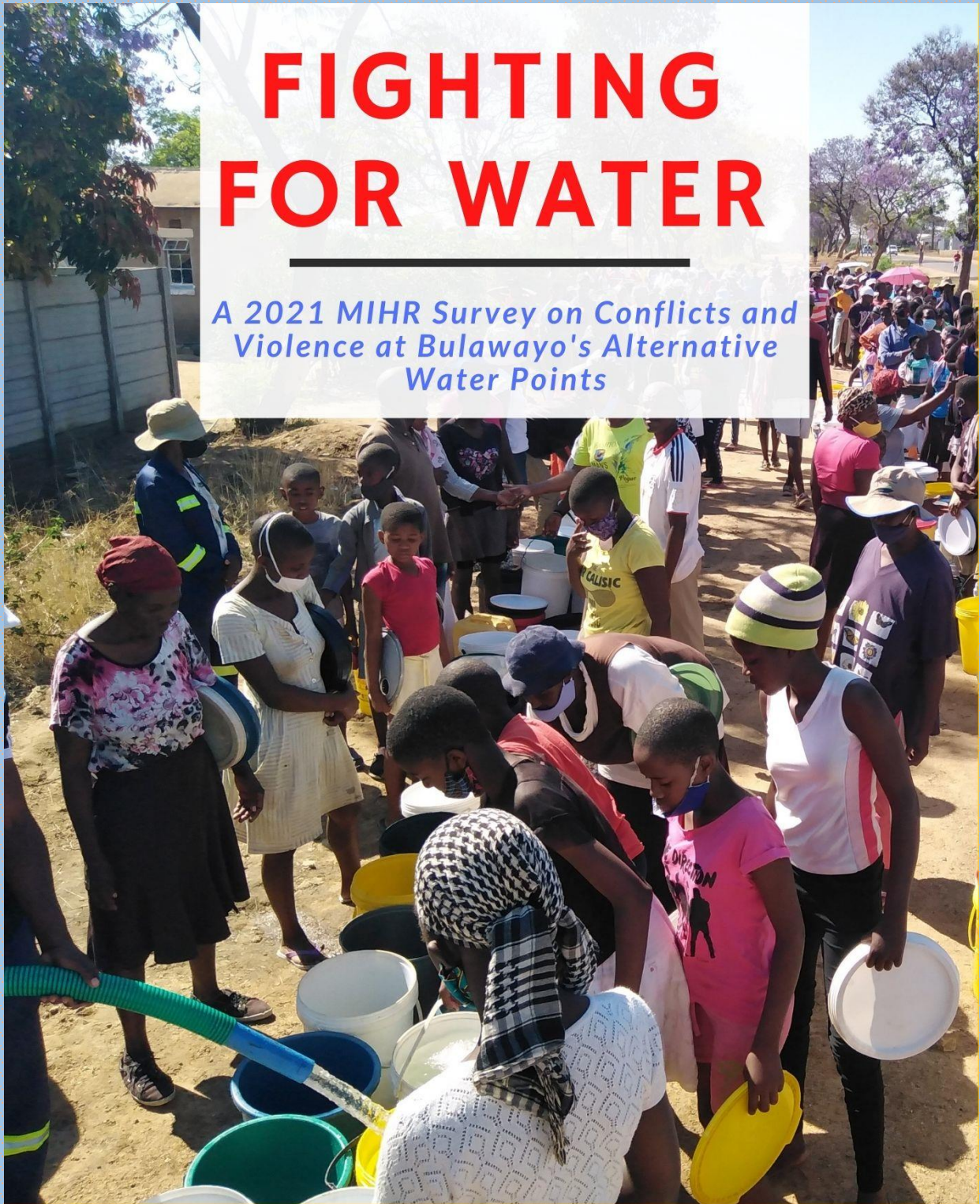


FIGHTING FOR WATER

*A 2021 MIHR Survey on Conflicts and
Violence at Bulawayo's Alternative
Water Points*



**“For years there were wars fought over oil; in a short time
there will be wars fought over water,”**

(US Vice President Kamala Harris 15 April 2021)

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1. Executive Summary

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all by the year 2030 as envisioned by Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG6) requires a holistic approach to eliminating all water access barriers that include distance, cost, infrastructure design and water related violence.

Water related conflicts and violence have been on the increase since 1900 and it is projected that due to acute water crisis to be faced by 2030, the world may begin experiencing inter-state and intra-state wars being fought over water.

In Zimbabwe, fresh water scarcity is worsening due to population growth, worsening climate change effects, increasing water demand by commercial activities and poor water management strategies. This water scarcity is resulting in localized conflicts and violence over water resources both in rural and urban areas. Nationally, as of the year 2020, an average of 7.4% rural households experienced violence at water points. Mashonaland Central (11.2%) had the highest prevalence of violence at water sources and Matabeleland South had the least (4.8%). Violence at water points was more prone in those areas where people spent more time queuing for water.

This survey which targeted Bulawayo women and girls' opinions on conflicts and violence at alternative water points in Bulawayo (Zimbabwe's Second Largest City located in the dry region of Matabeleland) shows that water conflicts and violence is also a feature in urban communities during water shedding times. According to the survey results most females are facing conflicts/violence at alternative water points with 73% having experienced insults, 66% pushing/shoving, 23% fights and 15% threats. The major perpetrators of conflict/violence being youths (young males 92% and young females 56%). The people who were the major victims were children (98%), young females (43%) and adult females (36%).

It is therefore critical for stakeholders in Bulawayo in particular and Zimbabwe in general to formulate gender inclusive strategies of ensuring access to clean and safe potable water by all. These strategies should be informed by consultations of women and girls since in Zimbabwe they are the major collectors of water for domestic purposes. Having gender inclusive access to water strategies during water stress times will therefore eliminate all forms of gender based violence at urban alternative water points such as boreholes, wells, water kiosks and water bowser queues.





2. Introduction

Conflicts around water are increasing in the headlines: clashes between farmers and herders in the Horn of Africa, disputes over large dam projects in Central Asia and the Nile River Basin, violence in the Lake Chad region, and state fragility in Iraq and Iran (driven at least in part by water issues). These examples show some of the many ways that conflict can arise around water and how water can trigger or exacerbate conflict, acting as a “threat multiplier”¹.

