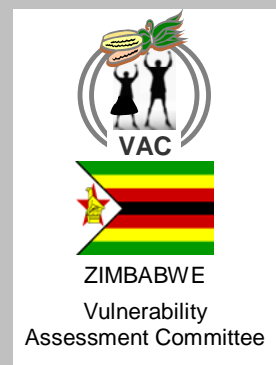
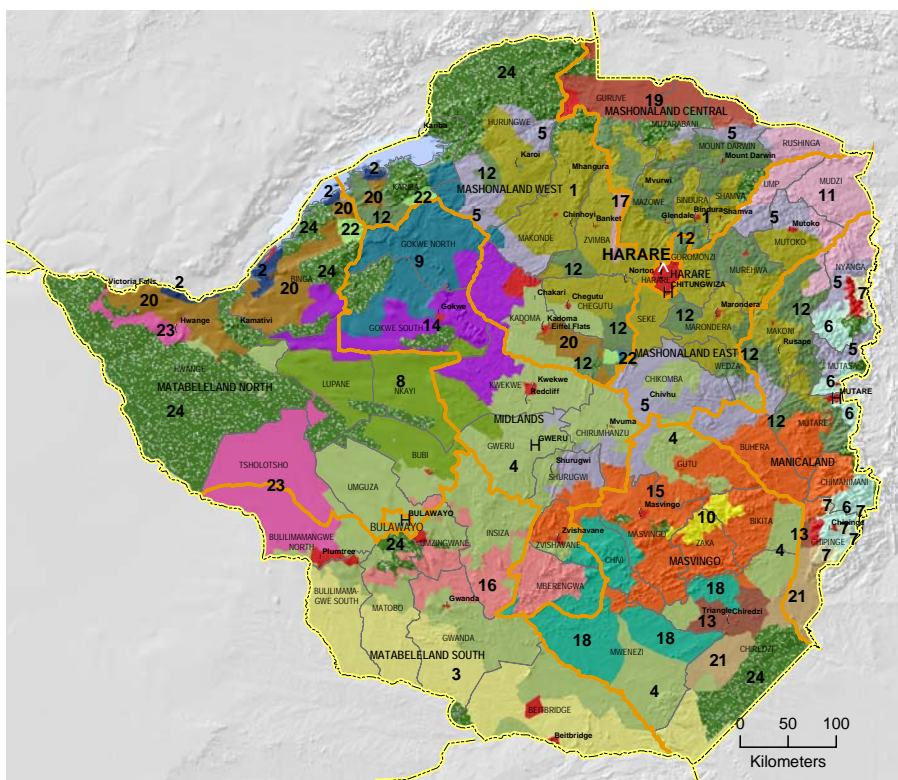


Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

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Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

Introduction

Introduction

The livelihood profiles that follow document how rural populations of Zimbabwe live. A *livelihood* is the sum of ways in which households make ends meet from year to year, and how they survive (or fail to survive) through difficult times.

There is increasing interest in using livelihoods analysis as the ‘lens’ through which to view a number of problems. These problems range from emergency response to disaster mitigation to longer term development. This interest rests upon two basic observations:

- 1) Information about a given area or community can only be properly interpreted if it is put into context with how people live.
- 2) Interventions can only be designed in ways appropriate to local circumstances if the planner knows about local livelihoods and whether or not a proposed intervention will build upon or undermine existing strategies.

Two main products are offered here:

National Livelihood Zone Map

The map shows the division of the country into homogeneous zones defined according to a livelihoods framework.

Livelihood Zone Profiles

The profiles describe the major characteristics of each zone, including a brief differentiation of the food security status of different wealth groups. There is some emphasis on hazards and the relative capacity of different types of households in different places to withstand them.

In compiling the profiles, a balance has been struck between accessibility and level of detail. The aim has been to present sufficient information to allow a rounded and balanced view of livelihoods nationally. The profiles provide a rapid introduction to livelihoods in the country; they do not offer localized detail.

The preparation of these profiles was a joint activity between the USAID Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) and the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC). The ZimVAC is composed of government ministries, NGOs and United Nations agencies working in the areas of food security, poverty reduction and development in Zimbabwe. ZimVAC’s mission is to contribute to the formulation and implementation of effective policies and emergency and development programs through a system of improved, co-coordinated and demand-driven vulnerability assessments and analysis. It is a subcommittee of the Social Services Cabinet Action Committee (SSCAC). The main focus of FEWS NET’s work is early warning, food security monitoring and emergency assessment. The profiles are based on the risk mapping of Zimbabwe conducted by Save the Children (UK) in 1996. Data collected from a series of provincial workshops were conducted in 2003 was used to update descriptions of livelihood zones and profiles produced in the earlier exercise. The updates were reviewed by a national workshop that was held in October 2004.

The livelihood profiles have been structured primarily with early warning activities in mind. However, it is hoped that they will also prove useful to the wider development community.

This document is divided into 3 main sections.

- **Introduction**—This has 6 sub-sections:
 - **The Uses of the Profiles**--which describe 3 main ways the profiles can be used.
 - **Key Concepts**--which defines the key concepts used in livelihoods based analysis.
 - **Introduction to the Food Economy Approach**--which outlines the analytical framework that has helped define the key information to be included in the profiles.
 - **The National Livelihood Zone Map**—which introduces the concept of livelihood zones.
 - **What is in a Livelihood Profile**—which describes the layout and content of each profile.
 - **Methodology**—which describes the methods used to develop the map and profiles.
- **National Overview**— The national livelihood zone map, together with a national overview of livelihoods in Zimbabwe.
- **The Livelihood Zone Profiles**—The profiles for each zone.

The Uses of the Profiles

The Zimbabwe livelihood zoning and profiles presented here offer an analysis of urban and rural food security on a geographical basis. Zimbabwe is divided into 23 relatively homogeneous zones defined according to a livelihoods framework. A brief description of each zone is provided, including an analysis of the position of different wealth groups within the zone. It is envisaged that the profiles will be useful on three levels, as follows.

1. An introductory guide to food security in Zimbabwe

The profiles pack considerable information and analysis into a few pages of presentation. They should therefore form a useful briefing for a newcomer who needs to get a quick grasp of food security conditions around the country. The geographical divisions are relatively small—as far as this is consistent with ground realities—so that the reader can take in the general pattern and the basic differences between areas and populations.

Development planners can also benefit from using the livelihood profiles. One objective of development is to reduce people's vulnerability to hazard and to increase their capacity to cope. An important first step is to understand who is vulnerable, to which hazards, and why. Likewise, efforts to reduce poverty require an understanding of how the poorest households survive in different areas of the country and the reasons for their poverty.

2. Early warning and food security monitoring

Most early warning and food security monitoring systems draw heavily from two information sources: (i) crop and/or livestock production data; and (ii) market price information. Given the predominance of production data, local food security is often equated with production outcomes. Hence, a chronic or temporary production deficit against local food requirement is immediately translated into chronic or temporary food insecurity.

This is almost never the whole story. A full account of the food economy addresses both food supply—that is, what food people produce—and food demand—what food people buy, and how they earn cash to buy it. Thus, data on casual employment or wild foods, or charity from relatives or the sale of handicrafts is equally important to the livelihood story as data on crop and livestock production.

Using a baseline livelihood profile, we can then inquire into household capacity to adapt to economic stress, especially failed crop or livestock production; and we can appreciate household activities at different periods in the yearly cycle. All of which feeds directly into our analysis of need, helping to answer key questions such as; which areas and what types of household are likely to cope should a hazard strike and which will need assistance? What types of intervention will be most appropriate, and when and for how long should they be implemented?

Thus for instance one could point to the position of poor households in a given geographical area who are highly dependent on urban employment. If urban employment declines, their labor will be less in demand: can they find alternative income elsewhere – and will they be competing with people from other zones in these activities?

