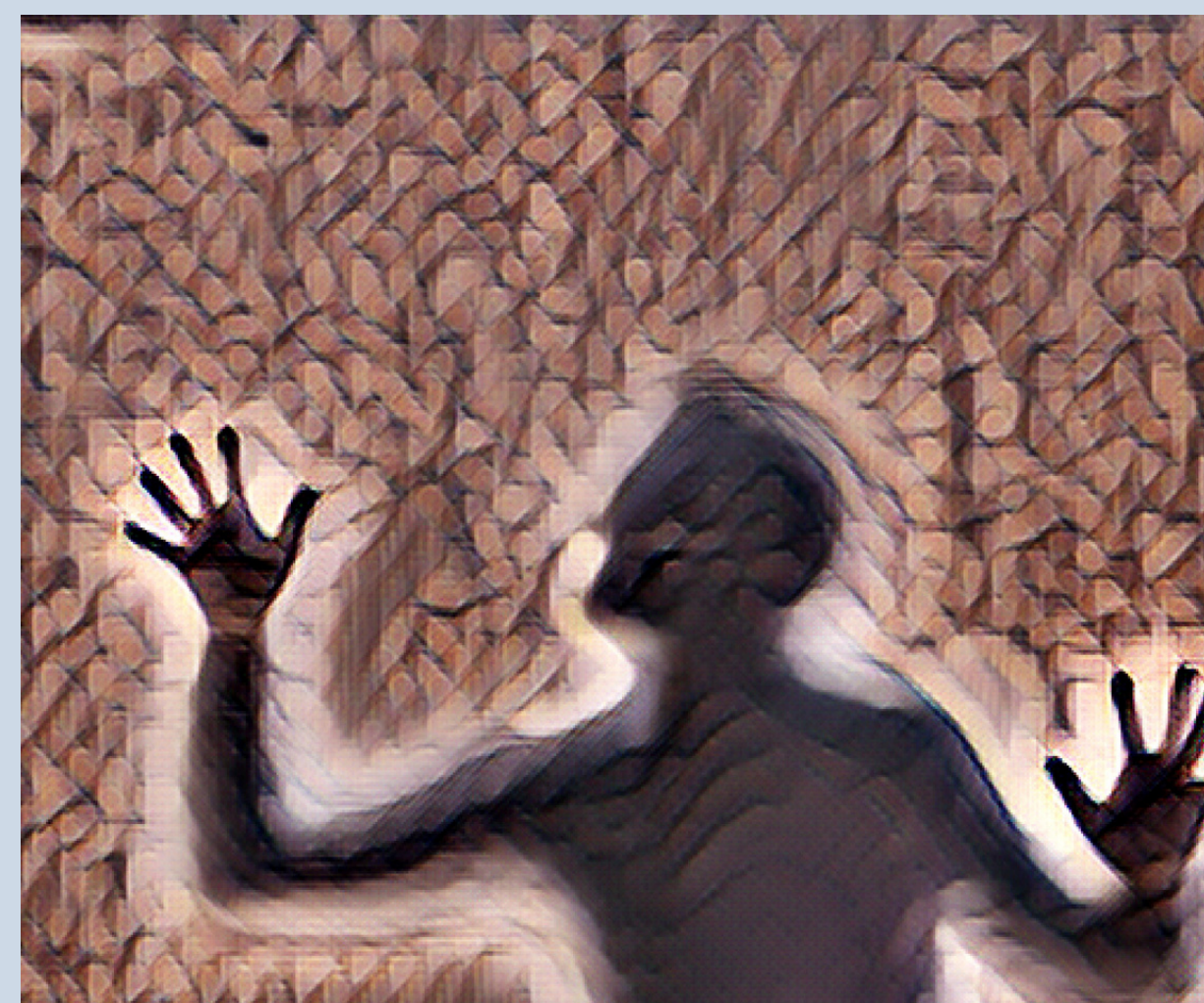


THEMATIC HUMANITARIAN REPORT



WASH



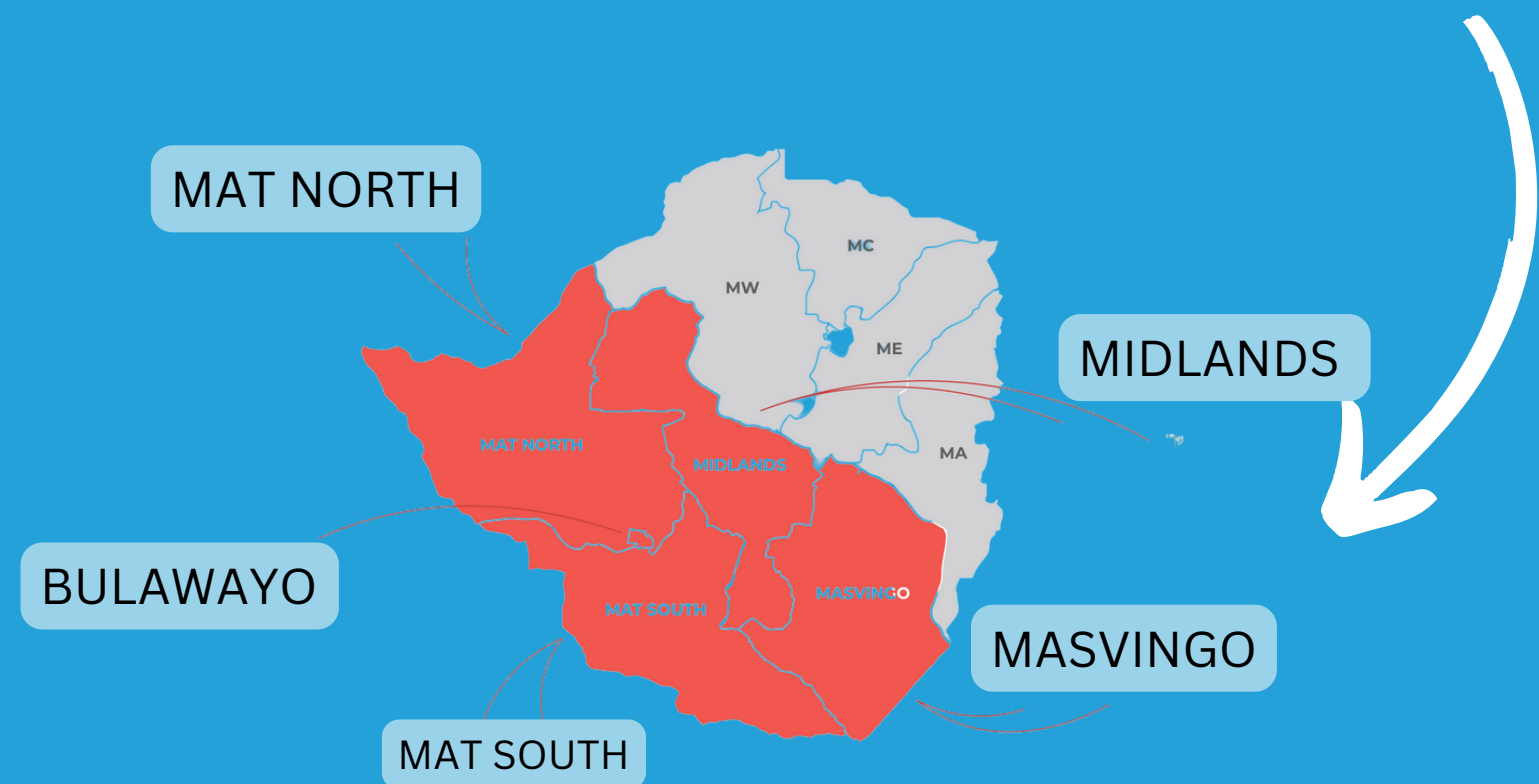
SOCIAL COHESION



LIVELIHOOD

INTRODUCTION

Rooted in Trust 2.0 (RiT 2.0) is a global pandemic information response program funded by the USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID-BHA) and implemented by Internews in 13 countries to counter the unprecedented scale and speed of the spread of rumours and misinformation on COVID-19, COVID-19 vaccines, other Health and Humanitarian topics. RiT 2.0 in Zimbabwe is working with media, community-based organisations, health and humanitarian actors to build a healthier information ecosystem that is responsive to the needs of vulnerable and migrant communities in Southern Zimbabwe where there is limited access/connectivity to mainstream media and information needs in minority languages spoken in:



ABOUT THIS REPORT

RiT 2.0 produces rumour products in response to notable or trending topical issues of concern regarding COVID-19, other health related themes and humanitarian issues. These include biweekly products such as Humanitarian Snapshots, Community Snapshots and Social Media Cards. This Thematic Humanitarian Report (THR) provides community insights by sharing rumour trends identified through systematic collection and analysis of social media listening data. Rumours identified, and analyses done are to help humanitarian actors, the media and health workers better inform their Risk Communication & Community Engagement (RCCE) strategies. This report covers trending rumours and misinformation collected by Internews between March 1, 2023, and March 31, 2023.