The world is staring at a deepening acute water crisis caused by worsening climate crisis, poor water management strategies, mis-governance, rapid industrialization, pollution and the burgeoning global human and species demographics. The 2021 World Water Development Report² notes that globally:

- Over 2 billion people live in countries experiencing water stress.
- An estimated 4 billion people live in areas that suffer from severe physical water scarcity for at least one month per year.
- About 1.6 billion people face ‘economic’ water scarcity, which means that while water may be physically available, they lack the necessary infrastructure to access that water.
- Climate change is likely to increase seasonal variability, creating a more erratic and uncertain water supply, thus exacerbating problems in already water-stressed areas and potentially generating water stress in places where it has not yet been a recurring phenomenon.
- Several of the world’s main aquifers are under increasing stress and 30% of the largest groundwater systems are being depleted.
- Water withdrawals for irrigation are the primary driver of groundwater depletion worldwide, accounting for an average of 69% in most countries and 95% in some developing countries.
- The world would face a 40% global water deficit by 2030 under a business-as-usual scenario.
- An estimated 80% of all industrial and municipal wastewater is released into the environment without any prior treatment, with detrimental effects on human health and ecosystems. This ratio is much higher in least developed countries, where sanitation and wastewater treatment facilities are grossly lacking.

As the global demand for water increases, so are the threats of water related intra-country and inter-country conflicts, violence and wars. As reiterated by United States Vice President Kamala Harris in April 2021, some analysts have since the year 2012 projected that “wars of the future will be fought over blue gold, as thirsty people, opportunistic politicians and powerful corporations battle for dwindling resources”³.

2.1 The Global Overview

In the year 2017, the United Nations Secretary General Mr Antonio Guterres warned the UN Security Council that by 2050 global demand for fresh water is projected to grow by more than 40 percent and at least a quarter of the world's population will live in countries with a "chronic or recurrent" lack of clean water. He further warned that *"Water, peace and security are inextricably linked, and without effective management of our water resources, we risk intensified disputes between communities and sectors and increased tensions among nations."*⁴

¹ <https://ecdpm.org/great-insights/complex-link-climate-change-conflict/water-scarcity-conflict/>

² <https://www.unwater.org/publications/un-world-water-development-report-2021/>

³ <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2012/8/26/risk-of-water-wars-rises-with-scarcity>

⁴ <https://www.voanews.com/science-health/un-chief-warns-serious-clean-water-shortages-2050>



The number of water related conflicts have been increasing over time as concluded by Levy and Sidel (2011)⁵ who observed the following trends:

Time Period in which conflict began	Number of Water Conflicts	Average Number per year	Number of violent conflicts and conflicts in the context of violence
1900 - 1959	22	0.37	Atleast 19
1960 - 1989	38	1.27	Atleast 23
1990 - 2007	83	4.61	Atleast 61

In 2018, the World Resource Institute warned that many countries of the world will face water related conflicts as droughts, water pollution and water demand are taking a strain on fresh water resources of the world. The Institute further reiterated that water has always been a key driver of conflicts and crises of the world observing that “Syria was not the first crisis driven by water scarcity – from ancient civilizations to conflicts in Darfur, water often plays a hidden role in instability.”⁶

Globally, intra and interstate water related conflicts have already been experienced in various parts of the world including Iraq, Bolivia, South Africa, India, Botswana, Mexico, parts of the US, Yemen, Egypt, Ethiopia, among others, where water related protests have been experienced in the recent past. Some case studies include:

(a) Iraq

In July 2018, thousands of citizens took to the streets protesting against their government and their frustrations mainly stemmed from a variety of problems that included poor service delivery, corruption and water rights. Many Iraq citizens lacked access to clean water, with more than 120,000 people hospitalized after drinking polluted water in Basra. The demonstrations turned violent and security forces used live ammunition, tear gas and water cannons to control the crowds. While protests eventually died down, they flared again across a number of cities in Iraq in October 2019 for the same reasons as before⁷. Water stress is unsustainably high in much of the Tigris-Euphrates Basin, including in Iraq, Turkey, Iran and Syria. The Tigris and Euphrates rivers account for more than 98% of all water used in Iraq. And there are further problems with the water that is available. Declining flows in the Tigris and Euphrates are allowing saltwater from the Persian Gulf to flow upstream, contaminating freshwater supplies in southern Iraq and ruining agricultural lands. Furthermore, Untreated sewage is released throughout Iraq into the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, further impacting water quality⁸.

(b) India

Drought conditions throughout India have sparked violent and nonviolent demonstrations and marches, leading to disputes between states over scarce water supplies, left urban dwellers without water, and forced rural inhabitants to flee their towns and villages. In Bengaluru, protesters rioted in 2016 after the Supreme Court ordered the state of Karnataka

⁵ Levy, B. S., & Sidel, V. W. (2011). Water rights and water fights: preventing and resolving conflicts before they boil over. *American journal of public health*, 101(5), 778–780. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2010.194670>

⁶ <https://www.wri.org/news/release-new-initiative-calls-urgent-action-water-and-security>

⁷ <https://www.wri.org/insights/we-predicted-where-violent-conflicts-will-occur-2020-water-often-factor>

⁸ [ending-conflicts-over-water.pdf \(wri.org\)](https://www.wri.org/ending-conflicts-over-water.pdf)

to release more water to downstream Tamil Nadu. In 2017, political conflict between the states of Madhya Pradesh (MP) and Gujarat over sharing of water from the Narmada River was accompanied by deadly protests in MP over insecure farm incomes made worse by drought. In 2019, about 50,000 farmers in Maharashtra staged a peaceful march on Mumbai over unmet water-related demands on government. Chennai, India's sixth-largest city, ran extremely low on water in 2019 following deficient rainfall in 2017 and 2018. Competition for access to scarce water supplies (which had to be trucked in) led to some violence.

(c) Nigeria

Water-related violence in Nigeria is responsible for more casualties than militant Islamist group Boko Haram. In the country's north, where the group has been waging war since 2010, they're also demanding the government provide clean water. Elsewhere, a lack of rain in their own grazing areas, is causing Muslim Fulani herders to move onto land owned by Christian farmers, leading to clashes⁹.

(d) Mali

In Mali, farmers and herders have been fighting over scarce water and land resources, against a backdrop of ethnic tensions, armed groups and population rise. In 2019, a combination of these factors led to mass killings in the Inner Niger Delta, a central Malian wetland. Government plans to build dams that may affect over a million farmers, herders and fishers in the Delta could make things worse¹⁰.

(e) Ethiopia – Egypt

Africa's longest river, the Nile — which flows through 11 African countries — is the source of most recent water tensions. Egypt and Sudan want to preserve colonial agreements drawn up by Britain that allocate the Nile's water to the two countries and also grant Egypt power to veto any river projects. However, in 2011 Ethiopia announced plans to construct a massive hydroelectric dam – the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. When Ethiopia announced in 2020 that it had started filling the dam with water from the Nile, Egypt cried foul, arguing that Ethiopia needed to comply with the colonial water treaties. Ethiopia, meanwhile, maintains it is entitled to the shared use of the Nile's water¹¹. Egypt has registered formal protests against the project¹². The wrangling has already led to verbal threats from policymakers on both sides and in the largely state-run media and Egypt threatened war against Ethiopia if it proceeded with the dam project.

