2022

TSHOLOTSHO District

Food and Nutrition Security Profile

WFP
World Food Programme

Contents
Page

List Of Tables

List Of Figures

Foreword

The Government of Zimbabwe aims to meet national targets under the National Development Strategy 1, Sustainable Development Goals, including Zero Hunger by 2030, with the support of the United Nations World Food Programme and other development partners. Evidence and knowledge are the starting point to ending hunger and improving nutrition. Hence policies and programmes need to be based on accurate and reliable data and information to make a difference in people's lives. In view of the above, the District Profiles were developed to provide evidence-based information for programming by the Government, UN, and development partners. This process was led and hosted by the Food and Nutrition Council (FNC), supported by WFP, and with the participation of Government Ministries and NGOs through a multi stakeholder consultative process.

The country has continued to experience climatic and economic shocks. While recurring droughts, erratic rainfall, and poor harvests have been the drivers of food insecurity in rural areas, economic challenges remain as one of the major drivers of food inaccessibility in urban areas. From, these existing challenges were further compounded by the effects of COVID-19 and the lockdown measures which were put in place to curb its spread. To understand the evolving changes, it was necessary to update all the 60 rural District Profiles to more accurately identify and address the humanitarian and programmatic needs in Zimbabwe. The 2016 District Profiles had reached their full life span of five years.

The District Profiles were compiled using other existing information products such as the ZimVAC Livelihoods Assessment Reports, national Integrated Context Analysis (ICA), the Seasonal Livelihood Programming (SLP), and community action plans, among other key reference documents. The district profiles provide ward-level analysis as well as insights for programmatic needs at sub-district level. These are developed as a public good to support Government, UN and developmental partners in the design, targeting and implementation of humanitarian, resilience and development programmes.

These risk profiles provide a comprehensive sub district level overview focusing on infrastructure, water and sanitation, communication, livelihoods, poverty, climate, crops, livestock, markets, hazards and shocks, development indicators and priorities, food and nutrition security conditions, and recommendations.

It is my greatest hope that all stakeholders will find this updated information useful in further refining their programmes and targeting criteria for the development of Zimbabwe.

Acknowledgements

The Food and Nutrition Council (FNC) would like to appreciate the support provided by the World Food Programme who worked tirelessly to ensure the successful completion of the district profiles.

Special thanks go to the various Government line ministries and departments, UN agencies, donors, and NGOs for sharing of information, technical support, facilitation, and collaboration.

Sincere appreciation goes to the Provincial Coordinators, District Food and Nutrition Security Committee and District Drought Relief Committee members for participating in the drafting of the profiles and the valuable information provided.

Our sincere gratitude goes to WFP Zimbabwe and the Government of Zimbabwe for funding for the activity.

Acronyms & Abbreviations

AARDS	Agricultural Advisory Rural Development Services
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CA	Communal Area
CAMPFIRE	Community Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources
DDC	District development coordinators office
DDF	District Development Fund
DFID	Department for International Development
DOI	Department of Irrigation
EHO	Environmental Health Officer
EMA	Environmental Management Authority
FEWSNET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
GAM	Global Acute Malnutrition
GMB	Grain Marketing Board
Ha	Hectare
HH	Household
LSCA	Large-Scale Commercial Area
MDTC	Mwenezi Development Training Center
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanisation and Irrigation Development
MOHCC	Ministry of Health and Child Care
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NR	New Resettlement
RDC	Rural District Council
RWIMS	Rural Wash Information Management System
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SSCA	Small Scale Commercial Area
UNDP	United Nations Development Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
WFP	World Food Programme
ZAR	South African Rand
ZimVAC	Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee

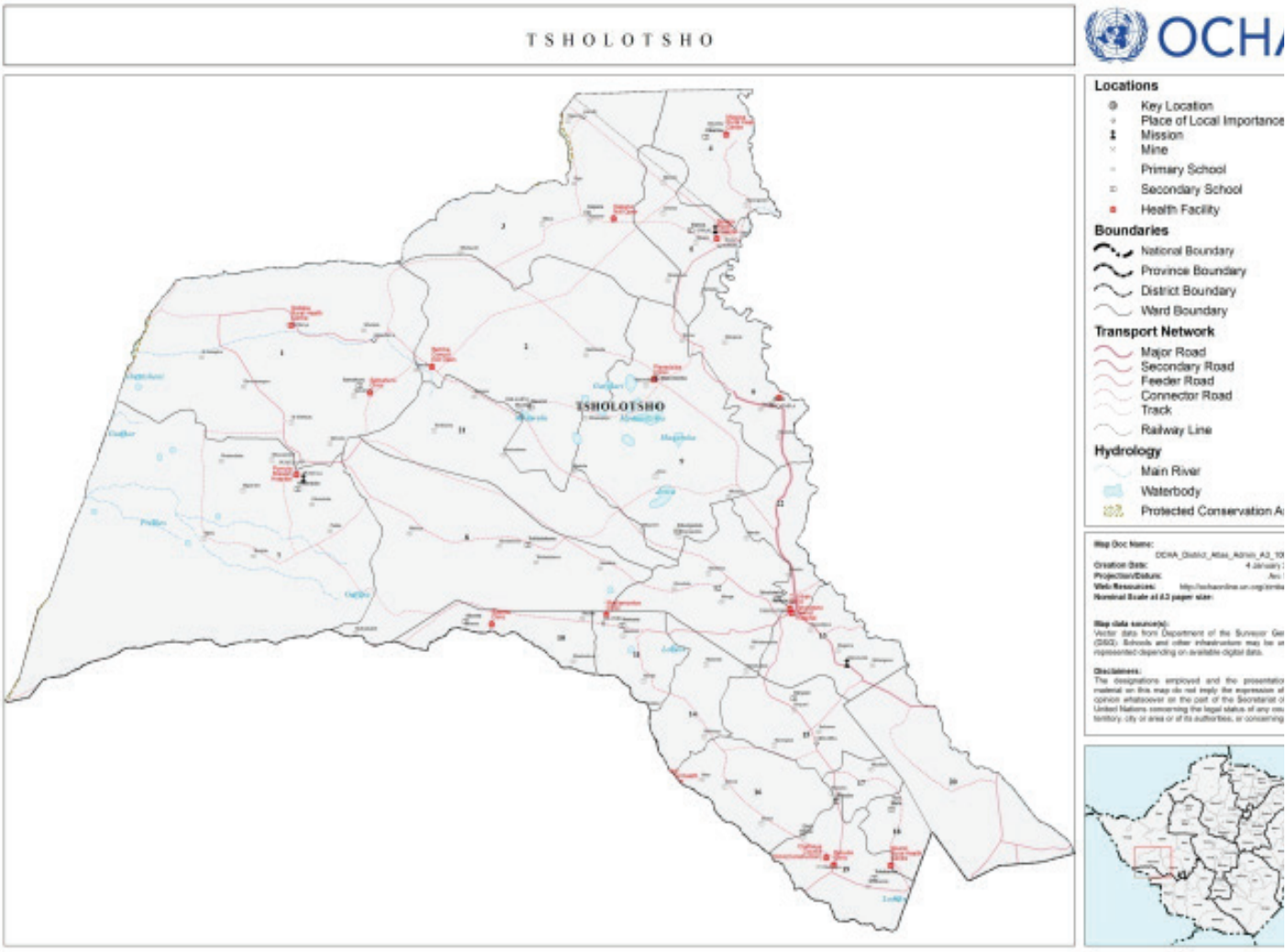

Figure 1: Map of District (Source:WFP)

1.1 Administrative Information

Tsholotsho District is located in Matabeleland North Province, in North-western Zimbabwe. Tsholotsho district is located 19 46' 00" South and 27 45' 00" East and covers about 8,336 km2 of land. The district is about 115km West of Bulawayo and borders with Lupane to the North, Umguza to the East, Hwange to the North-west and Bulilima to the South. Tsholotsho has two constituencies, Tsholotsho South (Wards 10-19, 22) and Tsholotsho North (Wards 1-9, 21) (Zimbabwe Parliament Research Department 2011a, 2011b). The administrative centre of the district is at the Growth Point, approximately 115 km both South of Lupane and North-west of Bulawayo, which has a population of approximately 3,300 people.

The district has got 22 official wards. Wards 1 – 19 and 21 falls under communal land, whilst Ward 20 falls under both new and old resettlements. Within Ward 20, there is a commercial estate under ARDA that is in partnership with two individuals specializing in beef production. Ward 22 falls in both communal land and the semi-urban (growth point of Tsholotsho).

Tsholotsho is home to three ethnic groups these being Ndebele (96%), Kalanga (3%), and the San (1%). The local common language is Ndebele, which is practically spoken and understood by everyone in the district.

The following Government departments: District Development Coordinator, Health, Education, Roads, AARDS, Veterinary Services, Registry and Police and other departments have offices in the district. Several development partners (NGOs) are partnering with Government on several pro-development programmes.

1.2 Traditional Leadership

Tsholotsho has got six (6) Chiefs, 21 Headmen, and 404 Village Heads. The District Development Coordinator and Rural District Council coordinate the development programs implemented in the district.

1.3 Settlement Types

Table 1: District Settlement Types

Settlement Type	No of Wards
Urban	Nil
Growth point	Ward 22
Resettlement area	Ward 20
Communal	Ward1-19 and wards 21 and 22
Estate Farms	Ward 20

Majority of households are settled in the communal areas.

