

A Fractured Nation



*17 July 2010: A woman in Killarney informal settlement demolishes her shelter
- evicted and on the move again, exactly 5 years after OM*

Operation Murambatsvina: Five years on

SOLIDARITY PEACE TRUST

JOHANNESBURG

30 July 2010

“I am no longer hopeful. I think it is going to be worse than this. At times I look at my scattered things, I don’t bother eating anything. I live in a state of severe emotional stress and depression. I am traumatised”

[Hopley Farm resident, Harare, June 2010]

“They have ruined my life again.... I have no money to go anywhere. From the word go, I have worked hard to get something, and have lost it all, over and over. “

[Zimbabwean in De Doorns IDP camp, May 2010]

State induced displacements and the multi-layered violence accompanying such practices... are not an aberration. Rather they appear to be an ever-present possibility if not actuality, integral to contemporary as well as past modes of rule and state making.¹

¹ Hammar, Amanda (2008), *In the Name of Sovereignty: Displacement and State Making in Post-Independence Zimbabwe*; Journal of Contemporary African Studies, Vol. 26, no. 4, pp. 417-434.



THE SOLIDARITY PEACE TRUST

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To assist individuals, organisations, churches and affiliated organisations in southern Africa, to build solidarity in the pursuit of justice, peace and social equality and equity in Zimbabwe. It shall be the special concern of the Trust to assist victims of human rights abuses in their efforts to correct and end their situation of oppression.

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Abbreviations

ARVs	Anti retro virals
ASP	Asylum Seeker Permit
BCC	Bulawayo City Council
BUTA	Bulawayo Traders' Association
CIO	Central Intelligence Organisation
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
GDP	Gross domestic product
IDP	Internally displaced person
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
MDC T	Movement for Democratic Change (Tsvangirai)
MP	Member of Parliament
NGO	Non governmental organisations
OG/HK	Operation Garikai/Hlalani Kuhle
OM	Operation Murambatsvina
PASSOP	People Against Suffering, Suppression, Oppression and Poverty
RBZ	Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe
SPT	Solidarity Peace Trust
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USD	United States Dollars
ZANU PF	Zimbabwe African Nationalist Union (Patriotic Front)
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions

PART ONE:

INTRODUCTION and OVERVIEW

A. Main outcomes: 2005

In May 2005, the Zimbabwean government embarked on a massive, highly systematic programme of demolitions of all informal housing in urban and peri-urban areas across Zimbabwe. Combined with a total clampdown on the informal trading sector, including the destruction of official vending areas and confiscation of all wares, Operation Murambatsvina (OM), or “Drive out the Filth” caused direct havoc in the lives of millions. The sheer scale and thoroughness of OM set it apart from previous demolitions, not just in Zimbabwe, but in Africa. These “indiscriminate and unjustified” demolitions caused sufficient outrage across the world to precipitate a UN investigation in July 2005 – although none of the recommendations have been acted on, five years later, and the government continues to contest the findings.²

1. 2005: immediate losses of dwellings and livelihoods

Three million people countrywide directly and indirectly suffered, as a result of the demolitions; an estimated 100,000 vendors were arrested - many of them legally licensed and selling from legal vendors’ markets; 560,000 people lost their shelter countrywide, with some small centres losing as much as 60% of their housing.³ A further 2,4 million lost markets for their goods, and/or remittances from the urban areas. Most of the demolished shelters were of good quality with access to electricity, water and sewerage, and many had been legitimated by virtue of standing for decades.⁴ The illegality of the government’s actions, which were in violation of the nation’s own laws with respect to evictions, as well as in violation of international statutes and protocols, has been noted in our previous reports on OM, as well as by other commentators.⁵

2. 2010: impact of OM

Five years on, what observations can be made regarding the causes and impact of OM, bearing in mind its context in the multi-layered, cataclysmic decline of Zimbabwe, which began in the 1990s? There have been several statements from concerned human rights organisations in the last few months acknowledging the five-year anniversary of OM, and some anecdotal information in the media that many still live in shocking conditions, but there appears to have been no systematic attempt to trace outcomes on particular families and communities in any detail.

² *Report of the Fact-finding Mission to Zimbabwe to assess the scope and manner of Operation Murambatsvina*, prepared by Mrs. Anna Tibaijuka, United Nations Special Envoy on Human Settlements Issues in Zimbabwe, July 2005. Henceforth this is referred to as the UN Report.

³ For example, Victoria Falls lost 60% of its housing, with 3,368 units destroyed. Other figures from the UN Report.

⁴ UN Report, *ibid*.

⁵ Solidarity Peace Trust (SPT) has produced three previous reports on OM. *Discarding the Filth* (June 2005), pages 14 ff, for legal context of government’s actions. and pages 18-22, for details of how the poor were “criminalized” in the media.

The massive internal displacement of people that resulted from OM in 2005, has been followed by further economic, humanitarian and political crises that have created seemingly impossible conditions for Zimbabwe's citizens. In 2008, a combination of political violence on a scale unseen since the 1980s, the total economic implosion of the nation with inflation running into the millions of percent, the almost total closure of schools and hospitals and the resulting cholera epidemic, all led to another exponential movement of people, this time out of the country in search of work, basic services and safe haven. In a previous report, we documented that in 2008-9, *the rate of diasporisation increased one-hundred-fold* from that of the 1990s, in rural Matabeleland at least.⁶

3. In this report

We follow up on previous OM research conducted by SPT in 2005 and 2006,⁷ and build on our narratives of the lives of particular families and informal settlements from 2005 to 2010. The story is a grim one, with many of those we remembered now prematurely dead, and others living in unspeakable poverty.

Our 2010 research shows that in Bulawayo's high density suburbs, the financial and other crises of 2008 managed to achieve what OM failed to – namely, decongestion of urban housing appears to have occurred, with properties that in 2006 housed 10 or more people, now housing two or three. The large scale loss of dwellings and livelihoods that occurred during OM in 2005, pushed millions of people to the very edge of survival. Successive further blows to fragile and failing survival networks as the economy collapsed during 2007-9 have led to the anonymous deaths of many, while others have continued to live in dire urban conditions.

Bearing in mind the very high 2008 diasporisation rates that we have referred to, urban decongestion is perhaps not that surprising. Ironically, considering the government's stated aim of OM to drive people back to rural areas - and its failure by and large to achieve this at the time - we have also found that since 2008 many of Bulawayo's urbanites are reported to have *returned to their rural homes*. Contributing factors appear to have been: inability to pay the costs of renting and living in the disastrous hyperinflation of the city; the need for non-existent foreign exchange to survive via the black market in 2008, and since 2009 to pay utility bills; the hope of becoming eligible for food aid, which was more likely to be accessed via rural areas, in a situation where shops countrywide were bare of commodities. In 2008, mission hospitals and schools in rural areas remained almost the only ones functioning countrywide, as government institutions collapsed, and so the search for health services in particular may have provided further impetus to some of those "going rural".

The deconstruction of urban society that was begun by OM and escalated by the ruralisation and diasporisation of 2008-9 in the wake of political violence and economic collapse, has undermined the social movement and the MDC's ability to organise. With the shrinking of the formal employment base in the last five years, and a corresponding shrinking of the power of the trades unions, MDC and civil society remain structurally in a weakened position in 2010.

⁶ www.solidaritypeacetrust.org/127/gone-to-egoli/ page 14 for the 2009 research on diasporisation. One person per hundred families migrated yearly in 1991, and by 2009, one person per family was migrating annually - this was a hundred-fold increase, and a three-fold increase over the rate of diasporisation in 2005, post OM, which saw 31 people migrating per 100 families.

⁷ SPT (June 2005), *Discarding the filth*, (October 2005) *Crime of Poverty*, (August 2006) *Meltdown*, all available on www.solidaritypeacetrust.org/reports/

OM and the Zimbabwean Diaspora in the Western Cape

Diasporisation has been a major consequence of the last five years for Zimbabweans. We have therefore included in this report, Zimbabweans now living in De Doorns in the Western Cape. We featured this group in our report of March 2010, which focused on the conditions of the diaspora in South Africa.⁸ Approximately 2,500 Zimbabweans were displaced in De Doorns during the grape picking season in November 2009, as a result of xenophobic attacks, and many ended up living in UNHCR tents for the displaced. *The majority of those living in this displaced persons camp in De Doorns, were also displaced by OM in Zimbabwe five years ago, which made them a pertinent group for this report.*⁹

The Cape Town based organisation PASSOP¹⁰ conducted interviews here for SPT, when the picking season was tailing off in April. Around 1,100 people then remained in the tented camp: 118 interviews were conducted, on a voluntary basis, among those who identified themselves as having been affected by OM in 2005. SPT visited De Doorns on 30 May 2010 and conducted key informant interviews, when the picking season was effectively over. There were 420 Zimbabweans still living in IDP tents in increasingly icy weather - waiting, with no clear plans, for the future to unfold. By July 2010, in the wake of the FIFA World Cup, Zimbabweans across South Africa were living in fear of xenophobic attacks. Many in De Doorns were on the move once more, fleeing ahead of threats.

B. Main findings 2010

1. Urban housing

- Diasporisation, ruralisation and death have temporarily **reduced congestion** for some suburbs at least in Bulawayo, although this may not be as true for other urban areas, in particular Harare.¹¹ We note that 269 people lived on 27 urban stands affected by OM in 2005. By 2010, this figure had been **reduced by 48%**, with only 141 living there. Of those we can trace, most moved to a rural area, while the balance moved to the diaspora or died.
- **Only 20% of individuals who were known to be on these stands in 2005/6 are still there in 2010.** This points to the importance of an entirely new voter registration exercise and the need for a national census to establish where people now are. People have moved multiple times over the last five years as they have desperately sought ways of surviving, and families are divided between urban, rural and diaspora settings.
- This decongestion is an indicator of severe urban poverty, precipitated by OM and compounded by the collapse of 2007-9: particularly since 2008, some families have been driven out of the urban areas, as they fail to cover the very high cost of urban living, including payment of rents, rates, electricity and schooling levies.

⁸ SPT (2010): *Desperate lives, twilight worlds: how a million Zimbabweans live in South Africa without sanction or sanctuary*; Johannesburg.

⁹ Ibid: initial interviews in February for this earlier report, indicated that 52% of De Doorns respondents had a direct history of displacement during OM.

¹⁰ People Against Suffering, Suppression, Oppression and Poverty.

¹¹ See Case Study One. Capital cities are always the most prone to rural-urban migration, which is why Harare may not have experienced this same phenomenon. Also, in 2008, many families fled rural areas for Harare during the political violence. Matabeleland was not subject to this same phenomenon of IDPs in 2008.

- Congestion nonetheless remains high in certain households, with more than 20 individuals, mainly orphans, residing on one stand in the study group.
- People remain struggling economically, and diasporisation of family members does not appear to have brought back much in terms of economic support. Loss of backyard structures has meant loss of rents for owners.
- People have not rebuilt backyard shelters since OM, with few exceptions.

2. Informal settlements, Bulawayo

- In the informal settlement of Killarney in Bulawayo, around 200 families from the Cement Siding area, are **once more in the middle of eviction**. MacDonald Bricks owns the land they have been squatting on and has successfully won a court case evicting them. In the dead of a very cold winter, these families are now demolishing their shelters. They are rebuilding a matter of 300m from where they were, in the “new line”, or Village One, in Killarney.
- In spite of the tough conditions, Killarney and Ngozi Mine in Bulawayo have both re-established themselves, with more or less the same families that were living there ahead of OM in 2005.
- 35% of our respondents representing 149 individuals have lived in Killarney for 20 years or longer – yet they still remain with absolutely no security of tenure. Average length of time lived here is 14 years. All had shelters destroyed in 2005.
- We have not seen the same urban-rural drift in the informal settlements as we have in the formal suburbs of Bulawayo, for the following reasons:
 - 48% in Killarney are descendants of foreign nationals, although they were themselves born in Zimbabwe. However it means they have no claim to any rural home.
 - 37% are women who are single parents or divorced or widowed, who therefore have no rural claims on tenure.
 - People in informal settlements do not pay rent or electricity and have therefore not faced the same financial pressures that families in formal accommodation have faced, which has precipitated the rural movement of some of the latter.
- 20% of respondents reported that they did not leave Killarney after losing their homes in 2005, but hid and simply rebuilt. The remaining 80% who were taken in by the churches, ended up moving on average 4,2 times each – before also ending up back at Killarney!
- Out of hundreds of informal settlement families forcibly resettled in rural Matabeleland in 2005, only 8 remain there at this time. All others have returned to the informal settlements. Of these 8, half are reasonably happy to remain rural, while 4 have become prisoners of circumstances.

3. Informal trading

- The informal sector remains under pressure, with raids by police on vendors, a daily occurrence. Very few formal vending markets have been re-established to replace those destroyed, leaving even licensed vendors technically outside the law. With up to

90% of people surviving via the informal sector, this continued “criminalisation” of it, is patently ridiculous.

4. De Doorns and the “diaspora” displaced

- The De Doorns case study further indicates that while OM itself was a factor in driving some people out of Zimbabwe in search of work (approx 30% of our respondents), it was more the cumulative impact of OM followed by the economic and service delivery collapse of 2008/9 which drove most of these respondents into the diaspora (60%).
- De Doorns respondents have confirmed the findings of previous studies of OM that the demolitions were of substantial buildings, and resulted in devastating losses to families, including in 62% of cases, loss of livelihood.
- Nearly half of individuals on chronic medication in 2005 suffered interruption as a result of OM, and some have never resumed access.
- 71% of families with school going children experienced disruption to schooling and in 28% of cases disruption was severe, resulting in years of lost schooling, or permanent drop out.

5. A nation on the move – still

The case studies in this report illustrate the lives of extreme hardship that have driven Zimbabweans from one place of abode to another in the last five years. In urban Bulawayo, we found that 80% of people on our target sites had moved on between 2005 and 2010. We found that people in the informal settlements in Bulawayo have moved an average of 4,2 times in the last five years – to end up exactly where they started out – only to be evicted again in July 2010! And we found that Zimbabweans who have travelled as far as the Western Cape have lived in up to seven places in the last five years, and are also once more on the move, chasing seasonal employment and fleeing xenophobia. Zimbabwe’s population is in a state of flux and movement, and each move costs dearly in terms of lost possessions, interruption in access to services, and emotional stress. Families have been forced to live apart, with children in Zimbabwe living with grandparents while their parents earn abroad, or living in rural areas while their parents struggle to make money in the informal sector in the towns. The social fabric of Zimbabwe has been ripped apart.

C. Recommendations

As so little has been done to formally improve the situation since our report “Meltdown” was published in 2006, the recommendations, sadly, are being reproduced here with only minor alterations.

1. Urban housing

- The international community should investigate possibilities of funding large housing projects either directly through some of the more accountable local authorities, or through NGOs partnering them.

- International donors should help build the capacity of local NGOs to be able to build on a large scale.
- Pressure must be brought to bear on the Zimbabwean government to return full control of the building of housing to local authorities, in accordance with the UN report recommendations.
- The UN report has pointed out the need for Zimbabwean local authorities to relax urban housing legislation. This should be a priority, to facilitate building of temporary or transitional housing in urban areas, with materials that can be upgraded over time by owners. Colonial by-laws mean building costs are prohibitive, as types of materials that can be used are limited. Changes in legislation might protect residents against a future Murambatsvina, as the government would no longer have the rationale that their housing was in some way illegal.¹² Sadly, in 2009 demolitions were continuing, in keeping with these outdated by laws – including under an MDC T city council in Victoria Falls.
- Local councils need educating on housing alternatives used in other developing nations, such as packed earth, wooden and other prefabricated dwellings: there is currently a distinct reluctance on the part of city council officials to relax housing regulations, seeing this as posing a health and safety risk to residents. Their position is that everyone deserves good quality housing and this is what the laws currently enforce.
- The international community should consider prioritising the building of sewerage, water and road networks in areas where stands have been allocated in urban areas. This would reduce one of the most arduous cost burdens currently facing local councils and plot holders. Sewerage and water systems in and of themselves cannot be usurped, and their provision would go some way to meeting the concerns of councils with regard to health and safety issues in developing urban areas.

2. Informal settlements

- There is an urgent need in Bulawayo for the City Council to consider ways of giving tenure to those in the Killarney informal settlement. 35% of people have lived there for 20 years or more, with people living there for an average of 14 years. Many have been born in Killarney and have known no other home. If they had security of tenure, they would be able to develop more robust dwellings: experiences of multiple moves and the current evictions have left families unwilling to invest time or materials in more than the most basic shacks. Their living conditions now are noticeably worse than five years ago.

3. Informal Trading Sector

- There is an urgent need for vending marts to be built throughout Zimbabwe: some local authorities already have extensive plans and costing for what is required, but lack

¹² The issue of legality of structures is a contentious one: it is dangerous to go along with the assumption that those in poor quality housing have fewer rights than those in 'legal' dwellings, but nonetheless a relaxation of housing laws at this time would reassure residents and make it easier for people to afford the building costs of dwellings.

the funds to go ahead. It is in everyone's interests for the informal trading sector to achieve a system of accountability and regulation. This will protect the rights of vendors and will prevent the continuous arbitrary arrests currently taking place, as well as controlling litter and crime.

- Pressure by Cabinet, NGOs and UN agencies needs to be brought to bear on the authorities including the police, to recognise the need for temporary vending areas to be established, in consultation with vendors and bearing in mind what is convenient to customers. This needs to be done immediately, in order to decriminalise vending.
- The UN CAP for Zimbabwe recognises the urgent need to help those in the informal sector struggling to re-establish livelihoods. Concerted efforts in providing skills training and SME development are needed: local NGOs already involved in this need capacity building and support to increase their initiatives.

Quite simply the choice is to do something on a large scale – or to continue to do very little or nothing. If nothing is done, then obviously in a year from now, the situation will have changed only for the worse for the hundreds of thousands who have lived in hopeless squalor, particularly in informal settlements, since their shelters were demolished over five years ago.



Photo 1: 17 July 2010 - shack in process of being built in the "new line" following this week's evictions in Killarney.