(f) Tanzania – Malawi

Colonial water agreements have also led to a dispute over a shared lake between Tanzania and Malawi — known as Lake Nyasa to Tanzanians and Lake Malawi to Malawians. The discovery of oil and gas in 2011 brought an Anglo-German treaty signed in 1890 back to the fore. The treaty allows Malawi — which, back then, was a British protectorate under the

⁹ <https://www.newsecuritybeat.org/2017/08/water-stress-instability-violent-extremism-nigeria/>

¹⁰ <https://waterpeacesecurity.org/info/mali>

¹¹ <https://www.dw.com/en/opinion-to-avoid-water-conflicts-in-africa-stop-playing-the-colonial-card/a-56949419>

¹² <https://www.dw.com/overlay/media/en/the-grand-ethiopian-renaissance-dam-a-never-ending-saga/52002602/56949419>



name of Nyasaland — exclusive rights to use of the lake. However, Tanzania claims the lake should be a shared resource in accordance with international law¹³.

(g) Kenya – Uganda

In 2008, a dispute over a one-acre island in Lake Victoria fueled talk of war between Kenya and Uganda. The Kenya-Uganda dispute concerns ownership of the tiny but fishing-rich Mgingo Island in Lake Victoria - at 26,560 square miles, the world's biggest tropical lake and slightly larger than West Virginia. Uganda sent troops and police to the island and hoisted its national flag. Members of Kenya's parliament urged the Kenyan government to set up a naval base on the lake to "deal with external aggression." Negotiations between the two countries in March 2008, followed by Uganda's decision to lower its flag on the island, appeared to have cooled tempers for a while. But on May 12 Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni told the BBC that "the island is in Kenya and the waters are in [Uganda] ... one foot into the water and you are in Uganda." Museveni went on to say that soon no Kenyan would be allowed to fish in Ugandan waters. The Kenyan Parliament reacted angrily to the comments, with members criticizing Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki for stressing diplomacy as Uganda annexed what the parliament members insisted was Kenyan territory¹⁴.

(h) Central Africa (Cameroon – Chad – Niger – Nigeria)

Lake Chad has lost more than 90 percent of its water because of deforestation, climate change and bad policies. The lake sits on the borders of four nations: Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria. When Lake Chad's waters began to dwindle, a significant number of Nigerian refugees went to Cameroon. In the mid-1990s, Nigerians founded more than 30 Lake Chad villages in Cameroon. Tension rose between Nigeria and Cameroon when Nigeria established state control and public services in the Nigerian-populated villages. The two countries went to war in the 1990s, prompting the Lake Chad Basin Commission to move in and help negotiate a truce. The commission failed; the case then was turned over to the International Court of Justice, which in 2002 ruled in Cameroon's favor. Nigeria at first challenged the ruling, but in 2007 agreed to relinquish the territory. Many Nigerians have never forgiven their government for giving away "their" land¹⁵.

Satellite images reveal an unprecedented shrinking of the 677 biggest African lakes. This has intensified fears that water shortages could trigger new conflicts across a continent where more than 340 million people already have little access to safe drinking water.

2.2 The Zimbabwe Water Conflicts Overview

Fresh water scarcity in Zimbabwe's urban and rural communities has led to water related conflicts and violence especially targeting women, young women, the children, people with disabilities and the elderly. Water conflicts in Zimbabwe have always been a common feature especially in rural areas due to user rights. Svubure et al (2010) studied water conflicts in Masvingo Province's Manjirenji-Mkwesine irrigation water supply canal, where they established that 83% of the respondents have either witnessed or been involved in water related conflicts. Several issues were

¹³ <https://www.dw.com/en/opinion-to-avoid-water-conflicts-in-africa-stop-playing-the-colonial-card/a-56949419>

¹⁴ <https://www.dw.com/en/opinion-to-avoid-water-conflicts-in-africa-stop-playing-the-colonial-card/a-56949419>

¹⁵ <https://pulitzercenter.org/stories/diminishing-water-resources-threaten-peace>



identified as the sources of tension concerning the access and use of the irrigation water. Conflicts were identified between upstream and downstream farmers; and also between the irrigators and the water authorities. The major sources of conflict were associated with the illegal water diversions, followed by the theft of irrigation equipment. The shortage of the irrigation water and the resultant intense competition for it leading to access denial for certain stakeholder groups were also cited as sources of conflict. Tempering of water control and measuring devices installed on canal is another cause of conflict. Non-payment for water-related use was also identified as a cause of conflict¹⁶.

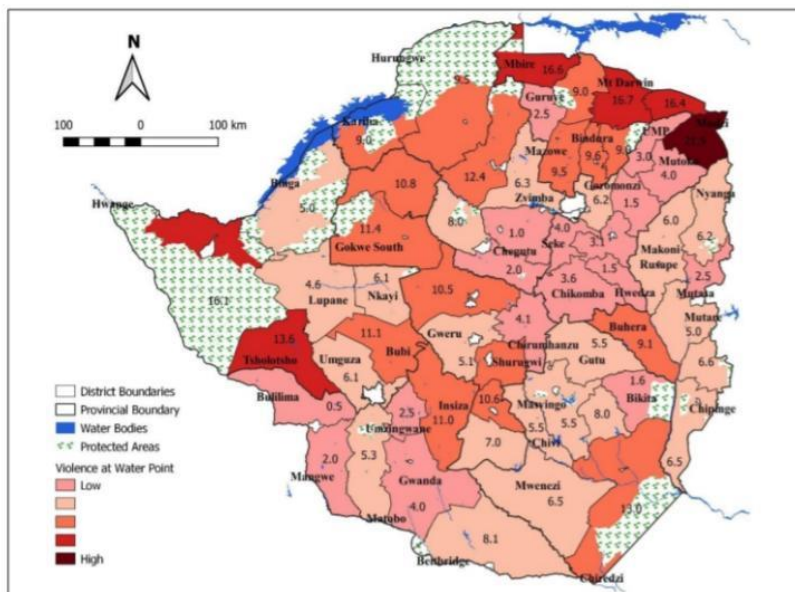
In analysis the Bulawayo water shortage problem, Musemwa (2006) argues that the Bulawayo water shortage problem is a deliberate water mismanagement and mis-governance phenomena that is aimed at 'disciplining the dissident city' which has and continues to be the epicentre of pro-democracy and anti-regime political organizing in Zimbabwe¹⁷.

