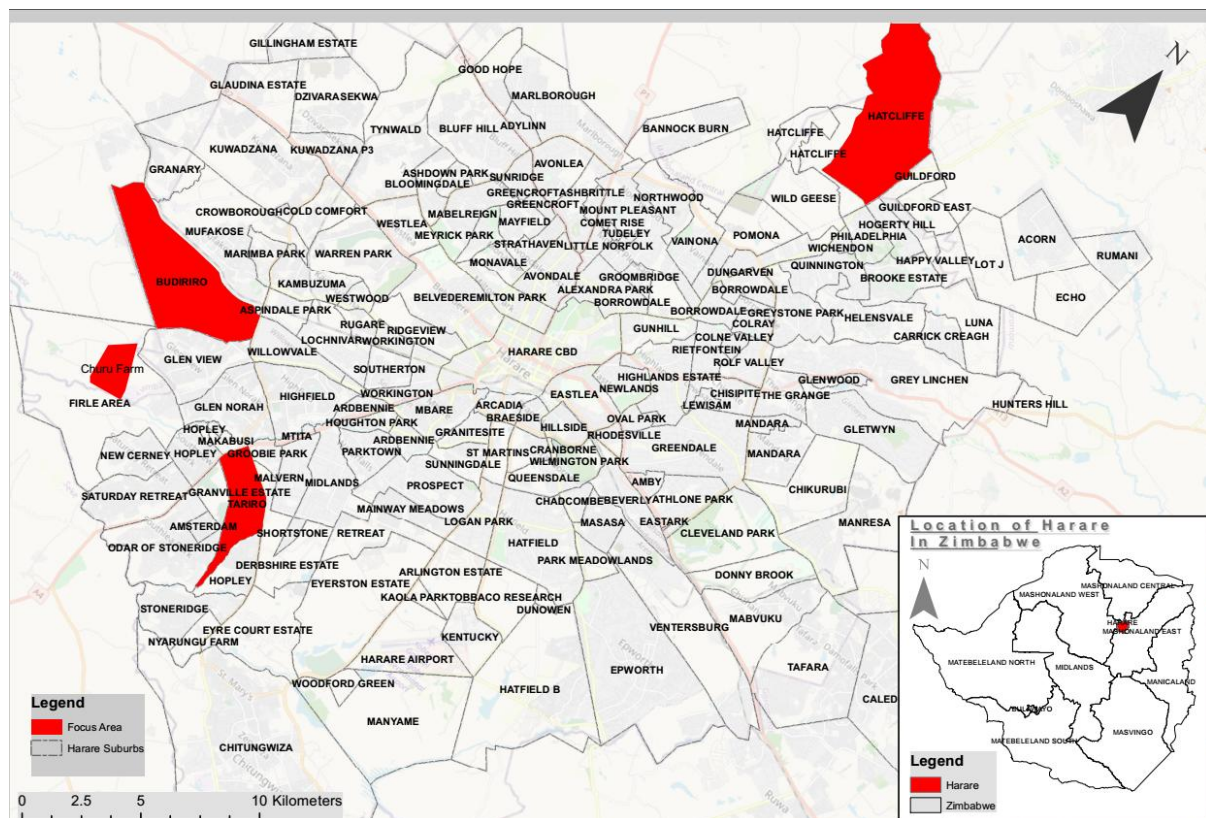
¹⁴ ZIMSTAT (2020a) District Population Projection Report, Harare

its regular population as inhabitants of nearby towns¹⁵ and rural areas spend their working/trading days in it. This stream of residents feeds the informal housing and settlement populations in the city region.

Administratively, Harare has a 46 Councilor policy body overseeing an executive that dwarfs all other entities other than national government institutions in terms of staff numbers. Harare faces governance challenges. Since the 2000's fierce political competition between the ruling ZANU PF party and opposition MDC that has controlled the city has affected city affairs.

The Figure below shows the four settlements/sites that the study is covering in Harare. These are Churu Farm, Budiriro 5 Extension (Ngungunyana Cooperative area and Consortium, developed out of excess Ngungunyana cooperators) Hopley, and Hatcliffe Extension. The study areas in Harare are Hopley, Hatcliffe Extension, Churu farm and Budiriro Extension. Except for Budiriro 5 extension these are mainly in the area categorized as rural and have jurisdictional overlaps between the city and national government as big swathes (and in some areas all) of the land they are on is state land.

Figure 1: Map Showing Harare Sites



¹⁵ Bindura, Chinhoyi, Chitungwiza, Marondera, Epworth, Norton, Mazowe etc.



In recent years considerable residential development has occurred outside the city's boundary. Part of this zone is categorized as Harare Rural. It has a population estimated at 262 872 i.e. 12.3% (ZIMSTAT 2020a), which is inadequately connected to the city's administration in terms of planning, governance and service delivery. Water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services are generally stressed in the city following years of under-investment. As a result, residents of some formal settlements do not access adequate and quality services regularly let alone those in informal areas. The city's water production is 280 mega liters (ML) against a daily demand of 800ML, which is 35% of demand. As a result, only 40% of the city's residents receive water for 2 days a week leaving most to resort to alternative water sources (Government of Zimbabwe 2020) some of which are unsafe. Due to ageing WASH infrastructure the city receives an average of 50 water pipe bursts and 22 sewer chokes daily (Ibid).

2.1.1 Hopley

Hopley was established in 2005 on planned city land. Most residential stands 200m² in terms of size. Following Operation Murambatsvina, national government negotiated with the city to settle people from a Holding Camp in Hopley and others in Caledonia, Porta Farm, and other areas of Harare. These residents had been displaced from their homes in settlements considered illegal. The settlement has six zones (1 to 6). National government allocated land in the first five to eviction victims while the city allocated its staff and other beneficiaries land in Zone 6. The settlement forms part of Harare's Ward 1 stretching from the International Airport in the East to Churu Farm in the West. Based on Hopley having 10 to 15% of this ward's population estimates put the population at over 20 000.

Most land was allocated on formal state leaseholds. Those not allocated between August and October 2005 informally allocated themselves land on open and institutional spaces in Zones 5 and 6 *gada*/informal areas. Hopley's population is mobile. There is increased socio-economic informality and formal servicing has intermittently stalled. Attempts by the city and its staff to facilitated water, electricity and roads have met with local resistance in the past. However, the city completed a Polyclinic in 2019 and re-started providing water in partnership with an international donor agency in 2020. Overcrowding is a feature in the settlement with some residential stands measuring about 50m². Hopley's proximity to Mbudzi¹⁶ (a business and transport hub connecting Harare to Zimbabwe's south through to the South Africa border) and the Boka Tobacco Auction Floors drive population mobility into/out of Hopley.

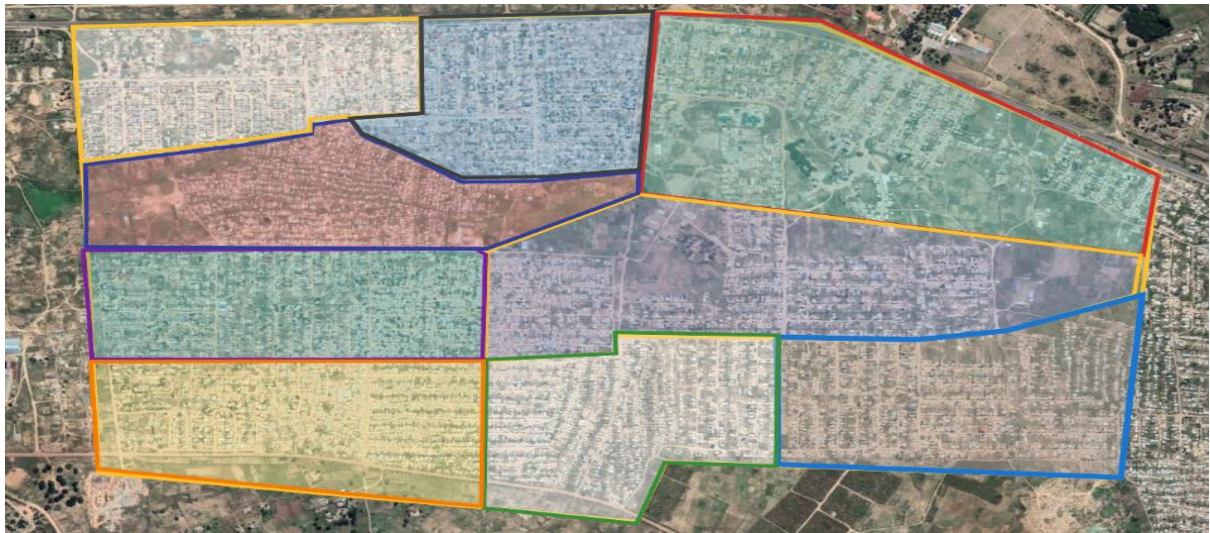
Housing structures are predominantly unapproved. Majority are temporary to semi-permanent partly because most residents 'lack proper paperwork'. Common materials include unburnt (sun-dried) bricks under asbestos or 'iron/steel' sheets. Some houses collapse during the rainy season especially in the *gada* section. Generally, the settlement has no connection to reticulated basic urban services. Residents rely on improvised solutions such as wells, pour-flash toilets connected to septic tanks. They rely on candles and solar for lighting, gas, and fuelwood for cooking. Water is increasingly a big challenge. Home wells often dry from late winter through the

¹⁶ Shona for goat. The semi-formal bus and haulage truck node rivals Mbare socio-economically

early rains in November. Residents end up buying water from those with more reliable wells, 'commercial water vendors' and wells at the nearby Mbudzi Cemetery.

