

# THEMATIC PAPER #3



Zimbabwe, May 2023



WASH



SOCIAL COHESION



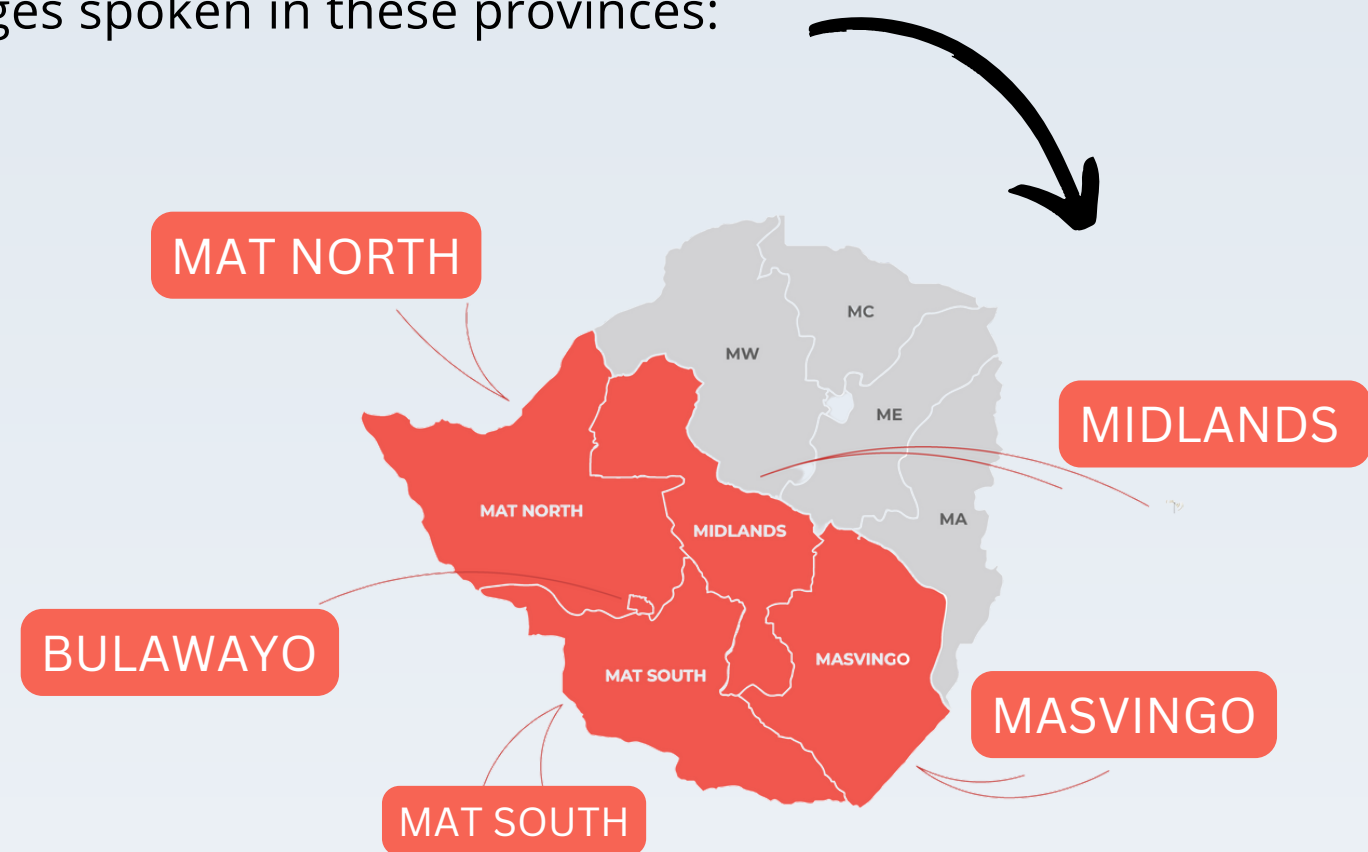
## THEMATIC HUMANITARIAN REPORT

LIVELIHOODS



# 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. The project seeks to counter the unprecedented scale and speed of the spread of rumours and misinformation on COVID-19, COVID-19 vaccines, and 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 these provinces:



## ABOUT THIS REPORT

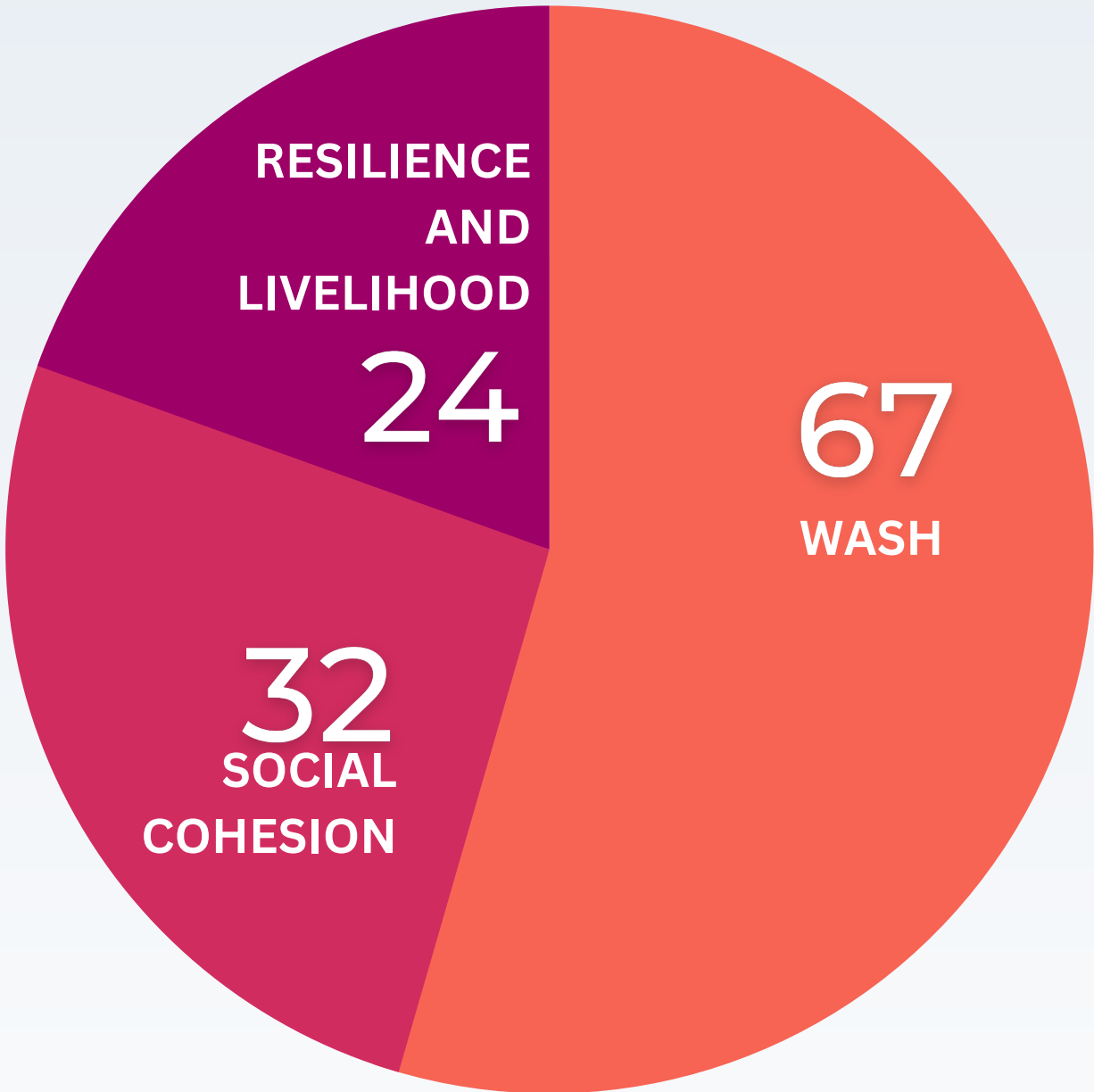
RiT 2.0 produces rumour products in response to notable or trending issues of concern regarding COVID-19, other health related themes and humanitarian issues. These include biweekly products such as Humanitarian Snapshots, Community Snapshots and Social Media Cards. This Thematic Humanitarian Report (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 May 1, to May 31, 2023.

