



# Water and Sanitation Barometer

Issue 9 of 2018

**2 October 2018, Harare-** The Harare Residents' Trust (HRT) consistently monitors the water and sanitation situation in Harare Metropolitan Province in order to update its membership, strategic stakeholders, local government followers, policymakers and other decision makers for their information and interventions. Residents have experienced water disconnections, shortages, and sewerage bursts have increased the possibility of spreading diseases like typhoid, cholera, dysentery, among other water borne diseases. All the information contained herein is gathered by affected residents, through observations, interviews, phone calls, and through HRT social media platforms. In this Water and Sanitation Barometer, the HRT examines and highlights the water and sanitation situation in Paradise, Canaan, and Cherima in Highfield, Glen Norah B, Glen Norah C Extension, Glen View 2 and Budiro. This Water and Sanitation Barometer mainly speaks to the Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and the Quality of the water being availed to residents in the identified communities. Recommendations are provided at the end of this Barometer. To share information, call, sms or WhatsApp 0772869294, 0774 306 380. One can also email us on [info@hrt.org.zw](mailto:info@hrt.org.zw) or [programs@hrt.org.zw](mailto:programs@hrt.org.zw), [hrthre@hrt.org](mailto:hrthre@hrt.org) and [hretrust79@gmail.com](mailto:hretrust79@gmail.com)

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## 1. Accessibility of Water

1.1. The sources of water that residents are currently using in Harare includes tap water, bush pumps, boreholes, unprotected well and shallow wells. Less than 50 percent of households in the above mentioned suburbs are receiving municipal tap water on a daily basis. Residents mentioned that most of the times they have tap water and there was less water rationing during the month of September with residents receiving water for at least six days a week. However, the HRT<sup>1</sup> received reports from Highfield Canaan that there are areas which do not receive municipal water at all i.e. from stand number 5432 to 5446 then from 5433 to 5447<sup>2</sup> to make a total of 16 houses. These houses have gone for about five months without water. Most residents use boreholes installed

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<sup>1</sup> Harare Resident Trust - advocacy and lobby organisation, established in February 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Last reported on 13 September 2018 to the City of Harare

by the city council, Church organisations, and humanitarian organisations as an alternative to municipal tap water. However, the boreholes are proving to be few as some residents in Highfield Cherima are getting water from shallow wells around the suburbs, which pose serious health risks.

## **2. Acceptability of Water**

- 2.1. The water being received from the City of Harare looks very clean with naked eyes most of the times. However, there are some times when the water comes out with a brownish color that will even discourage residents to use for domestic use.
- 2.2. In Glen Norah C Extension residents constantly receive muddy water specifically on 20 September when the HRT received a report that the water coming out of taps was highly unacceptable.
- 2.3. Residents from Highfield, Glen Norah, Glen View and Budiriro shared the same sentiments and showed that they are not ready to accept the water from City of Harare as clean and safe despite the city council insisting that the tap water is 95 percent safe for domestic use.
- 2.4. These residents have put their trust in community boreholes and that where they are getting water for domestic use especially drinking and cooking only, yet at the end of the month they have to pay for water<sup>3</sup> which they have not consumed during the month. They instead only used the dirty water for other household chores i.e. laundry, bathing and toilet use. However, the resident in Glen View has left with confusion on which source of water is really clean and safe to consume after the City of Harare has decommissioned two boreholes in Glen View.

## **3. Availability of Water**

- 3.1. Residents in Highfield, Glen Norah, Glen View and Budiriro complemented that they are receiving water most of the time. Residents applauded the City of Harare for making the water available for 80 percent of the month of September. This could possibly be attributed to the outbreak of cholera which broke out on 6 September 2018.
- 3.2. **Glen Norah C Ext:** Residents indicated that they get water during the night from around 11pm to around 3am. Resident fetch water from a borehole located between Glen Norah C and Highfield Paradise which produces yellow water and also at a tank

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<sup>3</sup> Water consumption and fixed water charge

between Glen Norah C and Highfield Paradise which was previously used by the farm owner. Residents said that they have been using the water from this tank since 2008.

3.3. **Highfield Cherima:** Water has been available for seven days a week. However there are unspecified days when water is disconnected at around 0600hrs and then restored at around 1100hrs. Residents have been facing challenges to access water when water is disconnected as they have only two boreholes<sup>4</sup> in the suburb.