Acute water shortages that were experienced in Mabvuku and Tafara high density suburbs of Harare in the year 2020 led to sextortion of women and girls¹⁸ as some unscrupulous officials demanded sexual favours in exchange for supplying potable water for the vulnerable communities¹⁹. These incidences are believed to be rampant in many parts of the country but they go unreported.

The 2020 Zimbabwe Rural Livelihoods Vulnerability Assessment Report (ZIMVAC) report²⁰ reveals that a national average of 7.4% rural households experienced violence at water points.

Mashonaland Central (11.2%) had the highest prevalence of violence at water sources and Matabeleland South had the least (4.8%). The survey further notes that the majority of provinces

Prevalence of Violence at Water Points by District



- Mudzi (21.9%), Mt Darwin (16.7%) and Mbire (16.6%) had the highest proportion of households that had experienced some form of violence at a water point.

¹⁶ <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/271763074> Water conflicts on the Manjirenji-Mkwazine irrigation water supply canal Masvingo province Zimbabwe

¹⁷ Musemwa, M. (2006). Disciplining a 'Dissident' City: Hydropolitics in the City of Bulawayo, Matabeleland, Zimbabwe, 1980-1994. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 32(2), 239-254. Retrieved April 29, 2021, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25065090>

¹⁸ <http://harare.opencouncil.co.zw/2020/12/16/sex-for-water-hawks-prey-on-mabvuku-women/>

¹⁹ <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2020/11/tiz-decries-sextortion-of-women-at-water-sources/>

²⁰ <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/WFP-0000119650.pdf>



where most households spent more than 1hour queuing for water also reported higher prevalence of violence at water sources.

2.3 Conclusion

Whilst globally there are a plethora of interventions documenting water conflicts and violence, in Southern Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular, poor documentation of water conflicts has minimalized the scope and extent of the problem. Documentation of localized intra country water conflicts and intercountry conflicts over cross boundary water territories is critical to informing and enhancing the appropriate state and non-state actors' interventions towards alleviating these conflicts.

As the demand for fresh and potable water increases at the backdrop of competing and conflicting social and economic interests and being propelled by the triple threat of climate change, mis-governance and pollution – the risk of water conflicts and wars also worsens.

Water is indeed not only a social or economic or cultural hydrological product – but globally water is a major human security issue as failure to manage it properly may lead to wars, extreme violence and even collapse of governments.



3 THE BULAWAYO STUDY

3.0 Rationale for the Study

In the year 2020, Bulawayo faced its worst water shortage problem so far with the City Council introducing a 144 hours long water rationing programme (cite). Many residents spent long hours queuing for water at alternative water points such as boreholes, water bowsers, water kiosks and open wells²¹. In some suburbs families were sleeping in queues in order to be able to access water²² where they risked many forms of conflict and violence that included sexual abuse and exploitation, physical abuse, verbal abuse, among others. There were rumours of 'water mafias' that were terrorising women and girls in some water points such as in Luveve suburb. Women from Bulawayo's high density and low income suburbs were the most vulnerable due to water scarcity²³. The 2020 Bulawayo water shortage was not only the worst in terms of water scarcity but also the number of casualties due to water contamination. In Luveve suburb 13 people died and 2000 were infected by a diarrhoeal disease due to water contamination²⁴ and in Makokoba and Mzilikazi suburbs, hundreds were treated for a diarrhoeal infection that was linked to water contamination²⁵.

The survey thus sought to ascertain the forms and scale of waterpoint conflict and violence that Bulawayo women encountered during the 2020 water shortage period. The survey findings are thus critical in informing efforts to ensure that barriers to access to clean and safe potable water such as waterpoint violence are eliminated by various concerned stakeholders.

3.1 Objectives of the Survey

This survey seeks to:

- (a) establish the forms and scale of conflicts and violence experienced by Bulawayo women as they access safe and potable water in alternative waterpoints during the Bulawayo water shortage period of the year 2020;
- (b) ascertain Bulawayo women's levels of knowledge on water related conflict mitigation and dispute resolution mechanism;
- (c) propose policy and implementation mechanisms that could be formulated by state and non-state actors to enhance women's full realization of the right to water as espoused in the Constitution of Zimbabwe and international law, by eliminating all forms of water related conflicts and violence.

3.2 Survey Scope and Methodology

Being informed by the findings of the 2020 Zimvac Rural Livelihoods Assessment Report which established that nationally the burden of fetching household cooking and drinking was on women in 80% of the households²⁶, this survey therefore targeted women from Bulawayo's high density – low income wards that were the worst affected by water shortage problems in the year 2020. The determination to target females only is also informed by the organization's observations during the 2020 water shortage period, where it was generally noted that the people who formed the most

²¹ <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-12-14-water-crisis-ravages-city-of-kings-bulawayo/>

²² <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-zimbabwe-water-drought-climate-change-idUSKBN23006T>

²³ <https://kubatana.net/2020/06/30/bulawayo-women-narrate-struggles-of-accessing-water/>

²⁴ <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-12-14-water-crisis-ravages-city-of-kings-bulawayo/>

²⁵ <https://www.chronicle.co.zw/another-diarrhoea-outbreak-hits-byo/>

²⁶ <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/WFP-0000119650.pdf>



water queues were females. Whilst, the 2020 Bulawayo water shortage problem affected everyone in the City, the survey recognizes that there are some wards that were worst affected. The areas that were scoped as being the worst affected by water shortage as evidenced by cases of people dying due to water contamination, diarrhoeal cases, longer months without water and people queuing for water at night were:

- Ward 8: Mzilikazi and parts of Makokoba suburbs
- Ward 14; Lobengula suburb
- Ward 15: Luveve
- Ward 18: Magwegwe suburb
- Ward 21: Sizinda and Tshabalala
- Ward 27: Pumula South and Habek suburbs
- Ward 28: Cowdray Park

In these areas, the survey purposively targeted women and young girls who were selected randomly. The survey used a representative population sampling method to determine the number of respondents per each area.

According to the 2012 Zimbabwe population census results, the 6 targeted wards have a total population of 99 819 females²⁷. With a 10% precision level and thus targeted a total of 100 respondents. Of the 100 targeted respondents, the survey further segmented them per ward using the average ward female population size as percentage of the total sample population as evidenced below:

Ward	Total Female Population	Ward Female population as percentage of all wards	Total number of respondents targeted
Ward 8	12 605	12.6%	13
Ward 14	11 114	11%	11
Ward 15	7 086	7%	7
Ward 18	12 324	12%	12
Ward 21	14 868	14.9%	15
Ward 27	17 040	17%	17
Ward 28	24 782	24.8%	25
TOTAL	99 819	100%	100

The data collection method used was a survey questionnaire that was administered by the researchers using a Virtual Platform (Kobo Collect). The research application allows to be used online and offline with uploading being made later. To eliminate the possibilities of manipulating or faking data, the researchers were working as a team and going to the same places at the same time. Uploading was being done daily after the data collection exercise for that day. The virtual survey questionnaire had questions being written first in English and then explained in IsiNdebele in order to ensure that the research team had a uniform understanding of the meaning of the questions. Pretesting of the survey tool was done twice with each pre-test targeting 20 people. The pre-testing was done in the wards that were not part of the targeted sample.