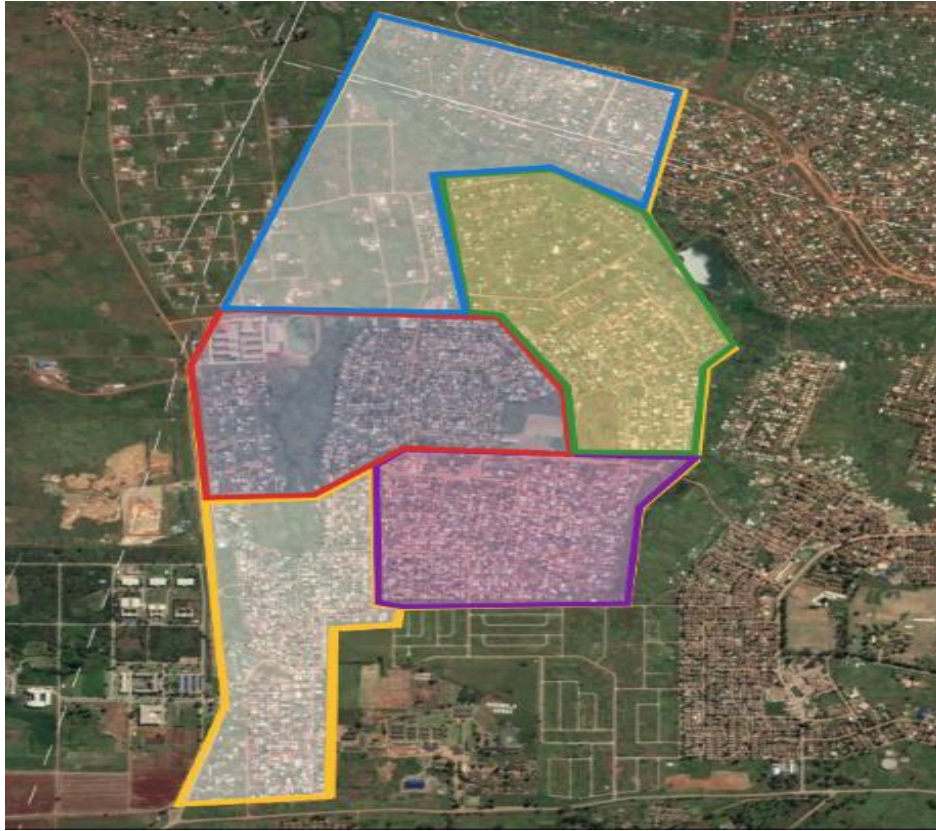
Connection with the city, though growing with establishment of a clinic and district office, remains low and contradicted. Local institutions are party-driven with ZANU PF dominating the formal areas while the *gada* section is largely MDC-controlled. Hopley has a Development Committee and a Residents Association. It also hosts several development organisations including UN agencies and local NGOs. The Committee and Association alternate between contradicting or conflicting and cooperating.

Figure 2: Study site, Hopley



2.1.2 Hatcliffe Extension

Figure 3: Study site, Hatcliffe Extension



Hatcliffe Extension is a peri-urban settlement which started in 1993 on a private farm taken over by government and leased to the city. It was earmarked for housing security forces, but this changed when Churu Farm evictees housed at Hatcliffe Holding Camp had to be included. The planned settlement was serviced by a private firm contracted by government. Delays faced through 2002 saw Dzivarasekwa and Hatcliffe Holding Camp residents in possession of leases with the Ministry responsible for local government proceeding to self-allocate and settle in Hatcliffe Extension.

Harare City administers aspects of Hatcliffe settlement and provides some services. However, national government planned the settlement, owns the land, and principally administers tenure issues. The settlement has four sections. Stand sizes range from 200 to 600m². Generally, houses are formally built with some temporary structures where construction is in progress or awaits commencement. 2005 evictions (Operation Murambatsvina) curiously affected this formal settlement reinforcing an insecurity that may explain delayed improvements.

A portion of Hatcliffe Extension has witnessed informal housing development. Though most of the settlement is serviced with reticulated sewer and water systems, water supply is very erratic and not all households are connected to the services. Residents have organised themselves to plan for the installation of services like electricity. A significant number of residents work as labourers in surrounding farms while an equally large number are formally employed in state institutions.



2.1.3 Budiriro 5 Extension

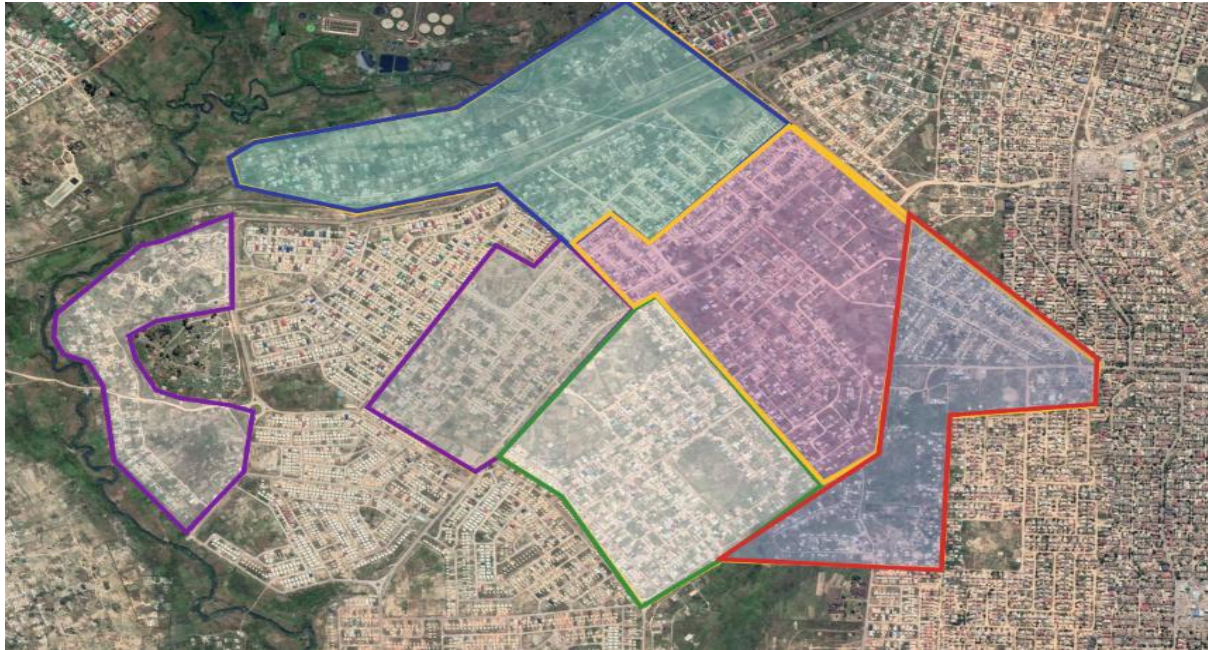
Budiriro 5 Extension is located about 25km south-west of the Harare CBD. The western part of the settlement is bordered by the Marimba River which drains into Lake Chivero, the main source of water for the City of Harare. The settlement is just about 6km from the Lake. It came about because of the rising need for housing and the policy of parallel development which made it possible for housing cooperatives (first Ngungunyana and later Consortium) to acquire and develop land. The land was offered to veterans of Zimbabwe's 1970s independence war who could not develop the area by themselves as they were few. The city and national government progressively directed land seekers to join Ngungunyana swelling the number of members and making the settlement viable. Beneficiaries were expected to pay the intrinsic (undeveloped) value of land prior to developing their houses. The original cooperators (war veterans) retain overall management of the state-cooperator interaction as well as actual service development and settlement management.

This study site is in an area of Harare where land ownership wrangles occur frequently. For instance, there was a widely publicized conflict between Tembwe and Events, two housing cooperatives under the umbrella of Ngungunyana. Further, city and national government instigated demolitions have been carried out in the area. Ngungunyana cooperators experienced demolitions during Operation Murambatsvina as some had put up housing structures without either fully paying for the land or seeking Council approval of their plans. Tembwe and Events conflict on one hand as well as with the city resulted in some demolitions in 2020. There are other smaller pockets of self-allocated land and a walled and gated Apostolic Church Village. Adjacent to the relatively more stable cooperative sites (Ngungunyana and Consortium) a CABS¹⁷-City of Harare Housing Project housing estate has been developed. Emplacement of the road serving the CABS-City project cut through some sections of the wider settlement leaving some homeowners without adequate residential land, in some precarity.

Security of tenure is an issue in the area. In 2020, Harare City Council issued demolition orders against some residents and demolished some houses in the area. The area is a planned high-density settlement with a layout plan that was prepared by Harare City Council. The houses in the area comply with the council standards. However, the challenge is on service provision. The other part of the area has reticulated water and sewer connections. However, the city is unable to provide water regularly. Sanitation is not fully reticulated. Households use septic tanks on small stands served by family wells. Transport services are inadequate and expensive. This forces some residents to walk to the nearest hub, Current Shops. Across the Marimba River is a Sewerage Treatment Plant, Crowborough. The plant often discharges untreated waste polluting the river and wider area. There are no schools, health, and recreational amenities in the area that are publicly provided.

¹⁷ Central Africa Building Society, a member of the Old Mutual Group

Figure 4: Budiriro 5 Extension



2.1.4 Churu Farm

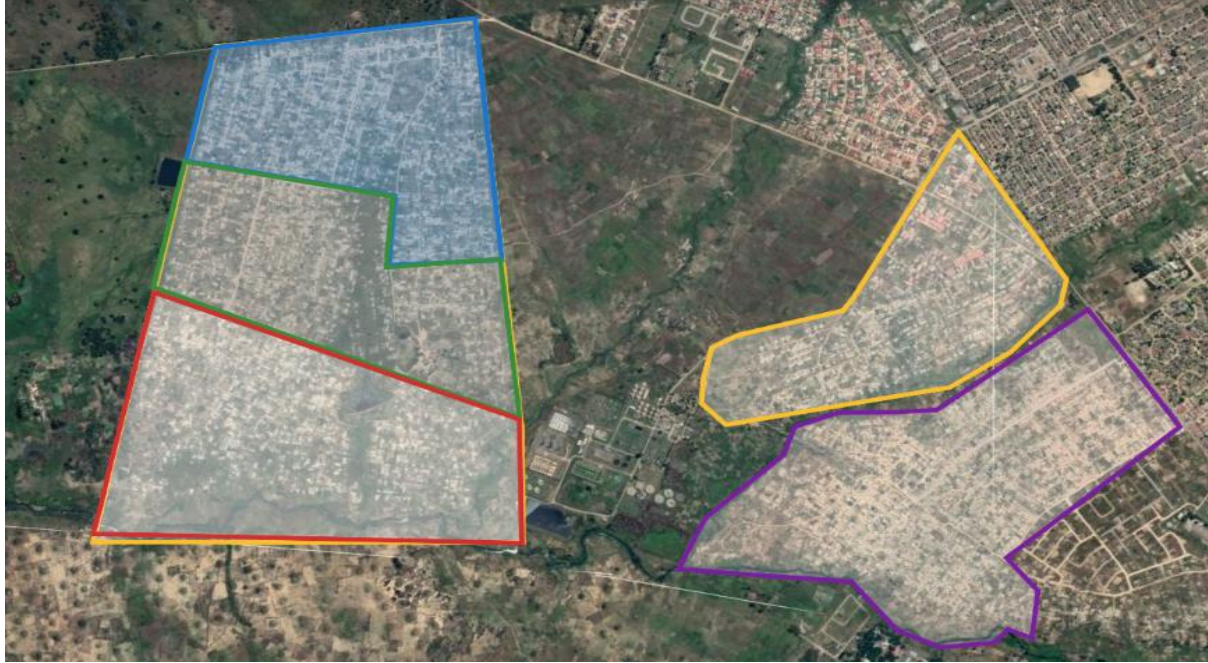
Churu Farm is on land taken over by government in 1993 from a prominent cleric and politician, a founder of ZANU (Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole). It borders a Council farm on which the City's Firlle Sewerage Treatment Plant is, to the East, Langford to the South and a portion of The Rest A to the West. It can be accessed through Amalinda Road off Simon Mazorodze, also known as Masvingo Road.