1.4 Population Information

Based on the 2012 Census population of about 115,119, the district has a projected population of about 122 665 by 2016, and an estimated annual population growth rate of about 1.6% (Zimbabwe Census Report, 2012). There are 22 administrative wards 11 in Tsholotsho District, with population sizes ranging from 3,088 (Ward 4) to 12,359 (Ward 8), **(Table 1)**.

Table 2: Population Distribution by Ward

Ward No	Ward Name	No. HHs 2012	2012 Census	Estimated 2016 Population	Estimated Population 2022	Estimated Households 2022	Proportion of Population (%)
1	Sodaka	739	3,733	3,978	4,378	842	3
2	Dlamini	973	4,843	5,160	5,676	1,092	4
3	Kapani	1,030	5,334	5,684	6,251	1,202	5
4	Dibutibu	562	2,829	3,014	3,315	637	2
5	Siphepha	1,116	5,201	5,542	6,096	1,172	5
6	Jimila	1,531	7,344	7,825	8,606	1,655	6
7	Phumula	807	4,190	4,465	4,910	944	4
8	Tshitatshawa	1,741	9,044	9,637	10, 600	2,038	8
9	Mpanedziba	1,287	6,606	7,039	7,742	1,489	6
10	Madlangombe	718	3,627	3,865	4,252	818	3
11	Nanda	781	3,980	4,241	4,665	897	3
12	Mhlabangubo-Bhule	1,469	7,018	7,478	8,228	1,582	6
13	Ngqoya	1,390	6,145	6,548	7,201	1,384	5
14	Makhaza	775	3,754	4,000	4,399	845	3
15	Mbamba	1,658	8,139	8,673	9,539	1,834	7
16	Shaba	1,204	5,567	5,932	6,524	,1255	5
17	Bubude	964	4,584	4,884	5,373	1,033	4
18	Nkunzi	953	4,658	4,963	5,460	1,050	4
19	Chefunye	1,208	5,704	6,078	6,685	1,286	5
20	Dlula	418	1,880	2,003	2,205	424	2
21	Tshibizina	439	2,257	2,405	2,645	509	2
22	Nembe	1,867	8,682	9,251	10,175	1,957	8
Total		**23, 630**	**115, 119**	**122, 665**	**134, 925**	**25, 957**	**100**
For updated population figures, refer to Zimstat Census report (https://www.zimstat.co.zw)							

1.5 Vegetation Characteristics

The vegetation consists of a variety of indigenous trees which include Mopane, Marula trees, indigenous hardwood like Teak, which is mainly found in Kalahari soils, and Acacia species and combretum species that are mainly found in sandy soil areas for example in Ward 2 and Ward 21. Thatch grass is readily available in Wards 3 and 4. The common grasses to support livestock grazing are love grass and the sweet veld.

1.6 Land Degradation

Land degradation is the reduction in the capacity of the land to provide ecosystem goods and services and assure its functions over a period of time for the beneficiaries. In Tsholotsho District, land degradation affects large areas and many people in dryland regions. The major causes of land degradation in the district include inter alia: the rising demand for agricultural land, which is leading to deforestation, increased population pressures and mining activities which are done in an uncontrollable manner. Brick moulding and sand poaching are some of the major causes. Climate Change has also impacted on the rampant land degradation through flooding and wind pollution. The demand for firewood has also increased deforestation in the district and this is coupled with the activities of timber loggers. There is a need for law enforcement through enactment of by-laws in the district and general awareness on proper land management.

1.7 Development Indicators

1.7.1 Education Information

Provision and access to education for all is an investment milestone that the district places high on its developmental agenda. The district has a total of 85 primary schools, of which 4 are satellite schools. Amongst the 29 secondary schools, 2 are satellites schools and 8 offer advanced level studies (table 3). Tsholotsho District was classified by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education as having a good level of Net Attendance Ratio for primary schools within a range of 88-90%, (Net Attendance Primary Education Survey of 2012). The same survey classified the district under the poor category for the Net attendance for Secondary Education with a level of 39% - 51%. There is a need for behavioural change programmes which educate both parents and children on the importance of completing secondary school before children are fully involved in income generating activities.