Photos 2 and 3: May 2005 - from Porta Farm in Harare (above) to Killarney in Bulawayo (below): burnt out and homeless, young children and the elderly survey the ruins of their homes



PART TWO

MURAMBATSVINA: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES IN A BROADER CONTEXT

A. The Displacements

1. History of displacements in Zimbabwe

Demolitions and forced displacements have a long history in Zimbabwe: during colonial times there were multiple forced displacements in terms of racist legislation restricting and decreeing who could live where. The Land Apportionment Act and the Land Tenure Act led to forced relocation of tens of thousands of black Zimbabweans into some of the country's least hospitable and productive land, to make way for white farmers. Entire communities were removed and dumped in remote and inhospitable regions, where people died in large numbers from diseases like malaria, to which they had no previous exposure or resistance.¹³ Restrictions on who could live and work in the cities also led to hardship and dividing of families throughout the colonial period. During the 1970s war of liberation, entire rural communities were forced into "protected villages", in order to try and break the line of supply and information that was aiding guerrillas in their struggle against the Rhodesian army.¹⁴

Considering the long-standing colonial injustices caused by forced removals and the artificial creation of native reserves, the forced removal of Zimbabweans from their urban homes on such a devastating scale in 2005 remains hard to accept. The War of Liberation was fought to redress all the imbalances of colonialism, including the exclusion of the majority of Zimbabweans not only from prime farming land, but also from ownership of the cities and from the advantages offered by urban centres in terms of improved housing, educational and employment opportunities. As Raftopoulos has pointed out, "...despite the discriminatory policies they faced, Africans made the cities their home and fought for their rights to live and raise families in urban areas."¹⁵

2. Sovereignty, citizenship and denial of citizenship

...state induced displacements and the multi-layered violence accompanying such practices... are not an aberration. Rather they appear to be an ever-present possibility if not actuality, integral to contemporary as well as past modes of rule and state making.¹⁶

In her 2008 article on sovereignty and state-making in Zimbabwe, Amanda Hammar makes the point that Zimbabwe is not unique in using displacement as a common, 'normalised'

¹³ Alexander, Jocelyn, JoAnn McGregor and Terence Ranger (2000), *Violence and Memory: A Hundred Years in the 'Dark Forests' of Matabeleland*; James Currey, Oxford, for a fascinating and detailed account of the impact of forced displacements in this region of Zimbabwe during colonial times.

¹⁴ Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, (1975) *Man in the Middle and Civil War in Rhodesia*, CIIR, London.

¹⁵ Raftopoulos, Brian, "The battle for the cities". *Zimbabwe Independent*, 3 June 2005.

¹⁶ Hammar, Amanda (2008), *In the Name of Sovereignty: Displacement and State Making in Post-Independence Zimbabwe*; Journal of Contemporary African Studies, Vol. 26, no. 4, pp. 417-434.

practice of state making, and that the identifying of certain groups as 'unworthy' in order to restrict their rights and living spaces has a long history. Integral to the definition of any modern state is the definition of who has the right to be a citizen – and who is an “other”, and can be deported, for example. The very concept of a 'sovereign state' implies the right of governments to have “control over space, resources and populations – including the latter’s movement or confinement”.¹⁷

Within many states, the rhetoric of sovereignty has been used to deem certain citizens unworthy,¹⁸ and in Zimbabwe itself, shifting legal and rhetorical definitions of who is an authentic citizen have been a noteworthy phenomenon at different points in its past and present. Pre-independence, racist divisions were defined in statutes and enforced, causing forced resettlements and hierarchies of “worth” among citizens. And in the 1980s, people mainly from Matabeleland who supported the political opposition were identified as the ‘enemy’ and ‘dissidents’ – the chaff that needed to be swept away by “Gukurahundi”. This rhetoric of otherness was used to justify five years of torture and murder in this region – and also resulted in displacements and a wave of diasporisation out of Matabeleland and the Midlands, affecting thousands.

...a common characteristic of [Zimbabwean] state driven campaigns of exclusion and displacement has been the practice of identifying a *dangerous other*... and then cleansing (by fire, demolition or removal), containing (by imprisonment or encampment) or excising (by torture or even death) the contaminating danger. Such dehumanising actions not only dislodge people from place, but from the rights and entitlements of citizenship, and from belonging to the nation as a whole.¹⁹

Other displacements both on small and large scales occurred in Zimbabwe prior to OM. In October 1983, unaccompanied women in urban areas were suddenly deemed to be prostitutes and were routinely arrested, in another version of “operation clean up”. In 1992, more than 4,000 residents of Churu Farm, near Harare, were evicted in a politically motivated decision. They were resettled in Hatcliffe – from where they were forcibly evicted during OM. Hammar recounts the forced displacement of some residents of rural Gokwe in the late 1990s; they had lived in the area since the 1980s and were suddenly identified as “squatters” for politically expedient reasons.²⁰ And since 2000, a conservatively-estimated 300,000 farm workers and their families have been evicted from commercial farms as a result of farm invasions, while others have been ‘displaced in situ’ – they have remained on the farms, but have had to change their mode of survival and negotiate new relationships with resettled farmers who cannot pay them.²¹

As a result of changes to legislation in recent years, thousands of Zimbabwean-born residents, including migrant workers from Malawi and Zambia whose parents were born outside the

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Hammar cites the exclusion of Ugandan Asians under Idi Amin. The racist and exclusionary rhetoric of Apartheid, or the anti Tutsi rhetoric in Rwanda ahead of the genocide are further obvious examples of states selecting who is a legitimate citizen.

¹⁹ Hammar (2008): op cit.

²⁰ ibid.

²¹ Magaramombe, Godfrey (2010) '*Displaced in Place: Agrarian Displacements, Replacements and Resettlement among Farm Workers in Mazowe District*'; in Hammar, Mcgregor and Landau, *Displacing Zimbabwe: crisis and construction in Southern Africa*. This JSAS special edition explores the complexities of the impact of the Zimbabwe crisis on the means of economic survival and identity: pages 361 - 375

country, have found themselves denied a citizenship that had previously been a birth right. And since 2000, the use of politically driven definitions of who is a 'good' citizen and who is a 'criminal' with lesser rights to every aspect of state protection – and who is even open to overt attacks and punishment by the state - has been an overriding feature of the crisis period.²²

Murambatsvina can be seen usefully in this longer context of 'sovereignty rhetoric' that has resulted in state violence against certain groups of citizens, of which OM has been but one manifestation.

3. Retribution for political 'disloyalty'

The timing of OM was significant: in the parliamentary election of April 2005, most of the MDC's 41 seats were won in urban areas. Coming as it did in June 2005, OM has been widely interpreted as an act of retribution against areas known by government to have voted for the opposition, sending a message that it was irrelevant whether urban MPs and town councils were MDC or not. As long as ZANU PF controlled the army and police, the ruling party could do as it would in urban areas.²³

In reality, many of those affected by OM were **not** MDC supporters. The operation was on such a vast scale and so systematic in knocking down all informal structures, that it was indiscriminate in its victims in urban and peri-urban areas. Afro Barometer conclude in their October 2005 survey that:

...there is trace – though hardly overwhelming – evidence that OM was partly a device to rebuke urban voters for preferring opposition supporters.... We find that the OM dragnet was cast so wide that it caught supporters of the ruling party as well as the opposition.²⁴

Ironically, considering the state's aim, they further note that a significant outcome of OM was the de-legitimization of state institutions. Even as it was intended to 'purify' the cities of the unworthy, OM undermined the state's own credibility, including among its 'chosen'. Across the political divide, in October 2005 people viewed ZANU PF, the government and the police as less trustworthy than before: "the crackdown undercut the ruling party's already dwindling base of support."²⁵

In March 2008, the first election since OM, the nation voted convincingly for the opposition – including for the first time in rural Shona-speaking areas. As discussed ahead in this report, OM was not the only calamity to befall Zimbabwe's poor between 2005 and early 2008 – the collapse of the economy, education and health all exposed the failure of the presiding government to protect the interests of its citizens. But OM may have had a crucial impact on voting patterns; while displacing 'worthless' urbanites was one of the intentions of OM, this may have backfired, sending some seasoned MDC political activists out into rural areas where

²² For example, in the 2008 March election campaign, ZANU PF election posters encouraged people to vote ZANU PF in order to "punish and forever silence puppet sanctions-mongers" – a very explicit and violent attitude to the political opposition. See also Zimbabwe Human Rights Forum (May 2007): *Their words condemn them: the language of violence, intolerance and despotism in Zimbabwe*, Harare.

²³ SPT (2005), Discarding the filth, op cit, among many other commentators.

²⁴ Afro Barometer (2006); *Popular Reactions to State Repression: Operation Murambatsvina in Zimbabwe*; Working Paper No 59; pages 9 and 10.

²⁵ Ibid, pages 12-14.

they could introduce and sustain new dialogues around political change within rural communities.²⁶

4. Urban residents as the “unworthy”

During the demolitions, urban populations were sneeringly referred to as “totemless” by ZANU officials.²⁷ In a blatant example of this position, Deputy Minister of Industry and International Trade said in Parliament on 23 June:

90% of all people who have been voted into Parliament from the other side [MDC] are not indigenous and the [urban] constituencies they talk about have no identity and recognition.²⁸

To regain legitimacy, urbanites needed to “go back where they came from”, to the rural areas. This refrain of authentic citizens being only those who had rural roots to return to, resonated throughout the period of OM. Destroying ‘illegal’ structures in the towns did not matter as either you were a ‘real, indigenous’ citizen with a rural home to go to, or you were not a ‘real, indigenous’ citizen, in which case the state was not responsible for you.

5. Rural-urban links: what is their prevalence and relevance?

As Deborah Potts pointed out in 2008, the reality for many urban-based Zimbabweans in relation to their likelihood of having a claim to land and livelihood in a rural area is very different from the government’s crude assumption that all “real” Zimbabweans can “return” to a rural home:

... first, over half Zimbabwe’s current urban residents are urban-born and thus their rural links are weakened. Second, by 2001 even many recent rural-urban migrants did not have the basic asset of rural land to fall back on, and it can be safely assumed that this would be even truer of the urban-born.²⁹

The majority of Zimbabweans in urban areas may be able to identify a rural link, but in most cases this is now more of a sentimental tie to grandparents or other relatives than the reality of alternative livelihoods in a rural base. The problems of women claiming land rights in rural areas is further indicated by Potts:

...many divorced, widowed or separated women have migrated to town *because* they have been squeezed off the land and their social links in rural areas have become dysfunctional.

Yet many female-headed households were among those affected by OM. In Case Study Two ahead in this report, 37% of household heads in the informal settlement of Killarney in Bulawayo, consisted of widowed, divorced or single women, who reported having no claim on

²⁶ This suggestion is qualified by recognition that by and large most of those displaced did not in fact return to rural areas, although some did, for varying lengths of time.

²⁷ Brian Raftopoulos, “The Battle for the cities”, in *Financial Gazette*, June 3, 2005.

²⁸ Parliamentary Debates, 23 June 2005. Most MDC constituencies were urban after the 2005 election.

²⁹ Potts, Deborah (2008); *Displacements and livelihoods: the longer term impacts of Operation Murambatsvina*; published in Vambe, M. (ed) 2008. *Zimbabwe: The Hidden Dimensions of Operation Murambatsvina* (Harare, Weaver Press; Pretoria, Africa Institute of South Africa).

rural homes. Yet all were dumped in rural areas in 2005, and have made their way back to Killarney over the last few years. Zimbabwe's history of migrant labour also means that many people born in Zimbabwe are of foreign African ancestry and as such have no local rural links. In the Killarney case study, 48% of respondents reported that their parents were born outside of Zimbabwe. Several reported having been born in this informal settlement, and knowing no other home.

Potts acknowledges the significance to a minority of urban dwellers, of having active rural livelihood links, but adds:

As each successive new generation is born in towns, the proportion of the total population who can 'return' to rural 'homes' reduces. Gender, nationality and land availability are other important factors influencing rural linkages.... Linkages between African rural and urban areas can serve many positive socio-economic functions *if there is freedom of movement and settlement*.³⁰

OM on the other hand blatantly and cynically violated this principle of free movement, resulting in massive material and other losses for ultimately millions of innocent civilians. Most of those forcibly displaced and removed to rural areas had returned within a year, after failing to establish livelihoods there, as our report in 2006 illustrated.³¹

As our current report shows, some urban residents have, in very recent years, gone to rural homes – but this has been an option of economic last resort. If, in the future, the formal economy begins to recover meaningfully, increasing the possibility of urban employment, one could predict that there would once more be a rural to urban drift. The important issue is that freedom of movement and settlement should be maintained, without state coercion.

B. The Informal Sector and OM

1. Fear of an uprising: threat of increased organisation of the informal sector

OM began in May 2005 with the massive dismantling of Zimbabwe's informal trading sector. This has been interpreted as a pre-emptive strike against escalating social desperation, combined with the trades unions moving to organize and unionise the informal sector.³² By removing all vendors, OM depopulated urban centres, removed informal structures and physically cleared the streets of places to hide; this undermined the possibility of any kind of organised mass action against the government. By confusing and demoralising people, and by sending in overwhelming force, OM itself did not give rise to more than token resistance, left people disorientated and destroyed neighbourhood groupings and political structures.³³ The damage to the unions and democratic movement caused by OM was reinforced with the

³⁰ *ibid.*

³¹ SPT (2006), *Meltdown*.

³² The ZCTU confirmed that they had quietly been organizing and unionizing this sector, including in small centres across Zimbabwe, for some months prior to OM: interview Wellington Chibhebe, October 2005.

³³ In the first few days of the operation in late May, in Glen View and White Cliff Farm, some groups tried resistance and were quickly subdued. *The Standard*, 29 May 2005; "Terror of 'black boots' in Glen View". *The Saturday Herald*, 28 May 2005; "President backs clean-up".

subsequent undermining of the informal sector during 2008-9: to date, the structures of the MDC and the ZCTU remain reduced, as is their capacity to mobilise.

2. Criminalising of the informal sector: destroying the parallel market

The terminology of illegitimacy and illegality was used by government to justify the clampdown on the informal trading sector, in the same way as the rhetoric of sovereignty was used to justify the demolitions. The sector was routinely referred to as “illegal”, “criminal” and “corrupt”, even though vending sites that were in fact licensed were demolished along with unlicensed ones. Many of the vendors who lost their livelihoods were similarly licensed.

It is worth pointing out the difference between “informality” and “illegality” when referring to small business enterprises, as it was the deliberate conflation of these terms that the Zimbabwean government used to justify OM. Many commentators have indicated the almost insurmountable hurdles that exist in third world countries, including Zimbabwe, in legalising a small-scale enterprise.³⁴ Many such enterprises therefore operate outside of state-decreed structures and regulations, but are not illegal in the sense of being “criminal”.³⁵ Yet criminality and informality of small enterprises is often conflated, as it was in Zimbabwe in 2005.

As Potts has eloquently put it:

The issue of “criminality” (rather than “illegality”) as a feature of the informal sector is worth discussing... because it is so frequently used to demonise the sector and justify draconian interventions... Since... the informal sector is typically unlicensed/unregistered, it is also “illegal”. The logical fallacy that all too often follows is that, therefore, criminal activities are “informal sector”.... The conceptual muddling of the categories is often assisted by geography. In poor cities, some criminals live in poor, unplanned settlements where many people work in the informal sector. Obviously that does not mean that criminal activities are informal, any more than formal sector workers living in such settlements automatically become “informal” Poor people in African cities living in unplanned settlements, and working in the informal sector, are just as, indeed usually far more, exercised by the problems created by criminal elements living amongst them, than the government or the rich.³⁶

The Chairperson of the Harare Commission Cde Sekesai Makwavarara on the occasion of the official launch of “Operation Murambatsvina” at the Town House on 19th May 2005, stated that the intention of the operation was to enforce by-laws and stop illegal activities, including: “vending, traffic control, illegal structures, touting/abuse of commuters by rank marshals, street-life/prostitution, vandalism of property infrastructure, stock theft, illegal cultivation.”³⁷

³⁴ UNDP (2010); *The Informal Economy, SMEs and the ‘Missing Middle’ in Zimbabwe: Some Observations*; Working Paper 9, Comprehensive Economic Recovery in Zimbabwe.

³⁵ This debate around definition is similar to that of referring to ‘undocumented migrants’ as ‘illegal immigrants’: lack of a licence does not mean that a business is in any other way ‘criminal’, just as not having a passport does not mean that somebody is a ‘criminal’.

³⁶ Potts, D. (2007), *The State and the Informal in Sub-Saharan African Urban Economies: Revisiting Debates on Dualism*. Crisis States Working Paper Series No.2. Crisis State Research Centre, London School of Economics, London. Cited in UNDP (2010), Working Paper 9; page 5.

³⁷ *The Saturday Herald*, 28 May 2005. For full statement, see appendices of *Discarding the Filth*, op cit.

The Governor of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) Gideon Gono referred in May 2005 to the need to move against individuals and “shadow forces.... where the rot needs thorough cleansing.”³⁸ He referred to the parallel markets as sabotaging his economic turnaround strategy, adding:

We enjoy the support of all the law enforcement arms of the State and Government itself to win the battle against indiscipline, corruption, illegality and the sheer madness that we have been witnessing on the streets, at airports and border posts... ³⁹

The informal sector and parallel markets were estimated in June 2005 to control around 60% of GDP, and this money was not passing through the Reserve Bank or the tax department.⁴⁰ The government’s response was to try and seize control of the sector:

Crooks, greedy people, opportunists and black market traders in foreign currency, fuel and basic commodities had found convenient operational bases in the informal sector. The obscene feast is over. Law and order must now prevail.⁴¹



Photo 4: OM resulted in total destruction of licensed vending malls around Zimbabwe [Harare, May 2005]

3. The growth of the informal economy: 1990s to 2005

The factors that led to the increasing informalisation of the Zimbabwean economy had their roots in the early 1990s. By 1990, ILO already estimated that as little as 25% of the labour force was employed in the formal sector, and by 1991, there were 200,000 school leavers and only 20,000 new formal sector jobs per year.⁴² ESAP, introduced in 1991, liberalised the economy by deregulating the labour market and introducing monetary reform, among other measures. However, it failed to result in notable growth of the formal sector, contrary to

³⁸ RBZ Report, 20 May 2005; paragraphs 2.17 – 2.31

³⁹ *ibid*, para 2.31

⁴⁰ *The Financial Gazette*, June 9-15, 2005: “Political Backlash or genuine clean-up?”

⁴¹ *The Chronicle*, 12 June 2005: Comment; “Parliament has serious business”.

⁴² UNDP, Working Paper 9 (2010); *op cit*, pages 17-20.

government expectations.⁴³ There was only a 1,2% rise in formal employment between 1991-1996. Nor did ESAP's successor ZIMPREST improve the economic situation. Formal sector employment went from a 1998 peak of 1,24 million to 1,01 million by 2002. Between 1998 and 2006, the GDP shrank by 37%.