National officers working within their national early warning system have an immense knowledge of their countries. The livelihoods approach helps to provide a framework for the full use of that knowledge, as well as adding a new level of information to it.

3. Policy Development

Disaster management has been the main impetus to the spread of early warning systems. The rationale in early warning is to improve the efficiency in the scale and timing of emergency food aid. However, increasingly planners are looking at alternatives to food aid in early emergency intervention—and this often requires changes in policy and practice. A case in point is the stabilization of market prices for basic foods. Livelihoods analysis can expose the likely effects of such interventions on different households' capacity to survive a crisis. The analysis can also recommend the optimum timing for intervention.

Livelihood analysis can also be applied to other policy changes. For example, if government taxes on paraffin were reduced, or charges made for government veterinary drugs, what would be the impact on households? More generally, the household viewpoint offers a more secure footing for looking at the increasingly voluminous discussion of poverty alleviation. It allows one to look at the story which lies behind national statistics.

Key Concepts

Risk, hazard, vulnerability and **need** have well-established meanings in the context of disaster management. They are, however, frequently misused in the context of food security. The meaning of these terms is perhaps best explained with an example (see below).

Defining Risk, Hazard, Vulnerability and Need

- Drought is a major **hazard** affecting crop and livestock production in many African countries.
- Poor households are more **vulnerable** to (i.e. less able to cope with) drought than better-off households; they have fewer reserves of food or cash to fall back on, and fewer options for generating additional income.
- Poor households living in drought-prone areas of the country are more **at risk** of a food shortage than other households because they are both exposed to and vulnerable to the drought hazard.
- Once a drought strikes, the poor are the most **in need** of food assistance.

To be at risk of food deficits you must both be exposed to a hazard, as well as be vulnerable to that hazard, as in the case of poor households in the drought-prone areas of the country in the above example. Because vulnerability is so closely linked to hazard, it follows that there is no general state of vulnerability; people can only be vulnerable *to something*. For example, farmers cultivating along a river margin may be vulnerable to flood (which is likely to wash away their crops), but may not be vulnerable to drought (since they can irrigate their crops using water from the river). Likewise, pastoralists may not be very vulnerable to drought provided they can move freely in search of water and grazing. They may, on the other hand, be highly vulnerable to conflict if that inhibits their movement to key water points and grazing areas.

Mathematically, the relationship between risk (R), vulnerability (V) and hazard (H) can be summarized as:

R = f (H,V) Where:

R = likelihood of a negative outcome (e.g. food deficit)

H = likelihood of exposure to a hazard (e.g. drought)

V = likelihood that people will not be able to cope with a defined hazard.

Once a hazard has struck, it no longer makes sense to talk about vulnerable groups. Put simply, people are **vulnerable before the event**, (since this refers to their ability to cope should a hazard strike). They are **in need after the event** (i.e., those actually affected by and unable to cope with a hazard). Going back to the drought example, the poor are vulnerable to drought before the rains fail, but once they have lost their crops or livestock they are in need of assistance.

A different approach is required to assess food needs once a hazard has actually struck. One of the most widely used livelihoods-based approaches is the food or household economy approach, first developed by Save the Children UK in the 1990s¹. This is described further in the next section.

Introduction to the Food Economy Approach

There is one basic principle underlying the food economy approach. This principle states that:

an analysis of local livelihoods is essential for a proper understanding of the impact— at household level - of hazards such as drought or conflict or market dislocation.

Total crop failure may, for example, leave one group of households destitute because the failed crop is their only source of staple food. Another group, by contrast, may be able to cope because they have alternative food and income sources. These alternative sources—such as livestock to sell or relatives elsewhere who can assist--can make up the production shortfall. Thus, effective hazard impact assessments must be based on livelihood analysis, and livelihood analysis itself involves several steps (see table below).

The Livelihood Zone Map: Patterns of livelihood clearly vary from one area to another. Local factors such as climate, soil, access to markets etc. all influence livelihood patterns. The first step in a food economy analysis is therefore to prepare a **livelihood zone map**. This map delineates geographical areas within which people share basically the same patterns of access to food (i.e. they grow the same crops, keep the same types of livestock, etc.) and have the same access to markets. An example of a livelihood zone map based on information gathered from southern Mozambique is presented on page 5.

¹ See 'The Household Economy Approach', Seaman J., Clarke P., Boudreau T., Holt J., Save the Children UK 2000.

The Wealth Breakdown: Where a household lives is one factor determining its options for obtaining food and generating income. Another factor is wealth, since this is the major factor determining the ability of a household to exploit the available options within a given zone. It is obvious, for example, that better-off households owning larger farms will in general produce more crops and be more food secure than their poorer neighbors. Land is just one aspect of wealth, however, and wealth groups are typically defined in terms of their land holdings, livestock holdings, capital, education, skills, labor availability and/or social capital. Defining the different wealth groups in each zone is the second step in a food economy analysis, the output from which is a **wealth breakdown**.

The Food Economy Baseline: Having grouped households according to where they live and their wealth, the next step is to generate **food economy baseline** information for typical households in each group for a defined reference or baseline year. Food access is determined by investigating the sum of ways households obtain food — what food they grow, gather or receive as gifts, how much food they buy, how much cash income is earned in a year, and what other essential needs must be met with income earned.

Household Coping (or Response) Strategies: Once this baseline is established, an analysis can be made of the likely impact of a shock or hazard in a bad year. This is done by assessing how food access will be affected by the shock, what other food sources can be added or expanded to make up for initial shortages, and what final deficits emerge.

Outcome Analysis: The objective is to investigate the effects of a hazard on *future* access to food and income, so that decisions can be taken about the most appropriate types of intervention to implement. The rationale behind the approach is that a good understanding of how people have survived in the past provides a sound basis for projecting into the future. Three types of information are combined; (i) information on baseline access, (ii) information on hazard (i.e. factors affecting access to food/income, such as crop production or market prices) and (iii) information on response strategies (i.e. the sources of food and income that people turn to when exposed to a hazard). The approach can be summarized as follows:

$$\text{Baseline} + \text{Hazard} + \text{Response} = \text{Outcome}$$

The idea is that once the baselines have been compiled they can be used repeatedly over a number of years - until significant changes in the underlying economy render them invalid. A good food economy baseline will generally be valid for between 3 and 10 years. What varies is the prevailing level of food security, but this is a function of variations in hazard, not variations in the baseline. Put another way, the level of maize production may vary from year to year (hazard), but the underlying pattern of agricultural production does not (the baseline).

The food economy analytical framework described here sets out the types of information and analysis that are required to understand the impact of a hazard on food security and local livelihoods. As much of this information as possible has been included in the current profiles. However, the profiles do not contain all the information required to complete the full quantitative outcome analysis described in the graphic on page 4. This requires a further step, which is the development of a full food economy baseline². The national livelihood zone map and livelihood profiles are designed as a stand-alone product (see section on Uses of the Profiles), but they are also intended as an intermediate step towards the development of a full food economy baseline.

² A full food economy baseline provides quantitative information on food, income and expenditure for at least three main wealth groups within a livelihood zone. Taken together these baseline data provide detailed information on the *amounts* of food accessed and the *amounts* of cash income generated from different sources by typical households living at different levels of wealth. The livelihood profiles, in contrast, include information on the *proportional contribution* of different sources of food and cash income to the whole. Put simply, the units of measurement for a food economy baseline are kilocalories (i.e. food energy) and cash, whereas the unit of measurement for a livelihood profile is percentage of total.

Outcome Analysis: Baseline + Hazard + Response = Outcome

The baseline picture provides a starting point or context for understanding the likely impact of a shock or hazard on food access at household level.

