

Lived experiences of poverty and coping strategies of Gokwe–Nembudziya community in Zimbabwe

Chomunorwa Rusakaniko¹
Taruona Douglas²

¹rusakanikoc@zou.ac.zw (263773219325)

²taruonad@zou.ac.zw (263772959209)

^{1,2}Zimbabwe Open University

Recommended Reference: Rusakaniko, C., & Douglas, T. (2026). Lived experiences of poverty and coping strategies of Gokwe–Nembudziya community in Zimbabwe. *African Quarterly Social Science Review*, 3(2), 332–344.

<https://doi.org/10.51867/AQSSR.3.2.30>

ABSTRACT

This paper is an empirical qualitative case study which explores the lived experiences of poverty and the coping strategies used by households in Gokwe -Nembudziya area in Zimbabwe. The study is guided by theories that included capability approach, poverty trap, dependence and sustainable livelihoods framework. The study is grounded in an interpretivist paradigm, and it employed a qualitative case study design. A total of 30 participants comprising household heads, small-scale farmers, informal traders and community leaders were selected using purposive and snowball sampling. Data collection was conducted using semi-structured in-depth interviews, one focused group discussion and participant observation and it was analyzed through thematic analysis. Fundamentally, the findings reveal that poverty in the study area is driven by several intersecting factors including exploitative market prices for cotton and produce, significant education and skills gaps, weak political leadership and governance, inadequate infrastructure, a lack of diversified livelihoods and donor-dependence syndrome. The study also identified the critical coping strategies that can be used to address the discovered coping mechanisms which include value addition and agro-processing, fair pricing and improved market access, investment in irrigation and climate resilient agriculture, empowerment of youth and women through education and vocational training and investment in suitable infrastructure. The study concludes that effective poverty reduction needs a multi-faceted approach that goes beyond relief-oriented solutions to address the structural and systemic causes of deprivation. In light of this, the study recommends a collaborative strategy that involves government, non-governmental organizations, and the community itself to champion investment in sustainable agricultural practices, education, infrastructure and economic diversification.

Key words: Gokwe North, Midlands Province, Poverty, Strategies, Zimbabwe

I. INTRODUCTION

Poverty remains a serious global challenge, undermining human dignity and development. In Zimbabwe, prevailing conditions of economic instability, hyperinflation and unemployment have exacerbated poverty, especially in rural areas such as Gokwe -Nembudziya. Gokwe -Nembudziya is a constituency located in Midlands Province in Zimbabwe. It is largely a remote and rural constituency which is characterized by subsistence agriculture, relying on rain fed crops and thus it is vulnerable to climate shocks. The Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZIMVAC, 2021) noted that many households, about 80% of the population, relies on rain fed agriculture and exposing the area to climate changes shocks. National poverty reduction efforts have been formulated and implemented but they fell short to address unique challenges in rural areas, necessitating local studies to come up with tailor made interventions.

The Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT, 2021) noted that, Gokwe-Nembudziya, a largely agrarian community struggles with cyclical droughts, soil degradation and limited infrastructure. The area's economic instability is deepened by historical legacy including land reform policies and structural adjustment programmes (Mkodzongi & Lawrence, 2019). The poverty phenomenon in Gokwe is thus multidimensional encompassing low agricultural productivity, restricted educational access, inadequate healthcare and disjointed social safety nets [ZIMSTAT, 2021]. Focusing on lived experiences allows the researchers to capture the human dimension of the struggles the communities encounter, results not attainable when one dwells on quantitative data. A focus on the voices of relegated communities allows the study to understand the coping strategies used by households to endure and fight poverty.

Various studies have been conducted on forms of poverty and reduction strategies. Matsa (2020) noted that climate change, soil infertility and limited access to markets drive poverty and that addressing these challenges builds resilience in households. A study conducted by Mkodzongi and Lawrence (2019) reached the conclusion that

structural factors such as historical land inequalities and weak institutional support deeply entrench deprivation, resulting in a poverty-stricken society. Chiba (2023) pointed out that diversified livelihoods, social reciprocity and migration are essential strategies to deal with persistent poverty situations. In the same vein, Mupepi and Matsa (2022) argued that droughts and erratic rainfall patterns in some regions disrupt agrarian livelihoods and concluded that households with diversified assets have greater resilience to droughts. The above studies are noteworthy contributions on forms of poverty and alleviation measures; however, they did not explore how poverty is experienced in Gokwe-Nembudziya or how structural barriers shape coping mechanisms. Considering this, the aim of the study is to explore the lived experiences and coping strategies of poverty. The paper covered the theoretical framework, empirical literature review, methodology, findings and conclusion in the next stages.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Most rural areas in Zimbabwe are deeply affected by a persistent and multifaceted challenge of poverty. Gokwe- Nembudziya is one of the poverty-stricken areas despite its reliance on subsistence agriculture. Persistent droughts, poor infrastructure, and limited access to social services have worsened poverty levels. A significant proportion of the population wallows in abject poverty as they struggle to meet basic needs. The report by Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT, 2019) show that over 70% of the rural population in Zimbabwe lives below Poverty Datum Line (PDL), Gokwe Nembudziya is no exception. Efforts put to address poverty by International and National authorities have not been able to account for the specific lived experiences and coping mechanisms of those experiencing the challenges.

The lived experiences in Gokwe Nembudziya are not limited to income deprivation, they also encompass social exclusion, psychological stress and limited opportunities for development. Various coping strategies such as livelihood diversification, reliance on social networks and engagement in income generating projects have been developed and employed by households for their survival. There is inadequate empirical research that explores the daily realities of poverty and the effectiveness of these coping mechanisms in Gokwe Nembudziya (Chitongo & Casadevall, 2019, Makhetho & Thebe, 2025, Makhetho, 2024) broadly examined rural livelihoods in Zimbabwe, however, the studies did not explore the lived experiences of poverty and adaptive strategies in Gokwe Nembudziya. The study sought to address the gap by investigating the following questions: What are the lived experiences of poverty among households in Gokwe Nembudziya? What coping strategies do they employ to mitigate the effects of poverty and how effective are these strategies in improving their livelihoods. The findings on these questions provides a nuanced understanding of the poverty in Gokwe Nembudziya and contribute to the design of specific poverty mitigation strategies that build on the resilience and resourcefulness of the local population.