Table 3: Education Facilities In The District

Ward	Proportion Of Population (%)	Total Schools 2016	Total Schools 2022	Male Pupils 2016	Male Pupils 2022	Female Pupils 2016	Female Pupils 2022	Total Enrolment 2016	Total Enrolment 2022	Total Staffing 2016	Total Staffing 2022
1	3	8	8	769	631	759	596	1,528	1,227	54	41
2	4	6	6	900	907	939	967	1,839	1,874	66	54
3	5	7	7	810	1,021	774	916	1,584	1,937	50	58
4	3	3	3	608	510	606	420	1,214	930	40	33
5	5	6	6	1,125	1,60	1,015	863	2,140	1,923	75	68
6	6	7	8	1,305	1,503	1,399	1,457	2,704	2,960	78	80
7	4	8	8	990	797	990	673	1,980	1,470	75	48
8	8	8	7	1,336	1,216	1,433	1,155	2,769	2,371	85	39
9	6	9	9	1,207	1,64	1,205	998	2,412	2,064	81	61
10	3	4	5	894	1,250	867	1,070	1,761	2,320	52	50
11		3	3	772	902	827	925	1,599	1,827	66	51
12	6	7	7	1,586	980	1,507	1,034	3,093	2,014	162	61
13	5	3	4	1,085	574	1,149	665	2,234	1,329	81	42
14	3	4	3	982	746	854	811	1,836	1,557	47	43
15	7	4	4	897	1,161	1,109	1,024	2,006	2,185	79	63
16	5	5	4	713	656	788	692	1,501	1,348	52	40
17	4	5	4	885	948	894	923	1,779	1,871	74	47
18	4	3	3	752	635	654	591	1,406	1,226	47	31
19	5	5	5	1,253	1,391	1,094	1,388	2,347	2,875	189	90
20	2	3	3	357	244	356	201	713	445	25	12
21	2	1	1	120	213	110	105	230	318	6	6
22	8	6	6	1,569	2,559	1,582	2,533	3,151	5,092	117	153
Total	**100**	**115**	**114**	**20, 915**	**20, 974**	**20, 911**	**20, 007**	**41, 826**	**41, 163**	**1,601**	**1,171**
Source: Ministry of Education											
For updated population figures, refer to Zimstat Census report (https://www.zimstat.co.zw)											

1.8 Health facilities by Type

The Government of Zimbabwe is committed to providing universal health coverage to improve primary health care access at the district level. There are 22 health facilities in the district, which include government facilities, council clinics and mission (church) clinics. The majority of health centres are under the RDC authority. Most of the wards have health facilities that serve a large catchment area including those wards that have no physical structure. **(Table 4)**. To address issues of community access to health, there are clinics which are under construction in Wards 9, 12, 15 and 20. Most health facilities face challenges of power supply as most are not connected to the ZESA grid, however the majority are being solarized. Access to the health centres is also a challenge due to poor road network, shortage of staff due to excessive staff turnover, shortage of drugs, absence of ambulances. Quality of services is also not standard as some of the facilities do not offer maternity services. Water Supply at some facilities is not reliable and affects service provision especially maternity services.

Table 4: Health Centres by Ward (Source Ministry of Health and Child Care)

Ward Number	Name of Health Centre	Authority
1	Sodaka	Government
	Samahuru clinics	Church (SDA)
2	Dlamini	RDC
	Bemba	RDC
3	Mtshayeli	Government
	Kapane	RDC
4	Mlagisa	Government
5	Sipepa Rural Hospital	Government
6	Jimila clinic	RDC
7	Pumula Mission	Church (Brethren)
	Mpilo clinic	RDC
8	Tshitatshawa	RDC
9	Mpanedziba	RDC
10	Madlangombe	RDC
	Sikente	RDC
14	Makhaza	Government
16	Shaba	RDC
17	Bubude	RDC
18	Nkunzi	RDC
19	Chefunye	RDC
66	Urban Clinic	RDC
22	Tsholotsho Rural District Hospital	Government

2. Other Development Indicators

2.1 Water and Sanitation Information

Table 5: Distribution of Boreholes

Ward	Main Water Sources Per Ward 2016	Total Boreholes 2016	Total Boreholes 2021
1	80	67	67
2	48	42	44
3	52	49	55
4	50	38	38
5	44	37	38
6	38	31	65
7	71	34	46
8	56	48	54
9	56	42	42

Table 5: Distribution of Boreholes (Continued)

Ward	Main Water Sources Per Ward 2016	Total Boreholes 2016	Total Boreholes 2021
10	58	47	53
11	61	32	50
12	105	75	75
13	36	35	52
14	51	38	43
15	85	65	65
16	46	32	35
17	40	38	50
18	34	27	30
19	36	28	40
20	20	12	21
21	3	3	3
22	46	42	50
Total	1,116	862	1,016

3. Transport And Communication

Tsholotsho District has a relatively extensive road network system. Most of the roads are, however, unusable due to the extensive Kalahari sands covering the district. The majority of these roads, especially the major roads which covers Bulawayo-Tsholotsho route, Tsholotsho-Lupane route, Tsholotsho-Plumtree route, are in need of serious rehabilitation to enhance smooth movement of cargo and human beings.