²⁷ ZIMSTAT, 2012 Population Census Report – Bulawayo Province



3.3 Limitations of the Survey study

- (a) The precision level is 10% and thus led to a lower sample size which may have a negative impact on the reliability and validity of the study;
- (b) The survey relied mainly on the random individual interviews and did not use other validating research methods such as focus group discussions and key informant interviews in order to triangulate some of the claims made;
- (c) The survey was done internally by the implementing organization which may infer biases to the findings and the recommendations. Should it have been done by an external consultant such bias was going to be limited.

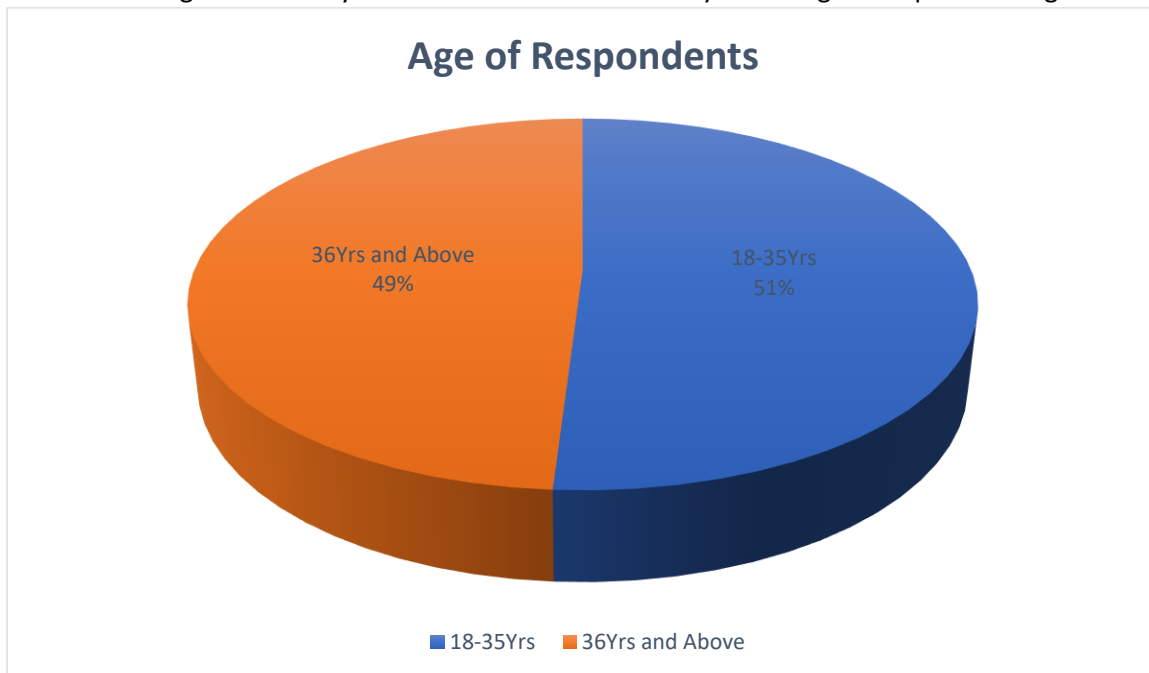
3.4 Definition of terms

- 3.4.1 **Conflict:** a social situation in which a minimum of two actors or parties strive to acquire at the same moment an available set of scarce resources. Conflicts are an unavoidable part of social change in all societies²⁸.
- 3.4.2 **Violence:** the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation.²⁹
- 3.4.3 **Alternative water point:** an alternative source of water different from where people always/ordinarily get water for their households needs. An alternative water point is a point B water source from the ones people use often.

4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Respondents' Age and Residency

There is a near balance in the age aggregation of the respondents as 51% of the respondents were between the age of 18 – 35 years and 49% were above 36 years of age as depicted in Figure 1 below:



²⁸ https://www.pseau.org/outils/ouvrages/crs_water_conflict.pdf

²⁹ <https://www.who.int/violenceprevention/approach/definition/en/>



Figure 1: Age of respondents

The respondents age distribution is in-line with the City’s demographic trends as depicted in in 2012 population census report where there is a higher proportion of young people compared to the elder population.

The respondents were drawn from 7 different Bulawayo suburbs which were among the worst water shortage areas during the year 2020.

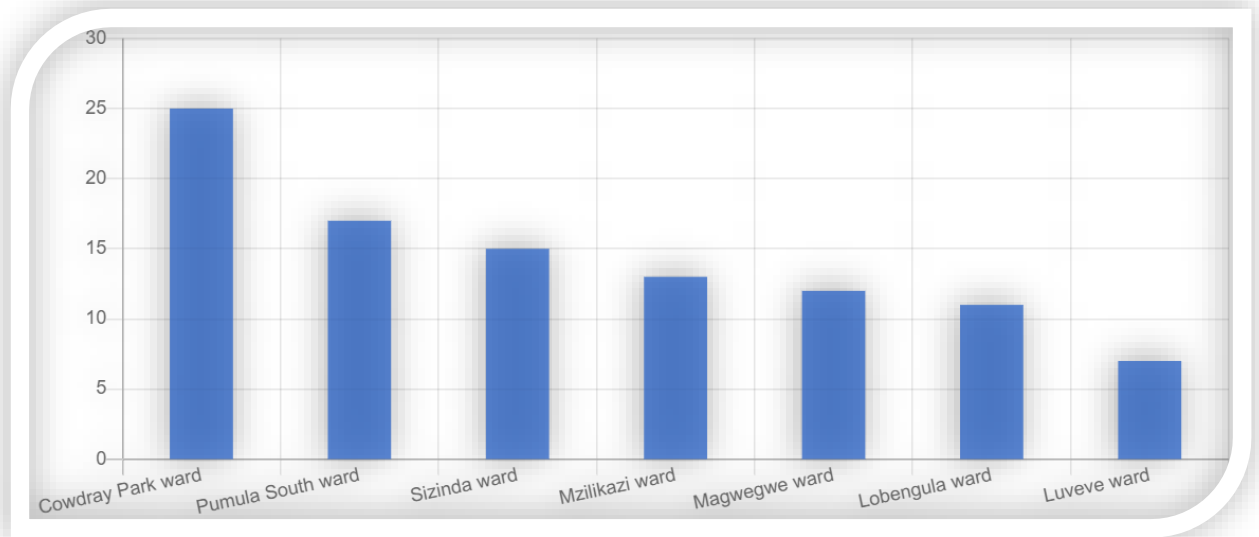


Figure 2: Respondents' Residence

Value	Frequency	Percentage
Cowdray Park ward	25	25%
Pumula South ward	17	17%
Sizinda ward	15	15%
Mzilikazi ward	13	13%
Magwegwe ward	12	12%
Lobengula ward	11	11%
Luveve ward	7	7%