1.2 Research Objectives

- i. To investigate the lived experiences of poverty among households in Gokwe Nembudziya.
- ii. To examine the coping strategies and effectiveness employed to mitigate the effects of poverty among the community of Gokwe-Nembudziya.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

The study is grounded in four major theories, notably the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF), Dependency theory, the Capability Approach theory and the Poverty Trap theory. The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework was principally developed by notable researchers Chambers and Conway (1992) at the Institute of Development Studies, and was further refined by the Department for International Development (DFID, 1999). The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) posits that poverty is multidimensional and that individuals rely on various capital assets including human, social, natural, physical and financial to sustain their livelihoods. The framework emphasizes how people, especially in rural set ups, employ adaptive strategies to cope with shocks, stresses and structural vulnerabilities. In the same vein, Scoones (2009) pointed out that Policies, Institutions and Processes (PIPS) shape livelihood opportunities and constraints. Essentially, the framework assumes that people operate in context of vulnerability, their livelihoods are built on a range of assets, and they employ diverse livelihood strategies to achieve desired outcomes. External factors are considered to have an impact on livelihoods as transforming structures and processes considerably influence livelihood strategies. In the context of the study area, SLF provides a valuable tool for understanding the lived experiences of poverty and the coping strategies employed by households. The SLF theory thus allows the study to examine how the vulnerability context [climate change, economic shocks] affect people's access to livelihood assets, helps to identify the role of transforming structures and processes [government policies, market access] in shaping livelihood strategies and facilitates an analysis of the diverse strategies employed by people in rural communities such as agriculture, informal trading and remittances.



The Capability Approach, pioneered by Sen (1999) an Indian economist and philosopher, posits that poverty is a deprivation of freedoms and opportunities to achieve well-being apart from just lack of income. The framework emphasizes capabilities (what people can do or be) and functionings (the realized outcomes of those capabilities), the focus being on expanding individuals' agency to live lives they value. The theory was expanded by Nussbaum (2011) who emphasises social justice, human dignity and a concrete list of central capabilities required for a flourishing life. Poverty was thus regarded not only as a situation of low income but as the lack of opportunities to achieve essential functionings such as health, education, political participation. According to Nussbaum (2011) poverty is the deprivation of fundamental capabilities which include life, bodily health, bodily integrity, senses, imagination and thought, emotions, practical reason, affiliation, play, control over one's environment and other species. The two notable authors agreed that poverty manifests itself where there is deprivation of capabilities, a person remains powerless as long as he/she lacks the freedom to navigate the circumstances that constrain endeavors to achieve wellbeing. Effective poverty reduction efforts should address the aspects of freedoms which entail attainment of capabilities necessary to accomplish decent well-being. Studies by Tom (2025) buttressed the issue of deprivation of capabilities when they noted that limited access to education, healthcare, and agricultural resources are critical deprivations in rural areas. In the same vein (Walker et al., 2001) posited that poverty is reinforced by systemic exclusion from markets, services and decision making. The Capability Approach theory is central for understanding how poverty limits individuals' abilities to achieve essential functionings. The theory allows us to move beyond a purely economic understanding of poverty and examine the social, cultural and political factors that constrain people's choice and opportunities.

The Poverty trap theory provides a framework for understanding the persistence of poverty across generations and geographies, theorizing it as a set of self-reinforcing mechanisms whereby current poverty directly causes future poverty (Kraay & McKenzie, 2014, Fernández et al., 2024). The theory is based on several key assumptions: first, self-reinforcing mechanisms operate across household, community and national levels, creating feedback loops that make escape progressively difficult. Second, multiple equilibria exist under a stable low-level equilibrium (poverty) and an inaccessible high-level equilibrium (prosperity) which requires external intervention to shift between them. Third, households require diverse assets (physical, human, social, financial and natural) to generate sustainable livelihoods; below critical asset thresholds, productive investment becomes impossible, trapping households in deprivation. Fourth, poor households face disproportionate vulnerability to shocks (climate events, illness, price fluctuations) and lack buffers, forcing them to liquidate productive assets and adopt survival strategies that perpetuate poverty. Fifth, social and expectational factors including trust, aspirations and expectations about future outcome shape economic decisions, with low trust creating isolated "trust clusters" that reinforce poverty. Sixth, network externalities mean that current network quality and expectations of future network quality both influence investment decisions, potentially leaving groups "constrained by history" despite improvement potential. Finally, geographic concentration means poverty traps are most prevalent in remote or disadvantaged areas where isolation, poor infrastructure and limited market access create spatial barriers requiring targeted, area-specific interventions rather than broad national policies. Poverty trap theory explains the mechanisms that keep household's poor at the micro-level, asset deprivation, vulnerability to shocks, expectation failures.

Dependency theory, which emerged in Latin America during the 1960s, as a diverse school of thought challenging orthodox development models, arguing that the global economy is hierarchically structured into a "centre" (developed nations) and "periphery" (developing nations), where economic relations systematically channel surplus from periphery to centre (Torres & Ahumada, 2024). Core propositions include unequal global structures, super-exploitation (systematic underpricing of peripheral labour), external constraints on development, and historical-structural analysis linking contemporary underdevelopment to colonialism and unequal integration into world markets. Dependency theory provides critical analytical tools for understanding poverty in Gokwe-Nembudziya: centre-periphery dynamics explain how cotton farmers receive low prices while finished products return from urban centres at high prices; super-exploitation captures systematic under compensation of agricultural labour; external constraints reveal vulnerability to global market fluctuations (such as the 2012 cotton price collapse); donor dependence syndrome resonates with critiques of aid reinforcing underdevelopment; and structural analysis links poverty to poor governance, infrastructure deficits, skills gaps, and rural marginalization.

