



The Journal of the Britain Zimbabwe Society

Harare Wetlands

Liam Brickhill learns about the wildlife living close to the capital – but fears for its future

We are standing in a marshy wetland, just after dawn, and Jimmy Muropa is explaining the backstory to the scientific name of one of the myriad summer day-flowers around us.

‘It’s actually named after three family members,’ he says, plucking a stem and holding up an ink-blue three-petaled *Commelina* flower, before expounding on what motivated the Linnean Latin naming of this pretty little flower. ‘Two of them were famous botanists, but the third died young, hence we have two bright petals, and one small, faded one.’

We are in Monavale *vlei*, one of seven Ramsar Sites (wetlands of international importance: see: <https://www.ramsar.org>) in Zimbabwe, and the only one actually inside a city: Harare, the capital. Jimmy is Monavale’s full-time scout and conservation officer.

There is no stem or leaf here that is a stranger to him, every sound known and named, the movements of small life, the birds, the insects, their habits, their characters. I stand squelch-booted in the mire, and listen. It has rained here recently, and a lot, but it is not raining now, though the thick low cloud threatens to spill at any moment.

Bushpigs and eagles

As Jimmy walks, he describes a bushpig family that lives here, led by a formidable patriarch. Jimmy tells us at what times and where they may be seen. I consider the boar’s hairy bulk, that glinting tusk, and am glad he is not here, and now. Jimmy knows not just the bushpigs that live on the Monavale wetlands, but even specific, individual birds, leading us along a path that meanders into a corner of a neighbouring golf course reclaimed by the vleigrass, and fretted with eucalyptus trees, wherein sits a Long Crested Eagle Jimmy knows as a friend.

As if on cue, the eagle drops wingtucked from its perch and emerges from the reeds with talons clutched around a marsh vole, completing the show.

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Monavale is broad, flat and busy with grasses, shrubs and herbs in their full midsummer bloom, every growing thing is a shining, fluorescent, electric green in the flat grey light of an overcast morning. The wetland is bounded on two sides by low hills, trees clumped about the higher areas like so much bunched broccoli. To the south, distant traffic oozes down the Bulawayo road, and beyond is the National Sports Stadium and the National Heroes’ Acre with its hilltop monument spired pinsharp and faintly coruscant against a sky widespread with cumulus raincloud.

From every direction there is birdcall, sharp sweet notes sounding over the faint susurrus of winds that set the meadowgrasses to dancing. Visible on the eastern horizon is the looming rectangular smudge of the Standard Bank building – the tallest building in Zimbabwe – and Harare’s Central Business District, around three kilometres away.

A protected area

The entire Monavale Ramsar site covers some 594 hectares, of which 34 are specially protected.

Despite being so close to the city centre, it is bursting with life. There are 36 species of grass, and countless other plants providing a home for almost 250 types of birds. There are otters, mongoose, duiker here, 16 reptile species and seven amphibians, including the endangered giant bullfrog.

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Every few metres we walk, Jimmy stops, listens, and tells us which birds are calling, where, and why. We spot a black coucal, and there are yellow-mantled widowbirds, warblers, bishops and croaking cisticola, their tiny round bodies perched and bending the long grass stems.

As we watch an Amur falcon wheel overhead, sooty wings sharp against the sky like two wharncliffe blades, a cuckoo finch calls behind us, bright gold against the green backdrop – and now here's a yellow-throated longclaw, found by its call, and there flies a pin-tailed wydah, coat-tails impossibly long and billowing as he flaps and prances to impress a mate.

Jimmy walks here every day, among these birds, the swaying grasses, this place always and never the same.

He records biodiversity and bird sightings, helps to run an indigenous nursery on site, and engages directly with the community around the wetland – those who use the paths across it as suburban short-cuts, those who cultivate maize on the far reaches of the *vlei*, the basket-weavers already busy in their camp amid the elephant grass beyond Avondale stream, which curves like an elbow through the marsh.

Jimmy works to ensure that all this can coexist, and somehow the wetland can still be protected even as it is utilised: that the ordinary people of this community, and this city, have a stake in things.

He regularly leads schoolchildren on birdwalks here and in other places, such as Mabvuku, reconnecting them to the natural world around them. His work is vital to Harare's water security in a future of changing seasons, rising temperatures, and an expanding city.

A wetland city

Harare is a wetland city, a city built upon a great, earthy sponge, a watershed from which flow the Manyame, Gwebi, Mukuvisi, Umwindisi, and Mazowe rivers. Harare's open, grassy areas are seasonally inundated by the summer rains, replenishing groundwater supplies even as they store and purify water, reduce siltation, and mitigate the effects of climate change as a carbon sink.

The rich biodiversity of life here is brimful and even spilling over the sides into the advancing suburbs. As we are leaving, we drive past a catfish walking on its fins through the run-off pooled at the

roadside and sucking open-mouthed at the morning air, like the Devonian progenitor of humanity stepping out of the primordial sea.

And then you look up, and there's a Durawall, a mealie patch, a petrol station. Harare is encroaching on these wetlands, concreting over them, even as it desperately needs to conserve them.

Harare's wetlands are also its water source. The rivers that begin here flow into Lake Chivero, from which the city gets its water, and the wetlands also play a key role in replenishing the groundwater that feeds Harare's boreholes.

Without the wetlands, Harare would be entirely reliant on summer rainfall.

Zimbabwe is a signatory to the Ramsar Convention, and there is both constitutional protection for environmental rights and specific legislation for the protection of wetlands, but neither are fully enforced and half of Harare's wetlands have already disappeared, many of them within the last decade. The result is a water crisis in the city.

A brutally extractive industry

Climate change is not a future threat in Zimbabwe – it is already here.

Harare is vulnerable. Siltation, a direct result of wetland destruction, has already lowered Lake Chivero's capacity by at least a fifth, and there is massive over-abstraction of groundwater as both rainfall and temperature become more erratic.

Much of the original wetland area has been turned to urban cultivation – a food security strategy for the city's poor. There are also housing developments of varying legality, their construction accompanied by murky talk of land barons and money to be made.

It is important, here, to maintain a distinction between those who use the wetlands as a matter of survival, and powerful elites who exploit them as a means to profit, engaged in activities on a far greater, and more destructive scale.

Perhaps most infamous of these developments is the Long Cheng Plaza Mall in Belvedere: hundreds of thousands of tonnes of concrete, glass and plastic shaped for commerce and sitting on top of what was once a gazetted wetland, about one and a half kilometres, as the Longclaw flies, from Monavale.

The mall was built by Chinese company Anhui Foreign Economic Construction Corporation, which also maintains diamond mining interests in partnership with Zimbabwe's military, construction going ahead in 2013, at a cost of more than \$200 million,



A blue Commelina: the Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus, who formalised the modern system of naming organisms, picked the name in honour of the Dutch botanists Jan and Caspar Commelijn, using the two large showy petals of Commelina communis to symbolise them. (See page 1.)

Photograph © Liam Brickhill

despite protests from residents, legislators and the Environmental Management Agency.

The connection to the mining industry is surely no coincidence. Is there any industry as brutally extractive as mining?