The settlement has gone through various stages of habitation and displacement starting in the early 90s. The first major eviction occurred when Rev. Sithole informally subdivided his farm and allocated stands to his supporters and other home seekers. Some of the distinct beneficiaries of this early 1990s informal housing were those evicted from Epworth and other areas ahead of the visit by the British Monarch, Queen Elizabeth II to open a Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) hosted by the country in 1991. A steady stream of residents trekked to the farm between 1994 and 2005 when Operation Murambatsvina of 2005 also affected them. Their houses were demolished with some taken to Holding Camps at Hatcliffe and Caledonia later to be absorbed in some of the post-Murambatsvina settlements around the city like Caledonia and Hopley. The current settlement started in the latter half of last decade with most of the 5000 families having settled there from 2016.

Originally, the area was zoned for rural-agricultural use. A change of use proposal to residential was made and a layout plan prepared by a housing cooperative operating in the area but not approved. While it is state land, its administration is not clear. The area lies on the boundaries of Harare City and Zvimba RDC. This is affecting service provision in the area because the regulating authority is unclear. The two Councils on one hand and national government on the other have some claim to the control of the area. Residents have managed to devise their own ways of accessing services. There is a cooperative management committee responsible for

steering development. Apart from water and sanitation services, transport and access to shops, tenure security is also a major challenge in the area.

Figure 5: Churu Farm



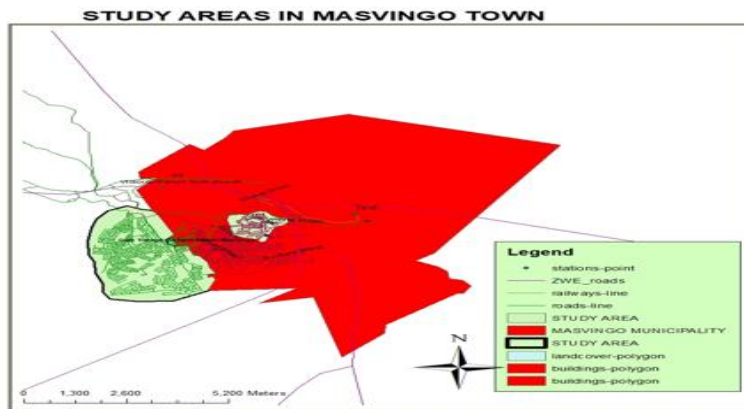
2.2 Masvingo

Masvingo City is 3 hours (300 kilometers) south of Harare on the road to South Africa. It is the capital of Masvingo Province. The city is 30 kilometers North-West of Zimbabwe's historical capital, the Great Zimbabwe, which is also called Masvingo in the local Shona language. It was founded in 1890 as Fort Victoria, after Queen Victoria by the Pioneer Column making it Zimbabwe's oldest urban centre. It grew as the first largest settlement established by the Pioneer Column of the British South Africa Company. Masvingo became a Town Council in 1926, a Municipality in 1953 and attained city status in 2002. Currently, the city's population is 119 951 (ZIMSTAT 2020b¹⁸). It is governed by a 10-member Council.

The study focuses on a section of the oldest part of Mucheke as well as part of Victoria Ranch, which is on the city edge, outside Masvingo's formal Municipal boundary.

¹⁸ District Population Projection Report, Masvingo Province

Figure 6: Map Showing Masvingo Sites



2.2.1 'Old' Mucheke

Mucheke is the oldest residential suburb in Masvingo City. It is located to the West, approximately 3km from the city centre. The core of the focus site started as a transport hub for the Pioneer Column as this is where horse stables were located. Some of these stables were later converted to rows of single rooms that are still in use. Other parts of the site include sections built for black workers of the Cold Storage Commission (CSC), the city's main industrial complex now non-operational for decades and National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ), both state companies.

The settlement is the most populous high-density suburb in the city. It is well known for its rows of single rooms (lines or *midhadhadha* in Shona) and semi-detached brick under curved asbestos houses known in the local language as *Misana yeNzou* (elephant backs). Some of the houses are old and dilapidated, some dating back to colonial times. Most of the houses were built as singles quarters for r workers. Shared water and sanitation facilities served these houses. Most of them have remained as Municipal property rented out to tenants who pay monthly rentals and service charges. The city maintains the houses and cleans the shared facilities.

Mucheke residential area hosts the region's main bus terminus and a soccer stadium. It is also very close to the city centre hence the high population density in the suburb. Water and sewer reticulation systems are available but inadequate because of overcrowding. Residents, traders, their customers, and travelers compete for these services making them inadequate in both quality and quantity. Hostel blocks of 25 units or more share a water tap, two bathroom-cum-toilets (one each for women and men) and a shared electricity connection. Sanitation is thus an issue in the area due to the presence of dilapidated sewer pipes that always burst. Solid waste management is also inadequate. A city-Dialogue-Federation project is expanding the services to reduce the number of households served by one facility.

Figure 7: Old Mucheke



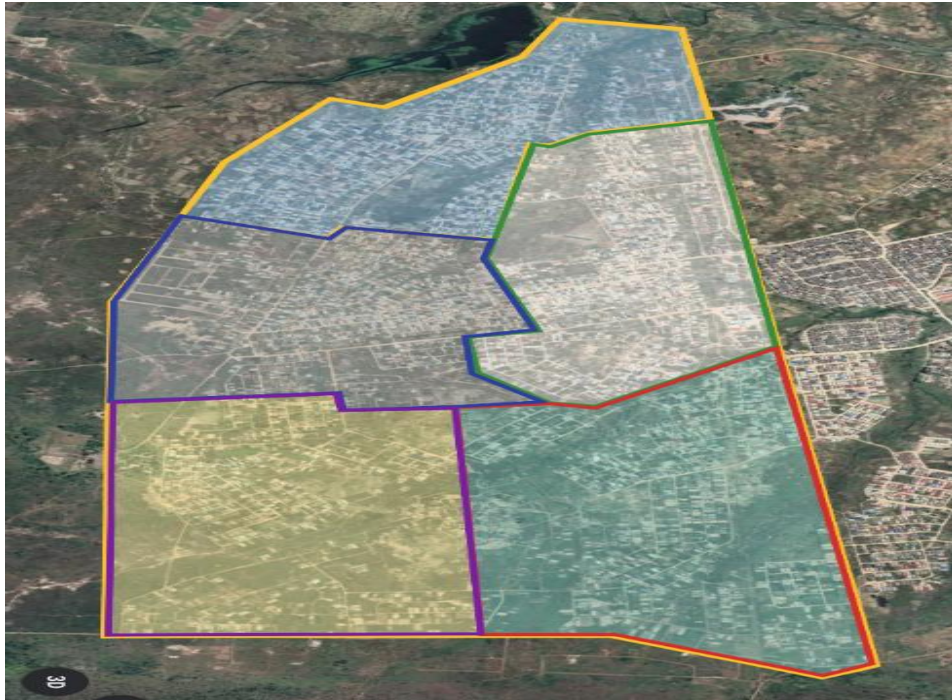
2.3.2 Victoria Ranch

Victoria Ranch is a peri-urban mixed density residential area in Masvingo Rural District Council. It is located on the city edge to the south-west of Masvingo CBD. Formal planning of Victoria Ranch began in the aftermath of Operation Murambatsvina. The plan was prepared and approved by national government. Lacking resources to service the land the 10 000 residential stands remained unallocated until from October 2011 when government started parceling the land out to private developers and housing cooperatives.

The land was once a cattle ranch/farm belonging to Tender Meats. Settlement establishment was led by the Ministry responsible for local government at provincial and district level. The two local authorities (Masvingo City Council and Masvingo RDC) were not directly involved in the planning and land allocation. The first phase to be developed is known as *Lot A*, with 5 000 residential stands. It was developed between 2011 and 2012 by 5 land developers. The second phase, known as *the Remainder*, has more than 5000 stands and was developed from 2012 by 11 land developers. The settlement involves a total of 16 'land developers'.

Security of tenure is an issue in the area because all the developers do not have certificates of compliance. They are therefore unable to help beneficiaries obtain title deeds. The area is not serviced with electricity, reticulated sewer, and water systems. It also lacks roads and social amenities like health and education facilities. Some land set aside for these services was converted into residential stands. The poor road network has resulted in lack of transport services.

Figure 8: Victoria Ranch



3.0 Research findings

3.1 Summary of the Methodology

This report is based on data from 16 focus group discussion (FGD) sessions and a household survey that reached 3132 respondents. 152 residents took part on the FGD sessions during the first quarter of 2021. The household survey was conducted from the 5th to the 10th of July 2021 while in Masvingo, it was from the 19th to the 23rd of July 2021. Data collection tools comprised of an FGD Guide and a questionnaire. The reach is as indicated in table 1 below.

Table 1: FGD and Household Survey Reach

City	Settlement	FGD Session Count & Reach		H/H Survey Reach
		Count	Participants	Participants
Harare	Budiriro 5 Extension	3	21	464
	Churu Farm	1	22	432
	Hatcliffe Extension	3	37	486
	Hopley	3	24	921
Masvingo	Mucheke	3	24	352
	Victoria Ranch	3	24	554
Total		16	152	3209
Total number of research participants			3361	

Setting up the research activities involved cycles of engagement with national and local state institutions as well as local community organisations. The engagement with the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works, the local authorities for Harare and Masvingo (both urban and rural) resulted in formal approvals. Institutional support for the research was very critical and this has strengthened over time.

Formal approvals paved the way for approaching communities. More effort was devoted to the two new Harare settlements of Churu and Budiriro 5 Extension. For Masvingo the study built on existing relations that the Zimbabwe Homeless People’s Federation and Dialogue on Shelter had built with the two local authorities. Besides taking note of and negotiating the technical, social, and political relations the research also had to negotiate the realities of COVID19.

The study closely followed the relevant protocols while taking advantage of mobile telephony to limit in-person interactions during data gathering. This reduced risks for Enumerators, FGD session facilitators and the research participants. A model of having Settlement Contacts, use of WhatsApp platforms and tele-communications helped in keeping contact with the field during ‘hard lockdown periods’.

3.2 FGD Findings

3.2.1 Water

Residents of the Harare and Masvingo study sites access water from multiple sources. However, the dominant ones are wells and boreholes, with some boreholes being solar powered. For Victoria Ranch, water availability is dependent on a developer or a cooperative managing development of an area. The area has multiple developers and cooperatives with some more



organized than others. In some areas, people use solar-powered community boreholes and in some, they use household level wells. Solar powered boreholes are available in the Federation area. High-yielding water points (wells and boreholes) tend to serve more residents with some sales occurring during the drier months of the year.