4.2 Alternative Water Points Mainly Used in 2020

The majority of the respondents, 47% used boreholes as alternative water-points. The boreholes used are mainly community owned assets and in some cases they are privately owned by the churches and community gardens. Open wells were the second most used (31%) and the majority of them are unsafe open wells dug by the residents in bushy areas. Some wells developed due to major pipe bursts which have not been attended for a long time.



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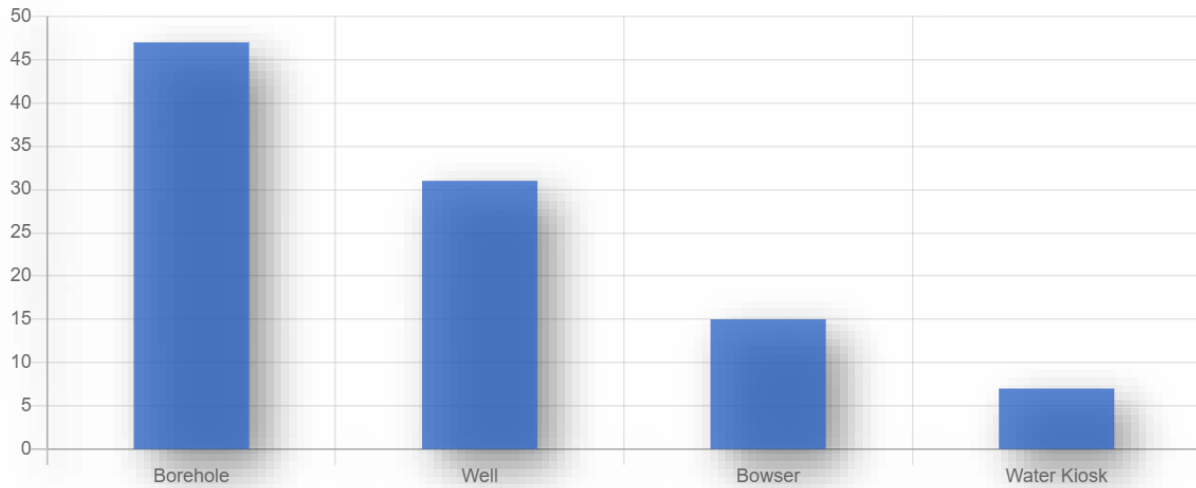


Figure 3: Alternative Water-Points mainly used in 2020

Value	Frequency	Percentage
Borehole	47	47%
Well	31	31%
Bowser	15	15%
Water Kiosk	7	7%

Some of the respondents relied on Bowsers (15%) which are the mobile water carrying vehicles which were mainly provided by the Bulawayo City Council for free at scheduled intervals. Water kiosks were the least used alternative water-points (7%). This may be attributed to the fact that Water Kiosks are a new phenomenon in the City and there are few of them at central venues within the wards. Water Kiosks are facilities that are erected within a community with a Jojo Tank and taps and the Council water container will periodically fill-up then Jojo tank for residents to access water.

Most respondents from Sizinda and Cowdray Park lamented the use of unsafe open wells as the only alternative water points available in their communities. The wells are dug in swampy (wetland) areas. Some in Magwegwe and Sizinda admitted that there are incidences where either there is a water burst or some community youths deliberately burst a Council water mains and a 'well' is established there to allow residents to get water. In Cowdray Park respondents had fears that their wells may be contaminated as residents are using Blair toilets. In Pumula South respondents explained that they wake up as early as 4am to queue for water at the borehole and sometimes they get from open wells. Some residents resort to buying water at ZAR5 per 20 litre bucket.



Figure 4: Water Bowser queue in Sizinda



Figure 5: Bulawayo Residents wait to collect water at a well



Figure 6: Residents getting water from a borehole



Figure 7: An evening water kiosk queue

4.3 Forms of Conflicts/Violence Witnessed/Observed/Heard

The question sought to establish the forms of conflict and violence that the respondents witnessed/observed or heard of having taken place in the alternative water-points as depicted in Figure 4 below:

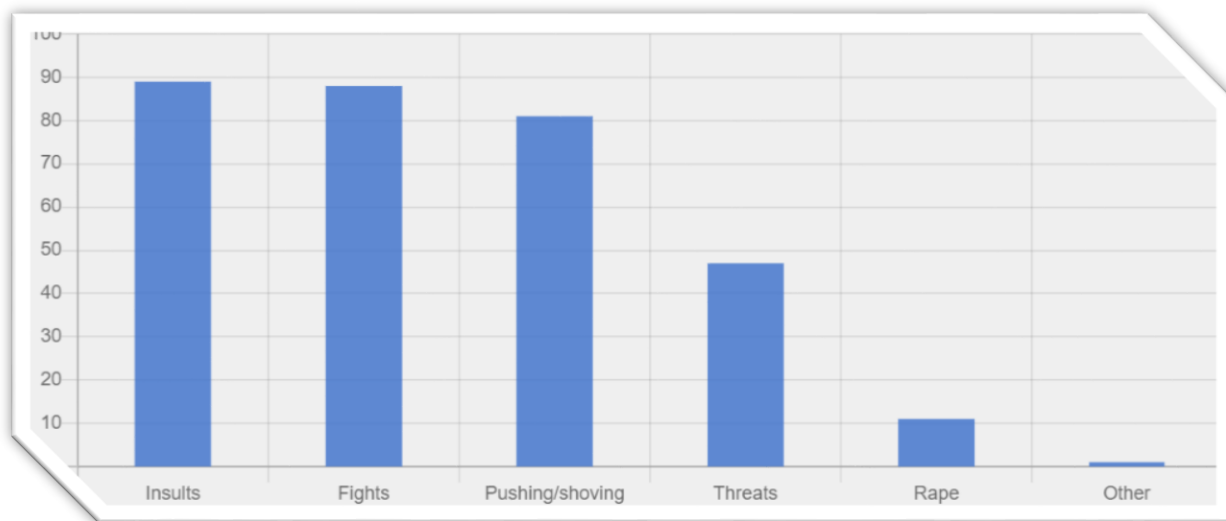


Figure 8: Forms of Conflicts Witnessed/Observed/Heard of

VALUE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Insults	89	89%
Fights	88	88%
Pushing/Shoving	81	81%
Threats	47	47%
Rape	11	11%
Other	1	1%