All that mineral wealth skulking underground like a curse, and all you need to do to get it is ignore the obvious blessings of the living green earth above it, all you need pay for it is your soul.

Outside Harare, while deforestation is serious and widespread in the communal areas, it is the mines that are really threatening Zimbabwe's wild places.

Even as all good sense urges the need for a radical shift in our relationship to nature as a way to mitigate and adapt to a changing climate, the Mavuradonha hills are being strip-mined, Chimanimani's rivers are being silted for gold, and there is coal prospecting within Hwange National Park, ostensibly the centre-piece of Zimbabwe's protected lands.

Invictus Energy, an Australian company searching for oil and gas in Zimbabwe, will start drilling the country's first exploration wells in the Muzarabani area in June this year. Because that is what the world needs right now: oil, gas, coal, and fat bonuses for executives.

Last summer I visited Umfurudzi National Park,

one hundred and thirty kilometres northeast of Harare, arriving in the middle of a storm that raised the Mazowe River a clear three metres. Near the park entrance a goliath mine scaffold looms gothic over the landscape.

The river valley beyond is as it ever was, old-growth miombo woodland in full resplendence, and we were stricken with car trouble while exploring the park, but gifted in return the endless kindness of Zimbabwean rural people. Will this place, that kindness, survive what is coming?

'It's an urgent situation'

If anything, the survival of Harare's wetlands is even more tenuous. In early February, the Harare Wetlands Trust held a press conference, ecologist Dr Rob Cunliffe making clear the gravity of the challenges faced by the capital's wetlands.

'It's an urgent situation,' he said. 'Day after day, stand by stand, development continues. If we continue as usual, it's going to be a disaster for the city. By 2030, we can expect the remaining extent of wetlands to be gone, covered with development.'

It is not too late for action. These wetlands have a remarkable resilience and an ability to regenerate, just as the veldt and forest follows the raging wildfire with tender green shoots and new life.

Monavale is the best established example of the ability of wetlands to bounce back.

'We are confident that restoration of wetlands is a possibility,' says Cunliffe. 'This is a long term process that will have a direct positive impact on water supply to the city, making it more attractive to live in and more resilient to climate change.'

A liveable, inclusive future

Harare needs an integrated, indigenous system for wetland management.

It will not do to fence and guard these places. Conservation by means of exclusion is no sustainable method. If there is a solution, perhaps Jimmy Muropa comes close to embodying it, with his enviable ability to marry finegrained, indigenous knowledge systems and local context with straightlined and systematic western science.

Jimmy does not just know the birds, plants and animals of Harare's wetlands. He knows the people too.

A liveable future for the city must include them all.

Liam Brickhill is a Harare-based freelance journalist.

Building Peace in Zimbabwe Through Peace Clubs

Don Rowe describes an educational initiative in Zimbabwe

In 2015, I was a trustee of Friends of Hlekweni (FoH) – a Quaker charity originally set up to support the Friends Rural Service Centre at Hlekweni, just outside Bulawayo.

By 2015, the centre had closed and FoH reoriented itself to support four peri-urban schools in the area, including Samathonga Primary on the site of the Hlekweni Training Centre. As part of a new five-year plan, we decided to try to introduce a peace-building strand into the schools we were supporting.

I've had a long-standing professional interest in values education, including various forms of peace education.

I discovered that a common approach across Southern and East Africa is to run peace clubs in schools. We already knew of the peace clubs in Pietermaritzburg led by fellow Quaker, Marie Odendaal of the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVPZ), KwaZulu-Natal.

Learning to 'do' peace

Students join the clubs as volunteers, learn about peace and conflict and are taught conflict resolution skills. They become ambassadors for peace in school, at home and in the community. The importance of providing opportunities to learn about and 'do' peace during the formative teenage years can't be underestimated, but since most students in Zimbabwe do not go on to secondary education, primary school peace clubs are at least as important as secondary ones.

The effectiveness of the peace clubs in schools project in Pietermaritzburg has been evaluated by Dorothy Moyo, who is a member of the Alternatives to Violence Project Zimbabwe, co-written with Professor Geoff Harris of the International Centre for Non-violence, Durban University of Technology (Moyo, 2020). The study cites much evidence of pervasive violence in the lives of South African schoolchildren, at home, at school and in the community. It argues that most children do not come across alternative ways of solving conflicts:

Homes and communities do not model or provide training in peaceful methods of resolving conflicts. The violent ways of handling conflicts which are practised teach learners that violence is normal and appropriate. Learners bring this 'education' to school, along with their anger and frustration, and vent it on others.

The evaluation study conducted interviews with learners, school principals and teachers associated with peace clubs. Findings were clear: that peace clubs can offer students a world-view not limited to the notion that survival depends on the use of force and that, long-term, there are better ways to healthy, peaceful schools and successful communities which respect human rights.

In the peace clubs, learners can learn in new ways because of the different atmosphere of peace clubs, which are supportive, encourage sharing between members, are

values-rich, and draw on various forms of active learning.

They give learners new skills in handling conflicts at a personal level and in offering mediation skills to use both in school and at home. As the report puts it:

At almost all schools, learners indicated that peace clubs provided them with a safe and confidential platform where they could share their experiences without fear of being judged or censured. They felt safe to tell their stories of anger, violence, drugs and alcohol that are rife in their homes and communities. For most learners, there was no alternative place for such sharing.

Promoting peace

We decided to pursue the idea of promoting peace clubs in the Bulawayo area. The first step was to broach the proposal with Samathonga Primary School, on the site of the former Hlekweni Rural Service Centre – our original school. The suggestion was greeted enthusiastically, and a pilot peace club was successfully started.

The following year, 2016, I travelled to Zimbabwe with Lee Taylor, clerk of the trustees of FoH. With peace clubs, we found we were pushing at an open door – there were already some schools with them. These were schools run by the Brethren in Christ Church (BICC), which is closely allied to the Mennonites and who, like Quakers, strongly identify as Peace Churches. (The Mennonites have promoted a range of curriculum materials for use in peace clubs and these are available on <https://mcc.org/learn/more/peace-clubs>.)

We were able to establish and financially support an active network of eight primary schools, led locally by a member of BICC's social agency, Compassionate and Development Services (CDS).

FoH not only funded the network but also supplied an American textbook to all these schools called 'Creating the Peaceable School'.

Very importantly, in our view, we paid for the teachers running the clubs to be trained in conflict resolution skills by Alternatives to Violence Zimbabwe (AVPZ). AVPZ had only recently been set up by Bulawayo Quakers, also with financial help from FoH.

We were delighted with the enthusiastic response from the schools. At a peace clubs conference the following year, one head teacher bravely confessed that the children in her peace club had taught her a valuable lesson:

They have developed communication skills which have made them able to approach me with their views, concerns and queries. All of them know me for my black rod which I would step out of my office and brandish to threaten for discipline. Now I have stopped that after they made me see that I was being violent.

In another school, a senior teacher reported that:

...transformation of bullies who joined the peace club has been a major win. This was one of our biggest problems. We now have many teachers who would like some training so that they are more confident as facilitators.