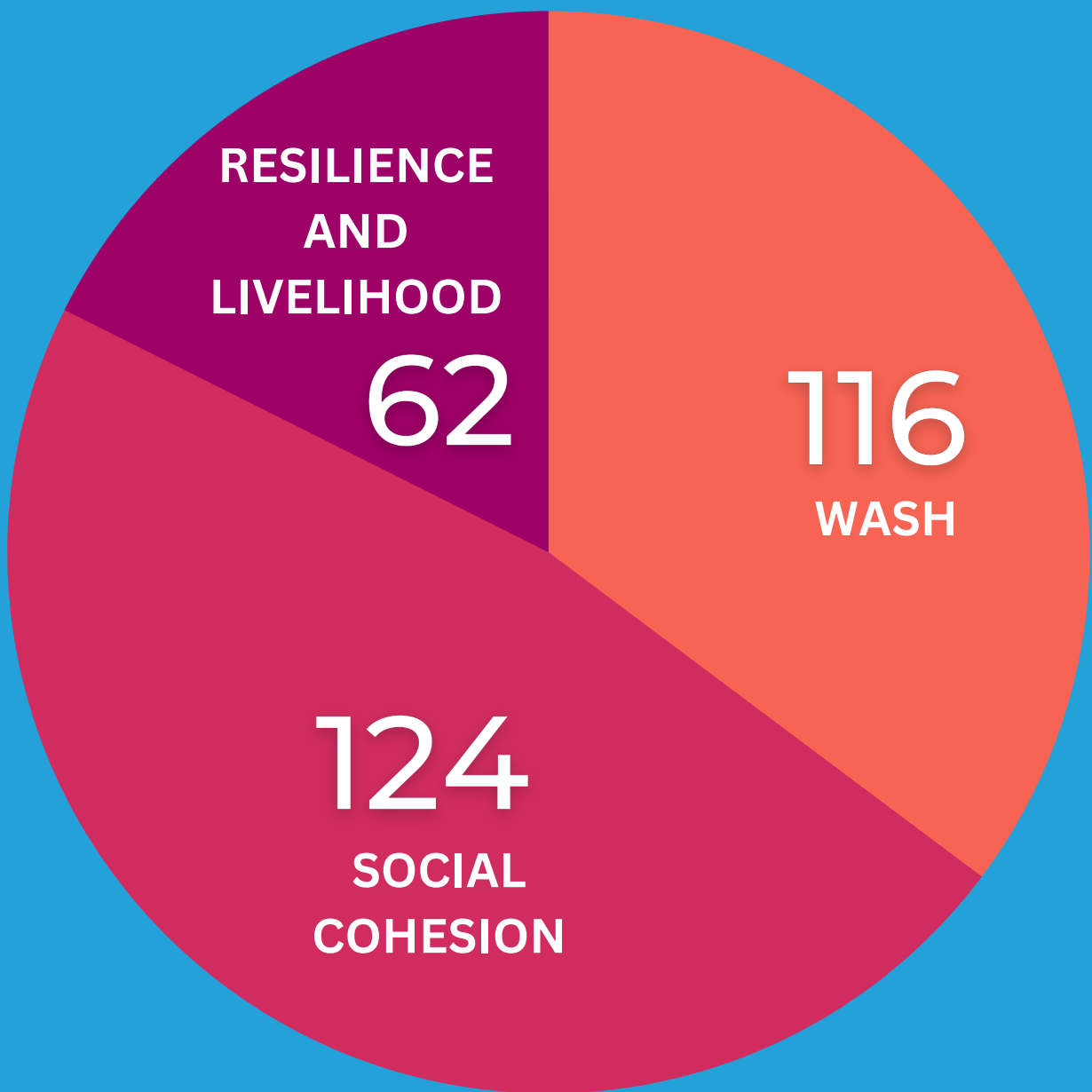


RUMOUR DATA OVERVIEW

Internews in Zimbabwe collects rumours on health themes and humanitarian topics using several rumour collection methodologies. Health themes include COVID-19 Vaccines, COVID-19 in general and other health topics, while humanitarian themes include Resilience and Livelihoods, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and Social Cohesion.

Under **WASH**, Internews collects rumours pertaining to hygiene issues, water rationing, waste management, sanitation, water infrastructure and purification. The Social Cohesion theme encompasses tracking rumours on violence, bullying, crime, political violence as well as drug and substance abuse. In the Resilience and Livelihood theme, rumours on drought, pests and diseases, food security, weather emergencies, climate change and climate smart agriculture are some of the sub-themes captured. A total of 319 rumours (Cohesion: 131, WASH: 118, Resilience and Livelihoods: 70) were collected during the reporting period.