Thus, over the decade prior to OM, "rather than the formalization of the non-formal sectors of the economy that one would expect from any development process, it is the informalisation of the formal sector that has occurred in Zimbabwe, such that by 2004, four out of every five jobs in Zimbabwe were to be found in the informal economy."⁴⁴

4. The informal economy: 2005- 2010

While supposedly intended to eradicate it, predictably OM resoundingly failed to dent for more than a moment, the informal sector and the parallel market. In fact, OM together with other political and economic crackdowns, simply exacerbated pre-existing conditions for economic decline, by further undermining investor confidence and driving potential consumers into dire poverty, thus shrinking the purchasing base and the manufacturing sector.

The numbers of people driven out of formal and into informal employment continued to grow over the next few years. Even in October 2005, within months of OM, Afro Barometer found that 68% of those who had had businesses destroyed by OM were back buying and selling goods, while 10% of those who had **not** been in informal employment prior to OM, were now working in the informal sector.⁴⁵ A 2006 study in Glen View suburb of Harare, which was badly affected by OM, found one year later that 88% of people were employed in the informal sector, a notable increase over the October 2005 estimate.⁴⁶ Furthermore, the vast majority of these were engaged in individual vending businesses rather than in any kind of manufacturing. The De Doorns Case Study in this report also illustrates the diversity of employment that existed in 2005, and the lack of diversity as time passed; teachers, nurses, artisans and people in formal employment were reduced to vending or part time menial labour in the diaspora as salaries in the formal sector became eroded by hyper inflation.

The burgeoning informal sector in Zimbabwe is indicative of "*high levels of 'desperate employment' and of the frenzied search for coping mechanisms amidst vertiginous rates of economic regression*", rather than of an environment conducive to small enterprises. This 2006 finding of up to 88% of people in the informal sector can be compared to the figure of 80,7% of people estimated by ILO to be in the informal sector in 2004, the year before OM.⁴⁷ Harassment of the informal sector, and the general context of cataclysmic economic and

⁴³ Ibid: all figures in the paragraph from this UNDP report. It is beyond the scope of this report to dwell on ESAP and the causes for its failures. UNDP makes the point that the measuring of economies is highly contentious, with differing approaches to quantification making absolutism impossible. However, there is no doubting the general trends in Zimbabwe over the last two decades.

⁴⁴ Kanyenze, Godfrey (2010): *Labour Markets and the Rebuilding of Human Capital*; UNDP Working Paper 3, Comprehensive Economic Recovery in Zimbabwe; page vi.

⁴⁵ Afro Barometer [2006]; *Popular Reactions to State Repression: Operation Murambatsvina in Zimbabwe*; Working Paper No 59; Page 12.

⁴⁶ Luebker, M [2008]: *Decent work and informal employment: A survey of workers in Glen View, Harare*. Issues Paper No.33. ILO Sub-Regional Office for Southern Africa, Harare. Cited in: UNDP (2010), Working Paper 9, op cit.

⁴⁷ Luebker, M: *Employment, Unemployment and Informality in Zimbabwe: Concepts and data for coherent policy-making*. Issues Paper No.32. ILO Sub-Regional Office for Southern Africa, Harare, 2008. Cited in UNDP, ibid.

humanitarian decline continued unabated, reaching its nadir in 2008.

The informalization of previously formal transactions as the crisis deepened was another facet of the deterioration in the economic environment. With an increasingly worthless currency, coupled with bank withdrawal limits, a growing scarcity of commodities, and frequent price control offensives which often left producers in a situation in which they were forced to sell at a fraction of the cost of their inputs, survivalist strategies kicked in and there was growing recourse by remaining formal-sector operators to informal transactions, often on the basis of barter exchanges.⁴⁸

5. Politics and patronage

ZANU PF patronage: Harare South

Reports have continued over the last five years of political patronage across the informal sector. Interviews in Harare, in Hatcliff and Hopley Farm in June 2010 confirm that in these areas, the few incomplete OGHK houses⁴⁹ were given to CIO, prison officers, youth militia, and police. Furthermore, in Hopley Farm, stands at the vendors' market still under development in 2010, have already been allocated entirely to youth militia, and the newly created jobs linked to this site, such as security posts and litter collecting, have been allocated entirely to ZANU PF supporters.⁵⁰

In 2008, during the intense political violence of the election run off period, ZANU PF once more heightened its long established policy of abusing access to resources, including work and food, in order to reward those prepared to commit acts of political violence on their behalf. Apart from promoting horrific intra-community violence, those perceived to be MDC supporters were pushed out of cooperative ventures and jobs in parastatals, to benefit ZANU PF supporters. In the civil service, teachers perceived to be opposition were once more hounded out of rural schools, and tens of thousands of youth militia were illegally added to civil service pay rolls.⁵¹ With regard to political manipulation of the informal sector, Jocelyn Alexander and Kudakwashe Chitofiri have written movingly of the impact of political violence and patronage in Norton, a small town in Mashonaland during 2008, noting how the ZANU PF leadership controlled who could benefit from the twelve fishing cooperatives in their area, as well as stoking terrible violence in this village.⁵²

While being ZANU PF has no doubt benefited some of its supporters in the informal sector, particularly when willing hands are needed to carry out violence, the party's capacity for sustained patronage on a large scale is more limited now than previously; the size of the informal sector is also such that most people across the entire political divide are left to fend for themselves.⁵³ Alexander et al's article makes this abundantly clear – in Norton, now that

⁴⁸ UNDP (2010), Working Paper 9, *ibid*; page 21.

⁴⁹ See ahead in this report for more on "Operation Garikai", under which the government built 2,000 houses.

⁵⁰ Interviews, June 2010, Hopley Farm, and May 2010, Hatcliff. ZANU PF and MDC supporters in Hopley Farm are living in different 'zones' with 'Zone 1' being ZANU PF. Hopley Farm is part of Harare South Constituency, with the only ZANU PF MP for Harare, so is a hotly politically contested space.

⁵¹ SPT (2008), *Desperately Seeking Sanity* for details of the 2008 run off campaign.

⁵² Jocelyn Alexander (University of Oxford) and Kudakwashe Chitofiri (University of Zimbabwe) (2010), *The Consequence of Violent Politics in Norton, Zimbabwe*, in: "The Round Table", forthcoming, December 2010.

⁵³ The curbing of the RBZ, in particular of its propensity to print money around the clock, as well as its schemes of doling out ploughs, tractors and other farming machinery and inputs, has severely undermined ZANU PF's

the months of intense violence are over, youth leaders on both sides of the political divide feel abandoned, forgotten and used by their political leadership. Those who committed acts of violence on behalf of ZANU PF have been left alone to deal with the consequences in terms of being ostracized or prosecuted, and the patronage has vanished. In the MDC, those who were arrested and suffered damage to health and property are bitter that MDC is now in a government of unity, but has not translated their political power into patronage and reward for those who have paid a high price.⁵⁴

In Bulawayo – MDC T patronage within City Council?

In 2006, we reported that the extremely few rebuilt vending sites in Bulawayo were allocated almost exclusively to ZANU PF women's league members, thus confirming fears that at least part of the intention of OM was for ZANU PF to seize control of the informal sector and dole it out to their supporters in the urban areas.

However in 2010, interviews with the Bulawayo Traders' Association (BUTA) have indicated that the problem with regard to political abuses and corrupt allocations is now to be found within the MDC T-led City Council.⁵⁵ In 2009, BUTA negotiated a deal with Bulawayo City Council (BCC), after three years of continued arrests of licensed vendors, and the failure of the BCC to re-establish official vending sheds in accordance with a High Court Order of 2006 made against the BCC.⁵⁶ In acknowledgement of the lack of council money to meet their legal obligation to rebuild, and in recognition of the desperate need of its own members to have legal vending sites, BUTA offered to rebuild the Lobengula Street Mall entirely at its own expense and with its own labour, in return for being allowed to allocate all the resulting vending sites to those among their own membership, which consists of over 3,000 vendors.

BUTA spent five months, from November 2009 to March 2010 rebuilding the mall. This took the labour of 150 members and USD 15,000 in materials, provided and paid for entirely by BUTA. The rebuilt vending sheds can accommodate 707 vendors, with a further 139 sites at Godini. So far 300 sites have been officially allocated, but the last 39 of these have been given to non-BUTA members, who did not contribute to the rebuilding, and were not vending at the mall during the demolitions in 2005. These 39 people are allegedly family members and friends of MDC T councillors, and some are alleged to have paid bribes to the council in order to be allocated a site. BUTA is currently pursuing a case through the courts against BCC, in fear that the remaining 546 sites, also financed entirely by BUTA, will be corruptly allocated. BUTA officials expressed their dismay at these events saying:

It is unfortunate because we thought we knew who the greedy people were, but now we have elected even greedier people. They are changing the goal posts because they want money. We thought the future was bright with an MDC T city council, but now we see it is black.⁵⁷

systems of patronage. Attempts in 2010 to conduct a formal audit of who is in the civil service and how 30,000 youth were illegally added to the payrolls, are also indicative of the shutting down of these patronage systems.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Interviews with BUTA officials, 15 July 2010. Senior BCC officials and councillors evaded being available for interview for two consecutive weeks; therefore their comment on the issues raised here is not available.

⁵⁶ In a landmark ruling in 2006, the High Court found that the demolitions were illegal and that the BCC had to replace the destroyed properties of vendors and the vending sites. Neither has ever been done, as the BCC has pleaded lack of money to do so.

⁵⁷ DN, senior BUTA official, interview 13 July 2010.

BUTA also accused the BCC of setting up five new vendors' associations, each of which has only a score of members, apparently with the intention of giving these associations equal status in future in any negotiations with BUTA. They perceive these associations as mere fronts for the MDC T councillors' interests.

6. "Kukiya-kiya"

It is ironic that the informal sector moved further towards precisely the sort of illegalities that OM claimed to be ending, as a direct result of the economic chaos that OM helped to precipitate. Repeated crackdowns have meant that parts of the informal sector were forced to become more clandestine, particularly during the total economic meltdown of 2008, and this has created a new generation of entrepreneurs who survive by "kukiya-kiya" – a colloquial Shona term that means indulging cleverly in rather shady enterprises if necessary, and becoming adept at seizing opportunities on the spur of the moment.⁵⁸

Paying bribes to officials in order to eke out a living has become a recognized part of survival, and people have had to adjust their previous ideas of which types of work are in keeping with the retention of personal dignity and self-respect. Zimbabweans with tertiary training have found themselves both within and without Zimbabwe having to work in menial tasks for which they are dramatically over qualified. Others have found themselves resorting to high-return, illegal jobs in which the state is complicit, for example in money changing on the parallel currency markets.⁵⁹

During 2008, when price control clampdowns and multi-million percent inflation literally emptied all businesses of goods, the only goods available to anyone in the country were those sold on the black market - out of private homes and in alley-ways, brought into the country by cross border traders. Those who would consider themselves generally law abiding, were forced into such purchases to get any and all commodities – paying in foreign exchange, which was officially illegal at the time. Some small-scale dealers thrived in the murky world that Zimbabwe's economy had become by 2008, but far more simply collapsed into unspeakable poverty.⁶⁰

By 2010, even as around 90% of Zimbabweans continue in the "desperate employment" of the informal sector, surviving by vending has become increasingly difficult, as shops now stock and sell imported goods legally in foreign exchange, meaning that small scale cross border trading is virtually without profit for individuals. While goods are available, stocks conspicuously sit for months on the shelves unsold, beyond the economic reach of the vast numbers of Zimbabwe's very poor.

Raids on vendors, and the need to pay police and municipal officials in order to be "protected" from such raids, remains a way of life, ensuring that most vendors continue to live on the fragile edge of survival. Members of BUTA confirm that arrests continue daily in urban centres around the country – police will even go to the private homes of vendors and seize all the goods in locked rooms, breaking down the doors, not happy with simply seizing all the goods

⁵⁸ Jeremy Jones (2010): *'Nothing is Straight in Zimbabwe': The Rise of the Kukiya-kiya Economy 2000-2008*; in JSAS special edition, op cit.

⁵⁹ Mawowa, Showers and Matongo, Alois (2010): *Inside Zimbabwe's Roadside Currency Trade: The 'World Bank' of Bulawayo*, in JSAS, ibid, Pages 319 – 337.

⁶⁰ See Hammar, Amanda, JoAnn McGregor and Loren Landau (2010). *Introduction. Displacing Zimbabwe: Crisis and Construction in Southern Africa*, Journal of Southern African Studies, Vol 36, Issue 2, pp. 263 - 283.

that somebody may be carrying on the streets. This is simply theft. The situation remains patently ridiculous, with 90% of people surviving for lack of any alternative in the informal sector, yet this sector remaining criminalized by the state.



Photos 5 and 6: glimpses of Bulawayo's informal sector, July 2010. These vendors all operate on the run, ready to take off when police arrive to arrest them and confiscate their wares.



Photo 7: there are 18 government-funded, "Operation Garikai" houses in Hopley farm, Harare, where 3,800 displaced live: windows and doors have been bricked up because there are no door or window frames, and also no sewerage, water or electricity, five years after being built. [July 2010]

C. Operation “Live Well” - and internationally sponsored housing schemes

1. A Grand re-housing scheme: Operation Garikai/Hlalani Kuhle – “live well”

Some weeks into the demolitions, and with UN official Anna Tibaijuka’s visit looming, the government suddenly declared a massive housing programme, which allegedly had pre-existed the decision to destroy informal settlements. 300,000 housing units were promised within the following year, and another 250,000 each year until 2008.⁶¹

Immediate outcome:

By the end of 2006, **fewer than 2,000** new units had been partially built countrywide. These units were of a shocking standard and lacked basic services. Corruption in allocations and scandals of poor planning and workmanship dogged the OGHK programme.⁶²

Five years on:

No further units have been built in the last five years. Many of the two thousand units built stand empty and unusable, while others, such as those in Hatcliff and Hopley Farm, Harare, have become inhabited slums, with no access to water or sewerage. Some have fallen down. People in informal settlements now live in dwellings that are seriously reduced in quality from those destroyed, which is a product both of fear of being demolished again, and poverty.⁶³

2. International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and UN housing – some progress, but not enough

In 2006, the UN had a target of 23,000 units of housing to be built during that year, but in fact around 4% of these were ever built. In *Meltdown*, we recognised the obstacles faced by international agencies in building new units, which included:

- The UN cannot act unilaterally but has to sign a bilateral agreement with the recipient nation, and there was a prolonged and difficult stand off around this, exacerbated by government fury at the UN Report.
- Destruction of IOM tented communities by the government – “we are not a tents people”.
- Obstruction of access to the displaced, especially at Hopley Farm.
- Obstructive reactions to the “UN model house” by the Minister of Local Government; this brick and asbestos house, intended as a stop-gap measure to get people out of the rain, was dismissed as “unfit for human habitation”.
- Insecurity of tenure: would IDPs retain ownership of their houses, or would they quickly be pushed out to house army or police, for example?

In the last five years, IOM has built 2,000 housing units across the country, mostly in Mashonaland. In Matabeleland, a housing scheme consisting of 33 houses was recently opened in Bulawayo, and another 100 housing units were handed over in Plumtree.⁶⁴ IOM had

⁶¹ Local Government Minister Ignatius Chombo promised this: *Zimbabwe Independent*, 9 December 2005, “Govt slips on Garikai targets”.

⁶² SPT (2006) for details.

⁶³ See section ahead on Killarney for example.

⁶⁴ Official hand over ceremony was on 4 July 2010: figures here are those given at the opening ceremony.

hoped to build up to 300 houses in Bulawayo, but were only offered 33 serviced stands by the BCC. They have now been offered land to build several blocks of apartments, which they now plan to do in the future.

The upshot of all this, is that in the last five years, only 33 houses have been built in Bulawayo, to replace the 10,870 structures that were demolished. While the 33 beneficiary families are delighted, the fact remains that hundreds of families in Killarney face eviction yet again as this report is being written, and have no reasonable prospects of ever having security of tenure anywhere in Zimbabwe in their lifetimes.

3. Demolitions continue – under MDC T city council

In Victoria Falls, arguably the urban centre worst affected by OM in that 64% of all its accommodation was demolished in 2005, the demolitions have continued. However, it is now the MDC T City Council that is responsible. Last year, people who own stands in Victoria Falls were given six months to construct a permanent structure, or face demolition of whatever temporary structures were on the properties. However, according to those who own the stands, this is unreasonable in the current economic climate. They lost all their building materials and many other possessions in 2005, and recapitalising since then has been near to impossible. They are therefore facing repeated cycles of demolitions – with the most recent one taking place on Christmas Eve, 24th December 2009! The anguish that residents feel at this heartless insult is tangible. The outcome is simply that people in Victoria Falls are in fact living in more basic structures now than ever, out of fear of yet again having these structures demolished.

4. Conclusion

Put simply, the 560,000 displaced have not been re-housed, and this failure extends to a failure of international agencies to house more than a few thousand people countrywide. It also extends to a failure of the current unity government to address the issue. The MDC-run Ministry of Housing has failed to change in any visible way any aspect of housing policy, and demolitions have even continued. The evicted have been left to fall back on their own resources to solve the problems of housing and livelihood – which, particularly since 2008, has happened by a surge in diasporisation and also in a belated movement to rural areas.



Photos 8 and 9: July 2010 - IOM has built 33 houses in Bulawayo since 2005 (on left), and around 80 houses in Hopley Farm, Harare (on right).

PART THREE:

CASE STUDIES

A. Overview

1. 2010: Families and sites revisited five years on

The latest SPT report builds on our three previous publications on OM, released in June and October 2005 and August 2006. The earlier reports traced the impact of OM on specific areas of Bulawayo's high-density suburbs, on two informal settlements at Killarney and Ngozi Mine, and on ten different groups of people in various settings. We tracked what happened to families forcibly dumped back in rural Matabeleland, and how urban families were trying to cope with impossible levels of congestion in remaining housing structures. We recorded the disastrous government housing project, OGHK, noting its corrupt lack of progress.

In 2010:

- We have returned to the high-density suburbs of Bulawayo to reassess how households have dealt with OM five years on, mapping detailed histories of movement over the last five years in 27 urban households, representing 269 individuals.
- We have gone back to Killarney and Ngozi Mine, informal settlements in Bulawayo entirely eliminated by OM, to find virtually as many families living there now as previously – in greater poverty and hardship than before, and having suffered large numbers of deaths. We conduct semi-structured interviews, mostly with families that we have previously interviewed from these informal settlements.
- We have attempted to track down once more, the ten families/groups who were among those forcibly dumped in rural areas, and whose narratives we first documented in October 2005 and again in August 2006.
- We have tracked the many moves of 118 individuals that have taken them, via many places and experiences, to De Doorns in the Western Cape.