In 2018, the opportunity arose to induct some secondary

schools, in Matobo district, south of Bulawayo, into running peace clubs.

Five schools were in the first tranche and then, with grants from Quakers in Britain, and working with our partners in Zimbabwe, twenty more schools were inducted.

The appetite amongst Zimbabwean teachers has been huge despite the immense difficulties and pressures they are facing. The basic conflict resolution training provided free by AVPZ – funded by FoH – has been welcomed and several teachers have now come back for more and have progressed through the three levels to become fully-fledged AVP trainers themselves.

None of this would have been possible without the permission of the education authorities. There is always a district inspector at induction days. One of them wrote about the value of peace clubs as he saw it:

I have been monitoring school children's positive behaviour in the pilot schools compared to those that have not been inducted. There is a huge difference. There is need to induct more schools, so as to inculcate positive peace and friendship value to our future generations.

Facilitators

From the beginning, AVPZ has greatly strengthened its team of facilitators.

Some of these have graduated from the Peace and Conflict Studies programme at Durban University of Technology which is led by Professor Geoff Harris, also a Quaker. In this way, AVPZ is steadily increasing its capacity and reach. In the last year or so AVP, with funding from FoH, courses have been run for young people, for NGO personnel, for community groups, for penal officers, and gender-related courses provided for both women and men. Some courses are now being offered at a distance from Bulawayo.

Endemic violence

Violence is endemic in Zimbabwe, but I see signs that cultural change is occurring. The 2013 new constitution, which guarantees political and civil rights and limits and is closely modelled on the UN Convention of Human Rights was approved in a referendum by 95 per cent of those who voted.

Under the constitution, 'cruel and degrading punishments' became unlawful – but, in the teaching profession, old habits die hard. In 2016, a mother took a teacher to court for cruelly beating her grade 1 daughter, with a length of rubber hose.

The High Court ruled such punishment was unconstitutional and, subsequently, in 2018, an Act of Parliament made it a criminal offence. Similarly, the corporal punishment of juveniles in the justice system was banned in 2019.

This, as I see it, represents an important cultural shift, which peace clubs and alternative to violence training are reinforcing through providing teachers with new skills and non-violent disciplinary methods, and empowering students to work for more humane and peaceful communities.

The opportunities which each teacher has to train many members of the next generation, make them very important 'multipliers'.

The model we have worked on in Zimbabwe is to provide a hard copy of a manual for teachers but also to offer free basic training from AVPZ in conflict resolution. This gives teachers hands-on experience of the skills and approaches capable of transforming their schools. They can see at first hand its potential. Recently the evaluations of a teacher course included the following comments:

- It was life-changing.
- It was motivating.
- It is very educational and healing and it really changes a person for the better.

Local contexts

It is not sustainable to continue to ship out a textbook written for a completely different setting, so working with two colleagues in Zimbabwe, I have spent the last year working on a peace clubs manual specifically aimed at Zimbabwe teachers and pupils.

It includes locally contextualised versions of material which is now standard in conflict resolution and mediation courses, but the manual is broader than many current curricula, including, for example, a chapter on human rights and the importance of the constitution in protecting civil rights.

All this is why, when FoH reluctantly took the decision to close its operations, my feeling was that this is the wrong time to pull the plug on these two important peace-building projects.

As I have tried to show, there are several strands coming together – the establishment of AVPZ, the growth of the peace clubs network, and the new constitution which encourages the shift away from institutional violence. So, when in January 2022, FoH ceased to fund-raise, our new committee 'Peace Works Zimbabwe' began to appeal nationally for funding – and the response is encouraging.

Don Rowe was a teacher and curriculum developer before retirement. He worked in the field of citizenship education in the UK and for several years was part of an international team for the Council of Europe promoting Education for Democratic Citizenship.

He has published teaching materials and academic papers on citizenship education, on values and moral education. To find out more about the peace clubs project, please contact Don Rowe on peaceworkszim@gmail.com or go to <https://peaceworkszimbabwe.net>.



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OBITUARY

Dewa Mavhinga: the Southern Africa director at Human Rights Watch died suddenly on 4 December 2021, aged 41



Dewa Mavhinga, who died on 4 December 2021. Photograph used with permission from Human Rights Watch

Human Rights Watch published the following obituary on its website on 5 December 2021, and is allowing *Zimbabwe Review* to use it.

Human Rights Watch is heartbroken to report the sudden death of Dewa Mavhinga, Southern Africa director at Human Rights Watch and beloved colleague to many activists across the human rights movement. Mavhinga was known not just for his passion, commitment, and leadership on human rights but above all for his great heart, his kindness, and solidarity with others.

‘Dewa was a deeply empathetic and highly effective human rights activist whose work made many people’s lives better, whether it was pushing the Zimbabwe government to respect the right to protest in the face of economic hardship or ensuring that victims of human rights abuses across Southern Africa have access to justice,’ said Kenneth Roth, executive director of Human Rights Watch.

Mavhinga, who joined Human Rights Watch as senior Zimbabwe researcher in 2012, spent years

documenting human rights violations in his native country during the turbulent and violent final years of the Robert Mugabe government. He had also been an extraordinary support to human rights defenders in Zimbabwe, where civil society is often under relentless attack.

As Southern Africa director Mavhinga oversaw and supported a broad range of work in the region aimed at ensuring human rights for all including exposing and ending political repression, forced evictions of indigenous people, violence and discrimination against women, LGBT people, and foreigners, and demanding access to clean water and fair distribution of vaccines and COVID-19 relief packages.

A sophisticated thinker and persuasive speaker, Mavhinga was an excellent advocate and much sought after by the media. He gave thousands of interviews, yet he never sought the limelight, mentoring and helping other colleagues and activists to deliver compelling messages. He was, one colleague wrote, ‘the best of what we strive to be.’

News of his death spread across Twitter, prompting tributes from activists and admirers. Among those Mavhinga had supported was the Zimbabwean journalist Hopewell Chin’ono, who tweeted that Mavhinga ‘was a great advocate for human rights in Zimbabwe and beyond. A gentle giant who was always there for anyone who was facing political persecution.’

The obituary ends with the words:

Human Rights Watch sends our deepest condolences to Dewa Mavhinga’s wife, Fiona, their four children, and his extended family and many friends. In the coming days we will share details of how people can pay tribute to Mavhinga.

‘We have lost a true gem, a treasure of a person and colleague. We’re devastated by Dewa’s passing,’ said Mausi Segun, Africa director at Human Rights Watch.

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Health Workers on the Front Line

Ian Scoones in rural Zimbabwe during the COVID-19 crisis

The first case of Covid-19 recorded in Zimbabwe was on 20 March 2020.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, health professionals in clinics and hospitals have been on the front line of Zimbabwe's response. In the last few weeks I have been part of a team visiting a number of health facilities in rural areas across Zimbabwe and talked to health workers about their experiences. We heard how the three waves of the pandemic in Zimbabwe have been quite different from each other.