Most of the respondents witnessed/observed/heard of insults being hurled (89%), fights (88%) and pushing/shoving (81%) especially at boreholes and bowser queues where they spent long hours waiting for water. In Pumula South’s Habek section and in Luveve, some respondents (11%) said they heard incidences of young girls that were raped going to collect water at local borehole sites. Lobengula respondents said the conflicts are experienced both at the borehole and water kiosk and sometimes people fight and injure each other due to the long queues in these alternative water sources. Sizinda respondents said there are usually fights and insults exchanged at the boreholes due to long hours people take queuing as the boreholes run dry. Mzilikazi respondents said they get water from the Makokoba borehole and some Makokoba residents are sometimes violent and at times they find you having woken very early and got in the front of the queue and they remove you because you are from another suburb.

4.4 Forms of Conflicts/Violence Personally Experienced

This question sought to establish those forms of conflicts/violence which the respondents personally experienced – which meant that which was done to them. By this question, the survey seeks to gauge the actual incidences of conflict/violence which the respondents suffered from.

Respondents from Mzilikazi, said they use boreholes in Makokoba and Thokozani and they meet violent youths and men who sometimes deny them the right to collect water.

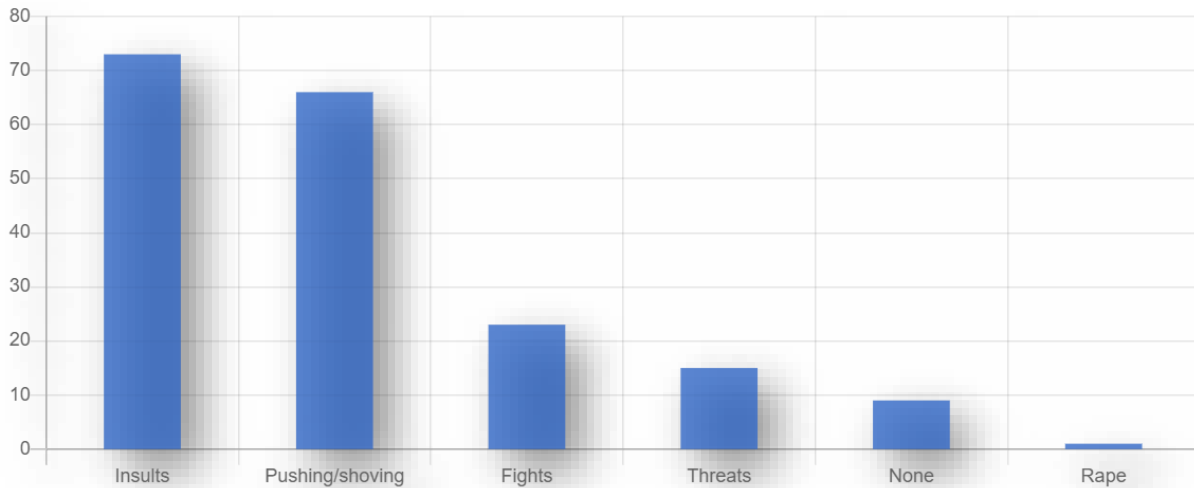


Figure 9: Forms of Conflict/Violence Personally Experienced

VALUE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Insults	73	73%
Pushing/Shoving	66	66%
Fights	23	23%
Threats	15	15%
None	9	9%
Rape	1	1%

As depicted in Figure 5 above, the majority of the respondents experienced insults (73%) and 66% experienced pushing and shoving.

Compared to Figure 4 earlier presented the personal incidences of conflicts/violence at alternative water-points are slightly less compared to what was heard/observed or witnessed.

4.5 Main Perpetrators and Victims of Conflicts/Violence

The majority of responded identified youths as the main perpetrators of conflicts in alternative water points sites. Both male youths (92%) and female youths (56%) were implicated in water-point violence. Adult females though they frequented these alternative water points a lot they did not contribute much to conflicts/violence (31%) which is similarly to the adult males.

As depicted in Figure 6 below children, young females and adult females (98%, 43% and 36% respectively). Considering the kind of conflicts/violence that was observed (Insults 89%, Fights 88%, pushing/shoving 81% and threats 47%) there is a concern in children’s exposure to violent language which inculcates wrong values and norms in them. If no rehabilitative or refor measures are taken, the children may eventually be foubd repeating/emulating these bad water-point behaviour and linguistic behaviour in schools abd play spaces thus nurturing bullying.