Council reticulated water systems are available in Mucheke and Hatcliffe Extension while the service has been stop-go for Hopley and Budiriro 5 Extension. In some parts of Hopley and Victoria Ranch, piping is currently underway with no water having ever flowed in Victoria Ranch. In Hatcliffe Extension, only a few houses are connected to the reticulated system while the rest depend on boreholes (both solar-powered and those where bush pumps are fitted). Digging of trenches and laying out of water pipes was done in some parts of Hopley and Victoria Ranch (Federation and December 12 areas). Residents of Victoria Ranch under December 12 paid a development fee of USD1000 each to the developers for service provision. The developers only dug trenches for water and sewer reticulation with nothing being done afterwards. In Budiriro 5 Extension pipes were installed and city-supplied water only flowed briefly. Most residents have since removed water meter installations to avoid thefts. Residents therefore now rely on alternative sources. In low-lying areas household wells get contaminated by flood waters when it rains.

Although Mucheke is connected to the Municipal water system, residents still face access challenges. Several houses share one tap, and this is associated with violence against women and girls. For instance, in some areas 25 households share one tap. Moreover, some residents in Mucheke do not have water meters making accountability for water use difficult. The water taps are used by outsiders who are in the car washing business. Residents end up receiving very high bills. Tap water availability is also a challenge in both Mucheke and Hatcliffe Extension. In Hatcliffe Extension, water is only available once a week. Residents also indicated that the water is deemed to be unsafe for drinking and is used for other domestic purposes. For drinking, people rely on boreholes.

Most of these boreholes were donated by NGOs and a few by local authorities (Masvingo and Harare City Councils). In Hopley, Victoria Ranch and Hatcliffe Extension, a community-based management approach has been adopted for water source management. Water Point Committees are responsible for the general management including collecting funds, maintenance, ensuring order and sanity.

In Churu Farm people rely on wells as their main source of water. Unlike other settlements with boreholes, Churu Farm residents have limited options when it comes to water sources. Some wells also dry up from late August making access to water a challenge during the period till the rainy season. People end up travelling long distances to access water. The wells are also in proximity to pit latrines, which also increases the risk of underground water contamination.

3.2.2 Sanitation

The types of toilet facilities used vary across the six settlements. In Harare settlements, the flush system connected to septic tank and/or latrine are the most common toilet types. These are more pronounced in Hopley, Churu Farm, Budiriro and some parts of Victoria Ranch where there is no sewer reticulation. However, the challenge with this toilet type is on the risk of contamination due to the proximity of wells where people access drinking water. Also, when the septic tanks/ latrines are full, most people abandon it and dig another one. Others empty it and dump the fecal matter where they dump litter. A few households hire professional companies to empty. For Churu Farm, the flush toilets connected to septic tanks and latrines, Blair Latrine and open defecation are for temporary use while residents are waiting for council reticulation

systems. The area is close to the Firlle sewer treatment plant and residents are hoping that reticulation and connection to the plant will be easier.

Two of the six settlements (Mucheke and Hatcliffe Extension) are connected to the council reticulated sewer system. Residents in both Mucheke and Hatcliffe Extension use the flush system connected to the council sewer system. However, council water is not always available. People use buckets to flush the toilets in Hatcliffe Extension and blair toilets as an alternative in Mucheke. Other people in Hatcliffe extension use blair toilets, Ecosan and the bush especially during the rainy season when there is enough coverage to maintain privacy. Most of Victoria Ranch's residents use Ecosan toilets. However, some of the residents prefer the flush toilet connected to a septic tank although they acknowledge that it may not be suitable for a 200sqm stand.

Most of the toilets, regardless of type in Hatcliffe Extension, Hopley, Budiriro, Churu Farm and Victoria Ranch are located outside the dwelling but within the yard. A few have toilets inside their dwellings and outside their properties. In these settlements, most people do not share toilets. However, this is different for Mucheke. In Mucheke, people share houses and toilet facilities. Too many people will be sharing a single toilet making it difficult to maintain hygiene within the facilities. The toilets are in a very bad condition and the council does not maintain these toilets. It is also very difficult to use them in the rain season because of toilet roofs leak. Maintenance of the sewer system is also an issue of concern in Hatcliffe Extension. Harare City Council is reluctant when it comes to attending blockages and pipe bursts. They take time and most of the times they demand money for transport and food from the residents.

There are no designated dumping sites for garbage in all the 6 settlements. Residents have created their own illegal dumping sites on undeveloped/ open spaces. Other residents in Hatcliffe extension have pits at their homes where they dump litter. Due to the difficulties in securing energy sources, plastic is recycled through using it for cooking. Both City of Harare and City of Masvingo do not collect garbage in these settlements. In Hopley and Hatcliffe Extension, residents pay for this service, but they do not receive it.

3.2.3 Transport

All the sites with the exception for Mucheke are characterized by transport challenges related to both infrastructure and the service itself. Mucheke as an old settlement is relatively better in terms of connectivity and accessibility. It has road infrastructure and a bus terminus which is absent in the remaining 5 settlements. Public transport services are available in Mucheke and they are easily accessible. Due to the settlement's proximity with the CBD, residents of Mucheke can easily use non-motorised transport systems including bicycling and walking. In the other 5 settlements, illegal taxis (*mishika-shika*) are the most common means of transport. Other means include formal public transport (ZUPCOs), private transport, motorbikes in Hatcliffe Extension and non-motorized transport systems.

All the other 5 settlements are characterized by poor road infrastructure. Most of the roads are gravel and earth. There are no tarmac surfaced roads in the remaining 5 settlements. Political polarization is negatively affecting road infrastructure development in Hopley. Accessing these settlements especially Churu Farm, Hatcliffe Extension and Victoria Ranch is very difficult due to slippery earth roads and lack of road drainage system. In Victoria Ranch, residents paid for infrastructure including roads, but the developers only marked and graded the roads, no gravel was put. Trees are even growing in the roads in Victoria Ranch. In some areas like Hopley and



Hatcliffe, the transport service providers do not provide intra-settlement services. People have to walk to the main road first then get transport there.

All these settlements are relatively far from the CBD compared to Muccheke making walking difficult for those who commute to work in town. Transport costs are very high owing to the poor road infrastructure and the distance from the settlement to town or other areas. A few service providers are willing to operate in these areas because of poor road infrastructure leading to more demand versus supply. Due to the market forces of demand exceeding supply, the prices become higher. This is worse in Budiro where residents are made to pay more money (USD1) over a short distance to get to Current (a place where they can board public transport to town) than the money they pay from there to town (USD 0.50).

3.2.4 Energy

Electricity is available in Muccheke. Other 5 settlements do not have electricity but some parts of Hatcliffe Extension and Hopley are currently in the process of connecting to the grid system. The most common energy sources for lighting in the 5 settlements are solar, candle, torch and paraffin lamp. For cooking, gas, firewood, charcoal, saw dust and plastics are mostly used. In Muccheke, the majority use electricity for lighting and cooking. However, when electricity is not available, the above-mentioned alternative sources are used.

There is a mixed use of energy sources for cooking and lighting in all the settlements. For instance, the most common combination is solar for lighting and gas for cooking in all the 5 settlements without electricity. Residents of these 5 settlements faced several challenges when it comes to accessing sources like firewood. The firewood sold in the settlements is expensive and people resort to fetching firewood in mountains and surrounding farms and forests. In Hatcliffe Extension, Churu Farm and Budiro, residents are chased, arrested and women are abused in trying to fetch firewood. In Muccheke, challenges arise from sharing electricity meters. There are instances where 25 families will be sharing 1 ZESA meter. The challenges arise in form of conflicts around paying and/or using the electricity. Electricity, gas and firewood are expensive for the residents, and they end up using plastics, straws and shrubs for cooking.

3.2.5 Communication

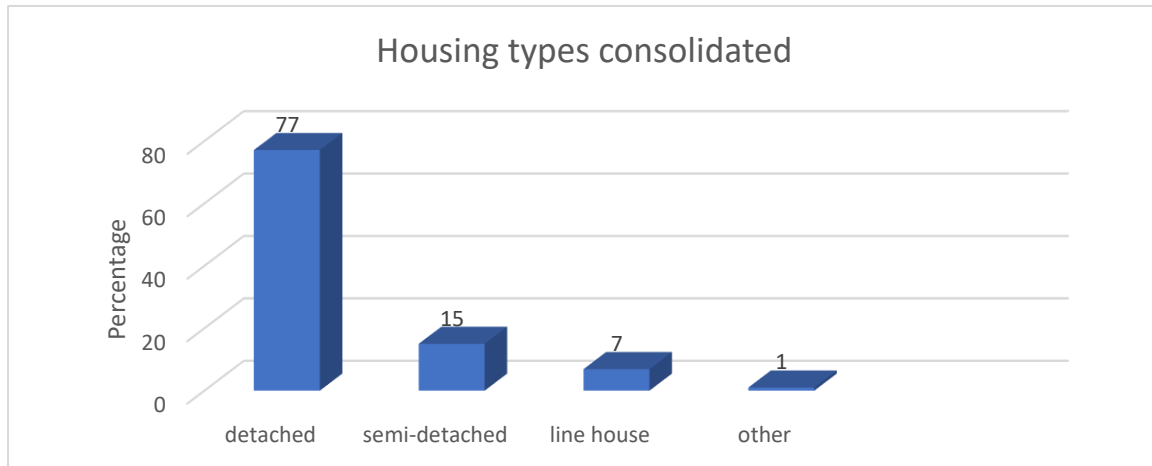
Mobile phones are used for communication in all the 6 settlements. In addition, physical gatherings, sending community messengers and mouth to mouth methods are used. In Hopley, they use social media through WhatsApp group platforms to communicate. Network coverage and connectivity is not a problem in Muccheke. In settlements like Hatcliffe Extension, and Churu farm, poor network connectivity is a barrier to communication. Econet and Telecel services are poor in these settlements because of the shortage of boosters. NetOne services are better and people will have to use NetOne lines for improved communication.