The fear of COVID-19: the first wave

At the beginning of the first wave, from late March 2020, there was a deep fear of the unknown. Health workers were confronting a novel virus without protective equipment and no known treatment or preventive vaccination. People watched TV and saw the scenes from China and then Europe, looking in horror at what might be coming their way.

Much commentary saw the parlous state of health systems in Africa and feared the worst. Certainly, our informants reflected on how they were all initially terrified, sometimes avoiding seeing or treating people for fear of contracting the virus, while later they learned how to respond to the disease, but with significant wider challenges.

Across Zimbabwe, the first wave saw limited cases and few deaths, and these were nearly all imported cases with deaths recorded in hospitals in Harare. One nurse, now based in the Lowveld, experienced this first-hand as he was a student the main hospital in Harare at the time. With qualified doctors and nurses on strike, students were asked to attend the COVID-19 wards.

Lack of PPE and no knowledge of how to treat patients meant that they had to improvise. The lack of ventilators in the country meant that any escalation of the pandemic would have been disastrous. Luckily, this did not happen.

Whether the strict containment measures enforced through a harsh lockdown helped or whether other factors were at play, no one knows, but the first wave came and went with only limited impact. In our sites, clinics and hospitals instituted strict screening requirements for entry and with testing facilities emerging, there were requirements for widespread testing, especially of staff. This was initially resisted as everyone feared the virus. Being COVID-19 positive was seen as a potential death sentence, and would result in enforced quarantining.

Tensions between public health measures and public views: dilemmas in the second wave

Vaccines became available from February 2021, but, initially, vaccination drives in our rural sites saw very limited uptake. Hesitancy emerged for a number of reasons. Low incidence meant that there didn't seem a need. The



Rural health workers prepared for working with COVID.
Photo © Ian Scoones

misinformation from social media was extreme, with all sorts dangers suggested from vaccination in general and from Chinese vaccines (the only ones then available in Zimbabwe) in particular.

Fears were also held by health workers, who were one of the first groups where vaccination was mandated. Many we interviewed admitted they delayed getting vaccinated until it was clear that the vaccines were safe. This made their role in promoting the vaccination drive somewhat ambivalent; although this changed as vaccines became more widely accepted. By the time of the second wave from mid-2021, when deaths and more serious illness were experienced, the demand for vaccination increased dramatically, as did the effectiveness of delivery and supply in the rural areas.

Reflections from health workers

By this time, health workers across our sites felt more prepared. There was better protective equipment available as well as testing facilities, and they were more accepting of vaccination. Health workers had also become more relaxed about regular testing, and saw this now as an important preventive measure.

In this wave, dominated by the Delta variant, there was however some sickness and death across our sites; although it remained limited, and COVID-19 was definitely more present in the rural areas than during the first wave.

Reflections from health workers on this period were more about how systems were developed to test, trace and contain the disease. Given the small number of cases, this seemed to be remarkably effective. Who knows if there were

Continued on next page

Health workers: continued from previous page

other unrecorded cases elsewhere, but it seems that the timing of the wave in the dry season helped limit spread.

By this stage, the lockdowns were increasingly being challenged, as they were seriously affecting livelihoods and businesses. Health workers commented on their importance for public health, but recognised the challenge of implementing them when there was actually so little recorded COVID-19 around.

Tensions

These tensions between public health recommendations strictly following government (and in turn WHO) regulations – and the negative impacts on everyday life and wider health care became increasingly evident. Transport restrictions (combined with fear of testing and then getting isolated) meant that many didn't come to clinics or hospitals at all, or only late. This meant, for example, that there was an increase in complications around pregnancy and births. Those preferring to treat COVID-19 at home with the growing array of indigenous herbal medicines available may equally have risked late treatment of malaria, with which COVID-19 was confused. This likely had fatal consequences. Some informants even suggested that, particularly by the time of the third wave, which came in the malarial wet season, malaria deaths probably far exceeded mortalities from COVID-19.

And then there were all the other knock-on consequences of the lockdowns. Mental health was mentioned, including the problem of boredom among young people now unable to go to school. This resulted in increased substance abuse, as well as unwanted pregnancies amongst very young girls. These wider health consequences of the pandemic were mentioned frequently by health workers.

A plural health system: the third wave

The third wave in December 2021 – January 2022 was different again. Omicron presented as a bad 'flu, but there were few hospitalisations (all from other conditions) and no directly attributable deaths. During this phase, the local treatments (steaming, herbal teas and other concoctions) had become part of daily life for both treatment and prevention. Here, blurring between treatment of health among the family and the official public health role became most apparent. At home, health workers, like everyone else, were engaging with a plural health system, involving herbalists, healers, prophets, pastors, spirit mediums and traditional doctors, alongside their own medical training.

In the context of the uncertainty of a new disease – and one that seemed to be so different in each wave – this made absolute sense. To protect themselves and their families they would follow whatever worked. In the clinics and hospitals, the protocols had not changed much from the first wave. At the clinics, paracetamol was administered along with antibiotic injections for severe cases to reduce co-infections, but for Omicron a different

regime was required, and local remedies served the purpose well.

Fear and stress taking a toll

All the health workers we talked to had worked incredibly hard during the pandemic. Unlike in other parts of the world, they did not have to deal with the horrors of massive sickness burdens and death, but they had to follow a set of complex measures of testing, masking, distancing and so on that made their jobs more difficult. And, with limited facilities and initially barely any protective equipment, the fear and stress that their concerns about how the pandemic would play out took their toll.

They had to deal with the dilemma of advocating testing and vaccines about which they had their own concerns. And they had to convince a public to follow a whole panoply of public health regulations associated with the pandemic, while still coming to clinics or hospitals with regular diseases. Masking became widespread but restricting gatherings, particularly of churches and political gatherings, was more difficult.

For many people, lockdowns were a dilemma as containment measures for a disease that was only sporadically present. While they accepted them at the beginning, later many were more circumspect as, for example, patients often presented late, if at all, increasing the acuteness of conditions and resulting in more challenges for health care.

Everyone we talked to agreed that, with the pandemic changing in form and severity, opportunities to 'live with the virus' were increasing and the costs of some of the remaining public health measures probably now exceeded their value.

Lessons learned

Many lessons have been learned about how to respond to a pandemic in a rural setting and, importantly, how public health has to be balanced with livelihood and economic needs, while being supported by local approaches to health care and treatment as part of a plural system. These will be important as health systems prepare for the inevitable next pandemic.

Ian Scoones is a professor at the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex and runs the zimbabweand.wordpress.com blog. The blog in this issue originally appeared on Zimbabweand, as the 20th in a series on the COVID-19 pandemic (<https://zimbabweand.wordpress.com/2022/02/22/health-workers-on-the-front-line-experiences-from-rural-zimbabwe/>). Search COVID-19 for other posts. A full compilation and overview will be available soon.

Thanks to the team from Chikombedzi, Wondedzo and Chatsworth and the doctors, nurses and environmental health technicians in the clinics/hospitals for sparing time to speak with us.

See 'News' item on page 14 for details of Ian Scoones's book, Researching Land Reform in Zimbabwe.