# RUMOUR DATA OVERVIEW

**RiT 2.0 collected 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, RiT 2.0 collects rumours around hygiene issues, water rationing, waste management, sanitation, water infrastructure and purification. The Social Cohesion theme involves tracking rumours on violence, bullying, crime, political violence as well as drug and substance abuse. Under Resilience and Livelihood theme, rumours on drought, pests and diseases, food security, weather emergencies, climate change, climate smart agriculture are some of the sub-themes captured. A total of 13 rumours (WASH: 67, Social Cohesion: 32, Resilience and Livelihoods: 24) were collected during the reporting period.

### RUMOR BREAKDOWN



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

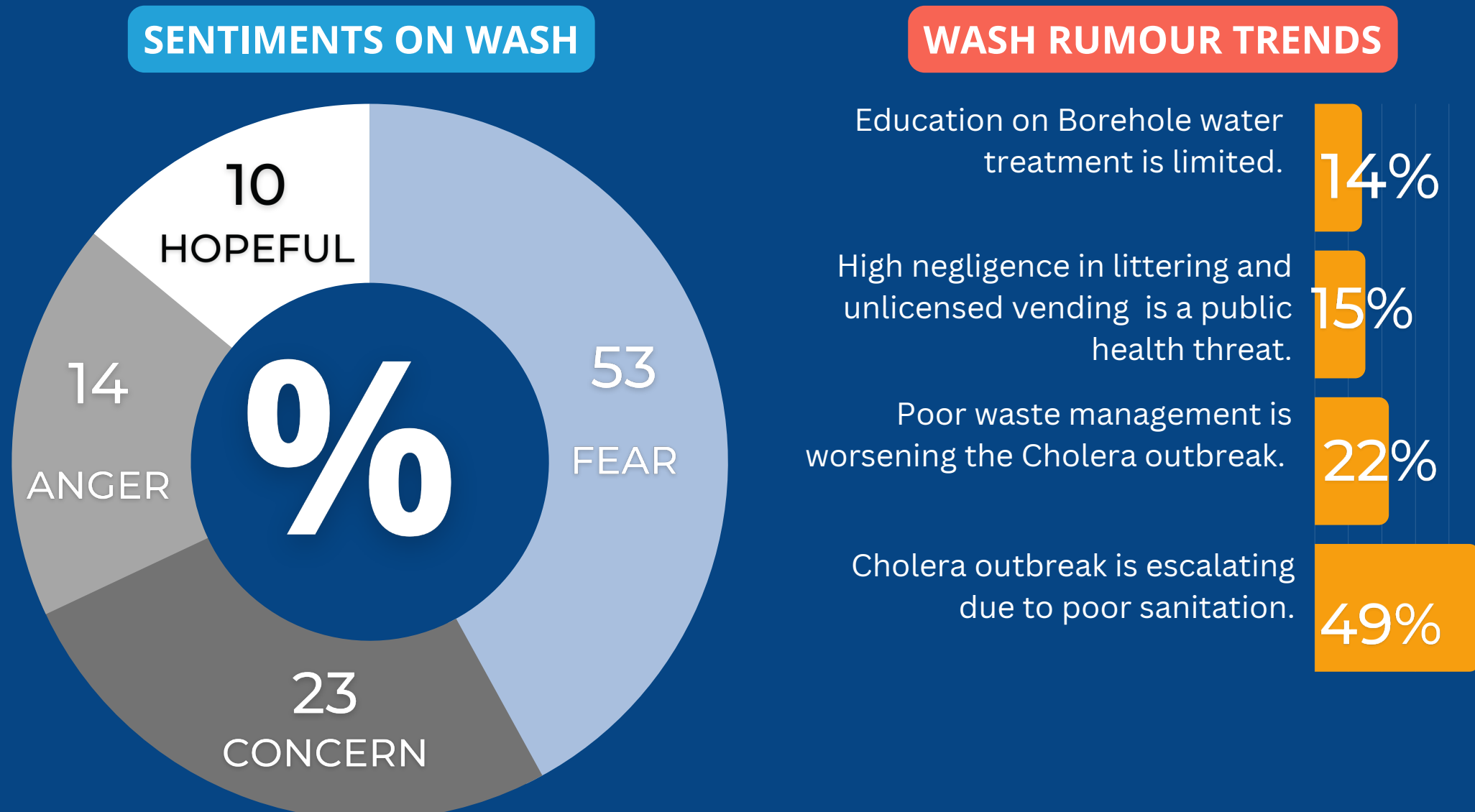


# WASH OUTLOOK

## SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

**WASH Outlook in Zimbabwe:** WASH Outlook in Zimbabwe: The Cholera outbreak in Zimbabwe continues to be a concern with the government reporting no epidemiological link between cases in Zimbabwe and other cases recorded in the Souther African region. This implies the local environment is contributing to the Cholera outbreak. There are fears that the capital city; Harare, which has recorded the second highest number of suspected cases (358) behind Manicaland province (570), is fast turning into the disease's epicentre. Efforts put in place to contain the outbreak include closure of all unlicensed and unclean food outlets in Harare, while surveillance of funerals and gatherings has escalated in Manicaland province. Nine out of 10 provinces in the country have recorded Cholera cases. As of May 30, 2023, there are 1,649 suspected cholera cases, 11 confirmed fatalities and 1,528 recoveries.

## WHAT ARE PEOPLE SAYING



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