RUMOR BREAKDOWN



Source: Visualisation by Internews. Data by RiT 2.0 Global Rumours Dashboard

WASH OUTLOOK

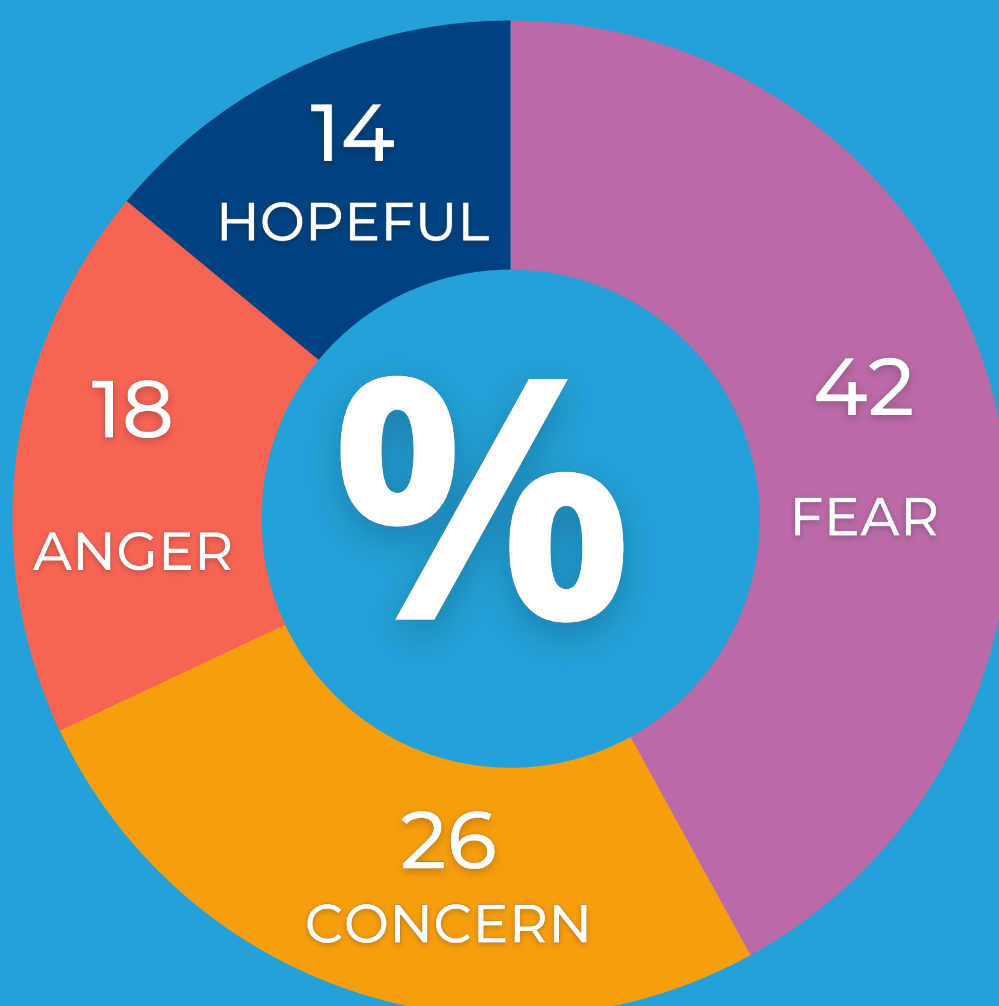
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

WASH Outlook in Zimbabwe: Zimbabwe recorded its first Cholera case in 2023 on February 12 in Chegutu, in the wake of a Diarrhoeal outbreak reported in January resulting in 6,000 cases and six deaths. To date, cases have been reported in eight provinces which have no epidemiological link to each other. As of March 31, 2023, the country has recorded 309 suspected Cholera cases, 52 confirmed cases, 272 recoveries and one death.