Mining in Zimbabwe – a history

Martin Prendergast tells the story of the ups and downs of a significant publication

A new book, *Mining in Zimbabwe: from the 6th to the 21st centuries*, covers the industry from the earliest times but concentrates on the later years of that history.

From 1890, the country now called Zimbabwe developed a sophisticated and broad-based mining industry that produced annually up to thirty five mineral commodities, including gold, coal, asbestos, chrome, copper, tin, iron and steel, and nickel.

That industry – which boasted nickel refineries and ferrochrome smelters as well as Africa's only integrated steelworks north of the Limpopo – helped to support one of the continent's most advanced and diverse economies, with associated health, educational and other services.

Following Independence in 1980, Zimbabwe's post-colonial mining industry faltered in the face of political, economic and governance failures. In consequence, the country's asbestos, copper and tin mines are no more, only one nickel mine remains open, and the iron mines and steelworks are mostly shut, while the still-important gold sector has changed from entirely formal to largely artisanal. The formal mining sector is now dominated by three large platinum mines, developed from pre-Independence pilot operations.

A prompt for publication

In 2013, this reversal in fortunes, and the growing need for major investment, prompted a group of local mining professionals to compile a comprehensive, multi-authored history of their industry. They aimed to collate and preserve in book form the vast body of knowledge and experience of the country's mineral resources and mining operations gained since the birth of the modern (rather than the traditional) industry some 120 years earlier.

The technical development of each main mineral commodity sector was to form the book's essential framework. The target readership included mining professionals, technical and financial managers, and corporate leaders in both the local and international mining world, politicians, civil servants, mineral economists and historians.

In general, it was intended that the compilation should provide vital support to the resurgence of the mining industry by promoting Zimbabwe's mineral resources and mining capacity to foreign investors.

(Not so) final publication

The book was finally published in May 2019, under the imprint of the Chamber of Mines of Zimbabwe, wholly funded by Unki Mines (Anglo American's local subsidiary). It comprises nineteen well-referenced and peer-reviewed chapters, and a comprehensive index.

The two opening chapters summarise Zimbabwe's geology and mineral resources and government's role in funding and regulating mining.

Three chapters then relate the country's 1,500-year history of pre-colonial gold, iron and copper-mining. The core of the book consists of twelve chapters, each discussing one of the principal mineral commodities mined in the colonial and post-colonial periods – gold, coal, asbestos, chrome, copper, tin, iron, nickel, diamonds, platinum, industrial minerals, and minor minerals and metals – each taking the story through to the end of 2016. Mining's place in the national economy is reviewed in the penultimate chapter, while the book concludes with a *Postscript* describing developments in the years 2017–2018, during which time it was prepared for publication.

The eighteen authors and content editors are all professionals either with direct involvement in the local industry during the past forty years or with a close academic interest. The text is well illustrated with over 300 photographs, maps and diagrams, and has 55 tables.

A tribute to mining and publishing

Copy edited, typeset and printed in Zimbabwe, the book measures 203 x 254 mm, is printed in full colour on quality gloss paper, and is bound between hard covers with a handsome dust-jacket. It stands tribute, not only to the mining industry, which it celebrates, but also to the country's publishing and printing industries.

Reviews from international journals, as well as local periodicals, have been fulsome in their praise: 'a monumental and authoritative work ... bringing together so much past experience and research in a single, easily accessible volume' (*Materials World*), 'a detailed yet well-balanced record' (*Economic Geology*), 'a serious treatise of mining in one of Africa's best developed and regulated mining jurisdictions' (Newsletter, Geological Society of Zimbabwe), and 'a forward-looking distillation of the possibilities that exist in Zimbabwe' (*Transactions of the Institution of Mining and Metallurgy*).

According to the *Economic Geology* reviewer:

This publication surely must be a uniquely comprehensive insight into one country's mineral heritage and the exploitation of such natural wealth over a period of 1,500 years. As such it brings together so many facets of history, shifting cultures, and political machinations, that it will appeal to a much wider readership than just those focused on geology, exploration, mining, and mineral processing. The bonus is that this is all encapsulated in a high-quality, well-illustrated ... and well-edited publication that is a tribute to the editors and to a remarkable country.'

It was therefore a great surprise when the Chamber, without warning, failed to launch the book as planned at their event in Harare on 28 May 2019 or at its annual conference at Victoria Falls two days later.

The reasons for this bizarre development only emerged some weeks later, when the Chamber formally requested certain changes to the book's text, specifically in the

Continued on next page

Mining: continued from previous page

Introduction and the *Postscript*, the latter being the only part of the book covering the years 2017–18.

According to the Chamber, parts of the *Postscript* could be ‘improved and recast to reflect the Zimbabwe we all aspire for’. One particular complaint, for example, was caused by the question mark in the sub-heading ‘Mining in Zimbabwe: Open for business?’ that opened the *Postscript*’s final section on the industry’s current operating environment. The sub-heading referenced the official slogan used after the ‘military-assisted transition’ of 2017 and, in view of conditions prevailing on the ground, the editorial team wished to avoid making it a statement of fact.

A few months later, the Chamber further advised that the book ‘should stop being sold pending resolution of areas that have been raised as contentious’.

Faced with this, but still determined to make the main body of the book available to its intended readership, the editorial team agreed to make minor changes to the Introduction and to remove the controversial *Postscript*.

However, it was not until late 2021 that the Chamber made known its acceptance of the proposed changes –

allowing the publication of a second edition to proceed.

The content and presentation of this second edition are the same as the first, except that the *Postscript* has been removed entirely and a few minor changes have been made to the Introduction.

The book’s editors and authors are confident that *Mining in Zimbabwe: From the 6th to the 21st Centuries* will help encourage investment in an industry that, with the country’s impressive mineral endowment, able human resources and well-established infrastructure, retains rare capacity to reward that investment – and to bring benefits to the people of Zimbabwe.

The Chamber of Mines have now advised that the book is available for purchase from their offices (20 Mount Pleasant Drive, Mount Pleasant, P.O. Box 712, Harare), info@chamines.co.zw) at the price of US\$ 170.

Mining in Zimbabwe: From the 6th to the 21st Centuries
Harare: Chamber of Mines of Zimbabwe, 2nd edn, 2021 xlii, 626 pp. maps, colour illustrations. ISBN 978-77921-371-6.
Martin Prendergast is a joint editor of this book, with John Hollaway.

Home from Home

Bill Kinsey suggests some plants to bring a little of Zimbabwe to the UK

As winter starts to diminish and the days grow longer, we are reminded of the horticultural diversity of Zimbabwe. Can we recreate that here — indoors or out? Here, from experience, is a short list for the horticulturally adventurous.

The aloes

Zimbabwe is home to some 60 of the 500+ identified aloe species, and the aloe is the hallmark of Zimbabwe’s flowering plants. They range from miniatures to tree-sized. Aloes are highly promiscuous, making life very easy for plant breeders. That’s why most of those you’ll find in UK garden centres are hybrids with fanciful names. Here are only a few of the true species for which I know seeds are available in the UK.