Adoption of the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework, Capability Approach theory, Poverty Trap Theory and dependency Theory enables the research to provide a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of lived experiences of poverty and coping strategies in Gokwe Nembudziya and contribute to the development of more effective and just interventions.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Lived Experiences of Poverty

Empirical studies across African countries reveal that poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon, encompassing not only income deprivation but also inadequate access to healthcare, education, housing, and social protection. Jerumeh (2024) examined multidimensional poverty among rural women in Nigeria and found that 75% of rural women are extremely poor, with living standards and health access generally poor. Unemployment and economic shocks further exacerbate their vulnerability. Determinants of poverty among these women include age, household size, lack of educational access, limited credit, and insufficient agricultural land. Similarly, Abubakar (2022) highlighted that Nigeria has the highest number of people living on less than USD 1.90 per day, with the North East and North West regions accounting for 75.3% of extremely poor households. He noted that 62.3% of household heads lack formal education, 49.7% have no electricity, and infrastructure deficits in housing, health services, energy, and water are pervasive.

Ume (2025) identified corruption, lack of education, political crisis, geographical location, and unsustainable governance as major drivers of poverty and deprivation in Nigeria. In Kenya, Ngutuku (2024) focused on children's lived experiences of poverty, attributing poverty to lack of material resources as well as historical, political, and social dynamics. Maket (2024) studied multidimensional poverty in urban Kenya, finding that 8.7% of urban households are in extreme poverty and over 50% lack drinking water and health services. The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS, 2025) reported that more than 55% of Kenyan children are extremely poor, with rural children (66%) experiencing far higher poverty rates than their urban counterparts (28%). In Zambia, Mutale and Mtapuri (2023) explored rural women's perceptions of poverty in Mungwi district, finding that poverty is understood as financial challenges, inability to provide basic commodities, and shortage of resources. It was noted by Mwansa (2025) that Zambia's population is poverty-stricken, with rural poverty driven by over-dependence on copper, unemployment, poor farm productivity, lack of basic infrastructure, ineffective leadership, and poor governance. Mwiinde and Munshifwa (2024) linked urbanization, poverty, and homelessness in Zambian towns to challenges in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Focusing on Zimbabwe, Masuku et al. (2025) studied poverty among the elderly and found that lack of linkage between the National Pension Scheme (NPS) and social protection programmes, insufficient implementation of the Older Persons Act (2012), political manipulation of pension funds, financial access challenges, and exchange rate volatility undermine pension payouts. Bandaiko et al. (2023) documented poverty in Harare's informal settlements, characterized by squalid and insecure housing, social exclusion, and discrimination. Matsai and Raniga (2021) examined economic stress and poverty among single mothers in rural Zimbabwe, revealing that these women are entrenched in poverty due to economic crisis, societal stigmatization, and lack of social protection schemes. Senga and Dzimiri (2025) identified barriers to financial inclusion among smallholder farmers in Gokwe South, including strict bank account requirements, restricted credit access, long distances to financial service centres, low confidence in the financial sector, erratic banking, and stringent withdrawal limits, all of which constrain poverty reduction efforts.

2.2.2 Coping Strategies

In response to poverty, individuals, households, and communities deploy a range of coping mechanisms, while various institutional interventions have been implemented or recommended to mitigate deprivation. Kabonga (2023) examined the role of NGOs in poverty reduction in Zimbabwe, finding that NGOs contribute to improvements in income, healthcare, education, and food security, but face challenges such as political manipulation that undermine their effectiveness. Matsai and Raniga (2021) highlighted that single mothers in rural Zimbabwe adopt informal economic activities and rely on social networks to navigate poverty, advocating for greater recognition of their role in the informal economy. Senga and Dzimiri (2025) recommended targeted interventions to enhance smallholder farmers' poverty reduction capacity, including the provision of credit facilities, financial education, and improved mobile and agency banking services.

Across the broader African literature, several policy-oriented coping strategies have been proposed. Jerumeh (2024) recommended improving primary healthcare for women, doubling employment creation opportunities, and enhancing social protection approaches for rural women. Abubakar (2022) called for improved electricity provision to households and human-centered development solutions in education, water, and primary healthcare to achieve sustainable development. Ume (2025) advocated strengthening democratic governance culture, ensuring national budget accountability, community sensitization on poverty reduction, and policies to increase income among the poor. Ngutuku (2024) emphasized the need to amplify children's voices to counter structural poverty, while Maket (2024) urged policymakers to develop comprehensive and accommodative poverty policies. In Zambia, Mwansa (2025) recommended diversifying the national economy, improving social safety nets, reforming farming policies, expanding infrastructure, and enhancing education and skills training. Mwiinde and Munshifwa (2024) stressed the importance of urban planning, improved land and housing services, and the inclusion of sustainable practices in urban centres.



Masuku et al. (2025) called for support for human dignity at retirement, reconsideration of pension schemes, protection of pensioners from fragile financial systems, and improved administrative accountability of pension funds.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study adopts an interpretivist paradigm which seeks to understand the subjective meanings and lived experiences of individuals facing poverty (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). This approach aligns with the study’s focus on personal narratives and coping strategies, emphasizing context and human agency over generalized data. This philosophy emphasizes understanding the subjective meanings of participants, making it suitable for exploring the complex and nuanced experiences of poverty (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Qualitative research design is used, particularly in a phenomenological approach, to explore the lived experiences of poverty and coping mechanisms in Gokwe-Nembudziya. This design allows for in-depth exploration of participants’ perspectives through interviews and focuses group discussions.

3.2 Study Area

The study was conducted in Gokwe North District, Midlands, Zimbabwe. The area was purposively selected since it is a rural community where poverty is pervasive, and households face significant challenges related to subsistence agriculture, climate variability and limited access to services and infrastructure. The area is predominantly characterised by semi-arid conditions, poor infrastructure and a heavy reliance on cotton farming, making it a relevant context for examining the lived experiences of poverty.

3.3 Population and Sampling

The target population comprised residents of Gokwe-Nembudziya, including households heads, small-scale farmers, informal traders, Agricultural Extension Officers, Teachers and Youth development officers. A total of 30 participants were selected using purposive sampling and snowball sampling. The purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants with direct experience of economic vulnerability and those who could provide rich, information-rich accounts of poverty and coping strategies (Etikan et al, 2016). Snowball sampling was used to reach participants who were not easily accessible through initial contacts. The participants comprised residents of Gokwe Nembudziya for at least five years, those with direct experience of economic vulnerability and those who were willing to share personal experiences.