In terms of network connectivity, the district enjoys services from the three major network providers in the country which are Econet, Netone and Telecel. However, network connectivity is sporadic in most wards around the district rendering communication problematic.

Table 6: Communication Connectivity

Ward	Network Coverage
1	No coverage
2	Netone and Econet, Telecel
3	Econet
4	Econet
5	Netone and Econet, Telecel
6	Netone and Econet
7	Netone and Econet, Telecel
8	Netone and Econet
9	Netone and Econet
10	Netone and Econet
11	Netone and Econet
12	Netone and Econet
13	Netone and Econet
14	Econet
15	Netone and Econet
16	Econet
17	Econet, Telecel
18	Econet, Netone
19	Netone and Econet
20	Netone and Econet
21	Netone and Econet
22	Netone and Econet, Telecel

4. Nutrition

4.1 Prevalence of Malnutrition (District-Level)
Malnutrition, HIV and TB

Table 7: Malnutrition Indicators

Indicator	Percentage	Source
Moderate acute malnutrition	0,7	ZimVAC 2021
Severe acute malnutrition	0	ZimVAC 2021
stunting	24.7	NNS 2018
Overweight and obesity	2.1 (Provincial)	NNS 2018
Low birth weight	16	DHSI2
Prevalence of HIV in women 14-49	29	DHSI2
Prevalence of TB		DHSI

The prevalence of acute malnutrition in the district has remained below 5% threshold over the years. This might be attributed to the active screening programme that has identified early and provided support to the affected families. However, stunting rates remain above the above 20% WHO threshold. The district has observed a declining trend since 2010 (37.4%), owing to the multi sector approach which the district adopted in 2016.

The prevalence of HIV remains high at 29% which is way above the national threshold of 13%. This is reflective of active and frequent migration of reproductive age group to South Africa and Botswana.

4.2 Feeding Practices in Children Under 2 Years of Age

Table 8: Feeding Practises In Children Under 2 Years

Feeding Practice	%
Minimum Meal Frequency	13.2
Minimum Dietary Diversity	18.9
Minimum Acceptable Diet	3.8
Exclusive Breastfeeding	91.7
Bottle Feeding	9

The child feeding practices in the district are sub optimal. This might be due to poor caring practices and knowledge on the recommended practices by the caregivers who are mostly the elderly. The rates of exclusive breastfeeding are high (91.7%), and this could be attributed to the care group model that promoted the young-child life-saving practise.

4.3 Food consumption by women and in the household

The food consumption pattern by women of childbearing age are within the acceptable range as most women are able to consume iron rich foods and vitamin A rich foods on a daily basis. The district needs to increase awareness on the importance of consuming protein rich foods.

Table 9: Food Consumption Indicators (ZimVac RLA 2021)

Indicator	%
Minimum Dietary Diversity Women	24
Proportion of Women consuming Iron Rich Food	73.1
Vitamin A Rich Foods	70
Proportion of Women Consuming Protein	56
Household Food Consumption Score	29

4.4 Top 10 Common Diseases

The top 10 common diseases causing morbidity are shown in the table below. Airborne diseases, skin diseases and injuries are the three common conditions that most patients are diagnosed with at local health facilities. The disease burden caused by airborne/respiratory condition could be reflective of the high prevalence of HIV in the district (29%).

Table 10: Top Ten Common Diseases (DHIS2)

Rank	Disease/Condition
1	Airborne
2	Skin Borne
3	Injuries
4	Dental Conditions
5	Diarrhoea
6	Diseases of the eye
7	Ear Conditions
8	Poison
9	Nutritional Deficiencies
10	Bilharzia

4.5 Top 5 Causes Of Mortality

The top five cases of mortality across the general population, are shown in the table below. Infectious communicable diseases such as HIV, Pneumonia and Pulmonary Tuberculosis are amongst the top five causes of mortality in the district. Non communicable conditions such as Hypertension and Diabetes are also major causes of deaths in Tsholotsho.

Table 11: Top 5 Causes Of Mortality

	Disease/Condition
1	HIV
2	Pneumonia
3	Diabetes
4	Hypertension
5	PTB

4.6 Mortality in Children and Women

The maternal mortality ratio of 4.6% is high as the global reproductive health recommends that no woman should lose their life during childbirth. The district should aim to increase skilled attendants in all health facilities.

Table 12: Mortality in Children and Women

Indicator	Percentage (%)
Infant mortality	3,3
Child mortality	1,1
Under-5 mortality	4,4
Maternal mortality ratio	4,62

4.7 Growth Monitoring (2021)

Institutional-based growth monitoring is shown in the table below. Growth monitoring services should reach all children in the district. Community based growth monitoring should be strengthened to ensure that all children are reached and that there is early detection of malnutrition even amongst those that do not seek health services.