Aloe vera (the ‘true aloe’), because of its numerous medical and cosmetic uses, is perhaps the best-known aloe in the world. Not hardy or particularly ornamental but easy to grow in a pot.

Aloe arborescens bears rosettes of grey-green, fleshy toothed leaves. Under the right conditions and if you’re lucky, the plant may produce dramatic poker-like red blooms in summer. In Zimbabwe, it can reach an impressive 3m in height. Here, the size will be limited by its pot. Not fully winter hardy.

Aloe polyphylla (spiral aloe) is not a Zimbabwe indigene but hails from the mountains of Lesotho and has every prospect of proving hardy in the UK. At germination, a single leaf appears, with the following leaves produced alternately opposite each other. When the plant reaches



Aloe polyphylla (spiral aloe) Photo © Bill Kinsey

about 40cm in diameter, it starts to spiral, clockwise or anti-clockwise, eventually growing into a large, decorative rosette 60cm in diameter and up to 50cm in height. The flowering stem branches into several spikes of reddish to salmon pink flowers, but patience is required. It is a promising plant for the UK as it loves the cold and ample moisture.

Others

Agave. Well-known succulents, mostly with firm sword-shaped leaves formed into rosettes, in shades of green and bluish-grey, sometimes small, sometimes big

enough to need another greenhouse, always interesting. Make your own tequila if you're so inclined. They are tough and can survive most UK winters. They grow up to 1m.

Carica papaya (pawpaw) is grown in warm climates for its delicious fruits. In the UK it is grown as a foliage plant because of its large, handsome leaves. Very fast growing. The leaves can be used to wrap tough meat to tenderise it. With right conditions, it can fruit in its first season. As well as indoor plants, Given a sunny, perfectly drained position, they elicit praise for being as showy and tropical in appearance as any palms. Height to 6m.



Carpobrotus edulis (edible fig, ice plant) Photo © Bill Kinsey

Carpobrotus edulis (edible fig, ice plant). You may come across this on cliffs or along the seashore in Devon and Cornwall as well as Portugal. A low-growing succulent plant with fleshy, triangular leaves almost hidden under gaudy magenta flowers. This is *Carpobrotus*, not only one of the most colourful, but also one of the most easily grown of the African succulents. Requiring minimum protection during winter, and with flowers up to 10cm across, this is a plant to try. Used as highway ground cover in California, it is invasive in some climates. grows up to 30cm.

Cycas revoluta (cycad, sago palm). This cycad is a popular species with pinnate, herring bone-like leaves (75cm long on mature plants) divided into a large number of shining green, crowded, very narrow leaflets. With patience, this makes an excellent and dramatic houseplant. Grows up to 1.5m.

Dracaena draco (dragon tree) A popular potted house plant, this has sword-shaped, leathery, grey-green leaves, reddish at the base. Very decorative as young plants on window sills. Endemic to the Canary Islands but hardy in some parts of the UK. Grows up to 15m.

Eucomis bicolor (pineapple flower) – gets its name from the crown of leaves on top of the flower spike. The flowers, pale green with a distinct purple edge, are very long-lasting – over two months. A wildflower in Zimbabwe, it is hardy outside in some UK regions. Can reach up to 50cm.

Leonotis leonurus (lion's tail, lion's ear) – A statuesque plant, it can grow over 2m tall. The whorls of large flowers are a distinctive shade of bright orange-scarlet. Self-seeding, it is considered invasive in Harare's gardens, and it has naturalised widely outside Africa.

Strelitzia juncea (bird-of-paradise flower) A member of the banana family, this has striking flowers and ornamental foliage. The flowers are very like the popular *Strelitzia reginae* but a more compact plant with spike-like leaves and only growing to about 60cm. Perhaps the best *Strelitzia* for cultivation in a smaller greenhouse. The larger *S. reginae* is the commonest of the Bird-of-Paradise flowers with large, purple and orange blooms. Requires heated glass (minimum 10°C). Grows p to 2m.

Sanseveria (mother-in-law's tongue). Of the 70+ *Sanseveria* species, all can be propagated easily through division, but you can also propagate through leaf cuttings. And that is easy – all you need to do is to take a leaf, put it in water, and then wait. Just change the water once in a while and keep it in a warm environment. Once the leaf develops roots, transfer it to a new pot. Well-draining soil works best. They're as tough as old boots but happier indoors rather than outside.

Ricinus communis (castor oil plant). This has shrub-like growth with shiny dark brown foliage and eye-catching bright red flower buds and seed pods. The plants branch well and the flowering lateral shoots are useful for arrangements. It may be hardy outside in some regions with winter protection. Note: the seeds and all the plant parts for *Ricinus* are poisonous. It grows up to 1.5m.



Zamioculcas zamiifolia
Photo © Bill Kinsey

Zamioculcas zamiifolia – A handsome and hard-to-kill house plant that is very easy to propagate. *Zamioculcas* have huge tubers, and all you need to do is to divide it in half and then repot it. Other ways of propagation are by stem cuttings and leaf planting. Put stem cuttings in water and they will eventually create roots, or plant a single leaf halfway down in sand. These are not the best ways to propagate however, as they take a long time.

Continued on next page

Houseplants: continued from previous page

Hanging Baskets

You'll run out of window sills, so go vertical with hanging baskets – a much better use for curtain rods.

Senecio (or Curio) rowleyanus (string of pearls) is a flowering plant in the daisy family with trailing stems of oval, bead-like leaves. A perennial, succulent vine, it's native to southwest Zimbabwe. In its home, its stems trail on the ground, rooting where they touch and forming dense mats. Propagating is easy – almost too easy. If String of Pearls is in a hanging basket, then all you need to do is to fill a new pot with potting soil and put it below your hanging plant and lay a creeper on top of the soil. Simply by putting the hanging parts of the plant on the bed of soil, new roots will develop. Until that happens, don't forget to water the compost. After about four weeks, new roots should develop and you can cut the mother plant from your new plant.

Senecio radicans (*syn Curio radicans*, string of Bananas) – A close relative of the string of pearls and a South African native. It has multiple tendrils of glossy, banana-shaped foliage and works well in hanging baskets.

Ceropegia woodii (String of Hearts) is a trailing flowering plant, native to South Africa, Eswatini and Zimbabwe. Another ideal hanging basket candidate. *C. woodii* can be either water propagated or propagated directly in soil. Both techniques yield good results but propagating in water is easier.

Growing from seed

The fact that many plants do not like to be moved is one reason to start plants from seed. Growing from seed, you'll have many more varieties to choose from. Garden centres

here usually only offer the most popular plants and not many new or unfamiliar varieties.

Starting plants from seed is also much cheaper than buying started plants – and you have the satisfaction of starting your own plants and watching them grow under. *Adenium obesum*

Both *Adonsonia digitata* (baobab) and (sabi star) can, in theory, be grown from seed in the UK, but I can't attest to their local performance. Last autumn I unexpectedly discovered in a garden centre a sad-looking, remaindered *Gloriosa superba* (Flame Lily), Zimbabwe's national flower. Warmth and growing day length, however, have now stimulated promising indoor growth. *Gloriosa* is a fast grower, and some strains will scramble up trellises and supports to about 2m high.