Table 1
Participants Composition

Category	Number	Gender Distribution
Youths	5	3 Males, 2 females
Businesspeople	4	3 Males, 1 Female
Community Leaders/Politicians	5	4 Males, 1 Females
Women	6	6 Females
Agricultural extension officers	5	4 Males, 1 Female
Teachers/Educators	5	3 Males, 2 Females
Total	30	23 Males, 7 Females=30

3.4 Data Collection

The essential methods employed were in-depth interviews on thirty participants, Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) and participant observation. In-depth interviews enabled the researchers to gather personal narratives on poverty experiences and coping mechanisms (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Focused Group Discussions (FCDs) with a group of 8 participants were appropriately employed to explore collective coping strategies and community resilience (Kitzinger, 1994). Essentially, the participant observation was critical to contextualize the findings within daily livelihood activities (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011). All interviews and the FGD were audio-recorded following participant’s consent and were transcribed verbatim (WHO, 2025). As a measure to maintain confidentiality, pseudonyms were used to protect (Saunders et al., 2019).

3.5 Data Analysis

The collected was analysed using thematic analysis which followed a six-phase outlined by Braun and Clarke (2022). The process involved critical steps of transcription and familiarization with data, generating initial codes,

searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming the themes and producing the final report. The process involved identification of patterns related to the dynamics and impact of poverty and coping strategies. The used the NVivo qualitative data analysis software to organise and code the data so as to enhance transparency and rigour of the analysis.

3.6 Ethical considerations

The requisite ethical approval was secured from the relevant institutional review board prior data collection. All participants were given an information sheet which explained the study's purpose, procedures, risks and benefits. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants and they were explicitly informed of their right to withdraw at any time without any penalty. As a way to ensure confidentiality and anonymity personal identifiers were removed from datasets.

3.7 Trustworthiness of the Study

The study employed several strategies to enhance trustworthiness and academic rigor (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility was established through prolonged engagement and rapport building with community members. Triangulation was conducted to cross-check data from interviews, focus group discussions, and observations to ensure validity (Denzin, 2017). To enhance validity, participants reviewed transcripts to confirm accuracy (Birt et al., 2016). Peer debriefing involved colleagues reviewing interpretations to enhance reliability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Transferability was ensured by providing thick description, including detailed accounts of the research setting, participants, and context, enabling readers to assess the applicability of findings to similar settings.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Lived Experiences of Poverty

4.1.1 Poor Market Prices for Cotton and Other Farm Produce

Farmers in Gokwe Nembudziya face exploitation due to low prices set by buyers, thereby reducing their profitability. One of the respondents, a teacher in Gokwe-Nembudziya, shared:

"For years people continued to grow cotton, but they were not given what was equivalent to the labour invested in producing the cotton. In the way back one bale of cotton was equivalent to one month teacher's salary. They continued to grow cotton even though the prices were down because they did not have other options to make their families survive. When they sell groundnuts or maize, they are shortchanged by unscrupulous local businessmen and traders who buy their commodities at USD2 per bucket of maize and these traders later sell the bucket of maize at USD 15 in Harare. This creates a cycle of poverty". (Teacher in Gokwe-Nembudziya, 2, February, 2025)

A community leader noted:

"My observation is that the fall of global prices of cotton at world market as a cash crop has created a sea of poverty in Gokwe. Gokwe-Nembudziya sustenance method was growing cotton. For decades people lived through farming cotton. The fall of the world market prices in 2012 affected people. They were used to getting money from cotton that covered them throughout the year. There is nothing to support them now". (Community leader in, Nyamuroro, 10, February 2025)

Another resident of Gokwe Nembudziya, a farmer, noted:

"Gokwe is not spared macroeconomic instability in the country. Gokwe relies mainly on agriculture. Our agriculture is extensive; there is contract farming in cotton and sorghum. Cotton no longer pays much as it used to. We as farmers are paid in the form of groceries such as flour, sugar, chunks, and cooking oil. We sell these groceries as soon as we receive them to get money for education, health care and other transactions and buying grain. Cotton companies are not keeping promises to pay good prices for cotton. Hence, we are trapped in the poverty trap" (Farmer, Maserukwe, 11, February 2025)

The research findings reveal that poverty in Gokwe is largely driven by unfair trade systems, the fall of global cotton prices, and macroeconomic instability. These experiences mirror the situation documented by Jerumeh (2024), who found that economic shocks contribute significantly to rural women's poverty. The participants' accounts of exploitative pricing also resonate with (Mwansa, 2025), who identified poor farm productivity and lack of basic infrastructure as drivers of rural poverty in Zambia. The lack of alternative income sources and the vulnerability to price fluctuations align with the Poverty Trap Theory (Kraay & McKenzie, 2014), which explains how households remain locked in deprivation without external intervention.

4.1.2 Education and Skills Gap

Education in Gokwe encounters serious challenges including lack of resources, high numbers of school dropouts, poor school infrastructure, and schools lacking motivation to inspire learners to see value in education beyond growing cotton. One local politician stated :

“Gokwe-Nembudziya is largely characterized by high school dropouts and lack of vocational training that limit job opportunities beyond agriculture. The only vocational training centre, Nyamuroro, is not functioning properly, and this skill gap has enhanced poverty in Gokwe-Nembudziya area” (Aspiring Member of Parliament, 15, February, 2025).

A business studies teacher added:

“The education system in Gokwe Nembudziya is still backward and a lot needs to be done. Gokwe-Nembudziya has poor schools and there are some schools without electricity. During the rainy season some students do not attend school because of impassable rivers. Poverty is reduced by education, but other school pupils do not have textbooks, no money, no proper uniform and schools do not have structures. Children go to school for formality, without seeing a good future because of lack of resources” (A business teacher at Nyamuroro High school, 18, February, 2025).

One community parent also reported:

“Girls lack education and indulge in early marriages and join poverty traps early. These school dropouts, especially boys, participate in gold panning and their low education increases the chances of poverty. Most people lack knowledge and education” (A Community Parent, 20 February 2025).