Photo 10: this little girl in Killarney is in the middle of the second eviction of her short life.

B. Case Study One:

Survey of High Density Suburb in Bulawayo

In *Meltdown*, released in August 2006, SPT reported on a survey of 89 stands in Bulawayo all of which had been affected by demolitions in 2005. The stands were systematically and randomly selected from a list of properties affected by OM, provided by the BCC.⁶⁵

In 2010, we selected 27 stands, or 30% of the original number, and assessed the impact of OM five years on, using the same questionnaire as used in 2006. This provided us with varying degrees of information on the histories of movement of **269 individuals** who had lived at these addresses in 2005.

I. 2006: Main Findings

In August 2006, one year after OM, very few families had left for a rural area as a result of the demolitions that had taken place on their stand.

- Only 2% of families had gone to rural areas as complete family units, with a further 4% in which part of a family had gone back to a rural home. Instead, people had crowded from demolished backyard structures into the remaining structure on the property.
- The overwhelming outcome of OM was therefore found to be **extreme congestion** in the remaining structures.
- We found that people were living in an average of 3,4 sqm per person.
- In some extreme instances, people were crowded into houses to such a degree that there was barely more than one square meter per person of living space!⁶⁶
- On some properties, people were sleeping in shifts because it was impossible for everyone to lie down at the same time: married couples were unable to share rooms, while single people of both sexes were being forced to share rooms in other instances.
- Children were being exposed to sexual activity, and were also unable to do their schoolwork because of the congestion.
- Single people in particular were living on the move, camping in one corner and then being moved on to another friend or relative elsewhere, as conditions became unbearable in a particular household.

II. 2010: Main Findings

1. **Decongestion of urban stands**

The most notable finding of the follow up study has been that there has been **definite decongestion** of living spaces in these Bulawayo households. From 2010 interviews, it appears that finally, during 2007-9, there was **a move to rural areas** by some families, as well as a high incidence of **diasporisation**. **Deaths** have also played a role in this process of

⁶⁵ SPT (2006) pages 38-9 for methodology of original research and selection of properties.

⁶⁶ Ibid, Case Examples II and III, pages 44-46.

decongestion. Discussions with key informants have confirmed that our finding is in keeping with the observations of residents of the high-density suburbs generally in Bulawayo – there has been a movement of people out of the city. We cannot comment on whether this is a Bulawayo phenomenon, or prevails in other urban centres in the country as no research has been done elsewhere. However, while decongestion is a very clear trend, it is not a blanket finding, and in a few households, levels of congestion remain impossibly high.

This small study illustrates what the De Doorns study ahead also shows – Zimbabweans have been battered by one crisis after another over the last five years, and while OM had a disastrous impact on people’s health and wealth, this was compounded by the meltdown of 2008-9. It is the cumulative impact of many events that has finally driven many Zimbabweans out of their urban homes, either across the border or back to rural areas.

a. Reduction of numbers living on stands

The number of individuals living on these properties has almost halved over the last five years.

- In 2005, the total number of people living on these 27 properties was 269.
- In 2010, this figure has gone down to 141, which is a reduction of 48%.

b. Resulting increase in square meters per person:

The numbers of square meters per person has consequently nearly doubled since 2010, from **3,2 square meters** each to **6,2 square meters** each.⁶⁷

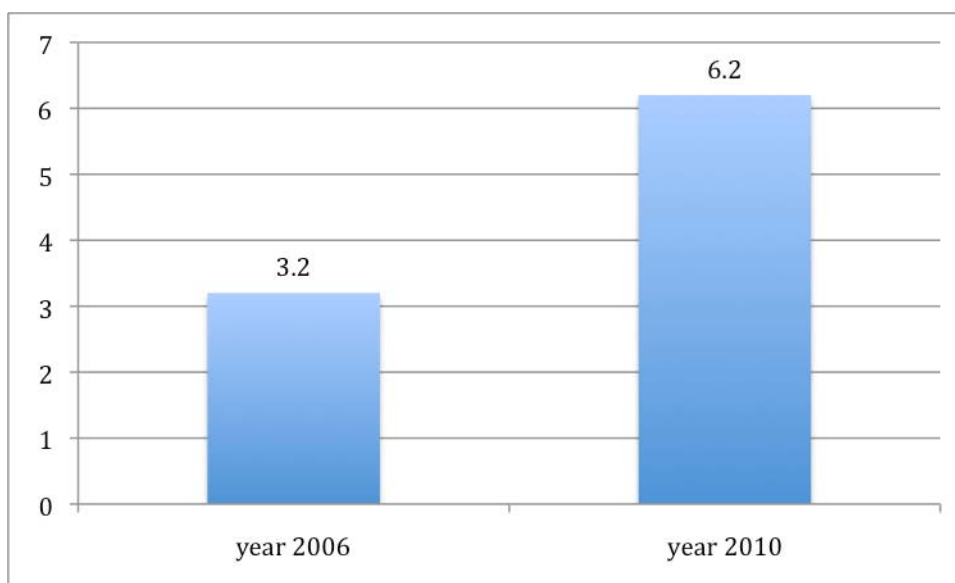


Chart i: square meters per person in 2005 compared with 2010.

However, in one instance, decongestion remains extreme. In 2006 we visited this stand and found 18 people living there in appalling conditions: in 2010 we found 20 people living on this same stand. This gave each person 1,2 m squared. Residents consisted of one old woman looking after 18 children, some of whom have no parents and some of whom are “diaspora

⁶⁷ In 2005, the average sqm per person, based on 87 properties, was 3,4 sqm pp. We have reassessed this figure specifically for the current 27 properties, as opposed to the figure for the entire previous sample.

orphans". In fact, as the interview was taking place, a taxi driver arrived from South Africa and deposited another five year old "diaspora orphan", sent back to be looked after here! When we returned for a follow up interview a week later, there were several more children added to the household, meaning that there were now 25 in the household! An adult son was too drunk to take part in the interview, and the only other resident adult, a 21 year old daughter, is a single mother of two who is out of work and not contributing to the household. This valiant grandmother is trying to do her best under very difficult circumstances.



Photo 11: this grandmother is doing her best to raise 20+ grandchildren in a three-roomed house in Bulawayo [July 2010]

In only one other instance has the number of people living on the property increased since 2005, from 13 to 14, but in the same five years, this family has added four rooms onto the house, meaning that the living space per person has improved, from 2,3 square meters per person to 4,2 square meters per person. The addition is a council approved one, with bricks and asbestos roofing. This family seems to be one of the few doing reasonably well, which is attributed to children and grandchildren in the diaspora, who send money home.

In only two cases, we found that families have expanded the capacity of the primary dwelling since 2005 – one is the above-mentioned instance of a council-approved extension, and in the other instance, it was an informal structure that had been built. On the other 25 properties, there has been no attempt to replace the structures knocked down, even in those few houses where congestion remains an issue. Fear of further demolitions, and costs of building were reasons for this. Many complained of loss of rent from tenants as a result of the demolitions, but were either not able or not prepared to rebuild an informal structure.

“Decongestion” – a relative concept

Although congestion was reduced, there were still many inappropriate sleeping arrangements being endured, with grannies sharing rooms with teenage grandsons, or women of three generations sleeping in the living room every night, so that male family members could sleep in the bedroom. This meant no privacy for anyone. Most of the houses involved in this study consist of a kitchen, a living room and one bedroom, so once there is more than one adult couple in a household, sleeping arrangements require much manoeuvring of furniture on a

daily basis, to move chairs out of the way to lay out mattresses at night in the living room and/or kitchen.

2. Where are people now?

We were able to track down at least some information on the post-2005 movements of 64% of people on these 27 stands (173 people), although 96 people remain entirely unaccounted for. In the case of these 96, those still on the stands simply knew that others had left and they had no idea where for. In only one case, did we find that there had been a complete turnover of who was living on the stand, so that current information about the 2005 inhabitants was completely absent. In all other cases, we either found at least one of the previous residents still on the stand, or we found other family members from the same family as the 2005 landlords/ tenants, meaning that they could tell us where people now were, as they were relatives. In many instances, the information was simply about the *first move* that a certain tenant had made, which might have been immediately, or several years, after OM. Landlords might report that a certain tenant had moved to another high density suburb in 2007, but had no idea where exactly, or what further moves might have occurred since then.

Each person has been allocated only one category of movement, being the most recent known: ie if someone moved first to another urban address, and then later to a rural home, they are listed as being rural. If somebody moved to a rural home and then died, they are listed as being dead.

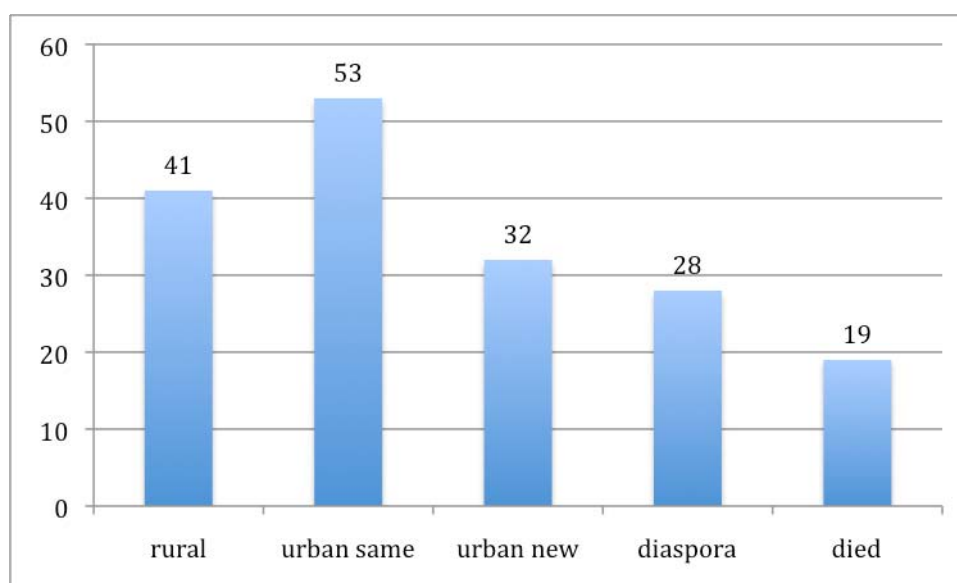


Chart ii: general whereabouts of 2005 urban residents, five years after OM

Of the 173 whose history of movement is known:

- 53 were known to have remained on the same stand: 30%
- 32 people were known to have left initially for another urban address: 19%
- 41 people moved to a rural home: 24%
- 28 were known to have gone into the diaspora: 16%
- 19 were known to have died: 11%

It is not known how many of the 19% who moved initially to another urban address, are still urban five years later. However, if we assume they all are, this would mean that **51% are no longer in the Bulawayo-urban setting**, with half of these having moved to a rural area. The remainder are either dead or in the diaspora.

What is significant is that out of 269 people, only 53 remained living on the same stand, four years later. This means **80% of people have moved on.**

3. Economic circumstances of people now

While the amount of living space per person may have improved in these households since 2005/6, their general economic status certainly has not improved. The interviews were a litany of desperate circumstances in one household after another. Remaining landlords reported dire losses in rentals, and the very emptying out of the stands was largely as a consequence of residents' inability to pay rents, water bills, rates and electricity. In several instances, families have sent their children to a rural home where schooling is free or cheaper. In two instances, parents have returned to rural homes, and left one or more children in the urban setting to attend school, while they struggle to send food or other earnings from rural vending, into town to support them. People reported struggling to pay medical bills, the deaths of key family members, and the movement to the diaspora of children who then did not remit anything substantial.

4. Diasporisation: helpful or not?

Only two families appeared to be coping well economically, with improved earnings over the last five years; in both instances this was owing to family doing well in the diaspora. However, ten households reported between one and three family members in the diaspora, which means that in eight out of ten families, having someone in the diaspora was **not** considered to have improved the economic situation. One married couple reported that they had twice headed out to South Africa seeking employment, and twice had returned having failed to find work or support themselves there. One mother was reported as having had to leave the stand in order to go and nurse her son who had returned ill from South Africa.

5. Conclusion

There is a need to explore more fully the apparent decongestion of Bulawayo that has been noted in this small study. Our findings have been supported by key informant interviews with members of BUTA and others who live in the high density suburbs; the economic chaos of 2008/9 and the failure of the formal sector to recover, are seen to account for this. One pertinent question is that of how accurate the current voters' roll is – with the fluidity of people's living arrangements over the last five years, updating the voters' rolls countrywide is an urgent priority. We found that only 20% of residents remained on their original stand five years after OM. As we have noted elsewhere, we would expect a movement from rural areas back to urban areas as soon as the formal economy shows any signs of recovering and creating work: the move to rural areas has been one of economic last resort.

C. Case Study Two:

Informal settlements of Killarney and Ngozi Mine

1. 2005 and 2006

During the demolitions of 2005, Bulawayo's two informal settlements in the peri urban areas were razed to the ground, displacing an estimated 1,500 of the city's poorest citizens. Many had lived in these settlements for decades, or even generations, and many were descended from parents born in neighbouring states, meaning that they did not have a rural home in Zimbabwe. The displaced were initially taken in by some of the churches in Bulawayo, from where they were abducted by the state in the middle of the night. They were dumped first on a farm north of the city, and from there were forcibly placed in various rural business centres around Matabeleland South and North.⁶⁸

In 2006, we established that around 75% of residents had returned to their original informal settlements, with only around 19% having remained in the rural areas where they had been forcibly dumped, and 5% being untraceable.

2. Follow up in 2010 – further evictions

Tragically, Killarney residents are once more in the midst of eviction – this time by MacDonald Bricks, who owns the land people are squatting on. The residents that we interviewed near Cement Siding on the Harare road, are all living on what is legally MacDonald Bricks property, and all have been served with eviction notices. They have been personally visited since March 2010 on more than one occasion and told to move off the land, and MacDonald Bricks recently won a court case brought against them by the Killarney pastor, meaning that eviction is now underway.

Families are already in the process of packing up and moving their entire settlement further away, off MacDonald Bricks land but still within Killarney. This is going to result in further losses and stresses, as material used to build their current shacks may not be entirely transferable. In any case, more labour must now be expended, and there may be no greater security of tenure where they build in the future. It is not surprising that 68% of respondents here mentioned secure shelter as a most urgent need.

Considering the current evictions, and also our finding that there has been a belated move back to rural areas from Bulawayo's high-density suburbs between 2006 and 2010, we were curious to see whether this trend was repeated in the informal settlements. However, this is **not** the case, with Killarney and Ngozi Mine having had fairly constant or growing populations since 2006. Those being evicted in July 2010 are simply moving 300m and rebuilding. This can be attributed to the fact that many families in these informal settlements simply do not have any rural roots or other living options in Zimbabwe, either because they are descendants of foreign nationals (48%) and/or because they are female headed households with no clear property rights in rural areas (37%). Furthermore, people living in informal settlements are not generally paying rates, water and electricity bills, which has been a factor in driving out people in the formal suburbs. Several Killarney interviewees remarked that they live in Killarney because there are no rent and service overheads.

⁶⁸ SPT, *Crime of Poverty*, October 2005, for full details.



*Photos 12 and 13 above: Killarney – evictions in **May 2005***

*Photos 14 and 15 below: Killarney – evictions in **July 2010***

Families are once more demolishing their homes and moving battered possessions to try and start again in the middle of winter



Photos 16 and 17 below: the backbreaking task of making new homes in the winter dust elsewhere in Killarney, July 2010 – and how long to the next eviction?



The follow up work involved tracking down once more, families that we interviewed in 2006, and visiting both informal settlements to assess the general situation.

Partially structured interviews were conducted with 33 families affected by OM.

- 8 families, representing 45 individuals were retraced to rural areas where they now reside. These were families that we followed up in 2005 and again in 2006.
- 25 families representing 104 individuals were interviewed back in their informal settlements in Bulawayo
- This study therefore provides information on the present circumstances of 149 individuals, or around 10% of those displaced here in 2005.
- A general assessment was made of numbers living in Killarney at this time, and a record compiled from families in Killarney, Cement Siding area, of who has died over the last 4 years.

Killarney and Ngozi Mine have re-established themselves at this stage. Killarney in particular is once more a large informal settlement, once more organised under various “headmen” as would happen in a more rural context. What is very striking is the fact that among the families we randomly interviewed in Killarney:

- **the average number of years lived in Killarney was 14 years.**
- **35% had lived in Killarney for 20 years or longer.** Three reported that they had been born in Killarney and had never lived anywhere else for any length of time.
- Only one couple, in their twenties, had moved to Killarney less than a year ago.
- Only three family units had moved there for the first time in the last 5 years.
- In Ngozi Mine, all respondents had lived there for 11 years or longer.

These findings corroborate what the Killarney pastor told us, which is that out of the entire Killarney settlement of 200 families in the Cement Siding area, thirteen are families that have moved there recently, with the rest being those who were affected by OM and returned.

20% of respondents indicated that they had never left Killarney, including during the demolitions: they had simply hidden when the churches came to collect people, and had rebuilt structures once the initial crisis had subsided.

Ironically, these individuals have probably had a better time of it than the rest of the Killarney residents, who have between them experienced an average of 4,2 places of residence over the last five years, most of these occurring in the first year as a direct result of the churches taking people in! People reported moving from: Killarney to a church; then forcibly to the ARDA farm after they were abducted; forcibly to a rural area somewhere; often to a new rural area or rural business centre; then eventually back to Killarney, suffering huge stress and losses with each of these moves!

3. Eight out of several hundred families from informal settlements still rural

The seven families in rural Matabeleland and the one in Midlands constitute what appears to be close to a comprehensive overview of those several hundred families, amounting to around 1,000 individuals, who were transported to the churches, then forcibly by the state to rural areas, during 2005. All other families, according to previous records kept by the churches, did

not remain in the rural area where they were dumped. Most returned to Killarney or Ngozi Mine.⁶⁹

Out of these eight families:

- 4 reported that they were happy to remain in the rural area where they now are.
- In the case of three families, they expressed reservations about being where they were, but said it was preferable to squatting and meant that their children would at least inherit a secure place to live in the future, unlike in Killarney.
- One woman has a very successful rural store operating and has done very well for herself and her children, although her marriage has broken up, with her husband returning to the urban areas.