Position in a sunny spot outside and the red and yellow flowers will wave in the summer breeze. Ideally grown in pots so that you can overwinter in a frost-free position.

Propagation is most easily done by dividing the rhizome, but seeds are also possible. All parts of the plant are extremely toxic.

There are many, many more that can be grown from seed – if you can get the seed. The best UK supplier I have found is Chiltern Seeds (<https://www.chilternseeds.co.uk>), but there are several South African suppliers who will deliver to the UK.

And two final tips: first, check out Wikipedia on succulents. And remember they are used to six months with no meaningful rain. The easiest way to kill your Zimbabwe migrants is through overwatering.

Happy growing!

BZS member Bill Kinsey gardened in Harare for 30+ years and now tries to create some of the same horticultural effects in mid-Wales

Zimbabwe Health Training Support

Margaret Ling reports on training in mental and sexual healthcare

Innovative advances in health training methods have been achieved in Zimbabwe over the last two years despite the restrictions and repeated lockdowns of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A team led by Dorcas Gwata, Public Health Specialist with Central and Northwest London NHS Trust, and Chido Chikwari, Assistant Professor at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), has rolled out a series of highly effective training workshops in mental and sexual health care in some of Zimbabwe's most remote areas. They report significant improvements in local self-confidence and leadership skills along the way.

In 2020, the Britain Zimbabwe Society, led by Knox Chitiyo, facilitated funding applications for

educational projects from a number of community-based organisations to the Business Council for Africa (BCA).

Zimbabwe Health Training Support (ZHTS) with whom the BZS has collaborated for several years including organising a Research Day together, was successful in being awarded a £5,000 grant despite stiff competition from all over Africa. The grant was of great help in scaling up and improving a mental and sexual health training programme in Zimbabwe in the toughest of tough times. The aim is to increase literacy in mental, sexual and reproductive health amongst frontline healthcare workers all over Zimbabwe, using local mentored youth to deliver the training and own the programme, rather

than the project coordinators themselves.

Dorcas Gwata and Chido Chikwari, who have been leading the programme since before Covid, delivered their report to the virtual AGM of the ZHTS on 5 February. Many lessons have been learned on how to move from traditional training methods to operating digitally during lockdown, how to coordinate implementation and budget management between London and Harare, how to take advantage of synergies between the UK and Zimbabwe in tackling mental health issues, and how to achieve long-term sustainability by ‘training the trainers’.

Training the trainers

Dorcas paid tribute, in particular, to the young people of Mbare, who had risen to the challenge of being trained as trainers with enthusiasm, passion and creativity.

Chido pointed out that training and up-skilling had ceased to be health policy priorities in Zimbabwe during the pandemic, despite the increasing incidence of mental illness and sexual health issues, making self-help projects of this kind all the more important.

The first workshop, at Binga District Hospital, was held in November 2019. Then the pandemic struck, and there was a long gap before they could be restarted, in Mazowe and Ruwa in December 2020. The Australian Embassy joined in with practical support and help in kind.

More workshops followed in 2021 in Mbare, on mental and sexual health and substance abuse and aimed particularly at young men, and at Ngomahuru Psychiatric Hospital near Masvingo, where 22 staff members were trained, including clinical psychologists, psychiatric nurses and social workers. Workshops at Zvidozvevanhu Secondary School in Mtoko, and Tongogara Refugee Camp in Chipinge focused on tackling ignorance about menstruation, menstrual health and use of menstrual products.

Funded workshops

Two funded workshops remain to be organised in Tsholotsho and Chimanimani, both hard-to-reach areas where digital solutions are not easy to implement (Zoom simply does not work in Tsholotsho) and lockdowns are unpredictable. Otherwise the team is focusing on pre- and post-workshop evaluation and developing a documentary video and a training manual.

‘We have proved that the workshop model works and can be built on,’ says Dorcas, ‘we now need more funding to achieve full sustainability.’

There is much more work to be done, Dorcas concluded, and the work has to be done right if it is to successfully negotiate Zimbabwean red tape and COVIDGloriosa superba restrictions.

A health partnership with Ngomahuru Psychiatric Hospital

The ZHTS AGM also heard a report on the developing partnership between the Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL) in the UK and Ngomahuru Mental Hospital in Zimbabwe. The chair of ZHTS, Chris Dziki, is a doctor with CNWL and Grace Musariri is a mental health nurse.

During 2021, Grace was able to visit Ngomahuru, which is 52 km south of Masvingo along dirt roads. One of four main mental health hospitals in Zimbabwe, with 300 beds, it is less well supported than others due to its remote location.

There are shortages of food, medication, personal and oral hygiene products, pens, paper and stationery. The hospital is poorly staffed, there is lack of access to continuous professional development (CPD) and few of the nurses have been formally trained in mental health.

The purpose of the visit was to meet staff, deliver training, explore current concerns and hand over donations that had been given.

Grace was accompanied by Kumbirai Macdonald, a mental health champion based in Mbare who himself led the training workshop.

‘The workshop was well received with good engagement.’ Grace said. ‘Staff want more training, they want to exchange learning with other hospitals, to learn more about mental conditions, to deliver community outreach.’

‘Stigma is still a very big issue in Zimbabwe and staff feel ostracised because of their profession, making their job even more difficult.’

Health partnership

The health partnership with CNWL aims to promote joint learning and understanding, explore commonalities, exchange ideas and support improvements. ZHTS, as facilitator of the partnership, is inviting support for Ngomahuru through its Just Giving page <https://www.justgiving.com/zhts>.

Contact zhtsmembership@gmail.com for more information.

Margaret Ling is BZS Treasurer and Membership Secretary

News

Zimbabweans at the Africa Centre

Zimbabweans are well represented on the recently enlarged Board of Trustees of the Africa Centre in London.

The Centre, which is preparing to unveil its new flagship building in Southwark, London, in late spring 2022, has recruited six new trustees to diversify and strengthen its board and bring in new skills.

They include Audrey Mpunzwana, an independent media consultant who started off in radio and television in Zimbabwe after graduating in sociology from the University of Zimbabwe. She gained an MA in mass communications from the University of Leicester and has worked in the corporate and international development sector.

Ethel Tambudzai, also from Zimbabwe, is a consultant on governance, business development and strategic planning. She graduated in international relations and development studies from the University of Westminster and is studying for her MSc at Birkbeck College.

The Africa Centre is currently developing a range of activities to celebrate the launch of its new building and reach out to more people.

Contact: <https://www.africacentre.org.uk>

The Africa Centre, 66 Great Suffolk Street, London SE1 0BL

Daneford Trust AGM and links with Zimbabwe

Josh Nyapimbi, the executive director of the Nhimbe Trust in Bulawayo, was among the international guests at the Daneford Trust's online AGM on 28 February.

Nhimbe Trust works in creative education, development cooperation and cultural policy, both for Zimbabwe and in a pan-African context.

It has a long-standing link with the Daneford Trust, which has

helped to facilitate youth exchanges with the Young Vic and the Lyric Theatre in Hammersmith. It is hoped that these can be renewed post the pandemic, Josh told the AGM.