If, for example, 'poor' households are heavily dependent upon crop production, then they may be vulnerable to hazards affecting crops, such as drought or pest attack. Households that rely upon other sources of food and income are, on the other hand, less vulnerable to these hazards.

The first step is to superimpose the hazard on the baseline to assess its effects on food access at household level.

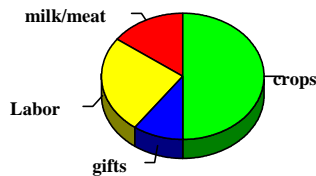
This requires that the hazard be expressed in quantitative terms, e.g. a 50% reduction in crop production, a 20% reduction in milk output, etc.

In the example below, a 50% reduction in crop production results in a 25% deficit in food access for the 'poor', since crops provide half of baseline food needs for this group.

The second step is to consider the response strategies that can be pursued by households exposed to a hazard, and the amount of food and/or income that can be generated from these.

In the example, the 'poor' keep from 3-5 goats, and in a crisis can exchange 2 of these for 1-2 sacks of grain – enough to cover roughly 10% of annual food needs. This has the effect of reducing the deficit from 25% to roughly 15%.

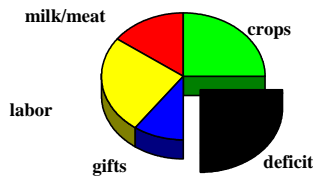
Baseline



+

Hazard

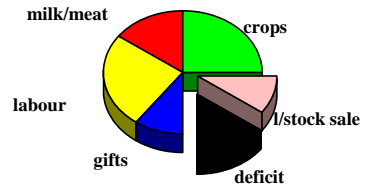
e.g. 50% crop failure



+

Response

e.g. sale of 2 goats



= Outcome

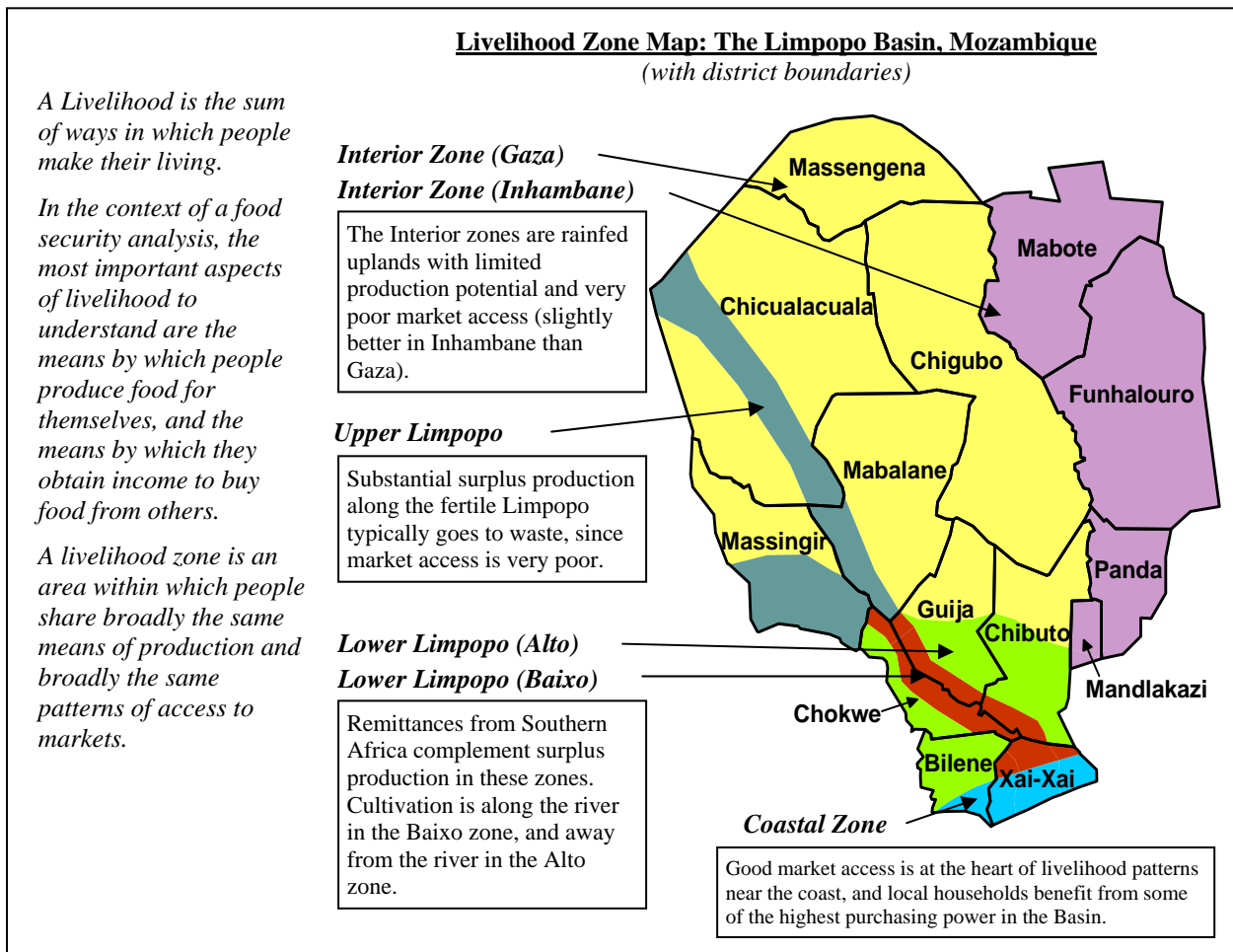
The outcome represents the final result, expressed in terms of the food intake deficit likely to result from a particular hazard, once household-level responses have been taken into account.

In the example, the conclusion is that a 50% crop failure is likely to result in a food intake deficit of 15% for 'poor' households. Similar analyses undertaken for other types of household (e.g. the 'middle' and the 'better-off') will indicate their vulnerability to this particular hazard.

The National Livelihood Zone Map

Livelihood Zone Maps: A livelihood zone is an area within which people share broadly the same patterns of access to food (i.e. they grow the same crops, keep the same types of livestock, etc.). They also share broadly the same access to markets.

Livelihood zone boundaries do not always follow administrative boundaries. Instead, a river or mountain range may be the boundary for a livelihood zone. In this way, one administrative zone may contain different livelihood zones, such as agro-pastoralists living alongside fishing communities. Conversely, one livelihood zone may cover several administrative zones. Yet, it is important that livelihood zone boundaries should wherever possible follow lower level administrative boundaries. The main reason is because resources are allocated on the basis of administrative units not livelihood zones.



What is in a Livelihood Profile

The profiles are divided up into a number of sections:

- **Main Conclusions and Implications** summarizes the main findings from the zone. This section also provides insights that will inform the planning of various types of intervention, including emergency response, disaster mitigation and development programming.
- **Zone description** offers a general description of local livelihood patterns (crop production, livestock rearing, off-farm income generation etc.).
- **The Markets** section contains basic information on the marketing of local production and on any importation of staple food into the zone.
- **Seasonal Calendar** sets out the timing of key activities during the year. This is useful in a variety of ways, e.g. to judge the likely impact of a hazard according to its timing during the year, or to assess whether a particular activity is being undertaken at the normal time in the current year.
- The **Wealth Breakdown** section describes three main wealth groups ('poor', 'middle' and 'better-off'), explaining the differences between these groups and how this affects potential access to food and cash income³.
- The **Sources of Food** and **Sources of Cash** sections examine patterns of food and income access at each level of wealth, relating these to the characteristics of each group.
- The sections on **Hazards** provide information on the different types of hazard that affect the zone, differentiated by wealth group where this is appropriate.
- **Response Strategies** describe the various strategies available to different types of household in the zone, together with a judgment of the likely effectiveness of the strategies⁴.
- Early warning involves identifying and interpreting key events that indicate that a severe food shortage or famine may be developing. The final section, **Indicators of Imminent Crisis**, draws upon the classification of early warning indicators proposed by Fred Cuny⁵. This section provides information on the key indicators and their likely timing by zone, based upon an understanding of local livelihoods and local patterns of response to food shortage⁶.