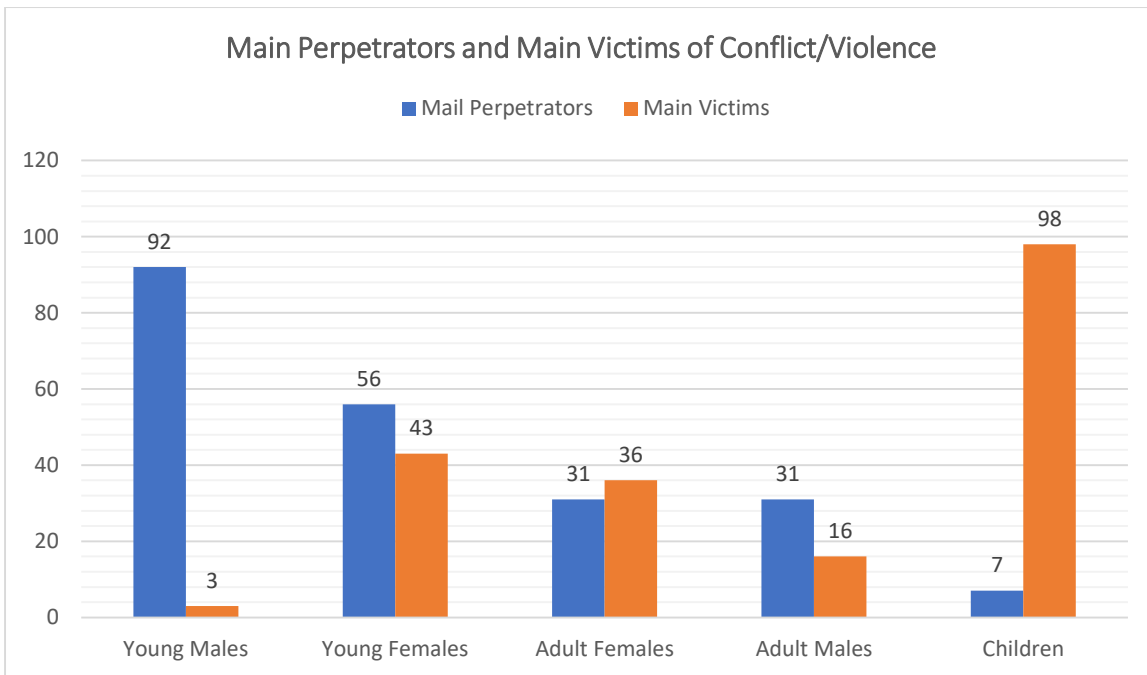


Figure 10: Main Perpetrators and Victims of Conflicts/Violence

The survey established through indepth probing that the young males were the main perpetrators of conflicts and violence even though they were the least in terms of numerical numbers in these alternative water points. In Luvuvu respondents spoke of the presence of 'water mafias' who travelled in small groups of not more than 10 but would bully everyone found at the borehole queue. Some elderly people from Luvuvu also complained that when they send young children to the boreholes, the children are bullied and at times denied the right to collect water. In Magwegwe, respondents explained that at the borehole that is near Konron shops, young men would come and abuse young girls and children queuing for water at night, which prompted adult males to start drawing water instead. However, the adult males also were at times subject to the bullying tactics of the young males.

4.6 Knowledge of Water-Point Conflict/Violence Management Mechanisms

The question sought to establish if the respondents were aware of any mechanisms that can be used locally to resolve water related conflicts or violence.

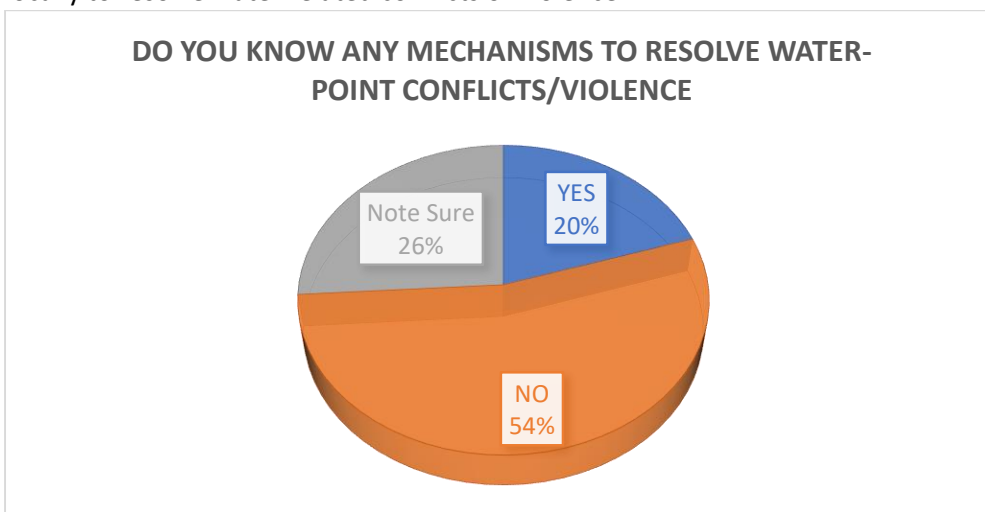


Figure 11: Knowledge of any Water-Point Conflict Resolution Mechanism

Most respondents (54%) were not aware of any mechanism to resolve water point conflicts/violence, 26% were not sure and only 20% were aware of the existence of such mechanism.

The 20% who claimed to be aware of the water point conflict resolution mechanisms mentioned other residents stopping the fights (12), reporting to police (4), local leaders intervening (3) and pastors quelling the conflicts (1)

Mechanism	Frequency
Stop the ones fighting (make peace)	12
Pastors quell the noise and encourage respect	1
Report to police offices	4
Leaders control water queues	3

The responses in the table above on the mechanisms show that there is little awareness of formal local conflict resolution mechanism. This could be due to the absence of such mechanisms as conflict management committees, the absence of water point committees and residents committees not playing an active role in managing water queues.









In Mzilikazi, some respondents explained the Bulawayo Water Action (BUWA) team from Makokoba is actively involved in controlling queues at the boreholes and thus ensuring peaceful resolution of conflicts.

4.7 Suggestions to alleviate water-point conflicts and violence in the future

Suggestion	Frequency
Solve the water problem to ensure that water should be provided everyday at the individual household taps	31
Drill more boreholes to reduce congestion in the current boreholes	37
Provision of more water bowsers so as to reduce congestion and waiting time	11
There should be specific water-points for the elderly and the vulnerable such as people with disabilities and separate for youths, etc	8
Police/security at alternative water points to deal with issues of violence and bullying	7
There should be many alternative water points in each suburb	6
Councilor and community leaders should visit water points that are congested and address the people encouraging peace	3
Water bowser should come during the day and not at nights	3
Council should fix all water bursts on time	2



5. Recommendations

-  Residents need to be educated on responsible sharing of water sources as well as realizing their collective power to non-violently resist and defend themselves from any form of violence, abuse and bullying;
-  There is need to design mechanism to protect residents from violence and human rights abuses during water emergencies such as acute water shortage times through enhanced security and protection;
-  Capacity building of water-point committees and local peace/conflict management committees, residents associations, local social movements and local leaders on conflict management is critical;
-  During water shortage times, there should be an increase in the number of safe alternative water-points in order to minimize conflicts and reduce queues;
-  Conflict management and peacebuilding needs to be integrated in all service delivery concerns;
-  Gender inclusive water management strategies during water shortage times should involve the voice of women, girls, people with disabilities and the elderly as they face peculiar vulnerabilities when accessing water;
-  Child sensitivity is critical to ensuring the protection of the rights of children as they access water at alternative water sources;
-  Water security should be imbedded in water policies and in all water source infrastructural development initiatives.

6. Conclusion

Safe, clean and potable water is a fundamental human rights as espoused in Section 77(a) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe. While in urban areas like City of Bulawayo, water should be available at household level, attimes due to water shortages, the local authorities are forced to institute phased water rationing schedules. During the water shedding times, residents access water in alternative water points. It is thus fundamentally important to ensure that access to the right to water in these alternative water points is not impeded by acts of violence. Local authorities, government departments, civic society and the residents need to work together to manage conflicts and curb all forms of waterpoint violence in Zimbabwe in order to enhance the protection and promotion of human rights and freedoms. Provision of water service delivery during water shortage times should be done under the auspices of service delivery during emergencies. Considering that in Zimbabwe water collection is a feminized task, curbing water violence and conflicts also enhances the enjoyment of human rights and freedoms by women and aids in reducing gender based violence.