Out of the remaining four rural families:

- All expressed serious reservations about being in a rural area.
- The main reason they gave for remaining, was security of having a plot that was theirs: three said that they would rather return to an urban area, but only if they were guaranteed ownership of a stand.
- One old lady expressed her exhaustion at the thought of having to move again to anywhere else at her age. She also mentioned that two of her children had died and been buried near her new, rural homestead, and she therefore could not now return to Killarney and abandon their graves.

In terms of problems faced over the last five years:

- 7 out of 8 families reported that there had been disruption to schooling as a result of being in a rural area.
- 6 out of 8 reported serious problems with the health of at least one family member, and problems of reaching clinics from where they are now. In some cases, the nearest clinic is now 30 km away.

In terms of immediate needs now:

- a depressing 5 out of 8 mentioned food as an overriding need at this time.
- Only 2 mentioned that they were concerned about shelter
- 5 out of 8 mentioned both schooling and the need for farming inputs and implements as pressing issues now.

Even though half of these families reported being moderately satisfied with life where they were, the above litany of problems indicates that life is nonetheless highly problematic for most of them, with food, schooling and healthcare major concerns.

4. Killarney and Ngozi Mine families

Apart from the very serious problem of lack of secure accommodation, those in the peri-urban areas face problems in relation to accessing other services and resources:

- 33% of respondents reported schooling disruptions because of OM and since.

⁶⁹ SPT (2006) *ibid.*

- 20% were concerned about current lack of schooling because of failure to afford fees. In many families, however, children are either too young or too old to be in need of schooling.
- In several cases, girls who were in primary school in 2005, have never returned to school and are now “married” with babies, although still teenagers.
- 66% reported needing regular access to health care now, with many of these being people on ARVs: they also reported that it was difficult to access health care, as United Bulawayo Hospital is 7 km away, which you cannot walk if you are unwell. People also cannot afford the hospital fees, and rely on free health care provided via a church clinic once a week.
- 40% reported food as a basic need now, which is a lower percentage than among the rural families, although it is still substantial. Several families reported that they grew maize and vegetables of their own during the last season, which has helped.
- 40% mentioned water as a problem: the only water source in Killarney is from a mine-shaft, and there is concern that the water is polluted by mining chemicals.

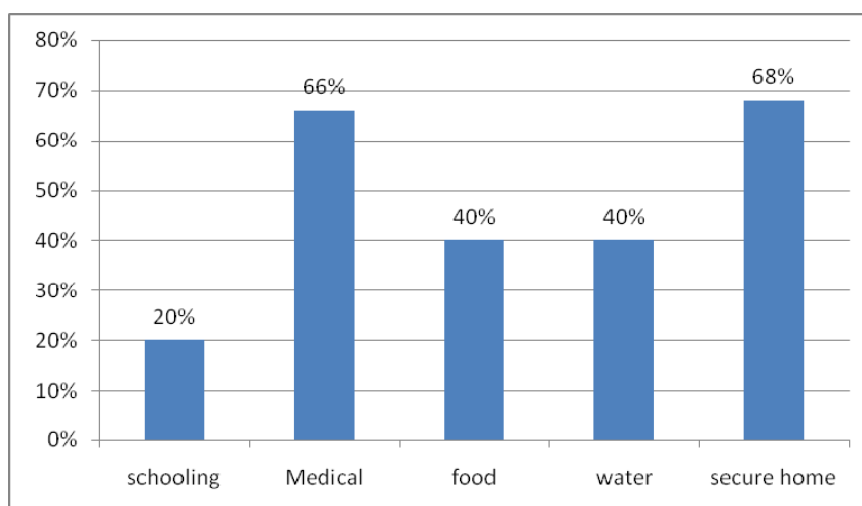


Chart iii: most urgent needs now in informal settlements

When asked why they had returned to Killarney from rural areas, people gave many reasons, including:

- being exploited as cheap labour by communities, as they were unable to till their own fields for lack of draught power;
- crops were destroyed by baboons and elephants;
- bad treatment by relatives;
- being ostracised because of being “dumped”, and not being allowed to play a role in community activities;
- lack of food and means to earn money to buy it; back in Killarney they can vend or brew beer or pan for gold.
- long distances to schools and clinics;
- many, quite simply, stated that Killarney or Ngozi Mine was their home and where they had lived a substantial part of their lives, or even their entire lives.



*Photo18: a child carries containers to the mine shaft
– only source of water in Killarney*

5. The Diaspora

Twelve out of 33 respondents reported that somebody in their family was in the diaspora, while of these, three reported more than one family member out of the country. However, not a single respondent considered this a source of income for themselves, as remittances were reported as never having been received. One respondent reported having gone into the diaspora himself, but of having returned after failing to get work. These findings confirm previous findings of SPT, that people with few formal skills and without established networks find it difficult to get decent remuneration in the diaspora, and seldom send remittances back.



Photo 19: cross border taxis promise to carry Zimbabweans “straight to Joburg Egoli” from rural Tsholotsho: diasporisation has increased exponentially in recent years, but has often seen little brought back to families left behind.

6. Deaths and illness

Most respondents reported deaths of family members in the last five years. The pastor supplied a record of 63 people who have died in the Cement Siding area of Killarney since January 2006. Approximately 200 families reside in this area, known as Killarney Village Two, accounting for around 650 people – or half of Killarney’s population. This amounts to around a 10% death rate. The average age of death was 48 years. HIV is the most common cause of death, and this is a disease that is exacerbated by poverty and poor nutrition. Several of the dead were infants, and others were in their teens and twenty’s. Among the living, many are ill, and while some have managed to access ARV programmes, others who are visibly very ill are not yet on ARVs.

7. Stands allocated to a few

Only five families in Killarney have benefited from a small housing scheme financed by IOM in Emganwini high density suburb. Since 2005, IOM have facilitated the building of a grand total of **33 houses** for all those displaced in Bulawayo during the demolitions. Originally, 12 families from Killarney were allocated stands, but 7 failed to take up the offer for unclear reasons. These 7 stands were reallocated to families from Ngozi Mine.

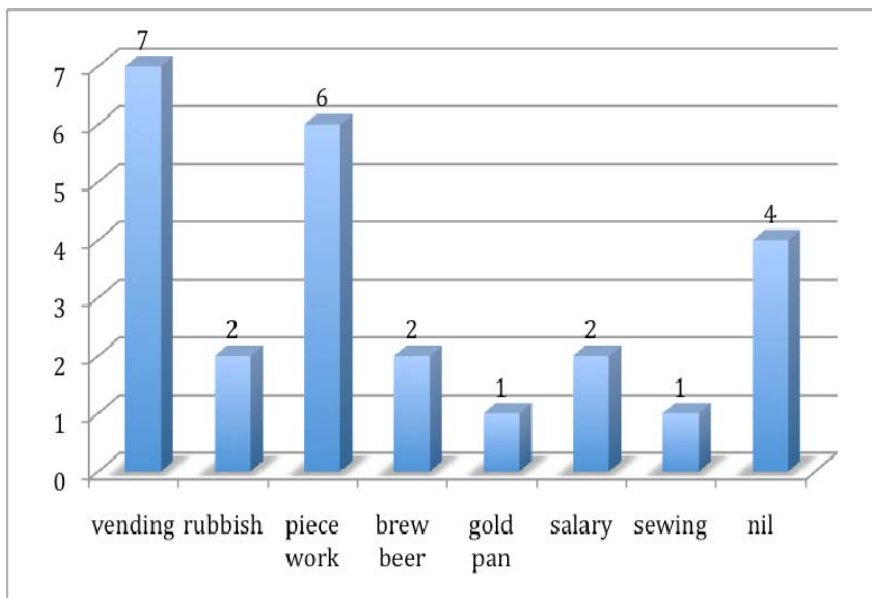


Chart iv: employment in informal settlements 2010

[Note: “rubbish” refers to making a living out of sifting items from the municipal rubbish dump for reuse or resale]

8. “Success” stories

While many respondents in Killarney and Ngozi Mine are clearly living bleak and difficult lives, a few individuals appear to be contented with their current situation. At Ngozi Mine, we interviewed some amazingly enterprising individuals, with great ingenuity and artistic talent, which they are using to survive these tough times. One man burns tyres in order to retrieve the internal wire, which he then hand-makes painstakingly into diamond mesh fencing. He

sells a roll of 6 meters for USD 6, and makes a roll a week. This means he is earning less than a dollar a day, but says this is enough to meet his most basic needs, in addition to finding what he needs on the adjacent municipal rubbish site. He has an impressive field in which he grows enough food to survive, with a very good crop of sweet potatoes being harvested at the time of interview. He sells the surplus. He has lived at Ngozi Mine for 16 years, and says that his current house is better than the one he had before the demolitions.

Two other residents of Ngozi Mine are ingeniously melting down plastic bags to make statues of wild animals and human figures. These black, life-size sculptures are true, if rather unusual, works of art, although the creators bemoan the problems of finding markets. They have great pride in their workmanship, but the fact that they are living in cardboard houses points to the fact that it remains very difficult in Zimbabwe these days to make a living out of craftwork! However, these ingenious artists/ wire makers are creating a very polluted environment for their neighbours, who mentioned that they were going to have to knock down their shacks and move to where they were upwind from the black and toxic fumes caused by the burning of tyres and plastic bags....



Photos 20 to 23: artists in Ngozi Mine live in cardboard houses while they carve intriguing sculptures – here, a fish eagle, kudu, leopard and humans – all made out of melted plastic collected from the adjacent rubbish dumps



*Photo 24 (below left): this man burns tyres and makes diamond mesh wire out of the waste.
Photo 25 (below right): a neighbour has turned a truck wreck into a house*



9. Conclusion: Case Study Two

Life for Zimbabwe's poorest remains very difficult. The state has done nothing whatsoever to alleviate the plight of those displaced by OM, and in Matabeleland, precious little that is tangible has been done by the NGO sector. A total of 33 houses built by IOM represents more of a joke than a solution to the housing needs of the 1,000+ people in the informal settlements of Killarney and Ngozi Mine alone. 10,870 homes were affected by demolitions in 2005 in Bulawayo overall, and while we have noted the decongestion of some urban housing, we have also noted that this is a temporary phenomenon, likely to be reversed if the formal economy improves. Housing officials should be planning for this now.

In Killarney and Ngozi Mine, security of accommodation remains an overwhelming problem, with Killarney once more evicted and on the move, at the time of writing this report. People die too young or eke out bleak lives, with a handful of individuals able to rise above the total poverty that engulfs most. Even this "rising above" is relative: families are sitting out an icy winter, living in a motley array of housing made from the remains of trucks, bathtubs, cardboard boxes and sheets of plastic. While one can admire the spirit of survival that is tangible in these informal settlements, it also has to be recognised that this alone is not enough to guarantee survival, as the death rates in recent years evidence.

A few families struggle along in the rural areas where they were dumped, and a very few have built adequate lives for themselves there. However, several other families give the impression of being trapped there by events rather than by desire. In short, those whose lives were devastated by OM in 2005 remain poverty stricken and forgotten. The arrival of the GPA and the unity government, in which MDC controls the Ministry of Housing, has made no difference in terms of actual housing policy on the ground.



Photos 26 and 27: in Hopley Farm, Harare, 8,500 adults live in makeshift housing: out of 2,000 school age children, 75% are out of formal school. [July 2010]



Photos 28 and 29: valiant teachers at Hopley Farm, Harare, do their best to provide education in this 'illegal school' for around 680 of the 2,000 children here, who have no other opportunities to learn. They need a proper building, with plumbing and toilets, to register the school... [May 2010]



D. Case Study Three:

Current situation of a range of IDPs from 2005

These IDPS were first accounted for in October 2005 and again in August 2006. We tracked down as many as we could, to find out how they had fared by 2010.

The following case summaries track the lives of 122 individuals over the last five years. These were people who were all dumped in rural areas in 2005. By 2006, we noted that the majority of them had already returned to the urban setting, mostly to the informal settlements of Killarney and Ngozi Mine where many had originated. Surprisingly, in 2010 we were once more able to track down substantial information on most settlements that we first tracked in 2005. However, the current whereabouts of one young girl, and of the seven interviewees of an informal mining settlement in Insiza - now entirely gone - remain unknown.

Based on what we observed and were told, it seems that many people are now fairly settled where they are, although this is often more a matter of circumstance than real choice. A few individuals travel between the urban and rural setting. Several men have failed to adjust to the demands of rural life, and have not had the resources such as livestock and other inputs to make a success of rural farming, in spite of having been allocated stands there. But at times it has suited families to continue to maintain the claim on a rural home that they had not been entitled to prior to 2005, and to also keep a foot in the towns, for purposes of earning a living. Wife and children therefore at times remain rural while the older children and the husband return to where they can make a living out of piece work or vending.

Out of the 122 individuals, 7 have died (6%).

65% are back in the informal settlements of Bulawayo – but this is a reduction from the 80% observed in 2006, and is owing to the dividing of families between rural and urban settings. 23% are still in the rural areas, not a very different figure from the 19% of 2006. And 6% have disappeared from contact.

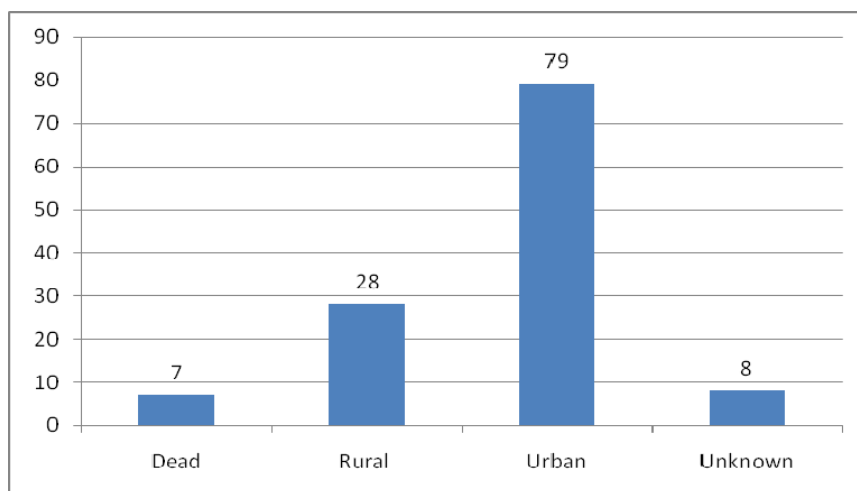


Chart v: current location of 122 IDPs first tracked in rural areas in 2005

Situation one

Cowdray Park, Bulawayo urban

A community of 9 adults and 14 children

Originally from Killarney informal settlement

Update Interviews: March, May and July 2010

2005/6

After the demolition of informal structures at Ngozi Mine, where several hundred people lived behind the municipal rubbish dump in 2005, eight families were housed in five tents in Cowdray Park, an adjacent high-density suburb. When we initially followed up in June 2006, we found that six families still remained there, living in increasingly impossible conditions, in tents that had literally rotted into shreds. There was no water or sanitation, and officially, there was total amnesia that these families were still there. One person had died of AIDS and one family had moved to Killarney squatter camp, meaning that 19 people remained here by mid 2006.

The Catholic church intervened and persuaded a headman in Tobotobo village of Umguza rural district, to offer these tented families some land to be resettled on. This duly happened, and five families were resettled there.

Follow up 2010

By 2010, the camped settlement at Cowdray Park was entirely gone. The six families still there in 2006 were traced as follows:

- One family has gone back to Ngozi Mine to live near the Bulawayo rubbish dump. The husband subsequently died leaving a wife and child.
- Four family units, all related to each other, were moved to Tobotobo by the Catholic Church in 2006. Of these, only one remains in Tobotobo, with the others all having moved back to Killarney in Bulawayo. Even in this one family, the husband has moved back to Killarney, leaving his wife and three children in Tobotobo. He returns occasionally to visit his family, but makes his living doing piece-work in town.
- The sixth family moved straight to Killarney from Cowdray Park, when the others were moved to Tobotobo.

These six families now account for **29 people**, as three children have married and there have been several births. However, there have also been two deaths of family heads. At least four of the children of school going age are permanently out of school at this stage. One, who was very bright and who was originally placed in a boarding school by the Catholic church, has since fallen out of school because the church stopped paying the fees: she is now 16 with a four month old baby. Other children aged 14, 15 and 16 years old are also out of school, with several others in jeopardy of dropping out of school owing to no money to pay fees and levies.

Out of **29 people**, 9 live in Tobotobo (two adults, 7 children), and the other 20 have returned to Bulawayo or never left, living either in Killarney squatter camp or at Ngozi Mine.

The fifteen of this group now living in Killarney have yet again faced displacement in July 2010, and are in the process of yet again knocking down their homes and reassembling them off MacDonald Bricks land.

Situation two

Resettlement area: Matabeleland North

Five families: 17 people in 2005

Seven families: 25 people in 2006

Originally from Killarney informal settlement

Interviews: March, April, May, June, July 2010

2005/6

All of these families are foreign nationals, descended from Malawian or Zambian parents, but themselves born in Zimbabwe. They had never lived in a rural area before, but were forcibly dumped in this resettlement area in July 2005, after being abducted from churches by the police. They were allocated plots by the local community leader, but found themselves in the middle of a difficult land dispute, where the plots they were allocated had been already allocated to others.

By June 2006, the population had expanded to 25 people, making up 7 family units rather than five, as several married, and several more children had been born. ***Out of the seven families dumped here, only one remained in the resettlement area, and six had returned to Bulawayo.*** One family was in Mahatshula suburb of Bulawayo, the others were in Killarney, where they were living before the demolitions.

Follow up 2010

In 2010, the one family that had remained in this Gwayi resettlement area in 2006, had moved from the rural homestead into Tsholotsho business centre, where he was working moulding bricks for a local businessman. In Killarney he had worked as a builder, and he was trying to return to this profession.

He was no longer living as a rural farmer and said that he had found conditions in the resettlement area impossible. He says that the families from Killarney were never accepted, and were ostracised by the locals, who called them *'imikutulwa'* meaning those who have been offloaded. He stated that those from Killarney were not allowed to benefit from schemes to give cattle to local people; he had been banned from joining local committees and his wife had been banned from training as a health professional, simply because they were considered to be dumped people. They acquired two goats and the neighbours set their dogs on the goats, breaking the leg of one of them. Their field had been taken away from them, and they said they lived in fear of being killed some time. Their 21 year old son has gone to Johannesburg.