³ It is important to bear in mind for this analysis that we are thinking of wealth in relative (and local) terms. Statistical data may indicate that 80% or even 90% of the population in a particular area lives below the national poverty line, but this is measuring poverty on a national, absolute scale. In a livelihoods analysis we are interested in understanding some of the differences between different groups within the community and the reasons for these – in which case it is not particularly useful to lump 80% or 90% of the population together into one group.

⁴ The term response strategy is preferred to coping strategy for two reasons. Firstly, the term coping strategy is often used to refer to regular components of everyday livelihood (e.g. firewood sale), which strictly speaking are only coping strategies when intensified in response to a hazard. Secondly, 'coping' can be taken to imply that the strategy in question is cost-free, which is not always the case.

⁵ 'Famine, Conflict and Response: A Basic Guide', Cuny F. C. and Hill R. B. Kumarian Press, 1999, pp 33-42.

⁶ Fred Cuny identified two types of early warning indicator, those that provide advance warning of a famine (indicators of imminent crisis) and those that confirm the existence of famine (indicators of famine). The latter group includes indicators such as distress sales of productive assets (e.g. plough oxen), consumption of seeds, increased malnutrition and increased mortality. Indicators of famine are not generally context specific (i.e. a single list could be prepared that would apply to all livelihood zones). They are also of little use in predicting or preventing severe food shortage or famine. For these reasons they have not been included in the livelihood profiles.

Methodology

The livelihood zone map and profiles presented here have been compiled through a combination of field work and reference to existing secondary data sources. One major secondary source is SC/UK's Risk Map Report for Zimbabwe (1996). In the last few years, certain sections of the 1996 report have been updated. For instance, SC/UK continues to carry out field work to refine and add to the 1996 food economy baseline data. In particular, their work detailing the conditions of mine workers in Mutorashanga, and household food access in Binga—an isolated and very poor zone in western Zimbabwe—exemplify recent work by SC/UK to update the food economy data base. In several instances, the ZimVAC (Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee) also collected field information on household food access during the annual needs assessment. Livelihood zone boundaries and profile summaries were updated in March 2003 during a nation-wide series of workshops held in each province. This was a ZimVAC undertaking, led by FEWS NET.

As noted above, the FEWS NET livelihoods approach that underpins these Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles draws its conceptual framework from Household Economy Analysis (HEA). HEA was originally developed to provide a detailed understanding of household livelihood patterns, with a particular focus on access to food and income, and expenditure patterns as shown by different wealth groups within the population. This understanding then informs the identification and design of appropriate emergency (food and non-food) and development interventions. As a food security early warning activity, however, FEWS NET has tailored this livelihoods approach so that it yields maximum value for early warning and food security monitoring and analysis in resource-constrained settings. FEWS NET Livelihood Profiles are not intended to be used in isolation to assess population needs or design programs. They are intended to be a valuable tool in the early warning food security analysis toolbox, that should complement (and contextualize) other food security-related data, including nutritional monitoring data, agricultural production, market prices, etc. Used in this way, Livelihood Profiles enable the food security analyst to better understand current shocks against the context of what is locally normal in a given population, and with knowledge of how households are likely to respond to a range of events. On this basis we are better able to identify a potential food security crisis in the right population, at the right time, based upon a sound livelihoods-based understanding, to prompt quick follow-up assessment and action – in other words, to do more effective early warning. While these Livelihood Profiles do not provide the level of statistical confidence or highly localized data to play the major role in detailed local program planning, they are invaluable for helping to rapidly identify a developing crisis, to effectively target more in-depth assessments and thereby to promote a quicker response to population needs.

Zimbabwe Livelihood Profiles

National Overview

The National Economy

Zimbabwe's economy is mainly comprised of agriculture, mining, and manufacturing activities. However, agriculture plays a critical role in the overall development of the country. As of 1998, agriculture contributed 11-14% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), provided employment for 70% of the population, and contributed 60% of industrial raw materials and 45% of exports.⁷ Zimbabwe is divided into five Natural Regions based on agro-ecological potential, descending from the prime lands in Natural Region I, which are primarily devoted to dairy, forestry, tea and coffee-production, to Natural Region V where infertile soil and dry weather conditions make agricultural production very risky, but more suited for animal husbandry. At Independence in 1980, Zimbabwe inherited a dual agriculture economy, consisting of a highly productive, highly skilled and mechanized large-scale commercial farming sector mainly located in areas with good soil and favorable rainfall patterns between Natural Regions I and III, alongside a low skilled, low productivity, communal agriculture sector mainly located in dry and infertile regions in Natural Regions III, IV, and V.



Approximately 65% of the population of Zimbabwe resides in rural areas⁸. Principal livelihood activities are crop production (food and cash crops), animal husbandry, and employment on commercial farming estates, with limited off farm economic activities. Major food crops are cereals (maize, wheat, sorghum and millet), and vegetables; major cash crops are cotton, sugar, tobacco, and horticultural produce (tomatoes, potatoes, pepper and baby corn). The biggest threat to rural livelihoods is drought, which occurs about 1-3 years of every 10 years. The worst drought in living memory was experienced between 1991 and 1992, and the most recent drought was in 2001-2. The prevalence of drought and limited access to productive resources have restricted the expansion of rural incomes. Access to irrigation, land, draught power, and mechanization permits the better off households to engage in horticultural cash crop production. Major markets for cereals, cotton and tobacco are government marketing boards, private companies and local markets, while horticultural products, sugar, tea, timber and coffee are primarily for export.

Zimbabwe's economy has progressively stagnated over the past 40 years. Between 1965 and 1996, economic growth averaged 4% per annum against the backdrop of a 3% annual population growth. By 1990, despite a hefty 46% of GDP investment on social expenditure in health and education, per capita income was only 7% higher than in 1980. A significant shift from state-led economic development was signaled in 1990 with the inception of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) recommended Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP) which liberalized the economy and set it on an export led development path. ESAP did not produce the anticipated growth. By 1997 manufacturing production was 13% below the peak 1991 levels, and GDP per capita was 7.5% below 1975 levels⁹. The decline in GDP worsened from 4% in 1999 to 13% in 2002¹⁰. Inflation reached a peak of 623% in January 2005.

The most significant change to Zimbabwe's social and economic structure was the initiation of the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) fast track land reform program in June 2002. Land was acquired from primarily white large scale commercial farmers for redistribution to predominantly black Zimbabweans. Compensation for acquired land was deferred to the former colonial power, Britain. Polarization on appropriate reform methodology compromised the potential efficacy of land reform as a poverty alleviation strategy. Resettled farmers were constrained by limited support services to ensure full utilization of acquired land.

⁷ Zimbabwe Human Development Report (ZHDR): Poverty, 1998, p 23.

⁸ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report. Available: www.undp.org/statistics/data/countries.cfm?c=zwe. Accessed : September 14, 2005.

⁹ Zimbabwe Human Development Report, 1998 : 17, 13, 26, 19).

¹⁰ International Monetary Fund, Zimbabwe Selected Issues and Statistical Appendix. 2003: 6.

The increase in poverty is compounded by the HIV/AIDS epidemic. An estimated 25-30% of the productive 15-49 year old age group is living with HIV. HIV has lowered life expectancy from 61 years in 1990 to 43 years presently. An estimated 2,000 people die of HIV/AIDS related illnesses every week. Women become infected at a younger age, and presently, HIV prevalence among young women below the age of 20 is five times higher than their male counterparts.¹¹ In addition, there are an estimated 980,000 AIDS orphans, and 56,000 children who are HIV positive¹².