## TRENDING WASH RUMOURS



## WHY IT MATTERS:

Rumours on Cholera highlight community fears about the disease outbreak causes and likely impact on their health and wellness. Poor sanitation is perceived to contribute to the continued spread of Cholera, worsened by poor waste management by local authorities and in communities. This reinforces the need to continue raising awareness and enhance adoption of sanitation and waste management practices that help stem the spread of Cholera.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### HUMANITARIAN

- Distributing local language (Ndebele, Shona, Sotho, Tonga, Venda and Kalanga) Information Educative Communication (IEC) materials such as posters and flyers promoting hand washing after using the toilet, boiling, or treating of all drinking water, discouraging use of unsafe drinking water and the consumption of raw or uncooked fish from sewerage contaminated water bodies.
- Working with Community Health Workers (CHWs) to educate communities on the dangers of poor waste management while highlighting correct methods of disposing waste to reduce the risk of outbreaks of disease such as Cholera.

### MEDIA

- Community radio stations may produce, broadcast, and distribute jingles, short videos and podcasts via WhatsApp groups promoting hand washing after using the toilet, boiling, or treating of all drinking water, discouraging the use of unsafe drinking water and the consumption of raw or uncooked fish from sewerage contaminated water bodies.
- Community newspapers can produce local language infographics educating readers on correct waste disposal measures that reduce the risk of outbreaks of diseases such as Cholera.



# SOCIAL COHESION OUTLOOK

## SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

**Social Cohesion Outlook in Zimbabwe:** Zimbabwe in partnership with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) has initiated a nationwide needs assessment and sensitisation programme ahead of the expected return of about 180,000 Zimbabweans from South Africa, in face of the looming end of June 2023 permit expiry date. Government officials have been trained to provide psychosocial support to the returnees amid fears of mental health challenges that could contribute to increased crime drug and substance abuse and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) upon their return.