The research findings indicate that high school dropouts, early marriages, inadequate vocational training, and poor school infrastructure are key drivers of poverty. These findings are consistent with Jerumeh (2024), who identified lack of educational access as a determinant of multidimensional poverty among rural women in Nigeria. Similarly, Abubakar (2022) noted that 62.3% of household heads in impoverished Nigerian regions lack formal education. Senga and Dzimiri (2025) also highlighted that barriers to financial inclusion, such as restricted credit access and low confidence in financial systems, are exacerbated by low education levels. The participants' views align with the Capability Approach (Sen, 1993), which views education as essential for expanding freedoms and opportunities to achieve well-being.

4.1.3 Lack of Good Political Leadership and Governance Culture

The lack of good political leadership and governance culture contributes immensely to poverty in Gokwe-Nembudziya. One politician shared:

“Farm inputs such as seeds and fertilizers are distributed late and on political grounds, disadvantaging many farmers. Some of the traditional and youth leaders are diverting funds and seeds that are earmarked for poor people, and this strengthens poverty” (Aspiring Member of Parliament, 14, March, 2025).

A businessman noted:

“There is poor governance here in Gokwe-Nembudziya and this created a lot of things. It led to poor delivery of service. Society failure and this culture led to poverty. We may receive aid to support ailing society. There is a partisan ticket, where everything we get here is given along party lines. Uneducated youths are given seeds or anything that comes through aid. They sell them and get money to drink beer. Seeds and fertilizers are sold for a song; hence this creates poverty” (A businessman, Nembudziya Growth Point, 2, February, 2025).

One councillor noted:

“In Gokwe Nembudziya there is great lack of effective leadership and there is failure to coordinate the policies that enhance development. Gokwe is characterized by poor infrastructure, and unfair distribution of resources due to corruption and nepotism” (Councillor, Gokwe Nembudziya, Ward 13, 10 March 2025).

The findings reveal that poverty is perpetuated by lack of effective leadership, corruption, poor governance, and political manipulation of farm inputs and aid distribution. Ume (2025) identified corruption, political crisis, and unsustainable governance architecture as major causes of poverty and deprivation in Nigeria. Ngutuku (2024) attributed poverty in Kenya to historical, political, and social dynamics. Mwansa (2025) similarly noted that ineffective leadership and poor governance drive rural poverty in Zambia. Bandauko et al. (2023) documented how social exclusion and discrimination in informal settlements perpetuate poverty, while Kabonga (2023) observed that political manipulation undermines the effectiveness of NGOs in poverty reduction in Zimbabwe. The Capability Approach (Sen, 1999) is relevant, as it attributes persistent poverty to the absence of opportunities to lead a valuable life due to systemic governance failures.



4.1.4 Limited Access to Infrastructure

Limited access to infrastructure is a key factor contributing to poverty in Gokwe. Poor roads, lack of electricity, and inadequate water contribute significantly to poverty. One community member lamented:

“Gokwe is characterized by poor roads, lack of electricity and inadequate water. Inadequate water supply hinders economic activities. Most dams can’t be used for irrigation purposes such as Maselukwe and Chiwashira dams” (Community Member, Gokwe Nembudziya Growth point, 3, March, 2025).

An agricultural extension officer shared:

“Gokwe-Nembudziya roads and infrastructure are in a very bad state. Gokwe is a place without adequate water, and the situation is made worse by the lack of dams that can store water for irrigation and for animals. During the winter season people and animals compete for water in boreholes and shallow wells in riverbeds. The place therefore has few cattle and poor grazing lands. Unlike Masvingo region which has many dams where irrigation is practiced, that enhanced livelihoods unlike in Gokwe Nembudziya” (Agricultural Extension Officer, 9, April, 2025)

The findings demonstrate that poor infrastructure undermines development prospects through lack of electricity, inadequate water, and dilapidated roads affecting farmers’ ability to access markets and essential services. Abubakar (2022) attributed persistent poverty in Nigeria to poor infrastructure, including lack of electricity and inadequate water sources. It was Mwansa (2025) who recommended infrastructural expansion as a key measure to address poverty in Zambia. Senga and Dzimiri (2025) identified long distances to financial service centres as a barrier to financial inclusion for smallholder farmers in Gokwe South. This is in line with the Capabilities Approach (Sen, 1999) which underscores that infrastructure deprivation reduces people’s capabilities to access markets, healthcare, and education, thereby reinforcing poverty.

4.1.5 Lack of Diversified Livelihoods and Limited Industrial Development

Lack of diversified livelihoods and limited industrial development contribute significantly to the experiences of poverty in Gokwe-Nembudziya. Besides agriculture, specifically growing cotton, the area has no other alternative livelihoods to rely on for survival.

One community leader shared:

“There is over-reliance on cotton farming without alternative income sources, increasing vulnerability” (Community leader, Murakwani Village 15, April 2025)

A resident of Gokwe-Nembudziya, an opposition leader, reiterated:

“Limited industrial development in Gokwe-Nembudziya is contributing immensely to extreme poverty. Absence of value-addition industries for cotton and other crops restricts economic growth” (Opposition leader, Kuwirirana, 20, April 2025).

A farmer in Gokwe-Nembudziya also shared:

“Land degradation and deforestation have undermined livelihood diversification. Unsustainable farming and firewood harvesting degrade the environment, reducing long-term agricultural potential. In places like Copper Queen, they are focusing on producing charcoal and vast forests have been destroyed” (Farmer, Copper Queen, 23, April 2025).

These findings reveal that Gokwe North suffers from overreliance on a single crop, limited industrial development, and environmental degradation. It was noted that in Zambia, poverty persisted due to over-dependence on copper and poor farm productivity (Mwansa, 2025). Jerumeh (2024) identified lack of diversified livelihoods as a key determinant of poverty among rural women. Mwiinde and Munshifwa (2024) linked urbanization, poverty, and homelessness to the absence of sustainable economic opportunities. The participants’ views connect to the Poverty Trap Theory (Kraay & McKenzie, 2014) without industries, there are few jobs outside farming, farmers sell raw materials at low prices, and youths cannot find formal employment, locking the community in a self-reinforcing cycle of deprivation.