They are both ill, as is a baby daughter. The baby is on ARVs although neither parent is. The three youngest children cannot get birth certificates as the mother lost her identity card during OM. The family is unable to pay school fees for the 3 children at primary school. The children are supposed to pay R11 per term per child, which they cannot afford. The husband has a rash all over the body but has failed to get it treated due to lack of money.



From Cowdray Park tents [photo 30] in 2006 - via rural Tobotobo [photo 31]

...and back to Killarney [photo 32] by 2010



Photo 33: May 2005: those people in Killarney who were taken in by the churches ended up moving four or more times over the next few years, incurring losses and stress at each move, while those who hid and stayed in Killarney avoided this! Virtually all those originally from Killarney were back there in 2010. Some have lived in Killarney for 27 years, and on average, for 14 years.



This family is clearly in dire straits, health-wise, money-wise and socially. However, they stated that they would maintain their claim to the homestead in the resettled area as they have no other claim to a stand anywhere. Nonetheless, they would welcome a move to any other place where their neighbours might leave them in peace. They also felt there was no future for them at Tsholotsho Business centre.

Out of 25 people originally dumped in this Gwayi rural area, only five (two adults, three children) remain. However, they are currently not at their rural homestead, but in the local rural business centre. They have clearly failed to be allowed to make a success of rural farming and would not stay if they had another option.

Situation three

Rural district, Matabeleland North

One extended family of 4 adults (brothers and their wives) and 6 children

Originally from Ngozi Mine informal settlement

Interviews: May 2010

This family was pictured in *Crime of Poverty* (2005) living on an open veranda in a rural district. They had a three-month-old baby and had lived in seven different places in three months as a result of the demolitions. They were originally from Ngozi Mine. They had been forcibly relocated to the rural area by the police, being among those abducted from the churches in July 2005.

Out of the first family unit of five, the mother and baby girl were dead by August 2006. The baby had lived in ten places in her eleven months of life. Her father was still alive in August 2006, and her eight-year-old brother was living with a grandmother.

Update 2010

In November 2006, the father from this family unit had also died, leaving the 8 year-old boy an orphan. He was sent back to live with his uncle and family, who were back living in Killarney by then.

Out of the second family unit of five, in 2006, they were shuttling between Killarney and their rural homestead allocated to them post OM in Tobotobo, and one of the children had severely burnt her feet walking in a fire. The family is mired in poverty, and cannot afford to have the child seen to be doctors. She appears to need her toes amputated as she cannot put on shoes and has to walk over ten kilometers to school bare footed.

Situation four:

Bulawayo urban:

15 year old girl

originally from three roomed house: displaced when landlord's relatives displaced.

This girl had the terrible experience of being raped as a result of being stranded in a bus station without money to get home to her rural area, after she was displaced as an unaccompanied minor from her backyard shelter by the demolitions. She was kept for three

days in a police station after reporting the rape, because the police did not know where to send her. She was then given the bus fare to go home by the churches.

Update: 2010

Nothing is known about the whereabouts of the girl. She is now 20 and could be anywhere.



Photo 34: June 2005 - out of this family of four (situation 3) only the little boy on the right is still alive in 2010. Mother, father and baby all died.

Situation five:

Rural district, Matabeleland North

2 women, a mother in her 70s and her daughter in her 50s, both widows

Originally from Killarney informal settlement

Interviews: May 2010

In October 2005, the older widow was in a state of deep mourning, having had to cope with her dying daughter throughout the process of displacement and dumping. She had had to nurse and then bury her daughter in this strange community. She was left raising two grandchildren aged 8 and 13. Her daughter (interviewee two), also a widow, in her fifties and supporting a child, had been battling to establish a homestead in another part of the same district, and had been offered two derelict huts.

By 2006, both widows were battling to survive in rural Matabeleland and had effectively become cheap labour for their neighbours, not having the physical strength or resources to plough, plant and fence fields for themselves. They were desperately poor – too poor to be able to move anywhere else.



Photo 35: with her failed harvest in the background, this old lady dumped in rural Matabeleland in 2005 recounts the deaths of two children, and the burden of a daughter who has lapsed into mental illness: while barely surviving, she has no energy to move again. [May 2010]

Update 2010

By 2010, the daughter aged in her fifties had developed a mental illness, which made her incapable of working for herself. She has moved in with her mother who is now 79 years old. The old lady was in tears as she narrated the challenges, including that posed by the mentally ill daughter, who had been a bread winner during the time they were in Killarney. The old lady had, over the last five years, been forced to walk long distances to search for her daughter, who due to her instability sometimes ran away from home to a far away place.

The grand children have all dropped out of school, as fees cannot be paid. The overriding concern is food and how to get enough to stay alive. The old lady has a small field, but is not able to plough or plant it very effectively. She has managed to build two huts over the last five years, but only one is thatched, as thatching grass is short in the area.

Poverty within the family is tangible: the old lady narrated how affordable life used to be at Killarney squatter camp, where she described rich red soils that gave them enough to feed the family. Fending for the family was said to be easier at Killarney due to the proximity to the city and suburbs of Bulawayo where they could also ask the Roman Catholics for food. The old lady was emphatic in emphasizing the incomparability of the two areas. The sandy soils in Mazibisa were so poor that not more than a 50 kg bag of millet was expected from the current harvest. Despite the hardships, she is not willing to leave the place to go anywhere, as two of her children have died and been buried at this homestead over the last five years.

The mentally ill daughter managed a partial interview, in which she accused her neighbours of having bewitched her, and lamented the fact that she had had to give up her huts which she had spent much time trying to repair, and that she had not been compensated for this.

The old lady tries to cut thatching grass to swop for food with her neighbours.

Situation Six

Rural district, Matabeleland South

Informal mining settlement deep in the bush

7 interviewees (out of settlement of around 60+ people)

Originally from Bulawayo back yard structures

Note: in 2005/6 there were literally scores of informal mining settlements across Matabeleland, and these became home to unknown numbers of those forced out of the towns.

In September 2005, interviews were conducted in this mining settlement with 6 women and 1 man displaced from Bulawayo when their back yard structures were demolished. Two of the women reported that they had been among those forcibly rounded up in the city by police, prior to the visit of the UN envoy to Bulawayo. They were arbitrarily dumped in a rural town around 120 km away, and had no previous links to this area. All those interviewed indicated that they made their way to this mining settlement deep in the bush in the hope of income generation. Some of the women were making money from prostitution, and others by vending. The man was gold mining. Life was very tough and the police often raided looting all their gold, money, and vending wares.

Shortly after we conducted interviews here in 2005, the entire settlement was razed to the ground by the police. This was around November 2005. The entire make-shift camp was burnt to the ground in the presence of the people living there: they lost all their possessions. **However, the camp was resurrected.** The community decided to relocate further into the thicket along the river. They were very concerned about not being razed again, and so they did not settle as a cohesive mining camp this time.

By 2006 when we revisited, they had separated their shacks, scattering in the bush so that they were really hidden.



Photo 36 and 37 [above]: informal mining settlement - from active mine shaft in 2005, to abandoned hole in the ground in 2010.

Photos 38 and 39 [below] from busy settlement (2005) to empty landscape (2010)



Update 2010

This mining community has now completely disappeared. There is scarcely a sign that anyone ever lived here. The mining shafts are abandoned and overgrown, and there is no evidence of shacks for kilometers around in the surrounding bush. This community probably became victims of the late 2006 crack down on gold panners and small scale miners, called “Operation Chikorakoza”, in which many hundreds were rounded up and imprisoned. People were forced to fill in shafts manually, and tools were impounded by the police, across the nation.

Situation seven

Rural district in the Midlands

Family of husband, wife and seven children

Originally from Porta Farm near Harare

Interviews: May 2010

This family with seven children had lived at Porta Farm, outside Harare, for many years prior to the total demolition of this settlement in June 2006. They lost a four bedroomed home, the wife’s shop, and the husband’s surgery where he practised as a traditional healer. They were forcibly taken first to Caledonia Farm and then by police trucks to Masvingo, and from there had to make their own way to the Midlands district where they had rural extended families.

By June 2006, the husband was living with his mother in law, which is in the same village as an old, derelict homestead they had been given but had not moved into. The wife was living ten kilometres away from this village, running a shop. Two children were with her, the youngest and one child in Grade two, who was in school. There were signs that the marriage was under strain, even though the family was clearly doing fairly well financially, even being able to employ two people to help with the store.

Update 2010 – still a success story

The wife continues to live in this area, and seems very settled there with her children. However, she and her husband have divorced and he has gone back to Harare. The store has done well, and the wife is considering expanding the business and buying up other stores in

the area. This is a rare success story among those who were forcibly dumped back in rural areas.

Situation eight

Ngozi Mine: informal settlement razed to the ground in June 2005

Around 400 settlers lived here at that time

Interviews: June and July 2010

During OM, everyone in this area lost all their possessions. Ngozi Mine is close to the municipal rubbish dumps, and people in the vicinity often scavenge from the dumps as a way of surviving. People living here are among Bulawayo's poorest and most vulnerable. By 2006, this settlement was slowly rebuilding itself. However the community remained very afraid of strangers and very hesitant to talk to outsiders. People when asked, all professed not to be actually living there, but to be just passing through.

Update 2010

There is once more a visible and settled group of several hundred people living at Ngozi Mine, once more under various headmen on the same principle as in a rural area. In some cases, people have now rebuilt substantial homesteads, while others remain very makeshift (see photos). As mentioned in the previous Case Study Three, some people have chosen inventive means to survive, such as reclaiming wire to make link fencing, or making sculptures out of plastic bags. One woman is sewing using scavenged scraps of fabric, selling quilts to her neighbours. Many children are out of school owing to a lack of school fees.

All are determined to stay at Ngozi Mine, and as in the case of Killarney, several families reported that they have lived there for more than a decade and have no other home. Several interviewees also reported that they had hidden away when the churches came to offer people refuge, and had simply lived in the bush for a few weeks before gradually rebuilding their shelters. Two interviewees had been among those taken in by the churches and then forcibly dumped by the state in Tsholotsho. They had promptly walked back to Ngozi Mine.

Situation nine

Victoria Falls

An estimated 15,000 displaced when suburbs were razed

Interviews: May, June, July 2010

In terms of percentage of town demolished, Victoria Falls was one of the worst affected areas in the country. The UN refers to 64% of dwellings being demolished during OM. Many of the houses demolished were substantial dwellings. When we revisited in 2006, we observed that people had rebuilt houses that were barely a meter off the ground in order not to draw official attention. Others were living in shell houses, with up to six tin shacks being built inside the brick frame of large but incomplete houses.



Photos 40 and 41: good quality housing was demolished in Victoria Falls in 2005 – the town lost 64% of its accommodation.

Photo 42: in 2010, many people in Victoria Falls now live in shacks unable to rebuild decent homes after years of financial battering – as well as further demolitions, including on Christmas Eve in 2009, ordered by the MDC T led city council!



Update 2010

Housing in Victoria Falls remains a crisis. However, it is now the MDC T led city council that is policing the informal housing sector. Many residents have owned plots in the high-density suburb here since before OM, and since then, have failed to rebuild the structures knocked down. Instead they have been living in makeshift shacks, while they try to save the money to build structures that will comply with minimum standards. However, at six monthly intervals, the city council comes in and knocks the shacks down. The last time this happened was on Christmas Eve in 2009! As each knockdown reduces the residents to greater poverty, this cycle seems really senseless and counterproductive. There is a need for urban councils countrywide to adjust their housing by-laws to take the Zimbabwean reality into account, allowing for a more relaxed approach to appropriate structures.

Situation ten

Two year old boy: disabled after feet burnt during “Murambatsvina”

Victoria Falls

Incident on 2 June

Interview: July 2010

This child had suffered horrific burns to his feet, in particular his right foot, after wandering into the smouldering ruins of a row of houses that had been torched by police during OM. His foot was still bleeding and he was unable to walk three months after the incident. During the course of 2006, the authors organised access to a surgeon and a health programme for this child. Once his foot was healed, his toes were amputated, to allow normal walking and wearing of a shoe.

Update 2010

The child has done well, is attending school and walks well in a shoe. His parents have moved to Bulawayo, although the child attends school in a rural area.

E. Case Study Four

DE DOORNS: ZIMBABWEANS DISPLACED IN THE WESTERN CAPE – AND ALSO DISPLACED BY OM IN 2005

De Doorns is a rural community in the Breede River Valley in the Western Cape of South Africa . The economy in the Breede Valley is based largely on agriculture, where most labour is linked to export fruit picking. The majority of labourers in the region find employment as seasonal farm workers who live well below the poverty line, with 80% of jobs falling away between May and October. In recent years, the labour force has included a high proportion of undocumented migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, increasingly predominantly Zimbabweans. While farm workers in general are considered a vulnerable population, asylum seekers and refugees are particularly at risk.

As a result of xenophobic attacks that peaked in De Doorns on Tuesday, 17 November 2009, approximately 2,500 foreign nationals were forcibly displaced from their homes, and were relocated in an emergency camp on the De Doorns playing field. At the time of this study in April 2010, around 1,100 displaced Zimbabweans, remained in the tented camp.⁷⁰

Intention of study

A previous study by SPT and PASSOP conducted in February 2010 found that 52% of those interviewed in the IDP camp (a 30% sample), had also been displaced in Zimbabwe in 2005. A

⁷⁰ SPT (2010), *Desperate Lives*, ibid, gives more background to the xenophobic attacks, which are not the focus of the current study. The previous study analysed interviews with 456 camp residents in February 2010. The preplanned nature of the xenophobic attacks and the failure of the police to intervene to prevent them or to bring anyone to justice, is discussed in the March report.

further study was therefore undertaken, focusing specifically on those who reported 2005 Zimbabwean displacement, to gain a better idea of how people have come to end up so far from Zimbabwe over the last five years, and what their accumulated losses might have been during this time. This study aims to record precise movements of respondents over the last five years, and also the employment patterns of individuals over that time. Living conditions prior to OM and immediate impact of OM on access to basic services has also been recorded. Working conditions in De Doorns were a focus of the previous study, and are not dealt with again here.

Respondents

The group of 118 interviewed in April was not drawn directly from the 456 interviewed in the February 2010 study. Displaced populations are highly mobile, and work long hours, which shifts their availability: hundreds of people had already left the camp between February and April, as the season was tailing off, and PASSOP was being denied direct access to the camp by April.⁷¹ This meant that they had to reach interviewees from among those who came to their legal advice centre around the corner, who also expressed a history of OM and were willing to take part in the interviews. The 118 interviewees for this second study should therefore be considered a new data set from the same general population of displaced Zimbabweans, and demographics have been reassessed accordingly. A wide cross section of people pass through the advice centre, which is also something of a social venue, and selecting from those accessing the centre is therefore unlikely to have biased the data set very significantly, although the mode of accessing respondents needs to be borne in mind.

I. Demographics

1. Gender

Female:	54% of interviewees	(64 women)
Male:	46% of interviewees	(54 men)

Mean age was 34 years, with the youngest being 19 and the oldest 54 years old. There was no significant difference in ages of men and women.

2. Marital status

Only 15% of interviewees were single, with 64% married, 14% widowed and 7% divorced. In the February study, the finding of married or previously married respondents was much lower, being 50% married and 8% widowed – this may indicate that single people are more mobile and that with the season drawing to a close, there were proportionally fewer single people left behind in the camp.

3. Children and care-giving

92% of respondents reported that they had children (108).

⁷¹ PASSOP is regarded as trouble-making by the camp authorities, as they have encouraged residents to stand up for their rights.

This is significantly higher than the February group, in which 75% of women reported children, and 48% of men. This suggests individuals without children may have been more inclined to move on as soon as work became erratic, while those with children may have clung to the area in the hope of a few more days' work.

The 108 respondents with children reported 271 children between them, but only 5,6% of these children were in De Doorns, with **81% being in Zimbabwe**. 2% were elsewhere in South Africa, and the balance was split with some in Zimbabwe and some in South Africa.

Of those with children in Zimbabwe, **71% were being looked after by their grandparents** – which is dramatically higher than the February finding, in which 54% were looked after by a grandparent. Once again, and more acutely, this emphasizes the pressure on grandparents in the raising of “diaspora orphans”. 13% of children were being looked after in Zimbabwe by the spouse of the respondent, with siblings and other relatives caring for the balance.

4. Education

65% of respondents had O Level. 10% had A level or tertiary training, compared to 15% in the February group, which may suggest that those with better qualifications had also been among the first to move on as the season ended. Once again, the comparatively high level of educational background of those picking fruit in De Doorns is in keeping with the finding of refugee populations elsewhere: by and large, Zimbabweans in De Doorns are over qualified for fruit picking.

5. Documentation

82% of respondents had Asylum Seeker Permits (ASPs), 3% had refugee status and 1% had a work permit. 14% were undocumented (16 individuals) and therefore working illegally. This is a higher proportion of undocumented migrants than those in February, which constituted 6% (29 individuals), but this may simply indicate a higher proportion of undocumented than documented people seeking legal advice at the PASSOP legal aid centre. In any event, it is clear that the vast majority of Zimbabweans in De Doorns have legal grounds for seeking employment anywhere in South Africa.

II. History of the Demolitions in 2005

1. Province of residence in 2005

People were asked where in Zimbabwe they were living in May 2005. While around two thirds of respondents were originally living in Harare or the Mashonaland provinces, it is interesting to note that Zimbabweans have travelled from every province to the furthest point of South Africa in search of employment; all ten provinces are represented in De Doorns, although Harare and Midlands predominated in this group of respondents.

2. Quality of structures demolished in 2005

57% of respondents were living in a house at the time of OM, with another 30% living in a backyard cottage. Only 11% reported living in a shack at that time.

63% claimed that either they or a family member owned the structure that was demolished, with 33% reporting that they were paying rent to a non-family member.

Respondents report that available accommodation on properties at the time of demolition was sizeable, with only 8% consisting of a single room. 60% of properties affected by demolitions originally had between 2 and 5 rooms, with 12% having more than 8 rooms.

People further reported that in:

- 86% of cases, demolished structures had access to clean water
- 88% had access to electricity.
- 80% reported that the structure had brick walls.

These reports are in keeping with previous findings, including by the UN, that the majority of housing demolished did not meet the criteria for “slums”, as claimed by the government, but were in fact substantial structures with basic services.