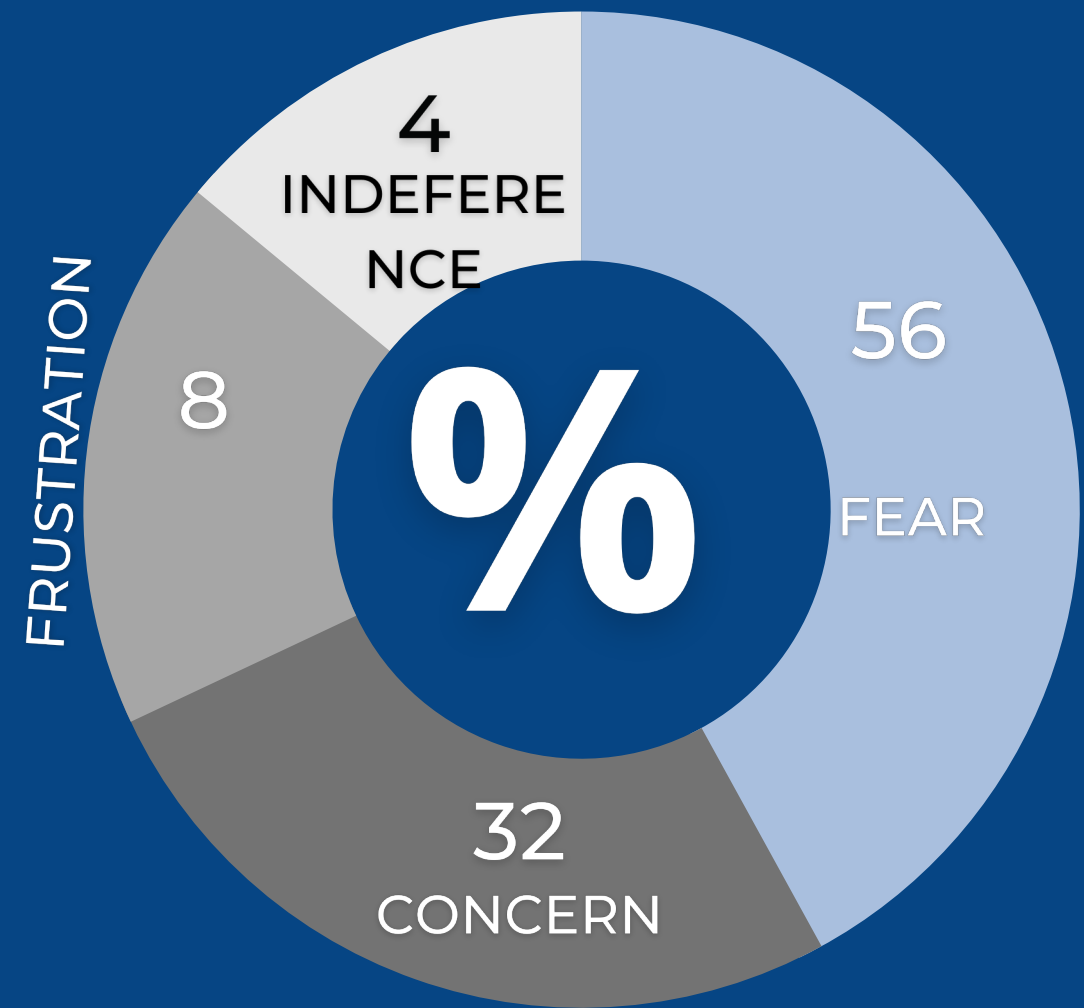
President of Zimbabwe, Emmerson Munangagwa, on May 13, 2023, granted amnesty to prisoners who served at least a third of their prison sentences for non-violent offenses by April 18, 2023. This has attracted mixed reactions from the public amid concerns on the mental and psychological implications of reintegrating perpetrators in their communities. On May 30, 2023, government announced that close to ZWL\$439 million worth of drugs were recovered under the Anti-drug and substance abuse campaign dubbed Operation Clean Up Zimbabwe, which is a collective approach to stopping drug and substance abuse in the country.

## WHAT ARE PEOPLE SAYING



### SENTIMENTS ON SOCIAL COHESION

### SOCIAL COHESION RUMOUR TRENDS



GBV is the leading cause for high murder cases.	9%
Victims of amnesty beneficiaries fear for worse.	13%
Returning citizens from South Africa need basic aid	15%
Rampant drug and substance abuse is causing mental health challenges.	63%

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

## TRENDING SOCIAL COHESION RUMOURS



## WHY IT MATTERS:

Rumours on the expected return of Zimbabweans from South Africa indicate worries that returnees will contribute to an increase in crime and GBV due to lack of social safety nets to ease their reintegration in Zimbabwe. They also infer worries that dependents of returnees will suffer social and economic shocks as bread winners may struggle to take care of them due to loss of income. This highlights the need for information dissemination on how communities can assist the reintegration of returnees in ways that minimise social or economic shocks. Rumours on the presidential amnesty highlight concerns that some former prisoners may be insufficiently rehabilitated and may present future challenges such as reverting to criminality. There is need for awareness in communities to conscientise them on attributes that qualify prisoners to benefit from the presidential amnesty, and efforts they can take to assist in reintegrating former prisoners in communities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### HUMANITARIAN

- Distribution of local language (Ndebele, Shona, Sotho, Tonga, Venda and Kalanga) IEC materials exploring challenges that Zimbabwe Exemption Permit (ZEP) returnees may face upon returning to Zimbabwe, how communities may assist in their reintegration and referral pathways for those seeking financial and psychosocial assistance.
- Sharing IEC materials on challenges that ex-prisoners face and how they can be assisted to effectively reintegrate into society.