4.1.6 Donor Dependence Syndrome

Donor dependence syndrome has contributed to the persistence of poverty in Gokwe Nembudziya. Several Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have worked in Gokwe-North participating in various activities including education, food aid, health, environment and development, microfinance, and women empowerment.

One resident of Gokwe-Nembudziya, a teacher, noted:

“Overreliance on donor funding. People are docile, they wait for handouts from the donor community and wait for government bailout through social welfare and Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM). The governing party is creating a dependence syndrome by giving seeds, grains and fertilizers to Gokwe Nembudziya community. However, most recipients of these inputs sell the inputs and engage in drinking beer” (Teacher, Nembudziya Government High school, 3, March 2025).

A former employee of an NGO stated:

“Before the coming of NGOs, the people used to work for themselves. With the arrival of NGOs people now depend on the handouts of NGOs. People are now relaxing waiting for food aid and payment of school fees for their children. They cannot feed themselves or educate their children” (A former Employee of Non -Governmental Organization, Sungai area 3, April, 2025).

One community member reported:

“Poverty mentality is haunting Gokwe-Nembudziya. People used to rely on donor funds from NGOs such as World Vision, Christian Care and Oxfam, CAMFED and government assisted scholarship of Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM). The people became so relaxed and waited for the donors to pay fees for their children and food to feed their families. Family coping mechanisms during disasters just evaporated” (A Community member, Chirape, 5, April, 2025).

These findings reveal that poverty persists due to overreliance on handouts from NGOs, abuse of inputs from government, and the erosion of traditional coping strategies. Kabonga (2023) found that while NGOs contribute to improvements in income, healthcare, education, and food security, they face challenges such as political manipulation that can undermine long-term sustainability. Masuku et al. (2025) similarly noted that social protection programmes in Zimbabwe suffer from inadequate implementation and political interference. The participants’ accounts reflect what was described in Zambia as the need to improve social safety nets without creating dependency. The Poverty Trap Theory (Kraay & McKenzie, 2014) is relevant, as reliance on external aid without building productive capacities can perpetuate poverty across generations.

4.2 Measures to Address Poverty in Gokwe-Nembudziya

4.2.1 Value Addition and Processing

Value addition and processing of agricultural products such as cotton, maize, sorghum, and rapoko has great potential to address poverty. One community leader shared:

“We need to establish local cotton ginneries and textile industries to increase farmers’ profits” (Community leader, Nembudziya Business Centre, 22, February 2025).

A youth leader noted:

“Young people here want to start businesses, but most opportunities depend on selling raw agricultural products. If there were small processing industries for cotton, sunflower or grains in Gokwe Nembudziya, it would create jobs for us. Instead, the raw materials are exported out of Gokwe and brought back as expensive finished products that majority of us cannot afford” (Youth leader, Nembudzia Business Centre, 15, April 2025).

Within the Capability Approach (Sen, 1999), the lack of value addition limits people’s capabilities to earn income, access employment, and exercise economic agency. Promoting agro-processing would expand the freedoms and opportunities of rural households, helping reduce poverty. This aligns with recommendation in Zambia, to diversify the national economy and improve farming policies (Mwansa, 2025), and with Senga and Dzimiriri (2025)’s call to capacitate credit facilities and financial education to support smallholder farmers.

4.2.2 Fair Pricing and Market Access

Fair pricing and market access are critical ingredients for poverty reduction. One farmer noted:

“There is a need to strengthen farmer cooperatives to negotiate better prices and explore export markets” (Farmer, Gwenzi Village. 15, March, 2025)

A business community member added:

“There is a need to pay farmers in time and the money must be denominated in United States dollars and there is a need to provide them with farming incentives, to cushion them from poverty” (Business Community Member, Tiki Business Centre, 16 April 2025).

Senga and Dzimiriri (2025) noted that financial inclusion, including access to fair pricing and mobile banking, is key to poverty reduction for smallholder farmers. It emphasized the importance of improving social safety nets and farming policies to enhance rural livelihoods (Mwansa, 2025). The Poverty Trap Theory (Kraay & McKenzie, 2014) underscores that farmers cannot escape poverty without access to fair markets and external support.

4.2.3 Irrigation and Climate-Resilient Agriculture.

Irrigation schemes and climate resilience are important areas that warrant attention to address poverty. One agricultural extension officer noted:

“There is need by the government, NGOs and local community to invest in irrigation schemes and promote drought-resistant crops alongside cotton farming” (Agricultural Extension Officer, Nembudzia Ward 36, 22, March, 2025).



One farmer in Gokwe-Nembudziya noted:

“There is a need to encourage mixed farming, livestock rearing and tree planting for sustainability” (A Farmer, Chiwashira Village, 15, April, 2025)

The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (Scoones, 2009) is key to understanding how policies, institutions, and processes shape livelihood opportunities. Investment in irrigation and climate-resilient agriculture would enhance the natural and physical assets of households, reducing vulnerability to climate shocks. Jerumeh (2024) recommended improving primary healthcare and employment creation, which are closely linked to stable agricultural production. Similarly it called for improved farming policies and infrastructural expansion to address rural poverty (Mwansa, 2025).

4.2.4 Youth and Women Empowerment, Education and Vocational Training

Education and vocational training are crucial vehicles for addressing poverty, empowering communities, creating employment, and engineering economic growth. One teacher shared:

“There is a need to develop technical skills programmes to create alternative income opportunities beyond farming” (Teacher, Dukaupfu Secondary School, 15, March ,2025)

A councillor shared:

“Support income-generating projects and entrepreneurship programmes for vulnerable groups” (Councillor, Gokwe North, Ward 36, 14, April, 2025).

A youth beneficiary of Nyamuroro Vocational Training Centre shared:

“Education and vocational training have the capacity to transform our lives from nothing to something. Here in Gokwe-Nembudziya, Nyamuroro Vocational Training Centre helped us to get skills and knowledge to participate in our local economy. We have managed to break away from the cycle of poverty” (Youth Beneficiary, Nyamuroro Vocational Training Centre, 10, February, 2025).