3.3 Household Survey Findings

3.3.1 Housing

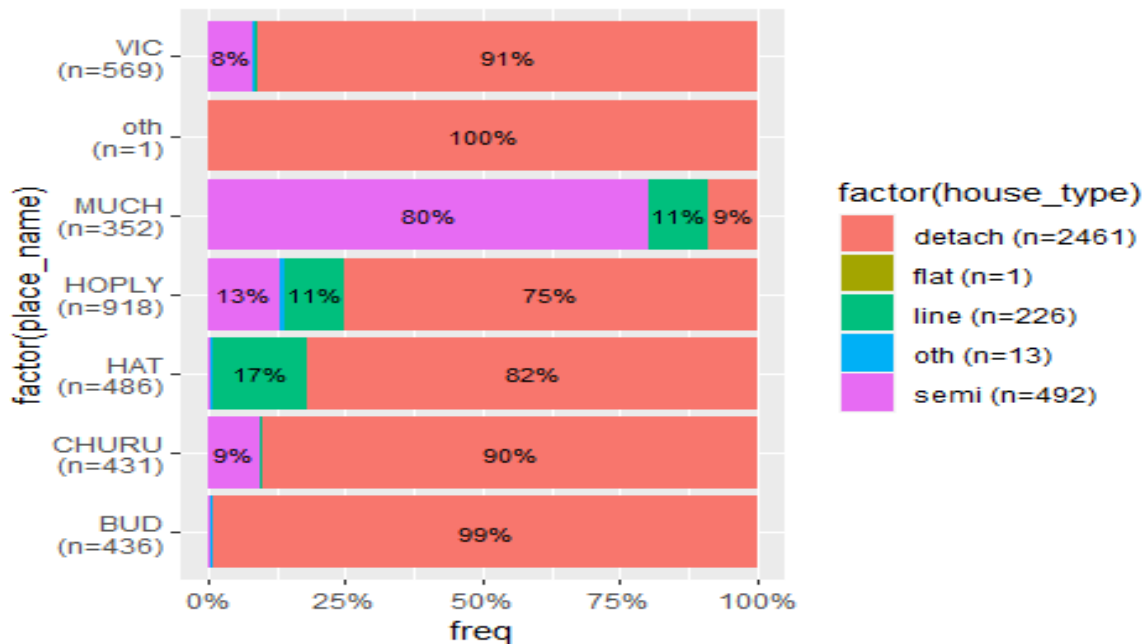
Across all the 6 sites, 77% (n=3132) are detached houses, 15% semi-detached, 7% are line houses and 1% other types. Other includes high rise flats, wooden cabins, metal containers and shacks. The Figure 9 below shows the types of housing across all the six settlements.

Figure 9: Housing types across all settlements



Disaggregated by settlement, Figure 10 below shows that all other settlements have more detached houses, except for Mucheke with more semi-detached houses.

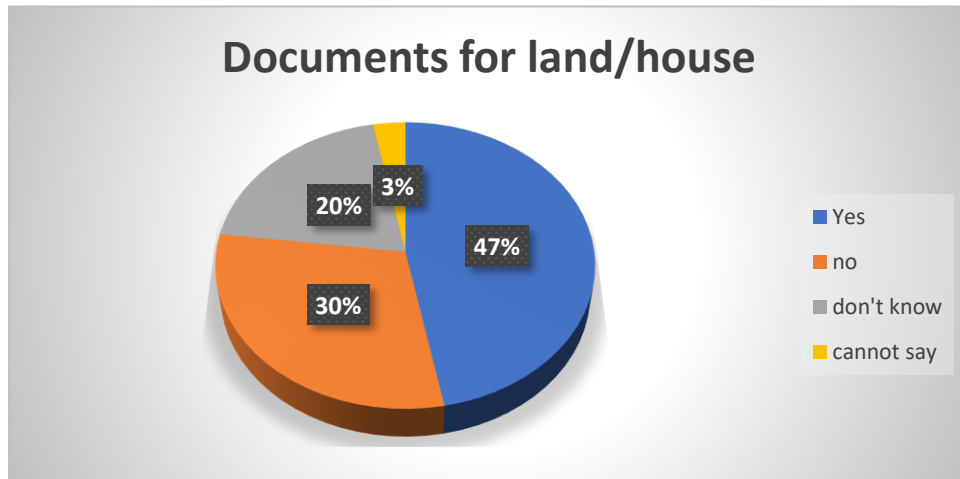
Figure 10: Housing types per settlement.



The average stand size across all settlements is 251sqm with a minimum of 10sqm and a maximum of 1900sqm. The average house size across all sites is 61.7sqm, with a minimum size of 10sqm and maximum of 500sqm. The smallest houses with 6sqm are in Mucheke and Hopley.

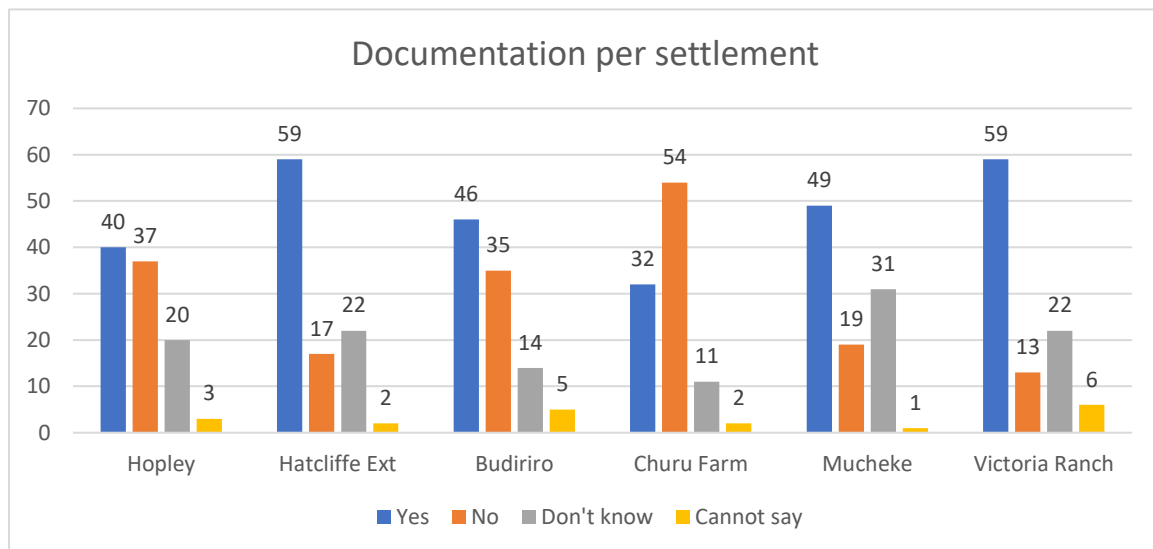
From the survey, 64% of the respondents always lived in the settlements while 36% migrated from somewhere else (n=3132). In terms of the land acquisition model, 26% got it from the government/ municipality, 10% self-purchase and 64% other (n=3132). Other includes allocated by party, customary authorities, family, community authorities, inherited, local leadership and rented. Despite having the different land acquisition models presented above, less than half of the respondents have documents over their land/ houses. The graph below shows the proportion of people with documents over their land across all the six sites (n=3132).

Figure 11: Land/ Housing documentation



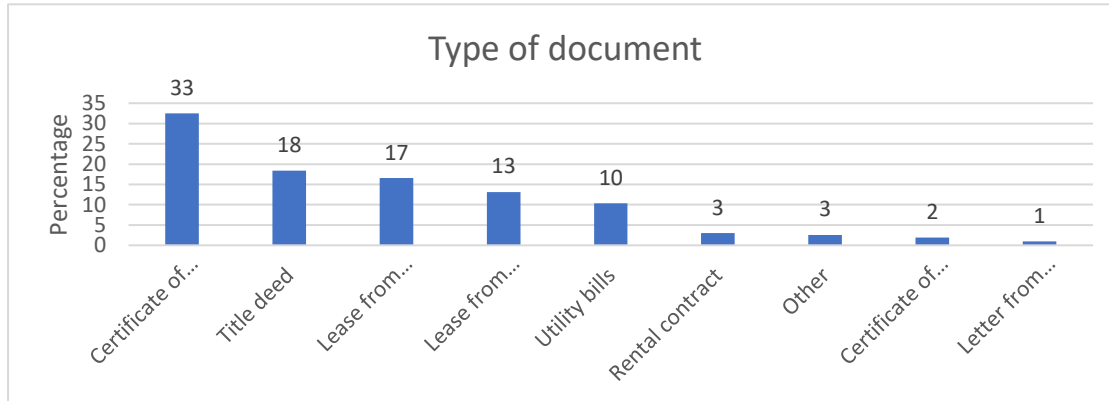
For each settlement, the graph below indicates the status of document availability for each settlement.

Figure 12: Documents for land/ housing by settlement



Churu farm and Mucheke have less than 50% of its respondents with documentation over their land while all other settlements have more than 50% as indicated in figure 10 above. The type of documentation also varies as shown in Figure 13 below.

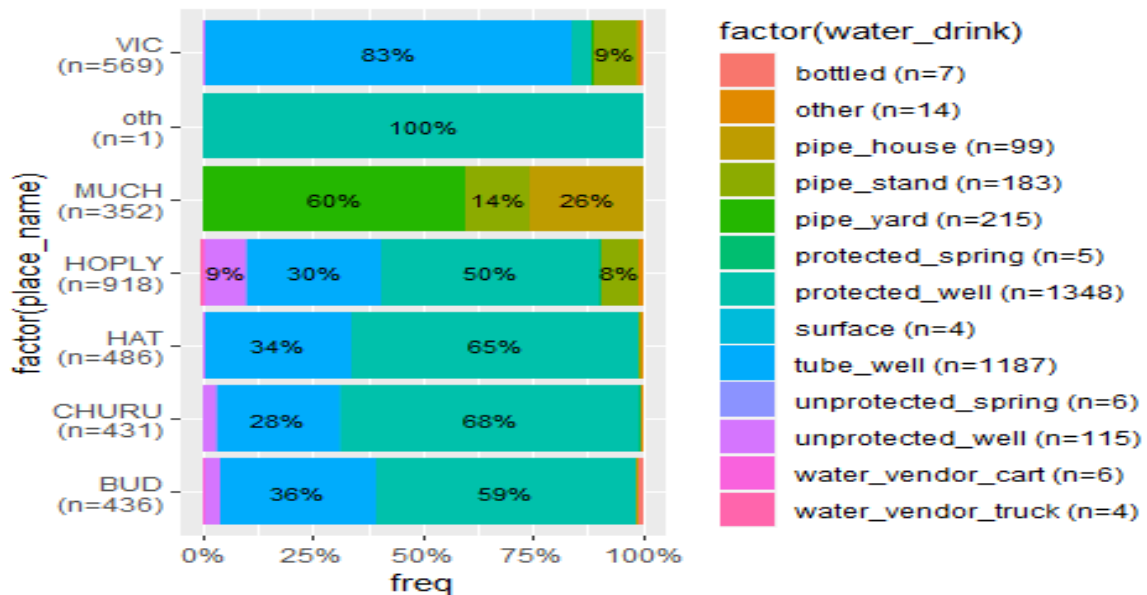
Figure 13: Documentation type across all six sites.