### MEDIA

- Journalists may host discussions with migration experts exploring challenges that ZEP returnees may face on their return to the country, how communities may assist in their reintegration into Zimbabwean society.
- Journalists may use multi-media content formats easily sharable on WhatsApp and produce features profiling former prisoners and explore how they have navigated the process of reintegrating into society after serving time in prison, together with interviewing family and community members.



# RESILIENCE AND LIVELIHOODS OUTLOOK

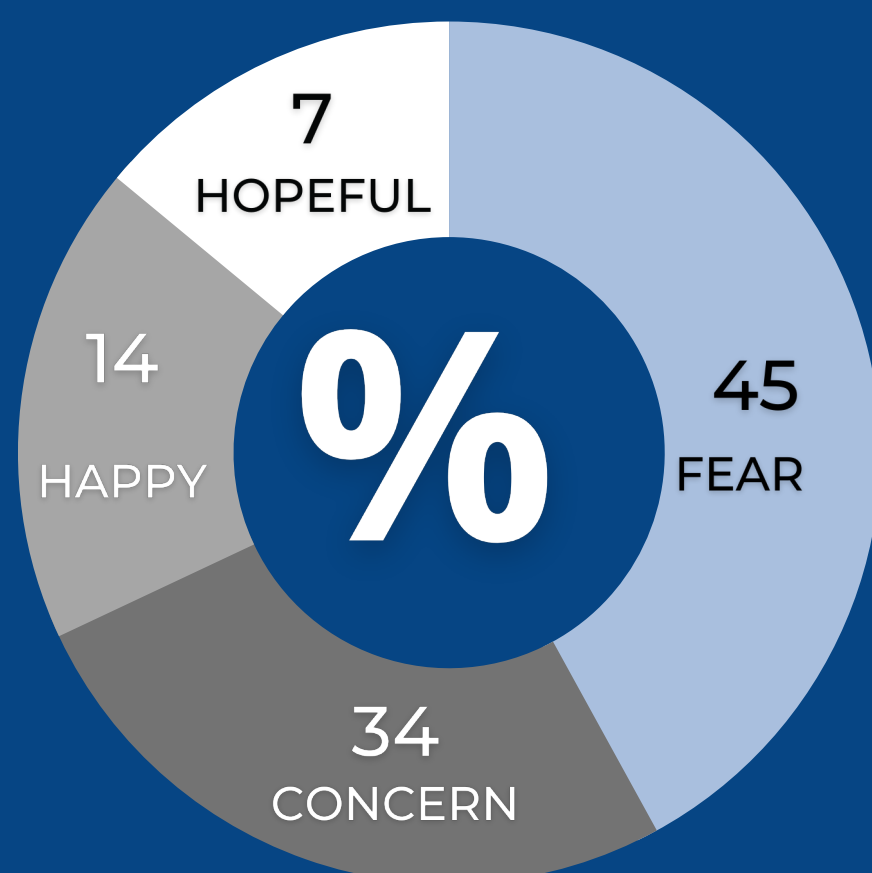
## SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

**Resilience and Livelihoods Outlook in Zimbabwe:** Government has engaged the private sector over the escalation of prices of basic commodities amid high inflation and devaluation of the local currency. A survey on the USD: ZWL exchange rate reveals that some retailers have pegged the rate as high as USD 1: \$5,500, against the official rate of USD 1: \$1,888 on May 23, 2023. Meanwhile, government has delayed the export of grain despite high prospects of a bumper harvest in the 2022/23 season in a bid to ensure food and nutrition security in the country. Efforts to build grain reserves have been buttressed by the Grain Marketing Board (GMB)'s request for a million USD to ease payment to farmers upon grain delivery. Despite a promising season, climate change remains a perennial challenge in the country with its devastating effects mostly visible in WASH and Agricultural sectors which form the backbone of the Zimbabwean economy.