The findings concur with notable authors. Jerumeh (2024) recommended doubling employment creation opportunities and enhancing social protection approaches for rural women. Abubakar (2022) called for human-centered development solutions in education, water, and primary healthcare. Senga and Dzimir (2025) emphasized financial education for farmers. The Capability Approach (Sen, 1999) reinforces that expanding capabilities through education and skills training is fundamental to enabling individuals to lead lives they value.

4.3 Infrastructural Development

Infrastructural development is important for poverty reduction in Gokwe Nembudziya as it is significant in enhancing access to marketplaces, increasing access to basic services, transport networks, and availing economic opportunities to people. A community leader shared:

“Improving roads, electricity supply, and water access to support agriculture and businesses. The Gokwe-Kadoma, Nembudziya-Jahana Road needs to be rehabilitated” (A community leader, Chinyenyetu, 22, February ,2025).

A local farmer noted:

“Improved roads help us take our crops to markets easily, which helps us earn some money” (A Local farmer, Jingeni Village 15, April ,2025).

A woman resident in Gokwe Nembudziya shared:

“Boreholes and nearby clinics save us time and money, so we can focus more on farming and other work” (A Woman resident, Gokwe -Nembudziya Business Centre, 16 ,February, 2025).

The views of the research participant are consistent with various authors. Abubakar (2022) identified improved electricity provision and human-centered infrastructure as essential for sustainable development. It was recommended that there is need for infrastructural expansion to address poverty in Zambia (Mwansa, 2025). Senga and Dzimir (2025) highlighted the importance of improving mobile and agency banking, which depends on reliable telecommunications and road networks. Similarly, the Capability Approach (Sen, 1999) affirms that infrastructure expands people’s opportunities to improve living standards and engage in economic activities.

V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The study on the lived experiences of poverty in Gokwe-Nembudziya reveals that poverty in the district is multi-dimensional, chronic, and deeply entrenched, affecting not only income levels but also access to education, healthcare, food security, clean water, infrastructure, and social services. Households face persistent economic instability driven by recurrent droughts, limited employment opportunities, poor road networks, inadequate markets,

and insufficient government support systems. The research noted that poverty in Gokwe-Nembudziya is largely rural and structurally embedded. Most households depend on subsistence agriculture, particularly cotton farming, which is highly vulnerable to climate change, fluctuating market prices, and exploitative value chains. Erratic rainfall and poor soil productivity worsen food insecurity, forcing families to survive on reduced meals and low-nutrient diets. Ultimately, the study concludes that poverty in Gokwe-Nembudziya is not merely a result of individual failure but is strongly linked to poor leadership and governance, reliance on donors, absence of diversified livelihoods, limited and poor infrastructure, an education skills gap, and the marginalization of rural communities from economic growth.

5.2 Recommendations

Given the challenges cited in the study, various recommendations were proposed. Strengthening climate-resilient agriculture is key to promoting drought-resistant crops and small grain production. Investing in irrigation schemes and water harvesting technologies, along with establishing reliable markets and fair pricing systems for cotton and other crops, is significant in efforts to address poverty. There is a need to improve rural infrastructure development, especially to upgrade road networks in Gokwe–Nembudziya, to enhance market access. Expanding access to electricity and clean water, as well as improving digital connectivity, is crucial for accessing market information and financial services. In this regard, infrastructure investment has the potential to unlock economic participation and reduce rural isolation.

Promoting sustainable livelihoods diversification (SLD) and providing vocational training for youth and women are essential for poverty reduction. Supporting small and medium enterprises (SMEs) through microfinance and grants, as well as formalizing and regulating artisanal mining to improve safety and income security, can help reduce over-dependence on rain-fed agriculture. Strengthening social protection programs, such as expanding cash transfer initiatives for vulnerable households, is also important. Additionally, improving access to affordable healthcare services, supporting community-based savings and lending groups, and social protection measures can cushion households against shocks and prevent extreme deprivation.

Enhancing community participation and local governance is vital, involving community members in development planning, strengthening local institutions and cooperatives, and encouraging partnerships between government, NGOs, and the private sector. Finally, there is a need to promote gender-sensitive policies that empower women economically. Community-driven development policies ensure interventions that are relevant, inclusive, and sustainable.

REFERENCES

- Abubakar, I. R. (2022). Multidimensional poverty among Nigerian households: Sustainable development implications. *Social Indicators Research*, 164(2), 993–1014. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-022-02963-0>
- Bandauko, E., Kutor, S. K., & Arku, R. N. (2023). Trapped or not trapped? An empirical investigation into lived experiences of the urban poor in Harare's selected informal settlements. *African Geographical Review*, 42(5), 574–593. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19376812.2022.2077781>
- Birt, L., Scott, S., Cavers, D., Campbell, C., & Walter, F. (2016). Member checking: A tool to enhance trustworthiness or merely a nod to validation? *Qualitative Health Research*, 26, 1802–1811. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732316>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). *Thematic analysis: A practical guide*. Sage.
- Brinkmann, S., & Kvale, S. (2015). *Interviews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Chambers, R., & Conway, G. R. (1992). *Sustainable rural livelihoods: Practical concepts for the 21st century* (IDS Discussion Paper No. 296). Institute of Development Studies.
- Chiba, M. (2023). The diversification of rural livelihoods after the year 2000 in Zimbabwe. *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal*, 10(7), 296–313. <https://doi.org/10.14738/assrj.107.15073>
- Chitongo, L., & Casadevall, R. S. (2019). Rural livelihoods resilience strategies in the face of harsh climatic conditions: The case of Ward 11, Gwanda, South, Zimbabwe. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 5(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2019.1617090>
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Denzin, N. K. (2017). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods*. Routledge.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2018). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Department for International Development (DFID). (1999). *Sustainable livelihoods guidance sheets*. DFID.
- DeWalt, K. M., & DeWalt, B. R. (2011). *Participant observation: A guide for fieldworkers* (2nd ed.). AltaMira Press.
- Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1–4.