Table 13: Institutional-Based Growth Monitoring

Facility	Total Weighed	Total Severe Underweight		Total Moderate Underweight		Total Measured	Total Severely Stunted		Total Moderately Stunted	
			%		%			%		%
Bubude	1,901	25	1.32	58	3.05	1,895	29	1.53	90	4.75
TDH	3,031	26	0.86	59	1.95	2,746	12	0.43	59	2.15
Makaza	1,592	1	0.06	0	0	1,491	0	0	0	0
Sodaka	335	0	0	3	0.9	335	0	0	3	0.9
Mpilo	2,388	1	0.04	8	0.34	410	0	0	0	0
Pumula	883	5	0.57	5	0.57	883	4	0.45	2	0.23

Table 13: Institutional-Based Growth Monitoring (Continued)

Facility	Total Weighed	Total Severe Underweight		Total Moderate Underweight		Total Measured	Total Severely Stunted		Total Moderately Stunted	
Dlamini	993	2	0.2	1	0.1	993	0	0	0	0
Mpanedziba	1,146	14	1.22	51	4.45	1,144	36	3.15	78	6.82
Jimila	2,336	3	0.13	17	0.73	2,336	3	0.13	22	0.94
Samahuru	808	17	2.1	1	0.12	808	0	0	0	0
Bemba	493	0	0	5	1.01	487	0	0	2	0.41
Mtshayeli	2,901	13	0.45	62	2.14	237	1	0.42	25	10.55
Kapane	2,629	22	0.84	86	3.27	951	16	1.68	42	4.42
TUC	2,253	1	0.04	2	0.08	2,253	1	0.4	2	0.08
Mlagisa	2,555	49	1.92	135	5.28	478	9	1.88	46	9.6
Nkunzi	4,574	37	0.81	99	2.16	1,163	24	2.06	93	8.0
Madlangombe	1,756	0	0	2	0.11	1,756	0	0	1	0.06
Tshitatshawa	796	8	1.01	66	8.29	796	83	10.43	117	14.7
Tshefunye	1,435	5	0.35	6	0.42	601	1	0.17	6	1.0
Shaba	2,996	2	0.07	4	0.13	1,670	0	0	2	0.12
Sipepa	969	0	0	5	0.52	969	0	0	5	0.52
Sikente	1,318	1	0.8	1	0.8	1,318	1	0.8	1	0.8

4.7.1 Nutrition

Health Centre Proportion Children with malnutrition in 2021

The prevalence of malnutrition by health facility is presented in the table below. High prevalence rate of severe underweight was recorded at Samahuru health Centre with 2.1%, though generally, a low record was maintained across the district.