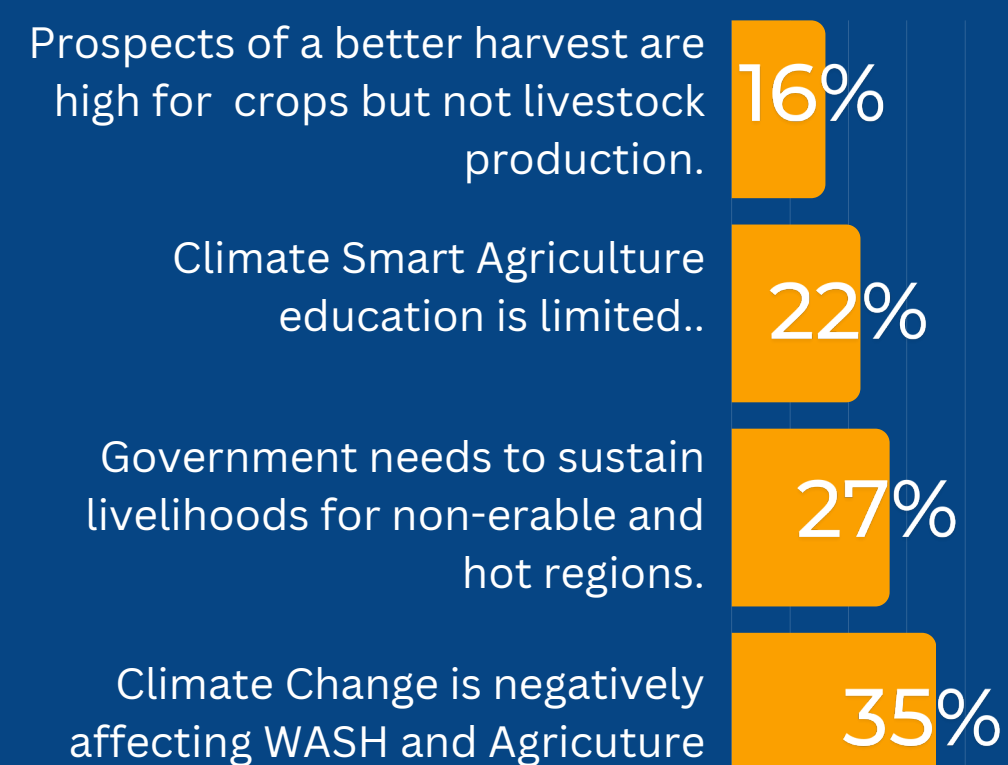
## WHAT ARE PEOPLE SAYING



### SENTIMENTS ON RESILIENCE AND LIVELIHOOD



### RESILIENCE AND LIVELIHOODS RUMOUR TRENDS



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

## TRENDING RESILIENCE AND LIVELIHOOD RUMOURS

"They only acquire resources for commercial farmers, us in the rurals are not considered."

Ndebele, Mat South

"A bumper harvest??? Hahaha but the economy is telling otherwise and people suffering of hunger."

English, Twitter

## WHY IT MATTERS:

Concerns about climate change, agriculture and livelihoods continue to dominate rumours on resilience and livelihoods despite an expected bumper harvest. This is likely due to agriculture being a key sector in the Zimbabwean economy contributing to 17% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 60% to 70 % of employment and income. Conversely, high inflation and the devaluation of the local currency are perceived to be threatening livelihoods as people may not have sufficient money to buy food. There is a need for communication strategies focusing on resilience building so that individuals and communities understand how to adapt in a depressed economic climate. It is further imperative to enhance efforts promoting climate smart agriculture especially among subsistence farmers who are more vulnerable to adverse effects of climate change.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### HUMANITARIAN

- Humanitarian actors can share local language (Ndebele, Shona, Sotho, Tonga, Venda and Kalanga) IEC materials providing guidance on smart agriculture and where farmers can get assistance in adopting smart agriculture interventions.
- Humanitarian actors may share information on existing resilience interventions in communities that they can receive support from, and adopt strategies shared by these organisations to ensure family self-sufficiency.

### MEDIA

- Journalists can interview agricultural extension officers and produce, stories and podcasts focusing on Climate Smart Agriculture and how it can be adopted to improve crop yields and livestock output.
- Journalists can profile humanitarian organisations that provide relief aid as a way of sharing information on where individuals in distress can get assistance.