3.3.2 Water

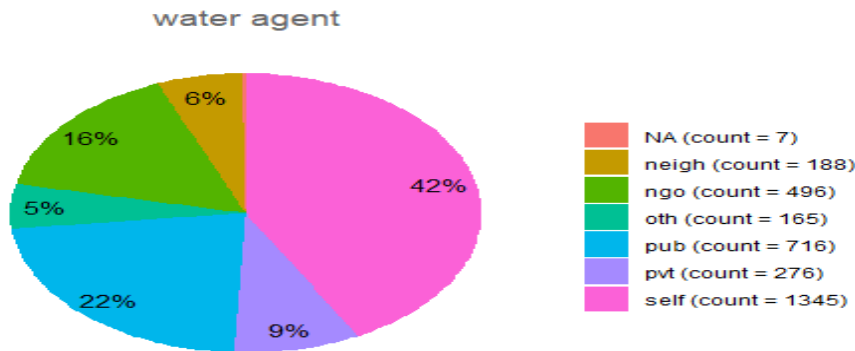
Across all six sites, 42% access drinking water from protected wells, 37% from tube wells/ boreholes and 21% other sources (n=3132). Other sources include piped into yard, public tap, piped into dwelling, vendors, bottled water, springs and surface water. The sources are also the same for other uses of water. However, the proportion differs within sites as indicated in Figure 14 below.

Figure 14: Drinking water sources for the six sites.



The above graph indicates that Victoria Ranch and Mucheke have different water sources compared to other settlements with almost similar water sources and slightly different proportions. Water is mainly accessed through self-provisioning as indicated in Figure 15 below.

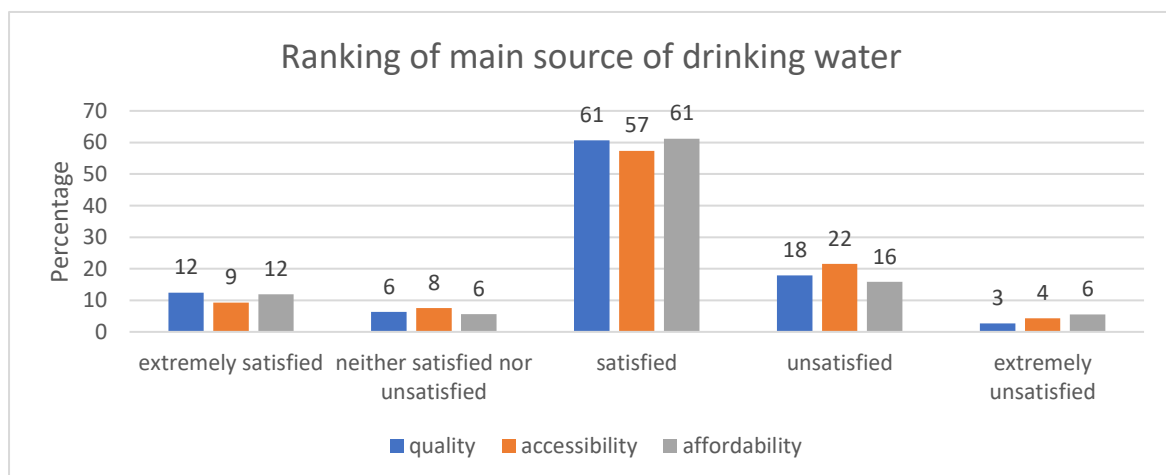
Figure 15: Agents in water provision.



Across all sites, only 29% pay for water while 71% do not (n=3132). This could be explained by the main sources in which people access water from. More than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the respondents access water from wells and boreholes which do not usually require any form of payment. Moreover, only 2 settlements (Mucheke and a small part of Hatcliffe Extension) are connected to the reticulated water system.

There were mixed results on satisfaction levels regarding water supply across all the 6 sites. Generally, residents are more satisfied with water quality, affordability as accessibility as indicated in Figure 16 below (n=3132).

Figure 16: Ranking of main source of drinking water in terms of quality, accessibility and affordability.

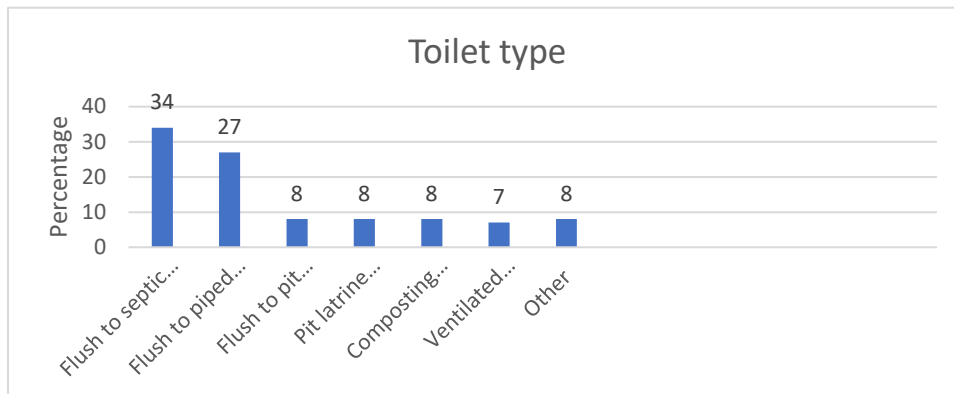


3.3.3 Sanitation

There is a mixture of toilet types across all sites as shown in Figure 17 below. The most used toilet types are the flush to septic tank with 34% followed by flush to piped sewer with 27%

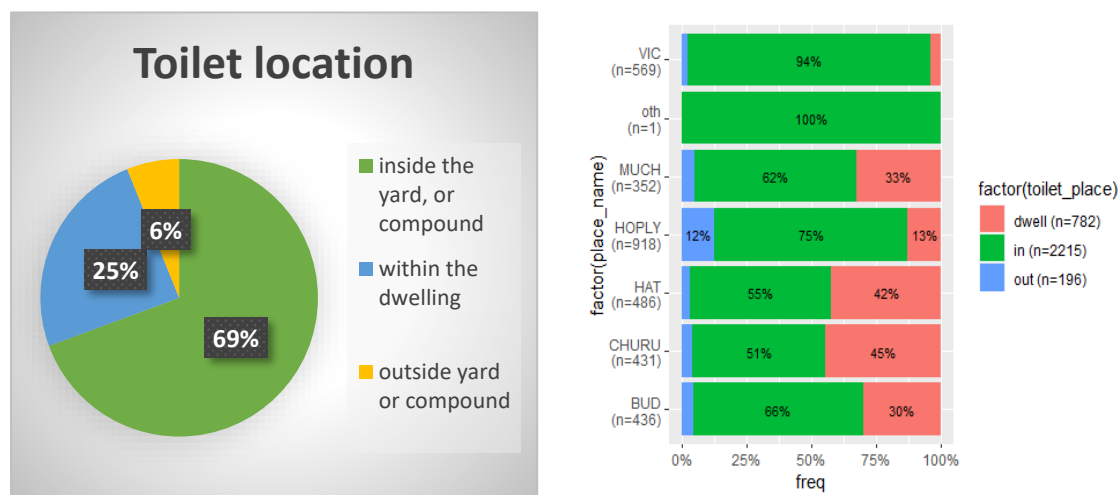
(n=3132). Flush to pit (Latrine), pit latrine with slab, composting toilet, ventilated pit latrine and other toilet types have almost the same number of users as indicated below. Other types in figure 15 includes Blair and ecosan toilets. From the survey results below, almost ¾ of the sampled population (n=3132) uses the flush system. Of those who use the flush connected to a pit/ latrine, across all the sites, 46% empty when it is full, 36% abandon and 18% did not know (n=779).

Figure 17: Toilet types across all sites.



The toilets are located in three main categories across all the six study areas. These are within the dwelling, within the property/ stand but outside the dwelling and outside the dwelling. The graphs below show the location of the toilets across the 6 sites and location by settlement.

Figure 18: Location of the toilet.

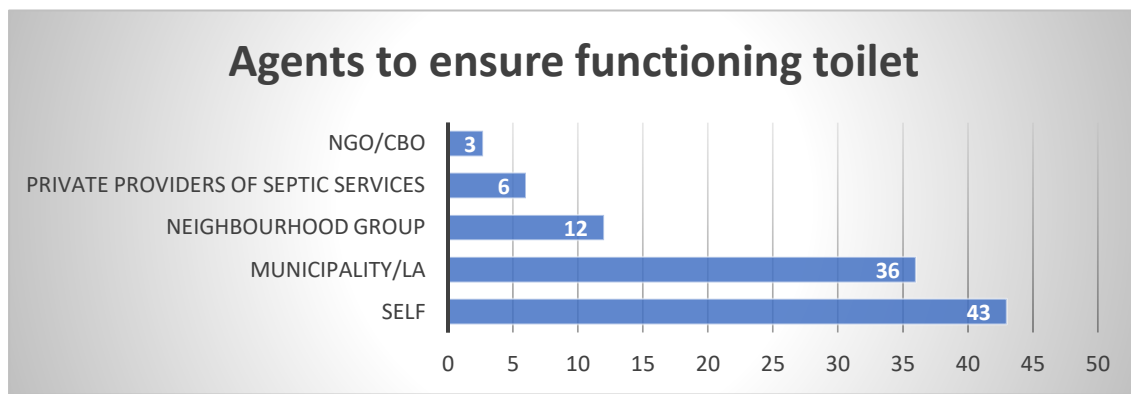


From the graphs above, 69% of the respondents have toilets inside their properties but outside the dwelling, 25% within the dwelling and 6% outside the property/ stand. More than half of the toilets in every settlement are located inside the property/ stand but outside the dwelling. Disaggregated by site, all settlements have relatively less toilets outside properties/ stands as compared to other locations as shown in Figure 18 above. However, Hopley has almost the same proportion of toilets outside the property and within the dwelling with 12% and 13% respectively. Churu farm has the highest number of toilets within the dwellings (45%) while Victoria Ranch has the least (3%) as shown by the graph above.

From the survey results, 58% do not share toilet facilities while 42% share with other households across all the sites (n=3132). Also, 95% do not pay for accessing sanitation facilities while only 5% pay. The 5% pay an average of US\$9/ month is paid to access sanitation facility.

Several agents are involved in the provision of sanitation services in Zimbabwe as shown in Figure 19 below. From the graph below, residents mostly rely on self-provision as confirmed by the 43% (n=3132). In addition to that, residents have also devised creative ways of providing sanitation services for themselves through organising neighborhood groups as indicated below. Harare City Council and Masvingo City Council are also actively involved in the provision of sanitation services as proven by a 36% in the graph below. NGOs/ CBOs and private providers also play a role in providing sanitation services across all the study sites.