- Fernandez, A., Lopez-Calva, L. F., & Rodriguez, S. (2024). Poverty, trust and social distance: A self-reinforcing “poverty trap”? *Social Philosophy and Policy*, 40(1), 129–149. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265052523000407>
- Jerumeh, T. R. (2024). Incidence, intensity and drivers of multidimensional poverty among rural women in Nigeria. *Heliyon*, 10(3), e25147. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e25147>
- Kabonga, I. (2023). NGOs and poverty reduction in Zimbabwe: Challenges and way forward. *SN Social Sciences*, 3(6). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43545-023-00678-8>
- Kenya National Bureau Statistics (KNBS). (2025). *Brighter futures: Breaking cycles of poverty for Kenya’s children*. <https://www.knbs.or.ke>
- Kitzinger, J. (1994). The methodology of focus groups: The importance of interaction between research participants. *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 16(1), 103–121. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9566.ep11347023>
- Kraay, A., & Mackenzie, S. (2014). Do poverty traps exist? Assessing the evidence. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 28(3), 127–148. <https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.28.3.127>
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. SAGE Publications. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0147-1767\(85\)90062-8](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0147-1767(85)90062-8)
- Maket, I. (2024). Analysis of incidence, intensity and gender perspectives of multidimensional urban poverty in Kenya. *Heliyon*, 10(1), e30139. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.30139>
- Makhetho, M. J. (2024). *Examining the contribution of livelihood strategies to household food security in rural Zimbabwe: The case of smallholder farmers in Muzarabani district* (Doctoral thesis, University of Pretoria).
- Makhetho, M. J., & Thebe, V. (2025). The paradox of survival: The adverse impacts of livelihood strategies on household food security in Muzarabani District, Zimbabwe. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00219096251388573>
- Masuku, S., Nkala, S., & Benhura, A. (2025). Navigating poverty in later life: The impact of shrinking pensions and inadequate social security on the well-being of the elderly in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Human Rights and Social Work*, 10(1), 581–596. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41134-025-00376-w>
- Matsa, M. (2020). Climate change and agriculture in Zimbabwe. In *Sustainability in minority farming communities, sustainability development goals series: Zero hunger*. Springer.
- Matsai, V., & Raniga, T. (2021). Economic stressors and coping strategies of single mothers living in poverty in Zimbabwe. *Social Work/Maatskaplike Werk*, 52(2), 182–192. <https://doi.org/10.15270/52-2-928>
- Mkodzongi, G., & Lawrence, P. (2019). The fast track land reform and agrarian change in Zimbabwe. *Review of African Political Economy*, 46(159), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03056244.2019.1622210>
- Mupepi, O., & Matsa, M. M. (2022). Seasonal dynamics of agro-meteorological drought in Mberengwa and Zvishavane districts between 2017 and 2020, Zimbabwe. *Natural Hazards*, 113, 157–184. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11069-022-05294-y>
- Mutale, T. M., & Mtapuri, O. (2023). Rural women’s perceptions of poverty and inequality in Mungwi District, Zambia. In O. Mtapuri (Ed.), *Poverty, inequality, and innovation in the Global South* (pp. 307–344). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-21841-5_15
- Mwansa, M. C. (2025). Poverty reduction interventions key success factors: A literature review and respective implication on the fight against poverty in Zambia. *International Journal of Poverty, Investment and Development*, 5(1), 19–30.
- Mwiinde, C., & Munshifwa, E. K. (2024). Urbanization, poverty and homelessness in Zambia cities: A threat to the achievement of sustainable development goals. In *Homeless to hope: Research, policy and global perspectives* (pp. 37–51). Elsevier.
- Ngutuku, E. (2024). *Children’s lived experience of poverty and vulnerability in Kenya: Going beyond multi-dimensionality*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003356769>
- Nussbaum, M. C. (2011). *Creating capabilities: The human development approach*. Belknap Press. <https://doi.org/10.4159/harvard.9780674061200>
- Saunders, M. N. K., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research methods for business students* (8th ed.). Pearson.
- Scoones, I. (2009). Livelihoods perspectives and rural development. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 36(1), 171–196. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150902820503>
- Sen, A. (1993). Capability and well-being. In M. C. Nussbaum & A. Sen (Eds.), *The quality of life* (pp. 30–53). Clarendon Press.
- Sen, A. (1999). *Development as freedom*. Oxford University Press.
- Senga, T. L., & Dzimir, W. (2025). Financial inclusion and poverty alleviation among smallholder farmers: Evidence from Gokwe South, Zimbabwe. *The Dyke*, 19(1). <https://doi.org/10.64754/thedyke.v19i1.323>
- Tom, T. (2025). The right to be rural: Farm community development and social services in Zimbabwe resettlement areas. *Community Development*, 56(4), 503–524.



- Torres, M., & Ahumuda, J. M. (2024). Dependency theory: An underdevelopmental thought from Latin America to the entire world. In *Global handbook of inequality*. <https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-3-030-97417-6-80-1>
- Ume, O. O. (2025). Poverty in Nigeria: Examining the causes of extreme deprivation and sustainable anti-poverty struggles. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 9(16). <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRIS.2024.916SC000019>
- Walker, J., Mitchell, B., & Wismer, S. (2001). Livelihood strategy approach to community-based planning and assessment: A case study of Molas, Indonesia. *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, 19, 297–309. <https://doi.org/10.3152/147154601781766925>
- World Health Organization (WHO). (2025). *WHO guidance on ethics of health research priority setting*. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240110953>
- Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT). (2019). *Poverty income consumption and expenditure survey 2017/2019 report*. <https://www.zimstat.co.zw/wp-content/uploads/Macro/Poverty-Statistics/PICES-2017Final-Report-28January2019-pdf>
- Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT). (2021). *Zimbabwe poverty atlas: Small area poverty estimation: Statistics for poverty eradication created*. Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency and UNICEF Zimbabwe. <https://koha.library.msu.ac.zw:8000/bib/160433>
- ZIMVAC. (2021). *Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZIMVAC) rural livelihoods assessment report*. Government of Zimbabwe. <https://fscluster.org/sites/default/files/documents/zimvac-2022-rural-livelihoods-assessment-report.pdf>