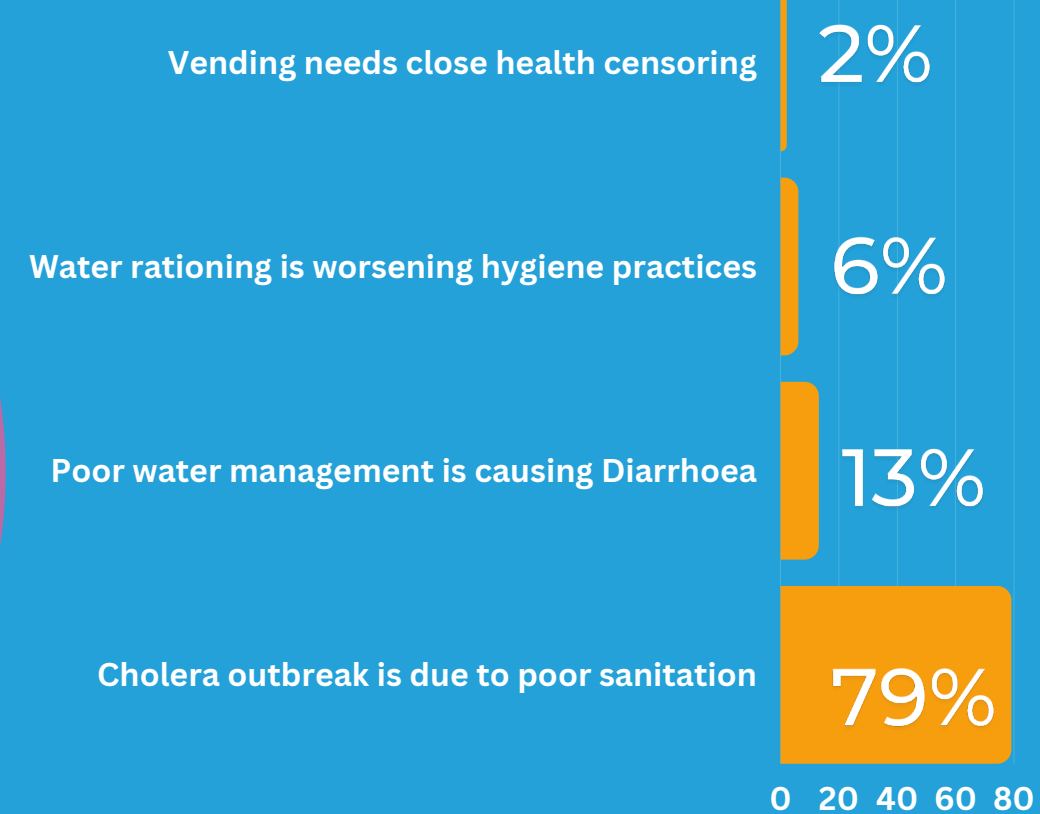
The Ministry of Health and Child Care (MoHCC) has identified about 17 Cholera hotspot districts in the country, which are Buhera, Chegutu, Chikomba, Chimanimani, Chipinge, Chitungwiza, Chiredzi, Harare, Gokwe North, Marondera, Mazowe, Shamva, Mutare, Murehwa, Mwenezi, Seke and Wedza. **Most councils in Zimbabwe are struggling to supply adequate and clean water to their residents throughout the year with Harare, Bulawayo, Gwanda and Chitungwiza toping the list.**

WHAT ARE PEOPLE SAYING

SENTIMENTS ON WASH



WASH RUMOUR TRENDS



Source: Visualisation by Internews: Data by RiT 2.0 Global Rumours Dashboard

TRENDING WASH RUMOURS

"Once again cholera is stalking our country due to a serious lack of water and sanitation."

(English, Twitter)

"This is just the beginning. Imagine the roads that are punctuated by potholes. The water network is worse, barely serviced. No future solutions in the pipeline, just patch and move on. Before you know it, communal boreholes will be the only viable option."

(English, Twitter)

WHY IT MATTERS:

The outbreak of water borne diseases such as Cholera presents an urgent need for action among humanitarian actors involved in WASH programming considering the disease can kill within hours if left untreated. The World Health Organisation (WHO) also notes that 1.3 to 4.0 million cases and 21,000 to 143,000 **deaths** worldwide are recorded **due to Cholera** annually. Rumours around the Cholera outbreak increase the risk of spreading misinformation on the causes and impact of the **Cholera outbreak** in communities and how **best** individuals and communities **can** respond to the outbreak. Therefore, there is an urgent need to understand and address information gaps that make it difficult for individuals and communities to make informed decisions in response to the Cholera outbreak.

RECOMMENDATIONS

HUMANITARIAN

- Local language factsheets in Ndebele, Shona, Sotho, Tonga, Venda and Kalanga indicating symptoms of Cholera such as diarrhoea, nausea and vomiting together with referral pathways of where to seek medical help may be distributed in communities affected by Cholera.
- Humanitarian actors working in communities affected by the Cholera outbreak may disseminate Information Education and Communication (IEC) materials that highlight methods of preventing the spread of Cholera such as washing hands with soap after using the toilet, maintaining good sanitation and to avoid eating raw or uncooked food.