3. Immediate movements after Displacement 2005

In the first days and weeks after the demolitions, almost half of respondents remained more or less in the same place. This was as a result of needing to guard displaced possessions amid the ruins, or the need to be close to work or schools. Simply having no plan to move on and nowhere to go, as relatives were also affected by demolitions, was also a factor. However, 51% reported having to move, and in many instances having to split up their families as a result.

- 49% of those displaced either stayed on the same plot, or moved within the same urban area.
- A further 14% moved to another urban area.
- **This means that a total of 63% remained urban.**
- **29%** were displaced initially to a **rural** home – but none remained there ultimately
- **6%** went immediately into the **diaspora**

It is worth noting that while over the next few years, 100% of the respondent group were to diasporise, it was not the immediate impact of OM that drove them to do so – only 6% did so in the first few months. However, by the end of 2005, this proportion rose by another 24%, meaning that 30% of respondents reported that they have been working seasonally in De Doorns since the end of 2005.

Of those who moved from their original site (51%):

- 38% moved to live with relatives, either in an alternative family home or where relatives were lodging
- 13% moved to where they thought they would be safe as a priority
- 9% moved to where they could continue to find work as a priority
- 5% moved with the need to keep children in school as a priority
- **39% of families reported that OM resulted in their families having to split up**
- Of these, 56% reported being separated from their spouse, and 65% reported being separated from their children

Friends/ affordability/ previous lodging experience all influenced decisions of where to move.

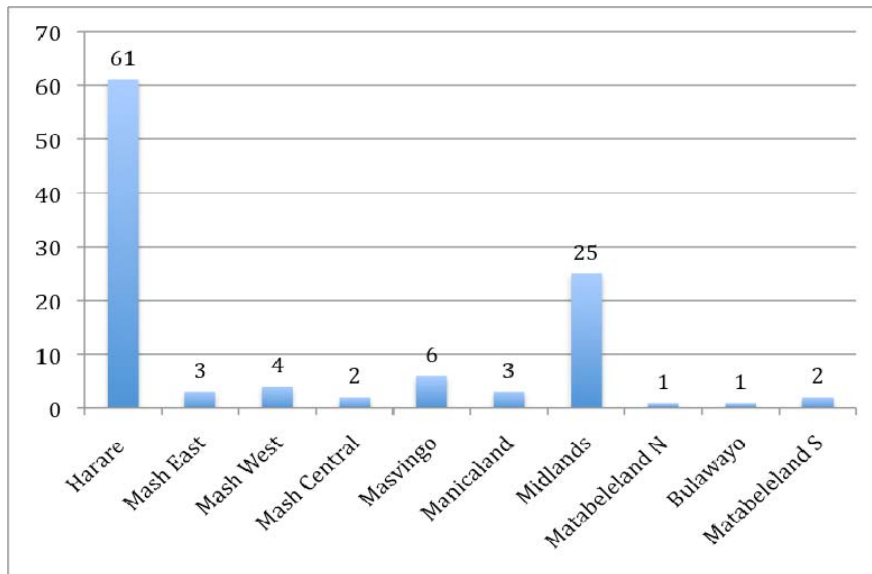


Chart vi: showing province of origin in Zimbabwe

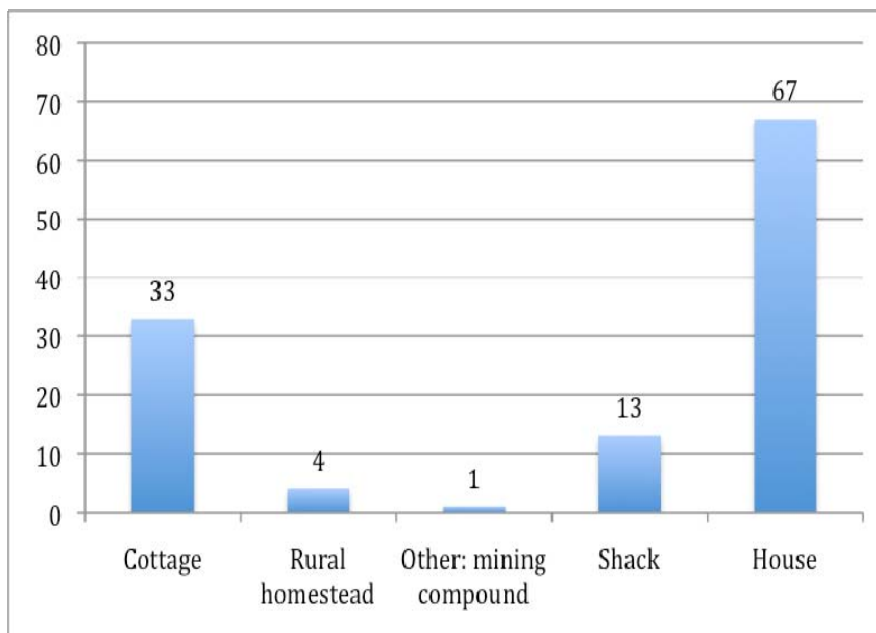


Chart vii: showing accommodation prior to demolitions 2005

III. Loss of access to essential services

Apart from loss of accommodation and property, OM caused severe disruption to people’s lives, resulting in secondary deaths through disrupted medications and the stress of losing everything: many thousands of children lost education that has never been recovered. Various

studies illustrated this at the time,⁷² and the current study once more underlines the sometimes devastating impact of OM in this regard. People were moved away from their local clinic or hospital, in particular those dumped in rural areas, and children dropped out of school in all the chaos: some have never resumed it. Loss of documents and records of every description have created enormous difficulties for families as well.

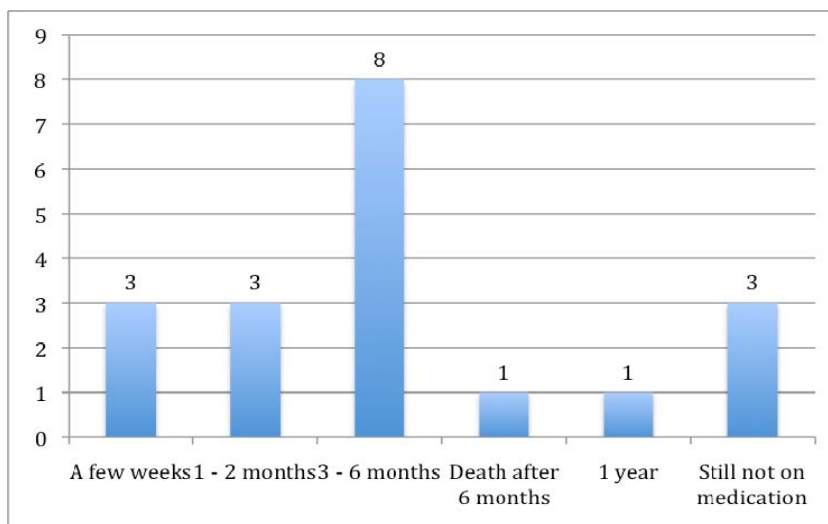


Chart viii: number of respondents reporting varying interruptions to medication after OM

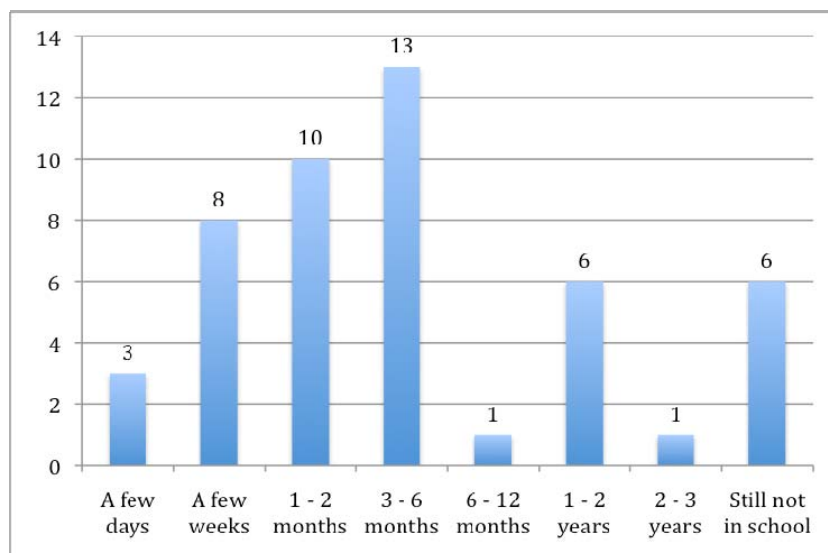


Chart ix: number of families where children lost schooling as a result of OM

1. Impact on health

- 35% of respondents (41 people) reported that a family member was on chronic medication at the time of the demolitions.

⁷² UN Report, *ibid*; SPT (2005a, 2005b, 2006) *ibid*.

- Of these, 46% reported that medication was interrupted as a result of OM (19 people).
- The most common length of time without medication was 3 to 6 months
- However, **16% reported having never been able to resume medication**

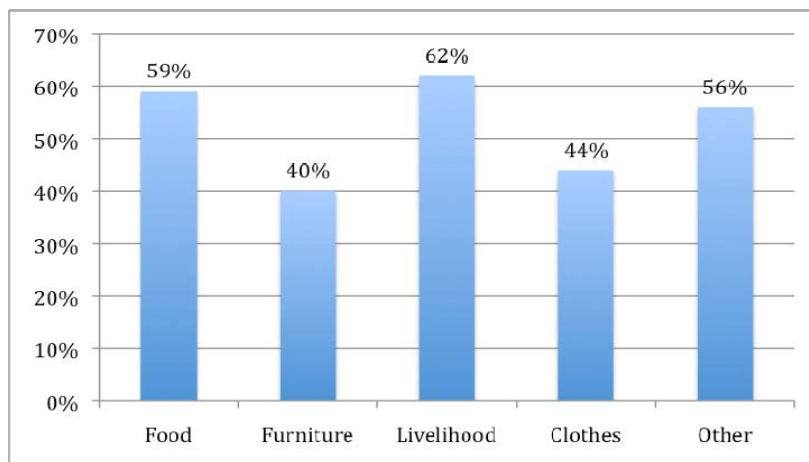


Chart x: respondents reporting losses during OM

Deaths attributed to OM

- One wife reported the death of her husband after six months without his chronic medication, which she attributes directly to the lack of medication.
- One mother shockingly reported the death of her child, killed in the process of her home being demolished.

2. Impact on education

- 56% of respondents reported having school age children in school at the time of OM.
- 71% of these reported interruption to schooling as a result of OM (47 out of 66 families).

Of those families where children dropped out of school for any length of time, **28% suffered severe disruption**, meaning the loss of a year or more of schooling as a result of OM. Of these, half (14% of all children who lost schooling) lost up to three years of schooling, or dropped out of school permanently.

A further 29% of families had children who lost between three and twelve months of schooling, which could be considered sufficient to have caused them to have to repeat the year.

Apart from the loss of accommodation, respondents reported the following losses during the demolitions.

- **A disastrous 62% reported loss of their immediate livelihood**, with all respondents reporting other types of material loss.
- Respondents reported loss of: personal documents; livestock; building materials; tools; business premises; memorabilia, among many, many other losses, including 'everything'.

IV. Impact of events of 2005 to 2010 on employment

1. Employment in 2005: at time of OM

In 2005, what is noteworthy is the *diversity of occupations*, and the fact that 35% of respondents were in full time, salaried employment at that time (either civil service or commerce).⁷³ A further 14% were in trades working in small, informal businesses, but producing products or providing skilled services, while only 31% were in buying and selling other people's products.

In the chart following:

- In the category of “artisan”, are included welder; carpenter; tombstone maker; painter; builder; brick maker/ layer; some of whom were working for themselves and others of whom were working for small enterprises.
- In the category of “salaried” are included: till operator; factory worker; company employee; receptionist; quality controller; bank teller; shop assistant; driver; security guard; caterer in restaurant; chef; shelf packer; baggage handler; investor; real estate assistant.
- “Self employed” refers to selling vegetables, building materials and craft work.
- Only ONE respondent reported surviving by farming.

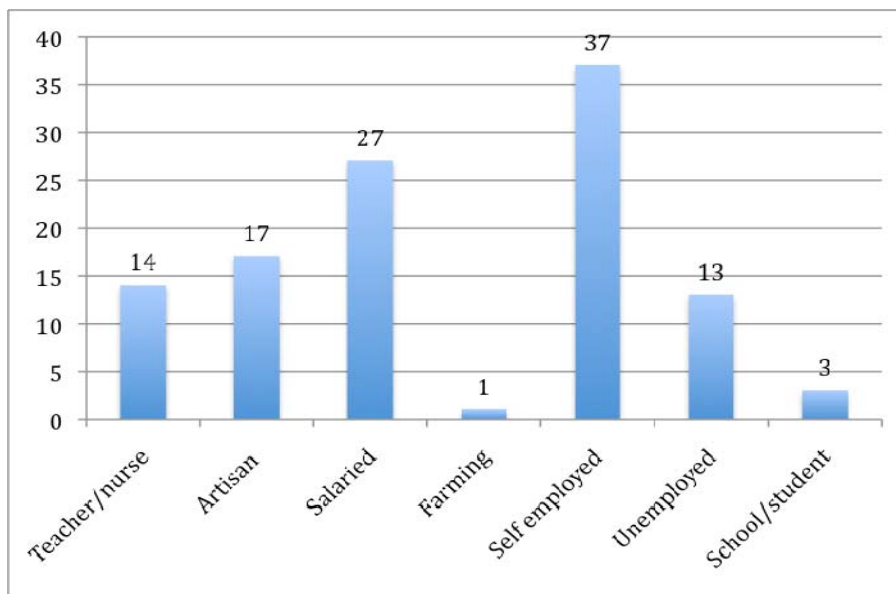


Chart xi: number of respondents in various categories of employment at time of OM in 2005

⁷³ In the February SPT study, 46% reported having been in a full time salaried job compared to 35% in April – the lower levels in the April group could point to those with higher skills and better employment opportunities having already moved out of the camp.

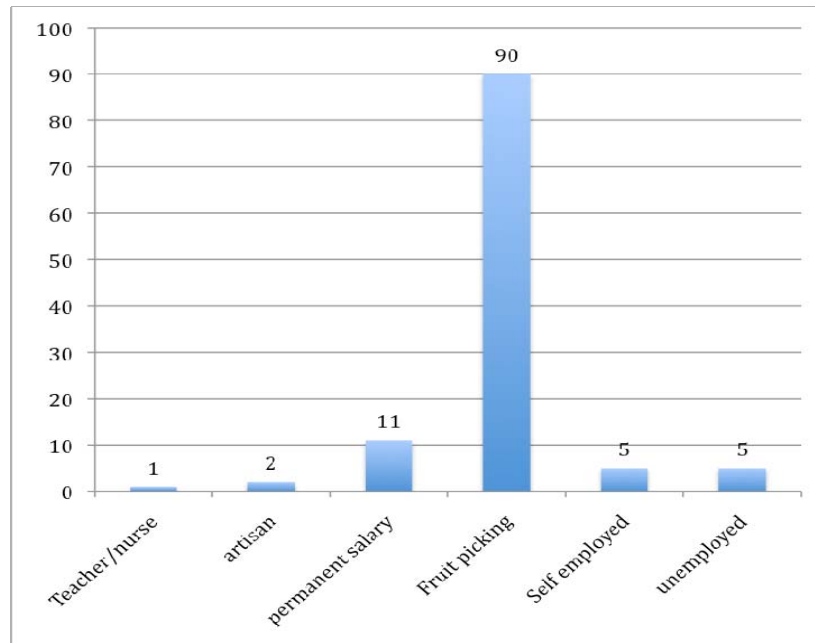


Chart xii: number of respondents reporting various categories of employment: De Doorns 2010.

2. Employment in 2010: De Doorns

There has been a dramatic drop in people reporting unemployment (from 13 down to 5) and self employment (from 37 down to 5) in this group, but also a very significant drop in people reporting full time salaried employment. This is hardly surprising as the majority of the target group are, by their very geographical location, involved in seasonal agricultural labour. However, by July 2010, almost the entire of this group are likely to be reporting either unemployment or self employment, by the very nature of the seasonality of the work.

It is also hardly surprising that the diversity of employment is gone: only one civil servant, a nurse, is still in her profession, while the other 13 teachers and nurses are now fruit pickers. The artisans, with only two exceptions (plumbers), are also now no longer utilising their skills and experience.

The vast majority, **76%, report seasonal (weekly or daily) employment** on the farms in De Doorns – in all cases this is essentially unskilled work picking fruit, and has no job security.

Only 9% (11 individuals) report being in a **permanent**, salaried job – categories include farm foreman, construction, shop assistant, assistant baker, IT consultant, gardener. This is a drastic reduction by 70% from 2005, when 41 individuals were on permanent salaries.

However, OM cannot be given the full blame for the changes in working patterns of Zimbabweans. As discussed in Part One of this report, OM was followed by other severe economic blows, in particular the hyperinflation of 2007 and 2008, which ultimately drove many of the few Zimbabweans still in formal employment, out of their jobs, as salaries failed to keep pace with the cost of living. The following history shows how it was not OM alone that drove one highly qualified Zimbabwean out of his profession, firstly into the informal sector in Harare, then to Botswana and finally to South Africa and into fruit picking. He has made six

major moves in five years, and is now contemplating a seventh with a high degree of depression and trepidation.



Photos 43-45: PASSOP, an NGO supporting Zimbabweans in De Doorns, is banned from entering the IDP camp, and here holds a meeting with them through the fence! They deliver “the Zimbabwean” newspaper – news from home read avidly. [30 May 2010]



KEY INFORMANT ONE

FM – aged 35

De Doorns

30 May 2010

- 1. Budiro: 2005** I was living in Budiro (suburb of Harare) in 2005 on my stand that I had bought. My dwelling was completely destroyed by OM. At that time, I was manager of Nandos. I did a three-year training in Hotel Catering in the 1990s.
- 2. Harare apartment: 2005-6** After OM, the company paid to accommodate me in Harare, but there was nowhere for my family to live, so I had to take my wife and children to my rural home in Bindura.
- 3. Botswana: end 2007** Life became very tough. By the end of 2007, I was working for nothing – my money had no value. I had to leave my job because there was no point working for nothing, and I thought I could earn more in Botswana. But in Botswana it was very tough – the police are very hard on Zimbabweans. I found that work was not really possible in Botswana as well, so I had to head on.
- 4. Cape Town: early 2008** So I came to the Cape. At first I was living in Cape Town, outside the Home Affairs office. I was just sleeping on the pavement there outside Home Affairs, it was desperate. Then a friend and I decided to come out to the farms to look for work. I have been working here on and off, ever since. It is not ideal. We get between R300- R350 per week, depending, in the high season, but at this time of year I am lucky to get one or two days of work a week.
- 5. De Doorns suburb: 2008** I was living in De Doorns when they threw out the Zimbabweans. I lost a lot of property – that's why they chased us, they knew they could get something for nothing.
- 6. De Doorns Camp: Nov 2009** I have been living in the tented camp since November when we lost everything. It is now getting very cold, it is not a good place to be.
- 7. Where next?** I have no idea what I will do next, if the camp closes. That is another problem. I have nowhere else to go and no idea what I might do.