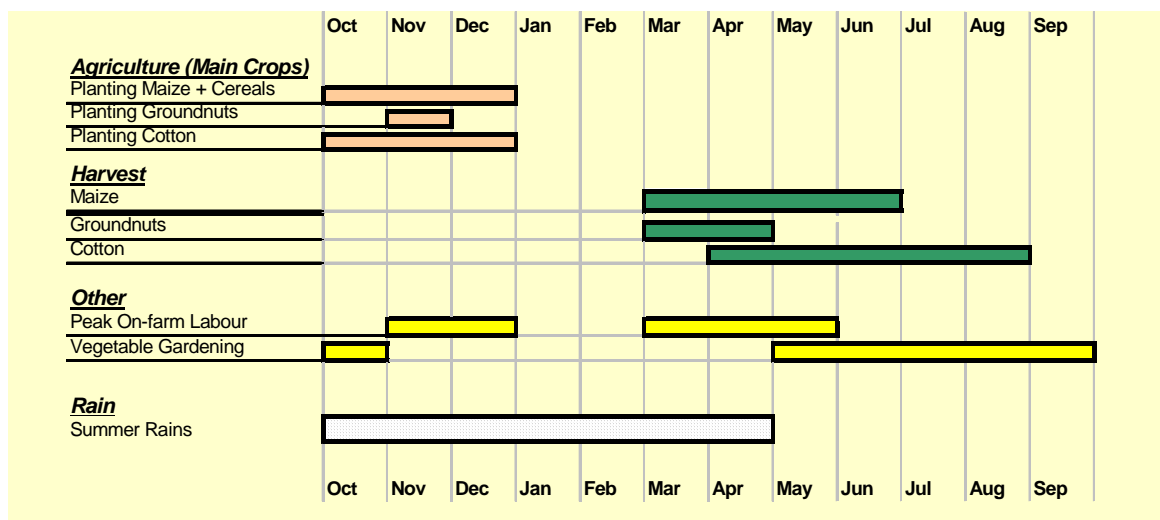
Recent changes in monetary policy and financial sector regulation have significantly slowed down the economic meltdown. Inflation has declined to 133%, and there is relative currency stabilization although a dual exchange rate still exists on the unofficial parallel market where the Zimbabwe dollar trades for between Z\$9,000-12,000 with the US dollar and the official market where it trades for Z\$6,200 to the US dollar.

Geography and Climate

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country with a total area of 390,580 square kilometers. It shares borders with South Africa to the south, Botswana to the southwest, Mozambique to the east, and Zambia to the northwest. Much of central and northern Zimbabwe sits on a high plateau 900 m above sea level. The central plateau offers prime agricultural land, moderate temperatures and summer rainfall that support a diversified base of food and cash crops. On either side of the central plateau lies the middleveld. This middleveld is surrounded by the lowveld which is about 500 m below sea level. To the north, on the border with Mozambique and Zambia, lies the Zambezi Valley, a hot, humid region that supports a mixed agricultural base of maize and cotton. To the northwest, bordering Zambia stretches the hot, dry Kariba Valley. These lowland areas receive no winter rain and summer rainfall is erratic and infrequent. In the south lies the flat, lowland savannah forming part of the Limpopo River basin. Commercial ranches and small-holder agro-pastoralism are the main features of the southern Zimbabwe economy. On average, a drought occurs an average 1-3 years of every 10 years in Zimbabwe. In the east the central plateau rises to form the Eastern Highlands, a mountainous border range between Zimbabwe and Mozambique. Good soils and sufficient rainfall in this region provide excellent agricultural conditions for intensive farming and the commercial lumber industry.

Seasonal Calendar

The seasonal calendar below represents general trends in the agricultural sector across the country. The planting season for the main crops occurs between October and December. The maize harvest takes place predominantly between March and June. The summer rainy season typically starts in late October and ends in April. Lowland regions receive less rainfall while storms are more irregular and more infrequent as compared to the middleveld/highveld. The main hunger season for farmers falls between September and January when on-farm labor demands peak.



¹¹ Professor E Gomo at the launch of the Zimbabwe Human Development Report 2003, on HIV/AIDS, 6 May 2003.

¹² UNAIDS/UNICEF/USAID.Children on the Brink: A Joint Report of New Orphan Estimates and a Framework for Action, July 2004: 26.

Changes in Rural Livelihoods

Macroeconomic instability (negative economic growth rate, declining investment and productivity, high inflation), the effects of HIV/AIDS, and a multi-year drought have all combined to negatively affect the national economy. The effects of these factors trickle down to impact the household capacity to access adequate food. The household resilience that was demonstrated during the 1991-2 drought has been significantly eroded, and smaller shocks now have bigger impacts on precarious livelihoods. Three factors will likely result in shifts in household livelihood patterns:

(1) Transformation of the large scale commercial agricultural sector

Prior to 2000, 1.3 million people including farm owner and farm worker households, lived on and off 4,660 large-scale commercial farms covering 10 million hectares (ha), while over 1 million households (5.6 million people) in the communal areas subsisted on 1.6 million ha¹³. This inequity has always placed land reform at the centre of GoZ poverty alleviation and development strategy. The fast track resettlement program was implemented using the A1 model for reducing land pressure in overcrowded communal lands, and the A2 model which intended to create a black commercial farming sector. By July 2003, the A1 model redistributed 2,652 farms with a combined area of 3,231,080 hectares to 127,192 households. The A2 model benefited 7,260 applicants from 1,672 farms with a total area of 2,198,814 ha. Meanwhile, 1323 white farmers remained with 1,377 farms totaling 1,175,607 ha¹⁴.

In some cases, the change of farm ownership interrupted the production cycles of the outgoing commercial farmers, and resulted in reduced employment for commercial farm workers. This had negative consequences on the livelihoods of roughly 350,000 farm workers who were dependent on income from farm employment and on the lost export earnings. Optimal conditions for land transfers and utilization were impaired by what the Presidential Land Review Committee reported as the “haphazard manner” in which the resettlement process took place in parts of Mashonaland West, and the “haphazard demarcations in districts like Chimanimani, Chipinge and Nyanga”¹⁵.

The rationale for GoZ land redistribution is to promote equity and intensify production, in order to boost both food security and equitable economic growth. However, significant investment needs to be made towards enhancing the potential of the resettled farmers. Specifically there is a need to take determined strides to facilitate access to farming inputs, building skills capacity to promote participation in high value cash crops for local and export markets, and providing access to credit facilities that will permit mechanization and acquisition of irrigation equipment. Providing basic services like health care and education facilities will improve the incentives for eventual relocation and full utilization of redistributed land.

(2) Economic downturn

The present climate of economic decline has immediate effects on people’s normal ways of accessing food and income. For example, fuel shortages and high fuel costs disrupt the transport and marketing of crops to distant high value national or export markets. To offset loss of income, farmers may replace cash crops with food crops or replace lost income with other cash work. Demand for labor will decline as rising input costs and transport costs will reduce the capacity of the well off households to hire additional labor- which could lead to a decline in production. Rural livelihoods will also be affected by a probable increase in migration to urban areas. Economic hardships triggered a 5% annual increase in the urban population, increasing 63% from 2 million in 1982 to 3.2 million in 1992. The flow of remittances to rural areas will likely decline as urban households increasingly squeezed will have less to spare for the rural extended family ties.

The biggest threat to livelihood improvements is inflation and the price increases of food and other basic commodities, which in themselves, are symptoms of fundamental macro economic disequilibria. The threat of inflation is compounded by falling real incomes and a 70% unemployment rate¹⁶. The hardships induced by unemployment and falling incomes force people to resort to negative coping strategies such as commercial sex work, criminal activities, gold panning and selling assets. Negative coping strategies endanger the long term prospects for livelihood recovery.