MEDIA

- Community radio stations and newspapers may highlight Cholera hotspots together with what people in these areas can do in response to the Cholera outbreaks through local language podcasts and news articles shared in community WhatsApp groups.
- Discussions and stories that feature guidance from health experts on the signs and symptoms of Cholera and where those presenting such symptoms may seek help can be produced and shared widely on Whatsapp.
- Infographics can be produced and disseminated through WhatsApp groups highlighting the number of cases and deaths to help communities understand the gravity and extent of the cholera outbreak.

SOCIAL COHESION OUTLOOK

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

The country has recorded an increase of worrisome cases of bullying with some resulting in students committing suicide while others drop out from school altogether. Four lives were lost during the month, two due to gang violence and the other due to suicide and bullying. The Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) is conducting schools-targeted awareness campaigns on bullying countrywide. In an anti-drug abuse campaign also being conducted by ZRP more than 4,000 suspected drug peddlers were arrested between February 2023 and March 2023. There is a 100% spike in divorce cases in Zimbabwe from 1,351 cases recorded in 2021 to 2,735 recorded in 2022. According to an online health news publication, loneliness and mental health challenges associated with being single and not having a partner have led to an increase in drug and substance abuse among single and divorced persons in Zimbabwe.

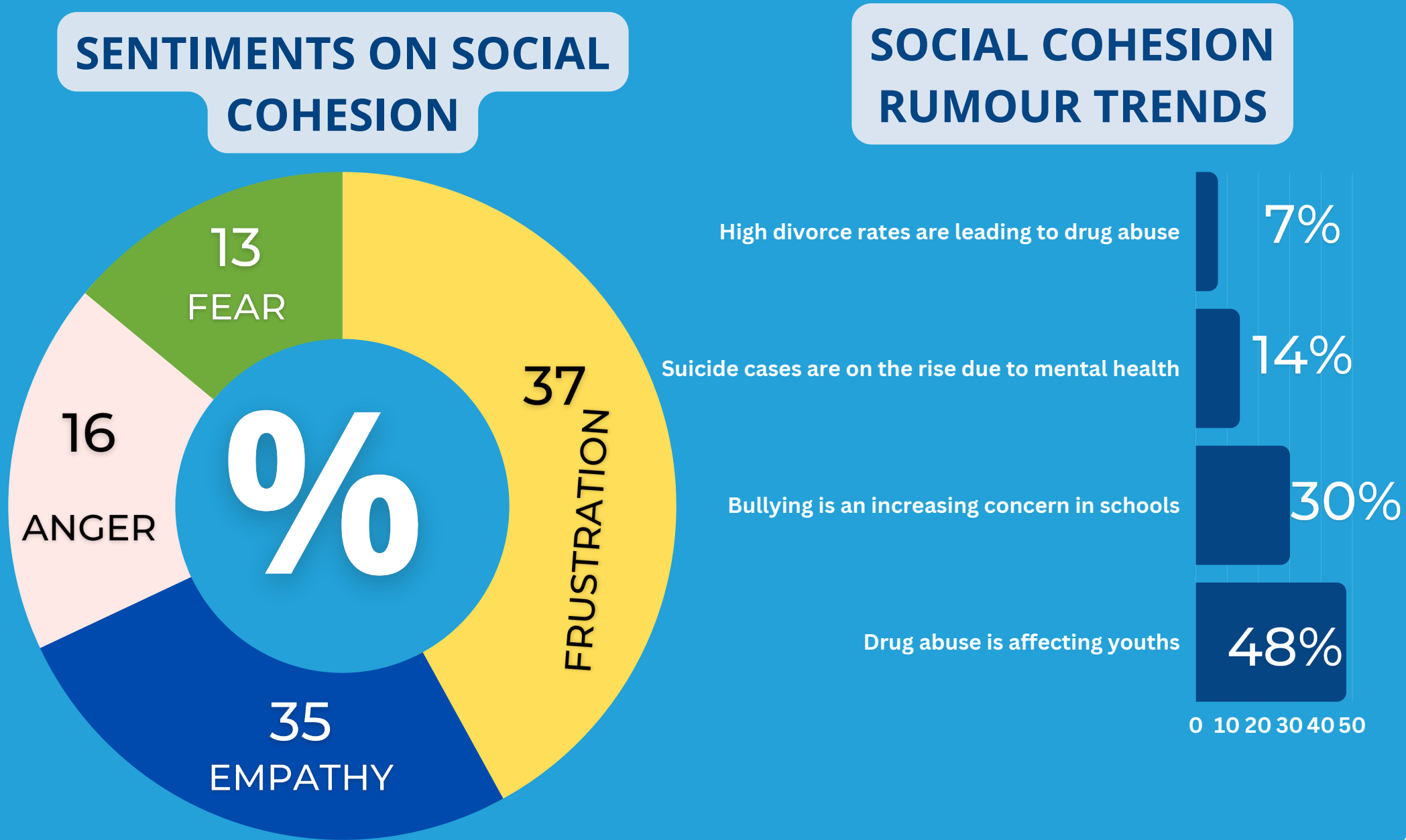
TRENDING SOCIAL COHESION RUMOURS



WHY IT MATTERS:

Rumours related to bullying, mental health, and drug and substance abuse among youths indicate widespread concerns over a crisis that is affecting youths in Zimbabwe. The rumours also indicate possible misunderstanding and misinformation on legal frameworks on the use of discipline and corporal punishment in schools, with parents and guardians arguing that laws of the country which bar corporal punishment may be contributing to the prevailing crisis. Consequently, rumours indicate a need for information on what parents, guardians and youths affected by bullying, mental health, and drug and substance abuse can do to overcome and prevent these challenges.

WHAT ARE PEOPLE SAYING



RECOMMENDATIONS

HUMANITARIAN

- Distribution of local language factsheets in Ndebele, Shona, Sotho, Tonga, Venda and Kalanga explaining what Zimbabwean law says about disciplining and administering corporal punishment to children.
- Sharing factsheets that explain signs and symptoms of bullying, mental health challenges, and drug and substance abuse together with contact information of organisations that provide help to affected individuals.
- Organisations having existing interventions in schools may mainstream peace building, mental health awareness and promote self-efficacy to report bullying in schools.

MEDIA

- Journalists may host discussions with legal experts that explain what Zimbabwean legal provisions are for disciplining and administering corporal punishment to children and what parents, guardians and school authorities can do to safely guide errant children.
- Community newspapers and radio stations may use their Facebook, WhatsApp groups and Tik Tok platforms to distribute podcasts and infographics that discuss signs and symptoms of bullying, mental health challenges, and drug and substance abuse and where affected individuals may seek help.

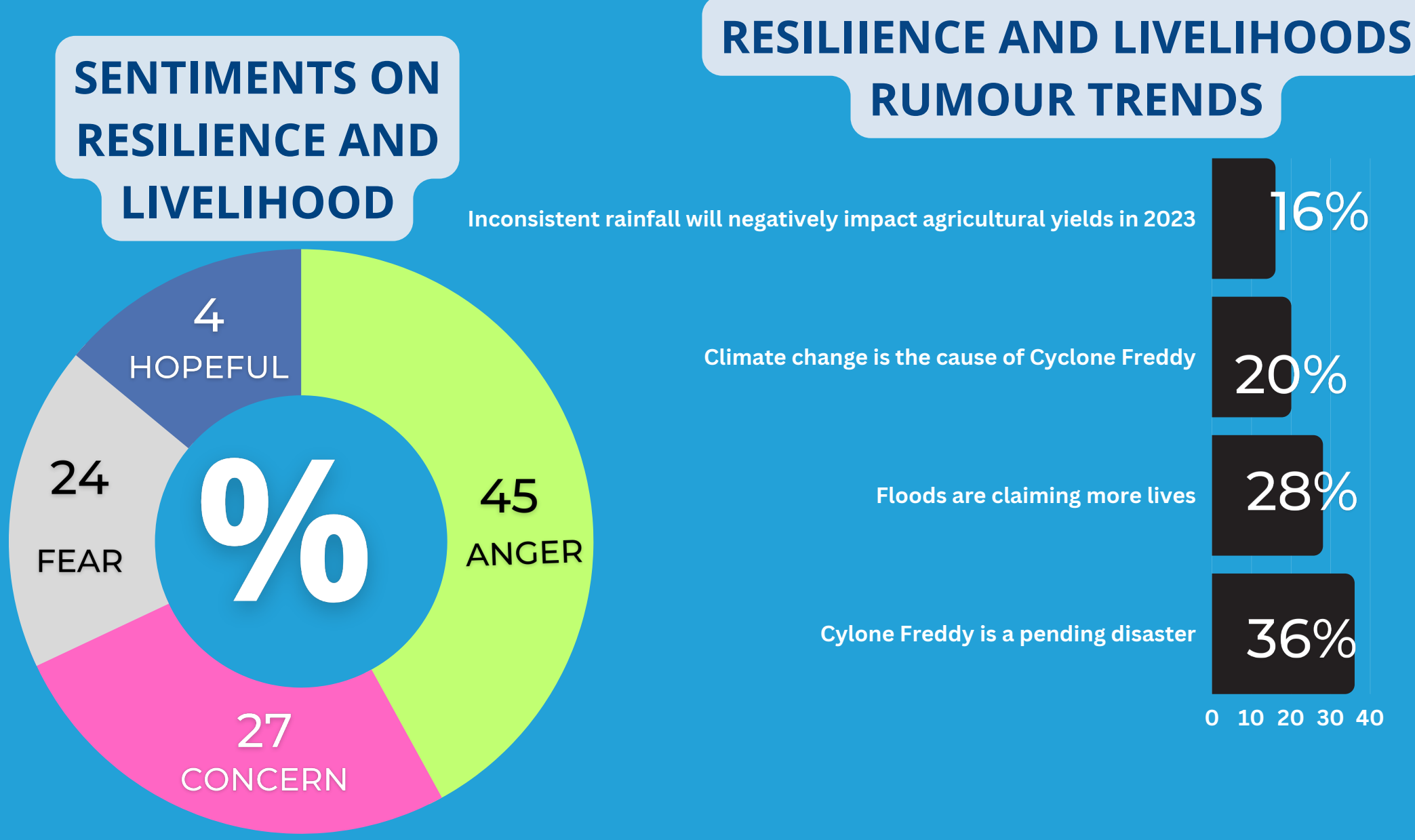
Source: Visualisation by Internews: Data by RiT 2.0 Global Rumours Dashboard