V. Diasporisation; why, when and via where, to De Doorns?

1. Why De Doorns as a destination?

It is clear from travelling times, which averaged 3,5 days to cover a distance in excess of 3,000km from Zimbabwe, that most people who are now at De Doorns travelled there directly, knowing that this was their final destination. As De Doorns is so far from Zimbabwe, respondents were asked where and from whom they had first heard about De Doorns. Word of mouth from family and friends is overwhelmingly the most common source of information of work at De Doorns, with 78% reporting this.

The majority of people - 60% - first heard of De Doorns while in Zimbabwe, with the balance hearing of these work opportunities while in some other part of South Africa. Within South Africa, people were most likely to have heard of De Doorns in Johannesburg (10), followed by Musina (7), and Cape Town (6). It is clear that networks of migrant information operate across the length of the subcontinent at this time, with job opportunities spreading by word of mouth very effectively. Thirteen different towns were mentioned as the location of where information on De Doorns was first heard.

2. How many years/ seasons in De Doorns?

- **30% of respondents moved there four to five years ago**, and it is this group that could be categorised as having left Zimbabwe primarily as a result of the demolitions of 2005.
- It is interesting to note that this a minority of our respondents, although a sizeable minority, and to further note that **prior** to OM only **two** respondents were in De Doorns!
- **60% of people in De Doorns have been there for two years or less.**

OM can thus be given the responsibility for having been the precipitating factor for De Doorns becoming an important destination for Zimbabweans in 2005, since when there has been a steady increase in movement to De Doorns. Once more it is worth noting that OM alone has not been responsible for the diasporisation of Zimbabweans, and that most of this group appear to have left Zimbabwe in 2008 (2 years in De Doorns) or 2009 (1 year) for the first time. This is in keeping with the exponential diasporisation that we noted in our 2009 research, precipitated by the more general economic meltdown.

3. Have you returned to Zimbabwe?

As most respondents reported having children in Zimbabwe, we were concerned as to how often they have returned home.

- 67% of respondents had returned to Zimbabwe either **never**, or only **once**. 60% of respondents have been out of the country two years or less, and 50% have been out for one year or less, so it is not surprising if this group has not returned yet, considering the distances – although one or two years is a very long period in the life of a growing child.
- 21% had been either two or three times
- 7% had been more frequently than this – usually mothers who commute to try and spend some time with their children, and to take them groceries and other goods.

In terms of why people have returned to Zimbabwe:

- 78% of respondents who indicated why they returned, reported returning primarily to visit family
- 15% reported they returned to trade goods bought in SA
- 9% reported they returned to take supplies to their families

People reported that their border crossings took them an average of 3,5 days, with the majority crossing the border by bus. However, 32% reported having to walk at least part of the journey, including across the border post itself.

4. How many moves between 2005- 2010?

Out of 77 respondents to this question, 46 or 60% had lived in 3 or more different locations since 2005. As this relates to major moves, from one centre or rural area to another, it does not indicate the number of different addresses people may have had in each centre. As the history of *Key Informant Two* illustrates (ahead), he has lived in **four general areas** – Harare, Seke, Gauteng and the Cape, but this has entailed 7 moves altogether, and several shacks where he resided for shorter periods in Finetown squatter camp, and De Doorns, are absorbed into the longer narrative, as are the possibly several places stayed in Limpopo, meaning a likely total of more than ten places of residence.

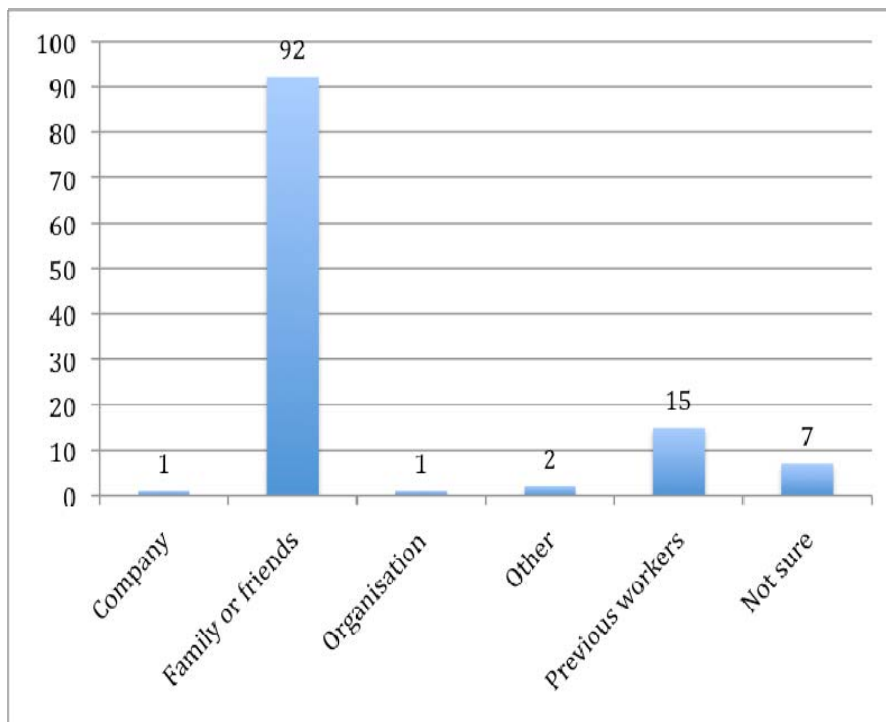


Chart xiii: source of information on De Doorns

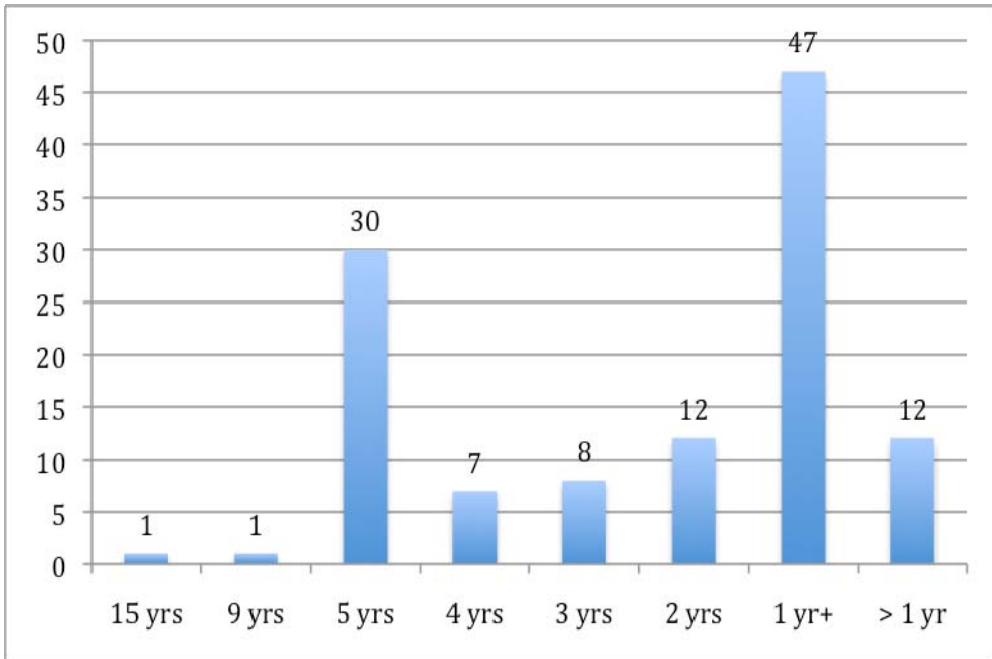


Chart xiv: number of years in De Doorns

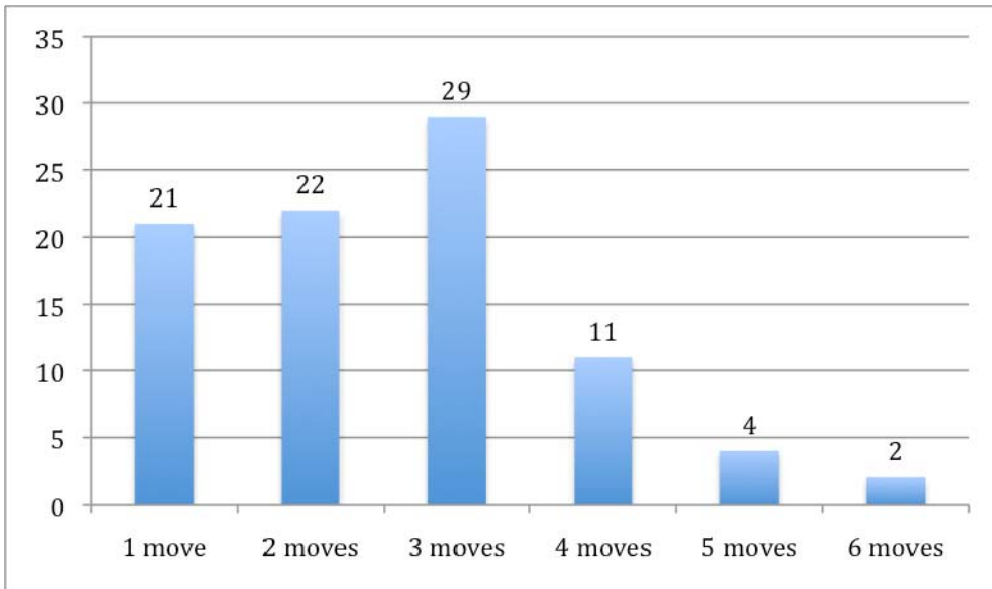


Chart xv: number of major moves 2005- 2010

KEY INFORMANT TWO

ZK: aged 41

Married, with 6 children.

Interviewed in De Doorns, Western Cape

1 June 2010

1. Chitungwiza, May 2005

In May 2005, I was living in Chitungwiza Seke Unit O. I had a mini market there, and was selling window and door frames there. Then the digger-loader came to Siyaso market and demolished everything. The police were there, and they destroyed the whole complex. We were not allowed to collect our wares, and had to run for our lives – I lost everything, and no longer had a place of work.

2. Seke Communal lands, June 2005 - November 2006

My two roomed lodging was next to be destroyed – I was a tenant there – so now work was destroyed, and lodgings were destroyed. I had no option but to return to Seke Communal lands with my family. But I found I could not make a living, I had no source of income and those of my children who had been in school, were no longer in school. In Zimbabwe at that time there was no rule of law. We people at the grass roots could not sustain life any more. Life in Seke was tough, I had to try to grow vegetables and maize and I had no plough and no cows to plough. This was my first time to be a communal farmer, but I had to try and grow food for my children. I grew some samp and sold it for R150, so that I could board a bus to Beitbridge.

3. Border area, Limpopo: November 2006 – January 2007

I stayed in Seke Communal for one year, 2006. Then in November 2006 I went to Beitbridge. The (Limpopo) river was waist high and we had to cross. Around 40 of us crossed together, and we had to pay someone to guide us over the border. It was difficult to find work. I got work on a farm for R40 a week, and was trying to save money to go to Johannesburg. I had to work for more than a month to save the R100 transport to Joburg. I hiked part of the way, and paid for lifts here and there because it was cheaper than the bus.

4. Park Station, Johannesburg: January - February 2007

I arrived at Park Station in central Joburg. It was not right, sleeping with no blankets, nothing – and eating left over food from the dustbins on the station. I stayed a whole month there. There were around 300-400 Zimbabweans sleeping every night at Park Station. The big problem is that we didn't have passports and the police wanted IDs or passports. I had no papers, I was illegal. We would go into the industries and try to get piece-work and would be paid only R40 a day because we were Zimbabweans.

5. Barberton Police Station and Lindela Deportation Centre: March 2007

I was arrested for having no papers and was held in Barberton Police station for 2 weeks, before being sent to Lindela. Eventually I was put on a deportation train, but I managed to bribe the cops on the train, to let me go at Germiston. So I jumped off the train at Germiston – this cost me R400. I went back to Park Station.

6. Finetown squatter camp: April 2007

I moved to a squatter camp near Grassmere called Finetown. From there I worked in neighbouring farms for around 9 months. I sent for my wife and she came and brought the

two youngest kids with her. I then went back myself and collected the rest of the kids so that we would all be together.

7. Epumuleni township, De Doorns: February 2008 – November 2009

I heard that it was easy to get jobs in De Doorns, and that they were not asking for papers and were short of labour, so I travelled to Cape Town and out to De Doorns. There were very few Zimbabweans there, then. Friends talked about De Doorns - that is how I heard about it. I lived there first as a lodger and then I bought my own shack for R2,500. It had four rooms but I bought materials and extended it to 17 rooms to give to fellow Zimbabweans who needed a place to stay.

17 November 2009 – xenophobic attack

It was a Tuesday morning, and the trucks to collect labour for the day were blocked by the residents of De Doorns. The councillor was with this group. Then they started to destroy our houses. They looted our property and stole everything, saying we must go back to Zim. They took our iron sheets, clothes, TVs, beds – we walked away empty handed.

My whole 17-roomed dwelling was knocked down. I have listed my losses with the police, worth R20,000.

This attack was very well planned – the police, the councillor worked together, it was cheap politics to buy votes from the people.

As a community leader they came to me and said – tell your people to wait for trucks to the police station, and all the Zimbabweans went to the police for safety.

8. De Doorns displacement camp: November 2009 – June 2010

Then three big tents went up, and everyone was accommodated there. Then more smaller, tents were put up and that is where we have all been living since November.

I have six kids in the camp – all their clothes were stolen, and I have nowhere to take them to. I am grounded because all my property was destroyed. Where can I get shelter for my kids? Now the government is saying – go back, go back to Zimbabwe, or go to another place, or go to Stofland. But we Zimbabweans are not wanted in Stofland.

The police never dealt with the issue – arrests were made, but the people were released. We told the Inspector exactly who took what, because we know them and we saw. But he has done nothing – they are sitting on all the dockets.

I don't want to go back to Zimbabwe right now, the economy is not right. We need real change and then – Home Sweet Home – I will go freely. I have got papers now, an ASP. I have not been back for three years.

My kids are confused. They came home from school and found the house destroyed.

In De Doorns the work is seasonal. There is no more work now, but my kids have to eat. All my things were destroyed, the government must compensate.

They have ruined my life – again.

9. Where to next?

I am confused. Now in the Western Cape it is raining every day – nobody wants to be in a tent. They are taking away the chemical toilets. Water is a problem. They are trying to force us out. But I came wanting asylum and cannot go back. I have no money to go anywhere. From the word go, I have worked hard to get something, and have lost it all, over and over.

5. Where to next?

59 people have been in De Doorns for less than a year, and the vast majority do not have any idea of where they would move on to now that the season was over.

- 38% of respondents reported that they would go back to Zimbabwe after the season. However, most of these indicated that they would head from Zimbabwe back to De Doorns for the next picking season. A further 40% indicated that they would like to return to Zimbabwe not now, but some time in the future.
- 57% indicated that they thought that Zimbabwe was NOT a safe place to return to now.
- 10% indicated that they would remain in De Doorns throughout the year – several of these have permanent jobs outside of the picking industry.
- 10% indicated they would move to other parts of the Cape to pick citrus fruits during the winter months
- 9% indicated they would stay elsewhere in the Cape.

VI. Conclusion: Case Study Four

The overriding sense conveyed after talking to people in De Doorns is of poverty, anxiety and exhaustion. People are afraid of further xenophobic attacks, and since SPT was there in May 2010, this fear has become a reality, with a Zimbabwean thrown off a moving train in Cape Town on 6 July. This appeared by mid July to be one of at least six xenophobic attacks resulting in hospital treatment in Cape Town alone.⁷⁴ The respondents in our study, in a frantic bid to survive and to help their families survive, have been driven out of Zimbabwe. OM was an initial precipitating factor in this regard, but the economic meltdown of 2008/9 has been a bigger factor in the rate of diasporisation, and political persecution has also played a role.

The majority in De Doorns do not consider Zimbabwe a safe place to return to, but also do not consider South Africa a safe place at this time. Zimbabweans, often with high levels of skill and qualifications, have seen themselves driven into poverty over the last five years, suffering substantial losses in terms of livelihoods, housing, health and schooling. Many of these losses have resulted in fatalities, obvious and hidden, and other consequences are likely to be irreversible: children who have fallen out of school have lost that opportunity permanently. Material and social losses during OM in Zimbabwe have been compounded by losses during xenophobic attacks in South Africa. Families live divided, their social fabric severely fractured.

For the last five years, Zimbabweans have been hounded by officials both in Zimbabwe and in South Africa. In both nations the police have been complicit to a greater or lesser degree in aggravating the suffering and injustices experienced by ordinary people, either by being actively involved in demolitions, or by deliberate failure to act to protect or bring about justice during and after xenophobic attacks. It appears that in South Africa in July 2010, official response and preparedness for attacks on foreigners has been much improved; this apparent willingness to head off such attacks needs to be sustained for the next year, as South Africa heads into local government elections, often a precipitating factor for xenophobia.

⁷⁴ Underhill, Glynnis, "Train assault underscores xenophobia fears", Mail and Guardian, 9 – 15 July 2010.

It is not simply a perception but a reality: in June 2010, this group of Zimbabweans in De Doorns has no greater certainty of security of property and person than it had in June 2005. Their only certainty at this stage is uncertainty – this time including about which nation they will be living in.

They have ruined my life again.... I have no money to go anywhere. From the word go, I have worked hard to get something, and have lost it all, over and over.

Photo 46: snow was already falling on the mountains at De Doorns in May 2010 – making life even more unpleasant for those living in tents.



Photo 47: this Cape registered cross border transporter was seen at Beitbridge with this precarious load: in July 2010, Zimbabweans were sending their worldly possessions back home as a precaution against losing everything again in xenophobic attacks.





Killarney children (above) and Hopley Farm children (below) play in the dust surrounding their makeshift homes: will they ever know a secure roof over their heads? [July 2010]