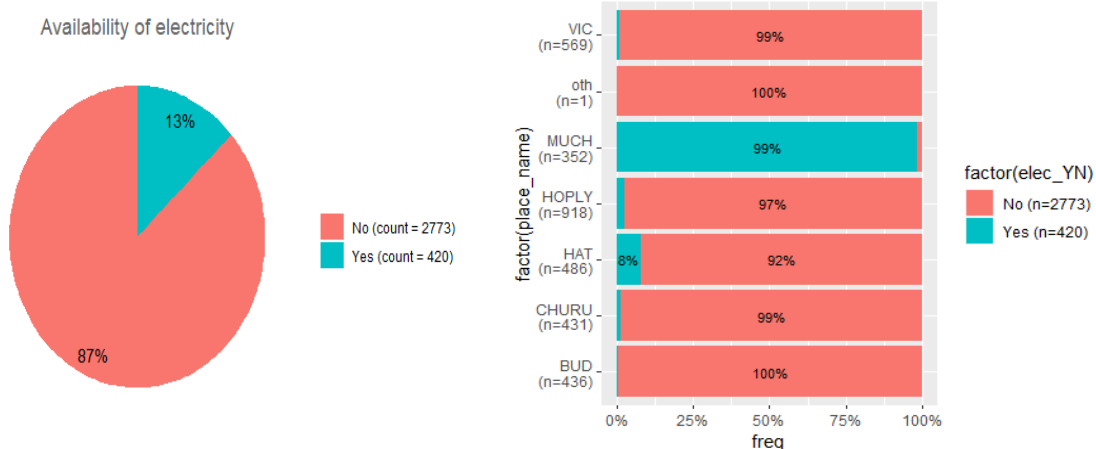
Figure 19: Agents involved in sanitation provision



3.3.4 Energy

Electricity connection is still behind across all sites. This is evidenced by only 13% having access to electrical energy while 87% does not. The graphs below indicate the availability of electricity across all sites and disaggregated by settlement.

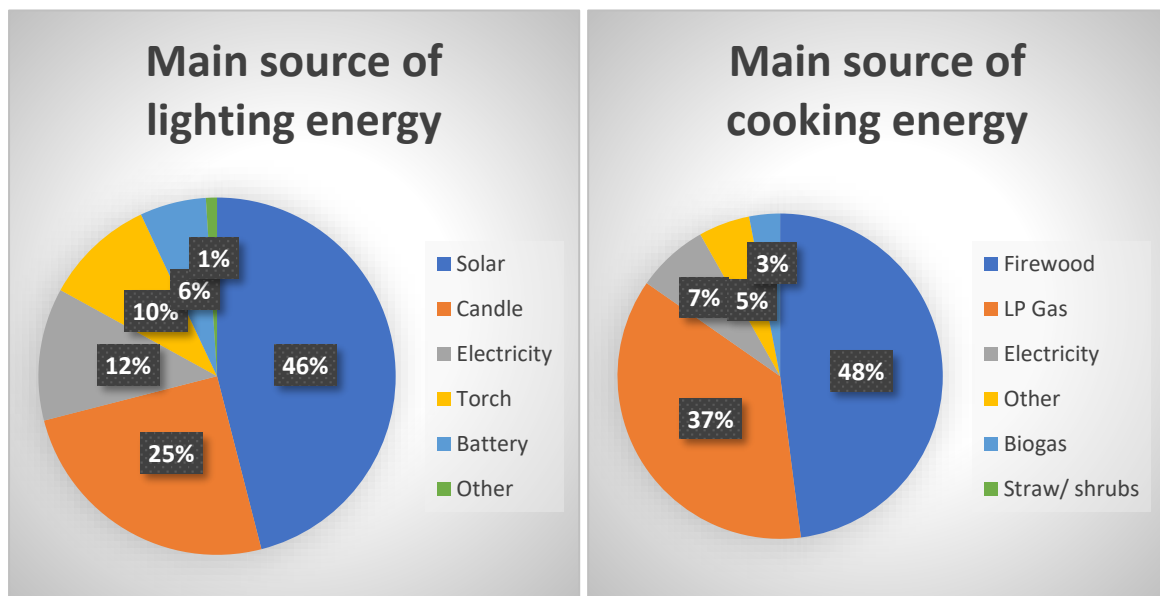
Figure 20: Electricity availability



From the graphs above, Mucheke is the only settlement with almost an absolute electrical connection. Other settlements are still behind in terms of access to electricity with more than 90% absence of electricity. Budiriro has absolutely no access to electrical energy. Within the connected area, electricity is supplied for 15 hours a day (on average).

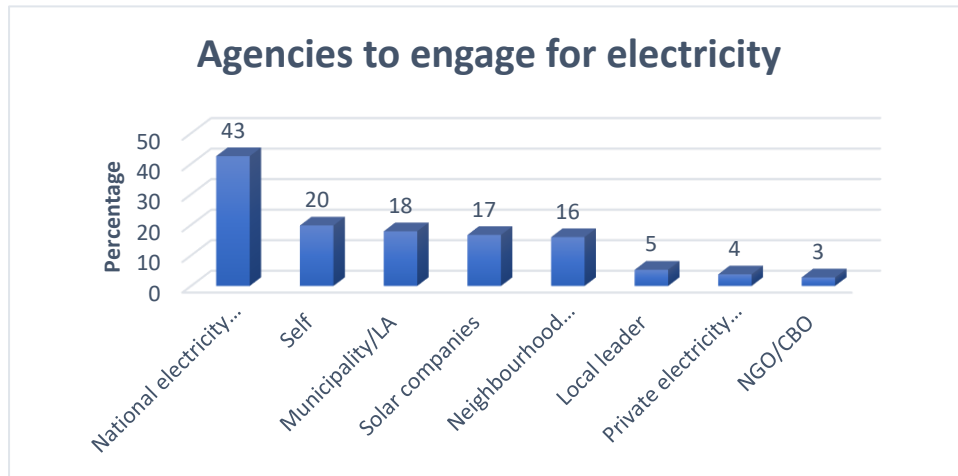
The widely used sources of lighting energy across all sites are solar and candles as evidenced by a 46% and 25% respectively in figure 21 below. Other lighting energy sources in figure 19 are kerosene lamp, generator and gas lamps. Energy sources for cooking are different from those for lighting. Figure 19 also shows energy sources for cooking. Firewood and LP-Gas are the most used energy sources for cooking as proven by 48% and 37% of the respondents respectively. Other cooking energy sources in the graph below are kerosene, coal and agricultural residue.

Figure 21: Energy sources for lighting and cooking.



The main agent involved in energy provision in Zimbabwe is Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Company (ZESA) as indicated in the graph below. Other agencies that are involved include individuals/ households, Harare and Masvingo City Councils, solar companies, neighborhood groups, private electricity companies, NGOs and CBOs as shown in Figure 22 below.

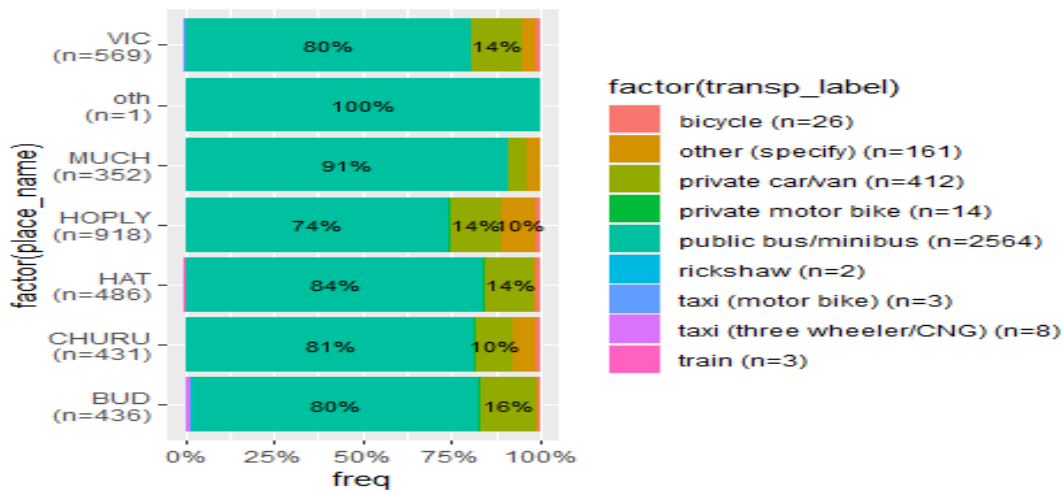
Figure 22: Agencies engaged for electricity across all sites.



3.3.5 Transport

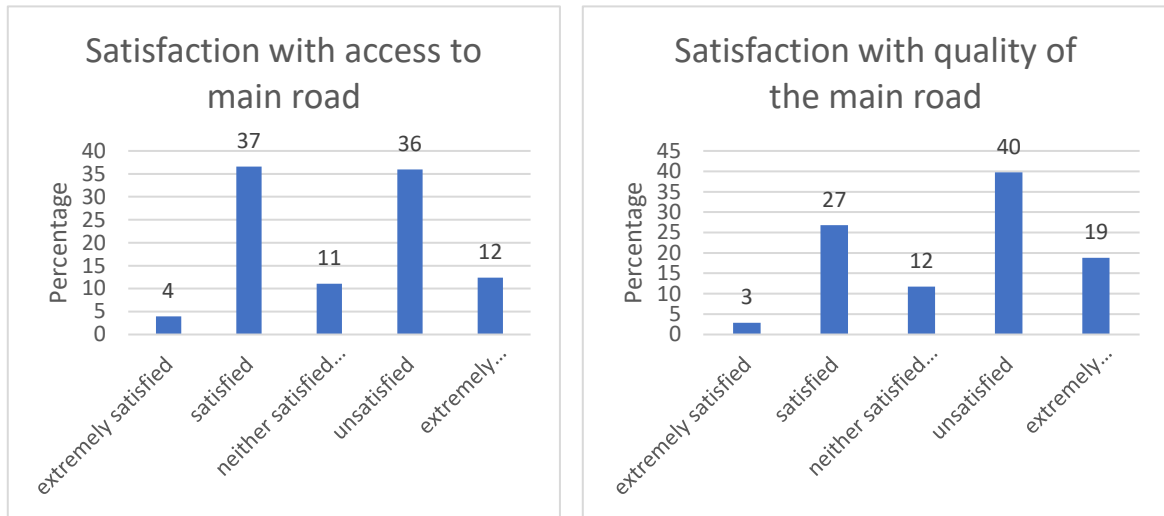
The study noted that 44% of the sampled households have members who commute to work while 66% do not (n=3132). 80% of the respondents use public transport, 13% use private transport and 7% use other means. Other includes motorbikes, train and non-motorised systems such as bicycles and three wheelers. Figure 23 below shows the transport modes for each settlement.