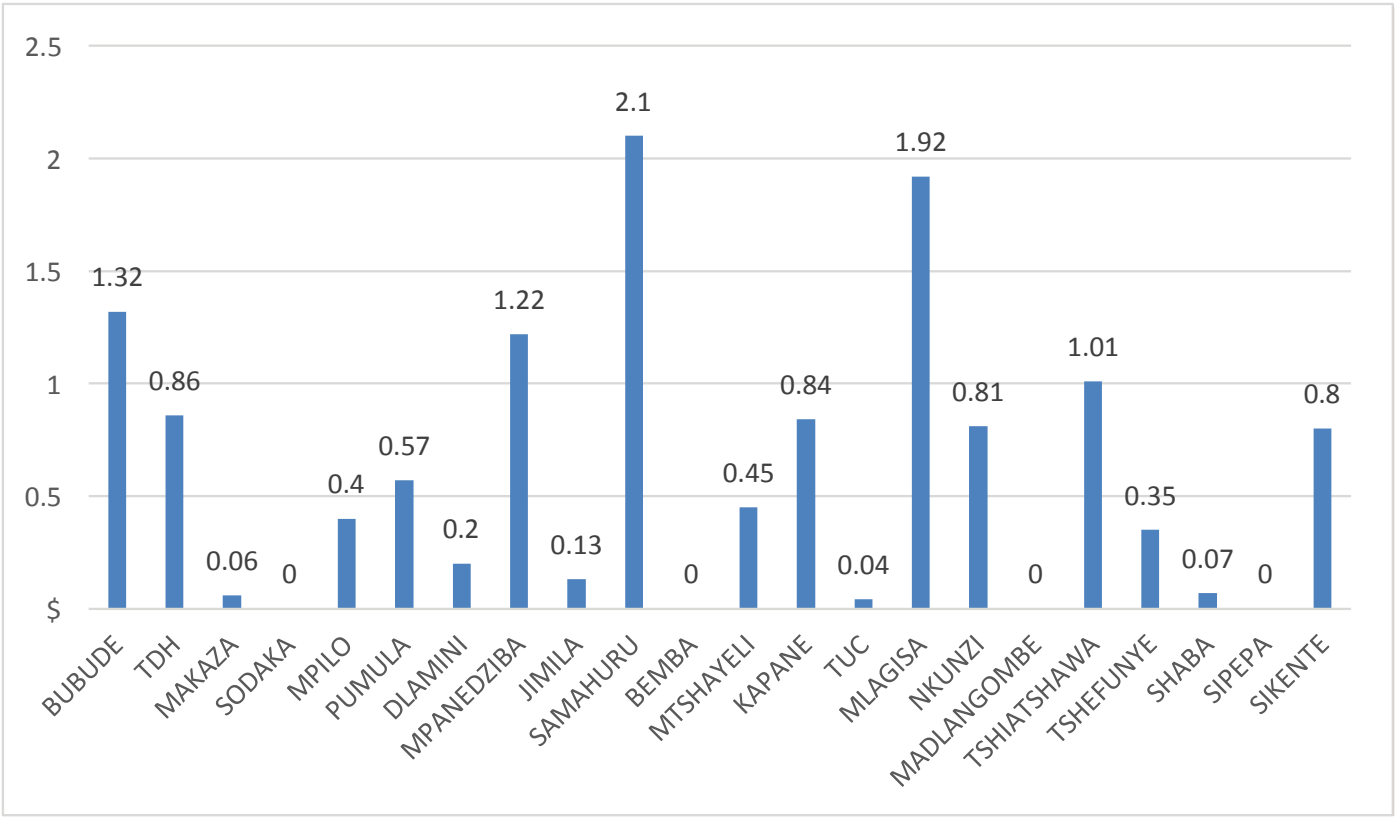

Figure 2: Proportion of Severe Underweight Children by Health Facility

4.7.2 Moderate Underweight Children

High moderate underweight was recorded at Tshitatshawa (8.9%), Mlagisa (5.8%), Mpanedziba (4.45).

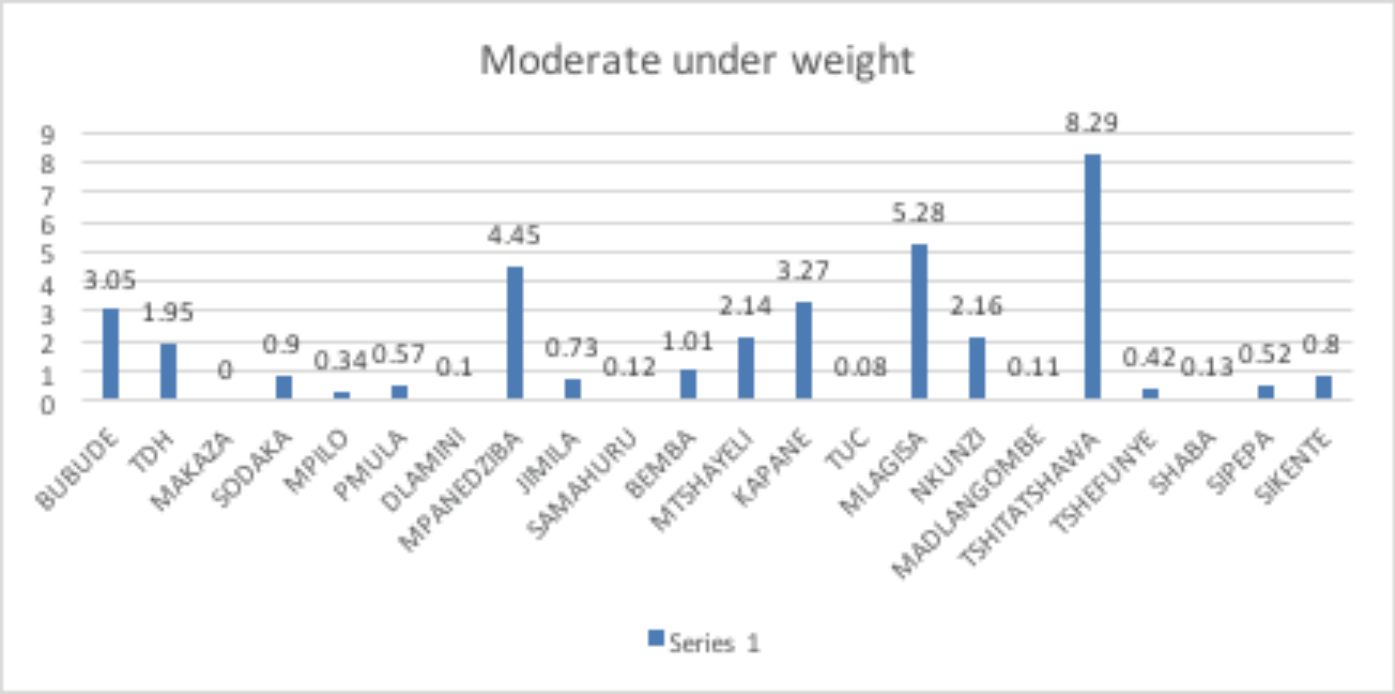

Figure 3: Proportion Of Children With Moderate Underweight Children By Health Facility

Monthly growth monitoring also tracks under five weights for age (stunting). The highest proportion of children with severe stunting prevalence was recorded at Tshitatshawa (10.43%), although severe stunting remains low generally across the district.