(3) HIV and AIDS

When HIV strikes a household, two of the immediate consequences are: (i) a rise in health costs and (ii) a drop in labor supply. These two factors will in turn affect expenditure patterns and levels of cash earnings. At the macroeconomic level, the cost of HIV

¹³ Zimbabwe Human Development Report 1998: 32.

¹⁴ Report of the Presidential Land Review Committee. Volume One: Main Report, August 2003, p2.

¹⁵ Ibid, p5, p74.

¹⁶ CIA World Factbook. Available: <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/zi.html>. Accessed : September 14, 2005.

related health care costs is estimated to increase to 3.5% of GDP by 2010.¹⁷ Losses in income limit the amount of agricultural inputs (seed, fertilizer and pesticide) that the household can buy, and this further compromises household food production. This triggers a chain of negative reactions that undermine every form of capital available to the household, leaving households with a diminished capacity to deal with shocks which may arise that are not related to HIV such as drought, or economic decline.

Orphans created by the epidemic often have to depend on the elderly for support. In a study carried out by Mutangadura (2000), grandparents accounted for 52% of households that had taken in orphans. An additional study was undertaken to inquire into the role social ties played in coping with the increased burden resulting from the high number of HIV related deaths. The results showed that 89% of households in the study were finding it difficult to get help from relatives and friends because they too were responding to HIV related hardships. Attention needs to be focused on the gender dynamics of HIV/AIDS. A study conducted on households in which the mother had died from an HIV/IDS related illness, indicated that there was a resulting decrease in school attendance, loss of assets, increase in the work burden among surviving children, and a “[decrease in] consumption of most of the food commodities.”¹⁸ This decrease in food consumption is attributable to the central role played by women in the household. They support the family and participate in food production and preparation.

The Rural Livelihood Zones

The National Livelihood Zone Map of Zimbabwe demarcates 23 livelihood zones. This level of disaggregation provides useful detail for planners working at regional and district levels. More broadly, the livelihood zones fall into eight main types.

- **The Eastern Highveld Commercial Zone:** Export crops such as tea and coffee are grown. The lumber industry is the other main commercial activity in the region.
- **Mid/Highveld Communal Zones:** Densely populated and intensively farmed, maize is popular but is one crop of many in a region that is well-suited to a range of food and cash crops. A second season of winter wheat provides an additional harvest during the year.
- **Mid/Highveld Commercial Zones:** Maize, winter wheat, tobacco and vegetables are grown for export on the large-scale commercial farms. The land redistribution changes the landscape of this zone extensively.
- **Middleveld Communal Zones:** Middleveld agriculture is dominated by maize and millet (the food crops), and groundnuts, sorghum and some cotton or paprika (the cash crops). Better-off farmers earn cash mainly from crop and livestock sales. The poor make ends meet mainly from daily wage work and gold panning.
- **Mid/Lowveld Cotton Zones:** Agriculture is a riskier proposition in the drier lowlands. Maize is the chief food crop; cotton the chief cash crop. The proportional importance of maize or cotton varies within the mid/lowveld “cotton” zones. Livestock sales, gold panning and daily wage work provide essential income for food purchases.
- **Lowveld Commercial Ranches:** Large-scale game and cattle ranches have given way to more mixed agriculture (cattle, game, and maize) as the new A2 commercial and A1 family farmers take possession of the resettled land in south-central Zimbabwe.
- **Lowveld Agro-Pastoral Zones:** Only one zone in the south (Beitbridge lowveld) is most accurately described as agro-pastoral. The other lowveld economies (such as in the Kariba Valley) have a crop-livestock economic base that is increasingly propped up by remittances, local wage work and gold panning.
- **Irrigated Commercial Zones:** Relatively small, these pockets of irrigated commercial production of fruit, sugar cane, and cotton provide a profitable addition to national exports.

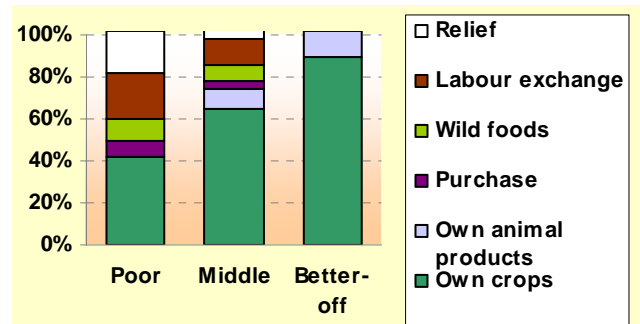
¹⁷ International Monetary Fund (IMF), 2003, p.35.

¹⁸ Mutangadura, G.B. (2000). Household Welfare Impacts of Mortality of adult Females in Zimbabwe: Implications for Policy and program Development.

Rural Sources of Food and Cash: Main Findings and Implications ¹⁹

Sources of Food:

Middleveld: The middleveld zones - namely those zones located on Zimbabwe's central plateau - are dominated by cereal production (mainly maize but also millet and sorghum), as well as groundnuts. Farm produce also provides better-off households with most of their annual cash income. The predominance of own-crop production (the green on the bar chart at right²⁰) is striking, especially for middle and better-off households. Droughts are infrequent but when they do occur, these agricultural zones suffer huge crop losses, leading to significant gaps in household food supply. Hence, in the middleveld region, harvest outcomes are a key indicator of household food security.



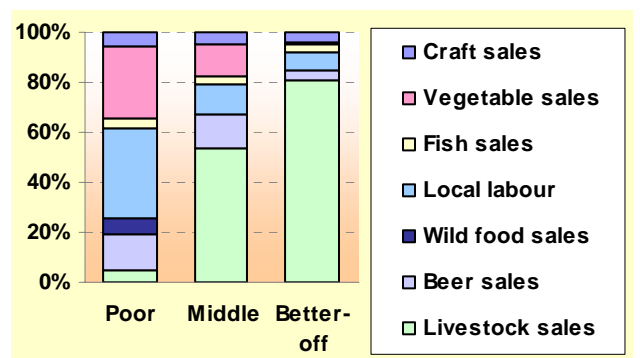
Lowveld: Lowland zones circle the central midland plateau, except in the east where the midlands rise to a rugged mountain range. Location in this lowland "ring" affects how households earn their primary income (see below). What they share in common is the risk associated with agriculture in an area where the climate is hot and dry, and rainfall erratic. Nonetheless, farmers try their luck year in, year out. For the poor, with little land, their harvest of maize and sorghum amounts to a relatively small source of annual food. For the better-off, cereal production is one important food source of three: namely own-crops, livestock and remittances. The exception is in the Zambezi Valley and Mudzi lowlands. These northern lowland zones are primarily agricultural and maize production is a chief food source for the poor and better-off. The implications for monitoring food security in the lowlands are two-fold: (i) harvest outcomes are an important indicator in the Zambezi and Mudzi lowlands, but only for better-off households in the lowveld; and (ii) for the poor, staple grain prices, especially relative to wages, are a better indicator of food access than harvest outcomes.

Highveld: In the highveld, own crop production provides families with most of their food during the year. Harvest outcomes are significant to food security. In highveld zones, a wide range of crops are grown—this diversity provides a safety net if one crop fails—although maize is the chief food crop.

Sources of Cash:

Middleveld: Farm produce is the main source of income for middle and better-off households in this agricultural region. Cash crops—mainly groundnuts, soybeans, and sorghum, as well as some cotton, paprika and sunflowers—find ready markets in local urban centers and Harare. Much of the region benefits from relative proximity to Harare. Droughts can dramatically reduce both food and cash crops; the main fallback is livestock sales as well as remittances. Fluctuating world prices and changes in marketing structures or buyers also affect farmer's returns. The present economic turmoil, with its associated disruption of transport and marketing systems, are hurting farmer incomes and causing shifts in crop selection. Poor households, by contrast, sow most of their land to food crops. For income, they rely primarily on casual work found locally or gold panning.