Figure 23: Transport modes by settlement.



The study also noted that only 8% of the sampled households (across all sites) had members who experienced traffic accidents while 92% did not. Respondents also ranked their satisfaction with access to and quality of the main road. Figure 24 below shows that residents are more unsatisfied with the quality of the road while the proportion of those satisfied with access vs those unsatisfied is almost equal.

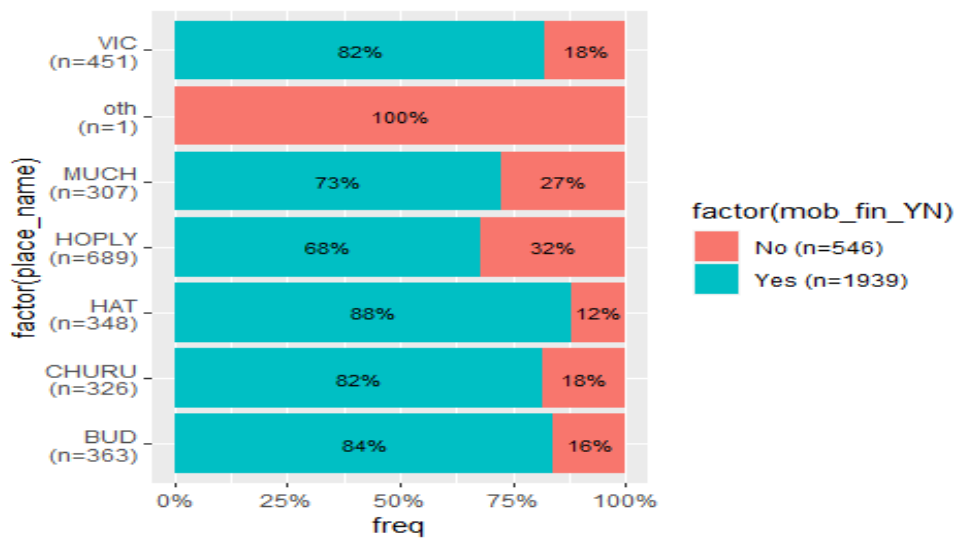
Figure 24: Satisfaction with access to and quality of the main road.



3.3.6 Communication

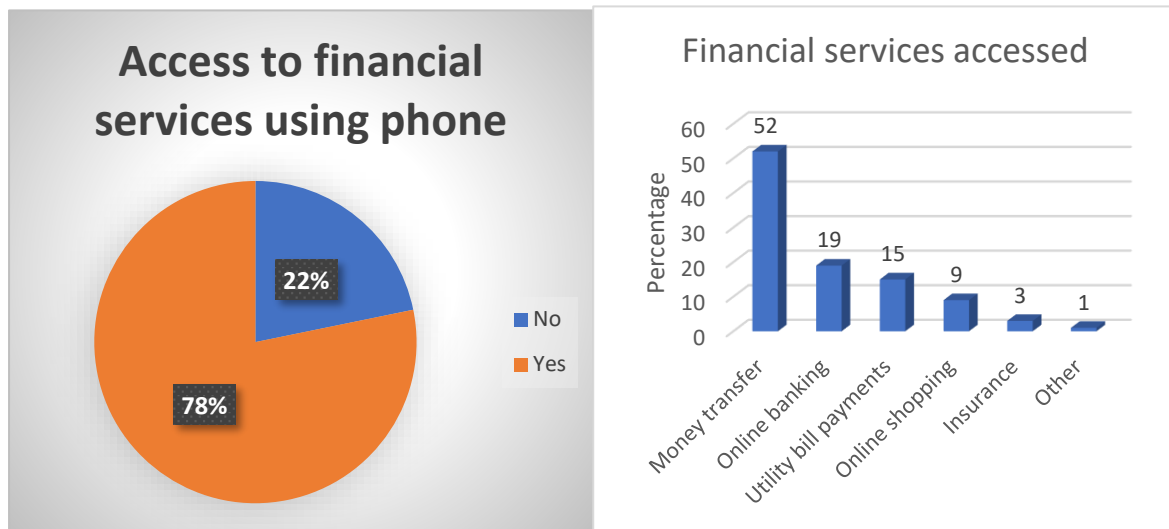
The survey indicated that 61% have access to and use mobile phones as a means of communication, 17% do not have mobile phones and 22% indicated that it is not applicable to them (n=3132). Figure 25 below show access to and use of mobile phones by settlement.

Figure 25: Access to mobile phones.



The graph above shows that more than ½ of the people in every settlement have access to mobile phones. Mucheke and Hopley has relatively larger percentages of people without access to mobile phones than other settlements as shown above. Of those with mobile phones, 49% have access to the internet, 50% do not and 1% do not know (n=2451). More so, 78% of those with mobile phones can access financial services which includes money transfer, online banking, utility bill payments, online shopping, insurance and other as shown in figure 26 below.

Figure 26: Access to financial services.



Those who cannot access financial services on their mobile phones indicated the following reasons;

- Did not know that they can access financial services on their mobile phones,
- Lack of trust on online banking systems,
- Cannot afford to use the services and
- Instructions for use are not available in their mobile phones

4.0 Conclusion, Policy Implications and Possible State Responses

4.1 Conclusion

The findings show that the government and the urban local authorities are less involved in infrastructure and service provision in these sites except for Mucheke. Residents rely mostly on self-provision strategies. This may exclude those who cannot afford to connect to infrastructure and services. Residents also organise themselves into neighborhood development groups where they plan, save money and eventually connect their communities to infrastructure and services.

There are several land acquisitions models and a mixture of agents in housing provision. Despite a wide range of land acquisition models and agents, tenure security remains an issue of concern. More than half of the respondents across all settlements lack documentation over land and housing. Accompanied by lack of infrastructure and services, the possibility of eviction increases. The detached housing type dominates in the 5 settlements except for Mucheke. Although this type is more common, several households share the same property.

All the settlements are characterized by poor WASH services. In Harare settlements, wells which are the main source of both drinking and cooking water are in proximity with latrines and sub-standard septic tanks. There is a high possibility of contamination, yet most people do not treat the water before drinking. This poses a health threat. In reticulated settlements like Mucheke and Hatcliffe, water is not always available, people resort to other alternatives such as boreholes and wells. Poor hygiene due to shortage of water especially in Mucheke, where 1 toilet is shared by 25 households also endangers people's health.

Road infrastructure is also poor across all settlements. Settlements like Victoria Ranch, Churu Farm, parts of Hopley and Hatcliffe Extension are not accessible during the rainy season because of slippery roads. Transport services are also limited within these areas. Residents are charged very high fares due to poor road infrastructure and demand exceeding supply of transport services. Public transport dominates all other transport modes in these settlements. However, the areas are not accessible enough for public transport to maneuver within the settlements. People will have to go to the nearest main road to access these services.

Electricity is the least available service across all the settlements and people rely on other energy sources for both cooking and lighting. There is a mixed use of energy as the same households may be using 2 different sources for cooking and lighting which are mainly LP-gas and solar respectively. Communication services appears to be relatively better as compared to other services across all the sites. However, poor network challenges affect communication. The most used communication network is NetOne because it offers better connectivity and have boosters within or close to the settlement.

4.2 Policy Implications with Possible State Responses

Based on the issues the report addresses (trapped populations in urban and peri-urban settlements) main policy implications that flow from those issues, and the types of state responses the report is clearly oriented toward and framed to inform ongoing policy dialogues.

1. Structural nature of “trappedness”

Policy implication:

The report positions immobility not as individual failure but as a structural condition produced by labour markets, housing systems, land tenure arrangements, and uneven urban investment. This implies that policies focused only on mobility (e.g. relocation, migration facilitation) are insufficient.

Possible state responses:

- Shift policy framing from “moving people out” to improving the viability of staying.
- Integrate trapped populations explicitly into urban development, social protection, and disaster risk policy, instead of treating them as temporary or residual groups.
- Recognise immobility as a legitimate planning condition, not an anomaly.

2. Urban and peri-urban policy blind spots

Policy implication:

The settlements profiled sit in administrative and policy grey zones—between urban and rural jurisdictions—leading to weak service provision, limited investment, and fragmented authority.

Possible state responses:

- Develop peri-urban-specific policy instruments, rather than extending rural or core-urban models by default.
- Clarify mandates across central government, local authorities, and parastatals to reduce institutional gaps.
- Align land administration, settlement planning, and service delivery within a single policy logic.

3. Precarious livelihoods and constrained labour mobility

Policy implication:

Economic immobility is a major driver of spatial immobility. Informal, insecure, and low-return livelihoods limit households' capacity to relocate or adapt, locking them into risk-prone settlements.

Possible state responses:

- Prioritise local economic development and livelihood stabilisation in trapped settlements.
- Link social protection to urban labour realities, not rural assumptions.
- Support informal economies through infrastructure, regulation reform, and market access rather than displacement.

4. Insecurity of land tenure and housing**Policy implication:**

Tenure insecurity reinforces trappedness or entrapment by discouraging investment, increasing vulnerability to eviction, and undermining access to services and credit.

Possible state responses:

- Adopt incremental and negotiated tenure approaches rather than insisting on immediate formalisation.
- Separate tenure security from full title where appropriate, recognising multiple forms of legitimate occupancy.
- Use land policy as a legal risk-reduction instrument.

5. Exposure to environmental and disaster risk**Policy implication:**

Many trapped populations are concentrated in high-risk locations (floodplains, unstable land, poorly serviced areas) not by choice, but through constrained options. Risk exposure thus reflects governance and planning failures.

Possible state responses:

- Integrate trapped settlements into urban disaster risk management and climate adaptation planning.
- Prioritise in-situ risk reduction before relocation.
- Ensure that relocation, where unavoidable, is voluntary, supported, and livelihood-compatible.

6. Limits of project-based and humanitarian responses**Policy implication:**

Short-term projects cannot address chronic urban immobility. The report implies a need to move from fragmented interventions to systemic policy reform.

Possible state responses:

- Embed responses to trapped populations within national urban policies, housing strategies, and social protection frameworks.
- Strengthen coordination across ministries responsible for housing, social welfare, local government, land, and disaster management.
- Use evidence from trapped settlements to inform long-term urban financing and investment decisions.



7. Overall policy signal

The overarching implication of the report is that trapped urban and peri-urban populations are a governance challenge, not a mobility problem. Effective state responses require:

- Recognising immobility as a normal outcome of Zimbabwe's current urban systems,
- Reforming those systems rather than managing symptoms, and
- Treating trapped settlements as permanent components of the urban future, not transitional spaces.