Nhimbe Trust, in partnership with the City of Bulawayo, is hosting the 3rd edition of the Bulawayo Arts Festival, 2–5 June 2022. It will be a hybrid physical, virtual and live event. Last year, participants from 54 countries were involved.

The Daneford Trust organises two-way exchanges for young people from east London and selected countries in the Caribbean, Asia and Africa, including Zimbabwe, to promote global citizenship, mutual understanding and respect.

It is a partner organisation of the

BZS, and celebrates its 40th anniversary in 2022.

Contact the Daneford Trust at www.danefordtrust.org.uk
Nhimbe Trust www.nhimbe.org

New book from Ian Scoones

Researching Land Reform in Zimbabwe is a new book compiling 20 articles from peer-reviewed journals documenting the outcomes of land reform across Zimbabwe published over the last 20 years.

The 557 page book is available for free as a pdf, or via Amazon as an e-book (£0.99) or a print copy (£10.68). More information on the book at:

<https://zimbabweland.wordpress.com/2022/02/07/new-book-researching-land-reform-in-zimbabwe/>

Update from the Dabane Support Fund

The Dabane Support Fund is a charity of Mid-Somerset Quaker Area Meeting.

Our role is to raise money in the UK to support The Dabane Trust Water Workshops, which have headquarters in Bulawayo. Their core business has been to help village communities in arid areas to access groundwater under sand rivers by installing well-points and connecting them to simple pumps that draw the water up the banks to be stored in small dams. These provide clean water for households, cattle and irrigating vegetable plots.

Established on a shoestring in 1997, Dabane has grown to be a significant and valued NGO, and is now able to access international aid money, often in co-operation with other water groups, and works further afield, for example throughout the Limpopo basin and advising on techniques in neighbouring countries.

From the start, Dabane has responded only after a request from a settlement, and full discussion with the people prepared to undertake the task of running the project when Dabane leaves. Some of the small farms are still operating 25 years later. Access to water makes a huge difference, especially to the lives of women, who market produce and pay for school fees and uniforms. Dabane has also assisted the Government with its plans for rural agriculture and development, health and hygiene. In 2016 Dabane assisted in unblocking the sewers of Bulawayo.

Despite having access to larger funding by USAID, Britain, Germany and other countries, Dabane's support Fund's contributions are still very valuable in helping with things big donors are not interested in – like administration, salaries and training. We have largely funded their employment of university students in their penultimate year of study, when they are required to work in the 'real world' for a year. Dabane treats its students well and gives them good training. An internship with them is seen as the gold standard. DSF gets reports from the students we fund and they are impressive young people. Last year one of their female interns, Nobubelo, qualified with a first class degree in engineering. A single donor to DSF was so impressed that she has undertaken to finance her salary so that she can work with Dabane Trust in the future.

The website is easily accessed with any phrase containing the word Dabane. The director and founder is Dr. Stephen Hussey: s.w.hussey@dabane.org

Hazel Hudson is convener of DSF committee: hazel.e.hudson@gmail.com
The treasurer is Mark Green mark.octopi@gmail.com

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- 15.30-17.00 **Panel 3: Resilience and future development of education in Zimbabwe**
Speaker 1: Aleck Ncube, Acting Director, NUST Innovation Hub, draft topic: *Digital technology and education in Zimbabwe and beyond*
- Speaker 2: tba, draft topic: *Development, education and climate change in Zimbabwe*
- Speaker 3: tba, draft topic: *Adult and continuing education – lessons from home and abroad*
- Chair: Julius Mugwagwa, University College London
- 17.00-17.30 Summing up
Speaker: tba
- 17.30 Close of programme
- 17.30- 17.35 Closing and vote of thanks
Dr Julius Mugwagwa and Dr Roselyne Masamha

*Admission is free. You are invited to add a donation to help cover the costs of organising the event.
Thank you.*

Register on Eventbrite at

www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/education-and-development-in-zimbabwe-and-the-diaspora-tickets-261914783167



Contact the Britain Zimbabwe Society

President: Knox Chitiyo

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*Vacancies exist on the BZS Executive.
If you are interested in joining the Executive, please
contact Pat Brickhill at zimgekko@aol.com.*

Britain Zimbabwe Society Membership Form

To join and receive your regular copy of the *Zimbabwe Review*, postings on the members e-mail discussion forum and WhatsApp network membership, please print and send the completed form below with your subscription cheque to:

Margaret Ling, BZS Membership Secretary, 25 Endymion Road, London N4 1EE

Please enrol me/us in the BZS at the following annual rate (tick relevant box).

(You may also join the BZS online, payment by credit/debit card, via our website:
www.britainzimbabwe.org.uk/join-bzs-today)

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Ordinary	£21	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unwaged/student	£10	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Membership runs by calendar year, renewals are due on 1 January each year.

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BRITAIN ZIMBABWE SOCIETY RESEARCH DAY 2022

Education and Development in Zimbabwe and the Diaspora

Saturday 18 June 2022

9.30–17.30 BST (CAT 10.30-18.30, EST 4.30-12.30)

Event Format: Virtual

All welcome – register with Eventbrite at

www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/education-and-development-in-zimbabwe-and-the-diaspora-tickets-261914783167

DRAFT PROGRAMME

Times in BST. Please note that some details may change

- 9.00 – 9.15 *Welcome and Introduction*
Kathy Mansfield Higgins, Chair, Britain Zimbabwe Society
Miles Tendi, African Studies Centre, Oxford University
- 9.15–9.45 *Zimbabwe education's footprint in the global arena – overview presentation*
Speakers: Dr Julius Mugwagwa, University College, London, and Dr Roselyne Masamha, University of Hull
- 9.45 – 11.15 **Panel 1: Inclusiveness of the Zimbabwean Education System: Case Studies on Historical, Current and Future Research**
Speaker 1: tba, draft topic: *Analysing the role of the diaspora in the education of women and girls in Zimbabwe*
Speaker 2: Jane Magaya, PhD candidate, International Education, Open University UK, draft topic: *COVID-19 and education in Zimbabwe and beyond*
Speaker 3: Dr Ebert Gono, University of Hull, draft topic: *Education in rural and farming communities*
Chair: tba
- 11.15-11.30 *Break – Zoom link remains live*
- 11.30-12.30 **Keynote presentation**
Speaker: Prof Norman Maphosa, former Vice Chancellor, Solusi University & former Chair, ZIMSEC, draft topic: *Perspectives on Zimbabwe's primary, secondary and higher education – past, present and future*
Chair: Dr Knox Chitiyo, President, BZS
- 12.30-13.45 *Break – Zoom link remains live*
- 13.45-15.15 **Panel 2: Relevance and Quality of the Zimbabwean Education System – Research and Lived Experience**
Speaker 1: tba, draft topic: *Views from learners and mentors*
Speaker 2: tba, draft topic: *Views from employers*
Speaker 3: tba, draft topic: *The nexus between community, vocational training and academic education*
Chair: Dr Lennon Mhishi, Oxford University
- 15.15-15.30 *Break – Zoom link remains live*

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