Lowveld: The chief ways households earn cash depend on where they live in the lowland region. In the south and in the Kariba Valley, for example, better-off agro-pastoralist households earn cash mainly from livestock sales (see graph at right.)²¹ Livestock prices relative to staple grain prices are critical to monitor in these areas. Just as notable throughout the southern and south-western region, is the contribution of migratory labor to household income. The southern zones share a border with South Africa and Botswana, and proximity to the border opens up more lucrative labor opportunities. Nonetheless, poor households tend to look for wage work closer to home due to labor and financial constraints. Game parks, commercial ranches and local mines all provide local



¹⁹ With few exceptions, the reference year for these profiles is 2003, that is data from 2003 is used to calculate the relative importance of various food and cash sources to a household's annual food needs.

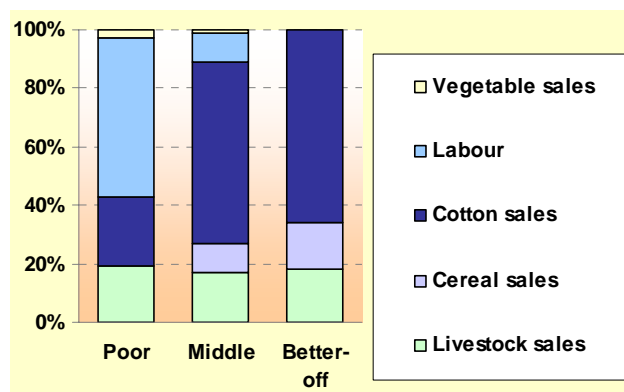
²⁰ Source of this graph: Zone 14 Livelihood Zone Profile.

²¹ Source of this graph: Zone 20 Livelihood Zone Profile.

work opportunities.

In other lowland zones, such as the Zambezi Valley, Mudzi, and Siabuwa/Nebiri, cotton is widely grown and this provides the main income source for better-off households (see graph at right.²²) The prevalence of cotton makes households' dependent on trends in price and demand on international cotton markets. On both graphs, what is also striking is the importance of local casual work to the poor.



Overall, the hot, dry Kariba Valley provides the most limited access to profitable and reliable income sources. Climate plays a role; so does the remoteness of the Valley from viable labor, tourism and produce markets. Given these factors, the Kariba Valley is notably the poorest area of Zimbabwe.



























Highveld: Farm produce (namely cash crops) is the chief income source in the agricultural highveld. Market disruptions will have a significant impact on farmer income, as will international demand and prices for export crops (tobacco, sugar cane, tea, coffee and so on), although crop diversity provides some buffer to market fluctuations. As elsewhere, poor households cannot make ends meet from their own crop production (whether food or cash crops). Earning cash through local wage work—in this case mainly on local commercial plantations or in the lumber mills—is the main way poor families stay alive.

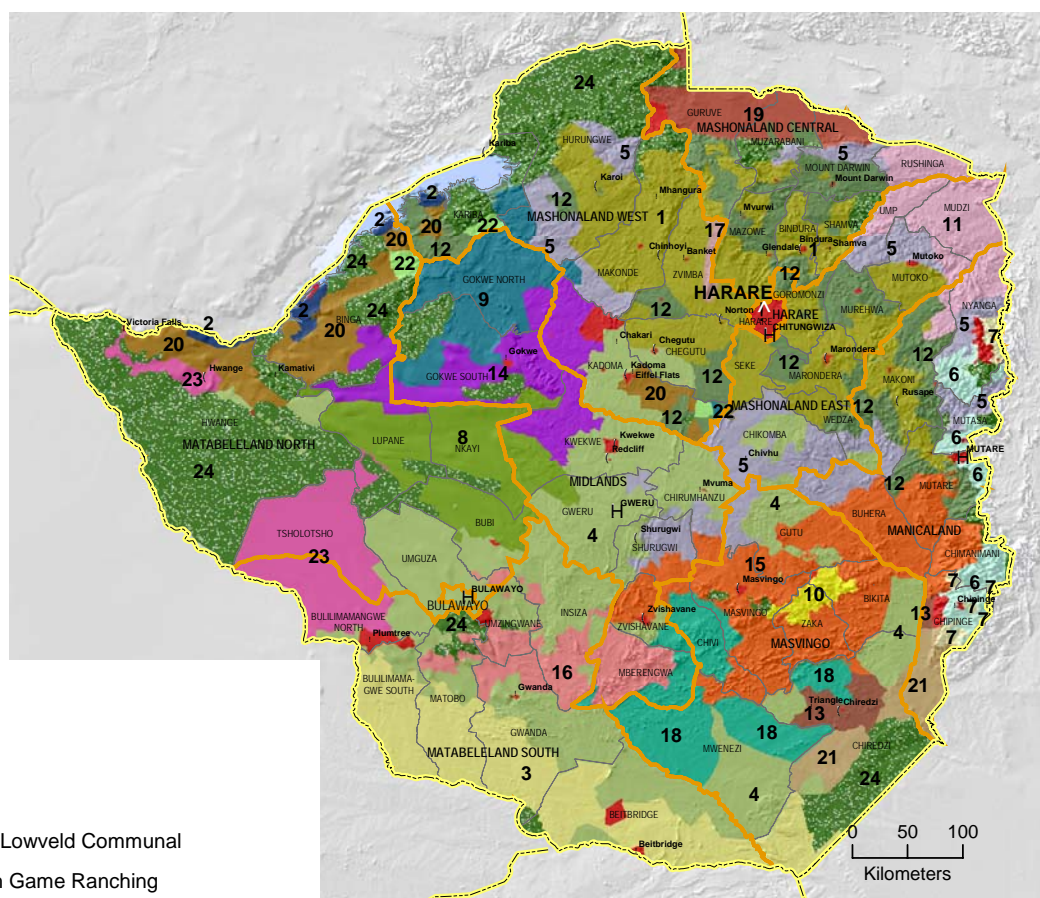
²² Source of this graph: Zone 20 Livelihood Zone Profile.

Rural Livelihood Zone Summaries

-  International
-  Province
-  District

Livelihood Zone

-  0 Urban
-  1 A1 Prime
-  2 Agrofiseries
-  3 Beitbridge and South Western Lowveld Communal
-  4 Cattle and Cereal Farming with Game Ranching
-  5 Central and Northern Semi-Intensive Farming
-  6 Eastern Highlands Farm Workers
-  7 Eastern Highlands Prime Communal
-  8 Eastern Kalahari Sandveld Communal
-  9 Greater Northern Gokwe High Cotton Producing Communal
-  10 Great Zimbabwe and Bikita Semi-Intensive Communal
-  11 Greater Mudzi Communal
-  12 Highveld Prime Communal
-  13 Irrigated Commercial Sugar and Fruit Farming
-  14 Lusulu, Lupane and Southern Gokwe Mixed Agriculture
-  15 Masvingo Mutare Middlelevel Communal
-  16 Matabeleland Middlelevel and Highveld Communal
-  17 Mutorashanga Informal Mining
-  18 Mwenezi, Central Chivi and South Midlands Communal
-  19 Northern Zambezi Valley Communal
-  20 Poor Resource Kariba Valley and Kariangwe-Jambezi Communal
-  21 Save River Valley and Ndowoyo Communal
-  22 Siabuwa and Nebiri Low Cotton Communal
-  23 Western Kalahari Sandveld Communal
-  24 National Park





Zone 1: A1 Prime

Zone 1 covers prime agricultural land that used to be large scale commercial land but is now settled by A1 “new farmers”. The zone is expected to eventually improve food security by: (i) increasing production of food crops, and (ii) increasing income opportunities through the higher output of cash crops. However, agricultural inputs and service infrastructure to back the resettlement of A1 family farmers are lacking and currently restrict the full use of available land.