RESILIENCE AND LIVELIHOODS OUTLOOK

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

There was **moderately** high rainfall in most parts of the country which raised hopes in the expected yields. In some cases, the rains posed a flooding threat to communities. Around 3.7 million people were queuing for food aid in January 2023 as hunger continues to stalk the country following the El Nino-induced drought last year. Cyclone Freddy killed two people and blew off several roofs in Chimanimani and Chipinge. In Malawi, Madagascar and Mozambique, the cyclone has killed over 500 people with tens of thousands in Malawi left homeless and approximately 345,000 people affected by the heavy rains, floods and landslides.

WHAT ARE PEOPLE SAYING



Source: Visualisation by Internews: Data by RiT 2.0 Global Rumours Dashboard

TRENDING RESILIENCE AND LIVELIHOOD RUMOURS



WHY IT MATTERS:

Rumours on Resilience and Livelihoods indicate concerns on the reliability of weather forecasts especially in the wake of Cyclone Freddy which was predicted to hit Zimbabwe in the second week of February 2023. A delay in the Cyclone's arrival in Zimbabwe due to a change in trajectory led to widespread jokes and misinformation about the cyclone and the reliability of weather forecasts in the country. In March 2019, Cyclone Idai struck Zimbabwe negatively affecting livelihoods of 270,000 people and leaving 340 dead. Considering that five cyclones are predicted to affect Zimbabwe between January and April, 2023, misinformation and the spread of rumours on the accuracy of weather forecasts increases the risk of people failing to pay attention to and adhere to disaster preparedness protocols. If this is not addressed, lives may be lost in the event of a cyclone affecting the country and livelihoods of many people negatively affected.

RECOMMENDATIONS

HUMANITARIAN

- Humanitarian actors can share IEC materials produced in Ndebele, Shona, Sotho, Tonga, Venda and Kalanga that explain the importance of weather forecasts, the reasons behind changes in predicted forecasts and what individuals and communities can do to address doubts related to weather forecasts to minimise the spread of rumours.
- Humanitarian actors may share factsheets highlighting steps that need to be taken when there is a threat of a cyclone together with available referral pathways in case of emergencies.

MEDIA

- Journalists can produce and distribute, through community WhatsApp groups, stories and podcasts from interviews with Meteorologists from the Meteorological Services Department explaining how weather forecasts are conducted and what happens when such forecasts about Cyclones and other weather phenomenon do not occur as predicted.
- Journalists can host discussions with officials from Civil Protection Unit (CPU) who can better explain steps that the country has taken to protect communities from cyclones and what individuals and communities need to do to ensure that disaster preparedness plans are successfully implemented to avert disasters.