3.4. **Budiriro:** Resident in Budiriro 3 complemented that they get water every day and have a backup of a council borehole located at the Budiriro 1 Community Hall. However, the HRT received report on 8 September that the city council was disconnecting water to residents with huge bills whilst at the same time the cholera outbreak has just declared.

#### 4. Quality of Water Supplied

4.1. The quality of water remains an issue in all suburbs in Harare. Residents have resorted to using borehole water for drinking and self well located at individual stands. The City of Harare gives justification that when water is supplied from the water sources it will be clean and it is safe for human consumption. The quality of water has been compromised also when the a human body was found in the Sunningdale Water valve chambers<sup>5</sup> meaning that there is lack of security of the council's water and sewerage infrastructure. This has been a nightmare for most residents who have to use their municipal water for other household chores instead of consumption.

#### 5. Sanitation Situation

5.1. **Glen View:** In Glen View 2 residents have repeatedly appealed to the City of Harare's District Office there to repair the burst sewer flowing along Second Street and 42 Crescent which was partially attended to late August 2018. The latest report by residents was made on 9 September and the issue took at least four days to be resolved with the city council stating that they have run out of vaccines to vaccinate sewer burst pipes. This has been cited as one of the causes of Cholera outbreak in Glen View which was first reported on 6 September 2018.

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<sup>4</sup> One borehole is located at the Western Triangle bus terminus and another one is at Geneva.

<sup>5</sup> A human body was found in the Sunningdale valve tanks on Friday 28 September 2018 and was removed the following day by the City of Harare. Children playing near the valve chamber identified the dead body, not yet decomposed, and alerted their parents who then informed the City of Harare and the Police resulting in the retrieval of the body.

5.2. **Highfield:** The HRT<sup>1</sup> received a report on 13 September 2018 that there is sewage burst which was affecting stand number 5465, 5461 and 5463 along 226<sup>th</sup> street<sup>6</sup> and this was causing toilets blockages, filling them up and spilling into residential yards. The Suburban Residents' Committee initially engaged the District Office only to be told that there were some people who had been sent to look into the matter but no one came. However, they decided to engage the HRT<sup>1</sup> office then the Sewage was rectified after five days of consistent follow up.

**On** 11 September 2018 the HRT also received report that the council had rectified the problem of sewer the previous day, but on this day at 3294 Old Highfield they wake up with sewage flowing through their door step.

5.3. Glen Norah C Extension: There is sewage at 9247 Glen Norah C which has gone for a month without being repaired but it has been reported to the District office. The responsible people cited that they cannot repair the sewer because the next door of 9247 always keep their gates locked therefore they cannot work.

5.4. **Budiriro:** The HRT received numerous reports of burst sewer pipes from Budiriro. These are as follows; along Twiza Road at number 2832 Budiriro on 14 September 2018, 508 Budiriro on the same day having been reported on the weekend of 11 September 2018. In Budiriro 4 also they spent two weeks with sewage flowing at number 7797 being unattended after reporting at the district office. The District Office has been giving excuses that they have no fuel or gloves to use.

5.5. Basing on the reports HRT<sup>1</sup> is receiving from residents, indications are that the city council is not responding to sewer blockages in the stipulated time of 24 hours stated in the City of Harare's Service Delivery Charter. Residents also said that the council no longer sprays chlorine when they have unblocked the sewer. Residents are worried.

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<sup>6</sup> This is in Highfield Canaan near ZAOGA church

**6. Recommendations:** The Harare City Council needs to invest more in the rehabilitation of the water infrastructure as the current infrastructure is too old, and they also need to replace galvanized pipe with poly pipes. It is because the galvanized pipes accumulate rust when water is disconnected but when water is restored it carries rusty water. This old infrastructure is allowing dirt to penetrate into the water pipes which is contaminating drinking water. The CoH<sup>7</sup> also need to invest more in securing the water reservoirs in suburbs not just securing the Morton Jaffray Water Works. More so the CoH<sup>7</sup> needs to carry out quality assurance services at the final destination of the water i.e. suburban households. In addition, the City of Harare as a big institution should never run out of resources, medication to service its valued customers. They need to have fuel, gloves, gumboots readily available so that they can attend to sewer blockages as soon as possible, thus reducing the chances of spread of Cholera which was declared a national crisis by the President of Zimbabwe. As observed by the HRT<sup>1</sup> the number of sewer burst reports has increased since the beginning of September and the response rate has been so slow.

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<sup>7</sup> City of Harare