Zone 2: Agrofiseries

This small zone includes households whose livelihoods depend essentially on the fishing trade in Lake Kariba, supplemented by agriculture and animal husbandry. The fishing villages are scattered along the lakeshore region within the Poor Resource Kariba Valley Zone.



Zone 3: Beitbridge and South Western Lowveld Communal

Livestock are the backbone of the economy in semi-arid Zone 3. However, poor households earn most of their income as farm laborers either in South Africa or on local commercial farms. Sorghum cropping, *mopane* worm sales and gold panning supplement wage earnings of the poor.



Zone 4: Cattle and Cereal Farming with Game Ranching

(Former name: Cattle and Game Ranching)

An area strongly impacted by the land redistribution program, the new owners of the sub-divided cattle ranches have introduced more crop production, particularly maize. Hence, income in Zone 4 comes from three main sources: cattle, crops and game.



Zone 5: Central and Northern Semi-Intensive Farming

Maize is the dominant crop in agricultural Zone 5, providing both food and income. Better-off households are reasonably self-sufficient in cereals but poor households depend equally on their own crops, daily wages and gold sales to make ends meet.



Zone 6: Eastern Highlands Farm Workers

(Former name: Eastern Highlands Commercial)

Due to high rainfall and good soils, the commercial plantations of mostly export crops (fruit, tea, coffee, sugar cane and flowers, as well as maize) do well in this rugged and thickly forested mountainous zone. Nonetheless, commercial farm workers in Zone 6 often have trouble making ends meet. Lumbering is the other main commercial activity, and both the sawmills and commercial farms are an important labor pull.



Zone 7: Eastern Highlands Prime Communal

Mountainous Zone 7 is characterized by intensively farmed, small plots of mixed food and cash crops. Maize is important but crop diversity is a key feature here (cereals, root crops, fruits, tea, coffee, tobacco and so on). Poor farmers find wage work locally at sawmills or on commercial plantations.



Zone 8: Eastern Kalahari Sandveld Communal

Income earned from local seasonal work - on farms, mines or in tourist areas - or from cross-border employment in South Africa and Botswana, is the economic mainstay of most households in Zone 8. Maize and sorghum farming is widespread but unreliable (the zone is semi-arid), and livestock sales a limited supplement for the poor.



Zone 9: Greater Northern Gokwe High Cotton Producing Communal

Zone 9 is characterized as a grain surplus area, where maize is the chief food crop and cotton the chief cash crop. The other pillar of agricultural income for better-off farmers is beef and dairy farming.



Zone 10: Great Zimbabwe and Bikita Semi-Intensive Communal

Intensive farming of maize and groundnuts on this relatively high potential land provides better-off farmers with a stable food and income source. Land in Zone 10 is densely populated and farm sizes thus small. The poor in particular depend on daily work found in the Bikita mines or in nearby farms and towns as well as working for better-off households within the zone.



Zone 11: Greater Mudzi Communal

The lowveld Zone 11 is characterized by extensive maize and cotton production. Goat and cattle sales provide an essential fall-back option in face of erratic rain and harvests. Poor farmers also turn to gold and tantalite panning to fill seasonal food and income gaps.



Zone 12: Highveld Prime Communal

Zone 12 boasts some of the country's prime agricultural land. A key feature is crop diversity. Maize is nonetheless the staple but a second season crop of wheat often adds to annual food stocks; and for the better-off, a variety of cash crops provide their main source of income.



Zone 13: Irrigated Commercial Sugar and Fruit Farming

The large-scale plantations in Zone 13 specialize in fruit, sugar cane and cotton. The commercial farm workers are primarily dependent on their wage earnings to secure their food needs.



Zone 14: Lusulu, Lupane and Southern Gokwe Mixed Agriculture

Zone 14 is a middleveld zone that supports both livestock production and crop production; maize grows well here and provides both food and income. Cotton is the chief cash crop for all; livestock sales bring in income mainly for the better-off. Daily wage work for poor farmers is still essential much of the year.



Zone 15: Masvingo Mutare Middleveld Communal

The typical middleveld pattern predominates in Zone 15: namely, a cropping calendar dominated by maize and millet with some lowland cash crops (groundnuts and cotton) added in. Cash income to buy food comes mainly from casual work wages for the poor or from livestock sales for better-off households owning sufficient goats and cattle.



Zone 16: Matabeleland Middleveld and Highveld Communal

Better-off farmers can make ends meet on their own farm output, which includes maize as the chief food crop; groundnuts and sorghum as cash/food crops; and livestock for sale in Zone 16. Poor farmers subsist partly on their own production of maize but, more importantly, on cash income earned from employment or gold panning.



Zone 17: Mutorashanga Informal Mining Communities

Zone 17 includes the mining communities on the Zvimba side of the Great Dyke. A mainly young population, the miners suffer high levels of job exploitation and food insecurity. Mainly employed in the mines, households also supplement wages with chrome picking and agricultural labor on nearby commercial farms.



Zone 18: Mwenezi, Central Chivi and South Midlands Communal

Lowland agriculture is typically risky; hence, the maize, sorghum, and groundnuts grown in Zone 18 provide a variable food and income base. Livestock are the other half of the lowland rural economy. For the poor, gold panning is widespread, as is the pursuit of casual wage work. Sales of crafts to tourist traveling along the Beitbridge-Masvingo highway may be important for a significant proportion of households in the zone.

 **Zone 19: Northern Zambezi Valley Communal**

Bordering Mozambique, this northern valley region supports extensive maize and cotton production. Zone 19 is primarily agricultural although income from cash crops (cotton, groundnuts and sorghum) is supplemented by local, seasonal employment and some goat sales.

 **Zone 20: Poor Resource Kariba Valley and Kariangwe-Jambezi Communal**

(Two former zones combined into one single zone.)

The Kariba Valley suffers from chronic problems of food insecurity. Cultivation—mainly millet and sorghum—is unreliable and wild foods are seasonal. Goat sales are the most common source of cash income but in this resource-poor area, local wage work, craft and beer sales must also be pursued. In Kariangwe – Jambezi, close proximity to Hwange provides work opportunities on commercial farms for the poor, as well as access to the tourist craft market.

 **Zone 21: Save River Valley and Ndowoyo Communal**

(Former name: Chipinge and Save River Valley/Eastern Chiredzi Communal + Ndowoyo Communal + Mutema and Muskowa Communal)

Dry lowland Zone 21 is primarily agricultural - sorghum, millet and maize are the main crops - boasting good soil but limited by uncertain rainfall. Consequently, cash income earned through seasonal work, craft, goat, cotton sales and cross-border employment in Mozambique, South Africa and Botswana is fundamental to the food economy.

 **Zone 22: Siabuwa and Nebiri Low Cotton Communal**

Located in the dry Kariba Valley, Zone 22 is farmed (maize and sorghum are the main food crops) but yields are low and variable. Cotton production spread into the Kariba Valley from Gokwe and provides some annual cash to farmers. Income from daily wage work and livestock sales, as well as seasonal wild fruits is the other staple features of this resource poor area.

 **Zone 23: Western Kalahari Sandveld Communal**

Low-lying dryland Zone 23 has the advantage of proximity to labor markets in South Africa and Botswana. Hence, migratory labor stands out in importance although most poor farmers depend instead on local seasonal jobs. Millet, maize and groundnuts are grown as standard lowveld crops. *Mopane* worm harvesting offers some seasonal income, as do livestock sales.