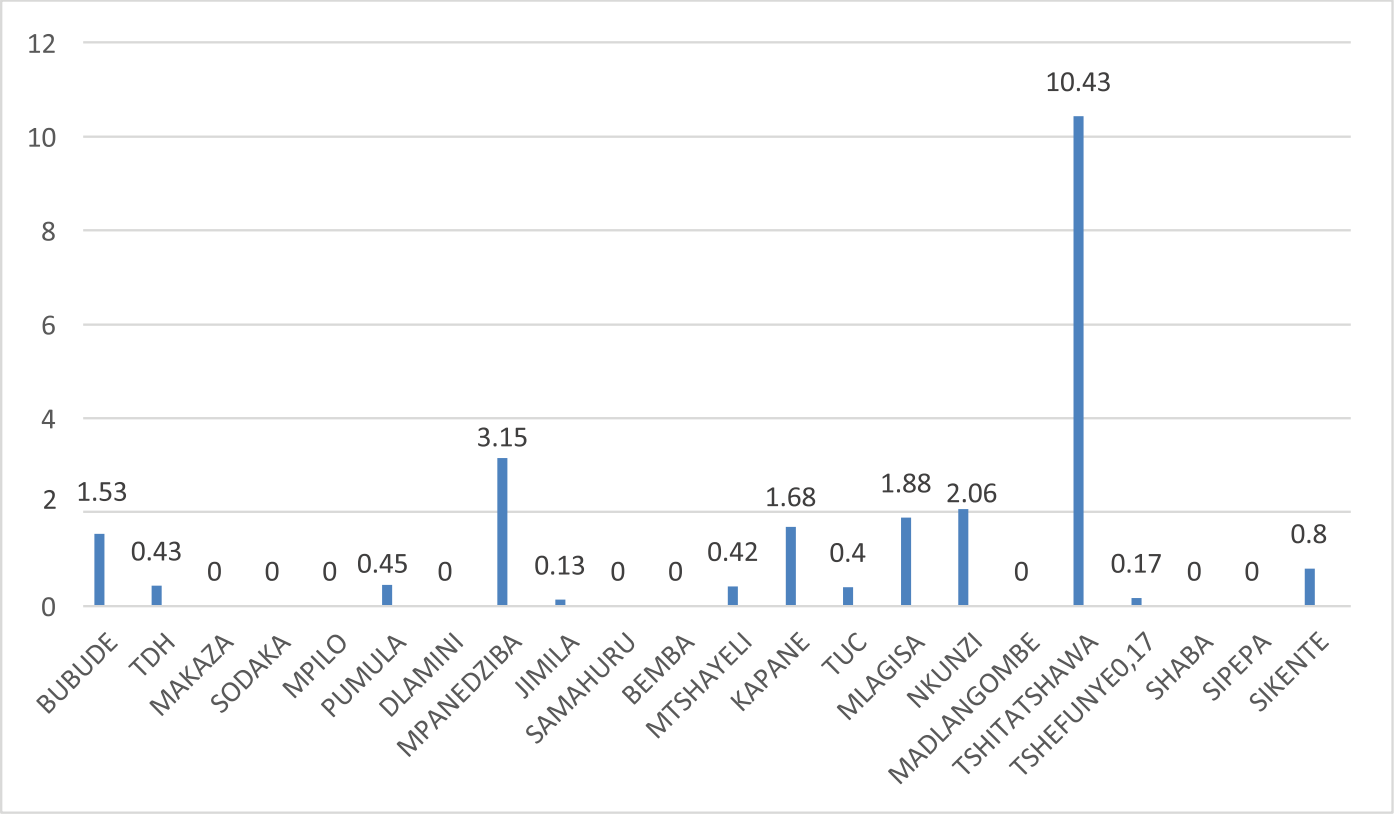

Figure 4: Proportion Of Children With Severe Stunting By Health Facility

4.7.3 Moderate Stunting By Health Facility

The highest moderate stunting rate was recorded at Tshitatshawa (14.7%), followed by Mtshayeli (10.55%) then lastly, Mlagisa with 9.6% prevalence rate as indicated in Figure 5.

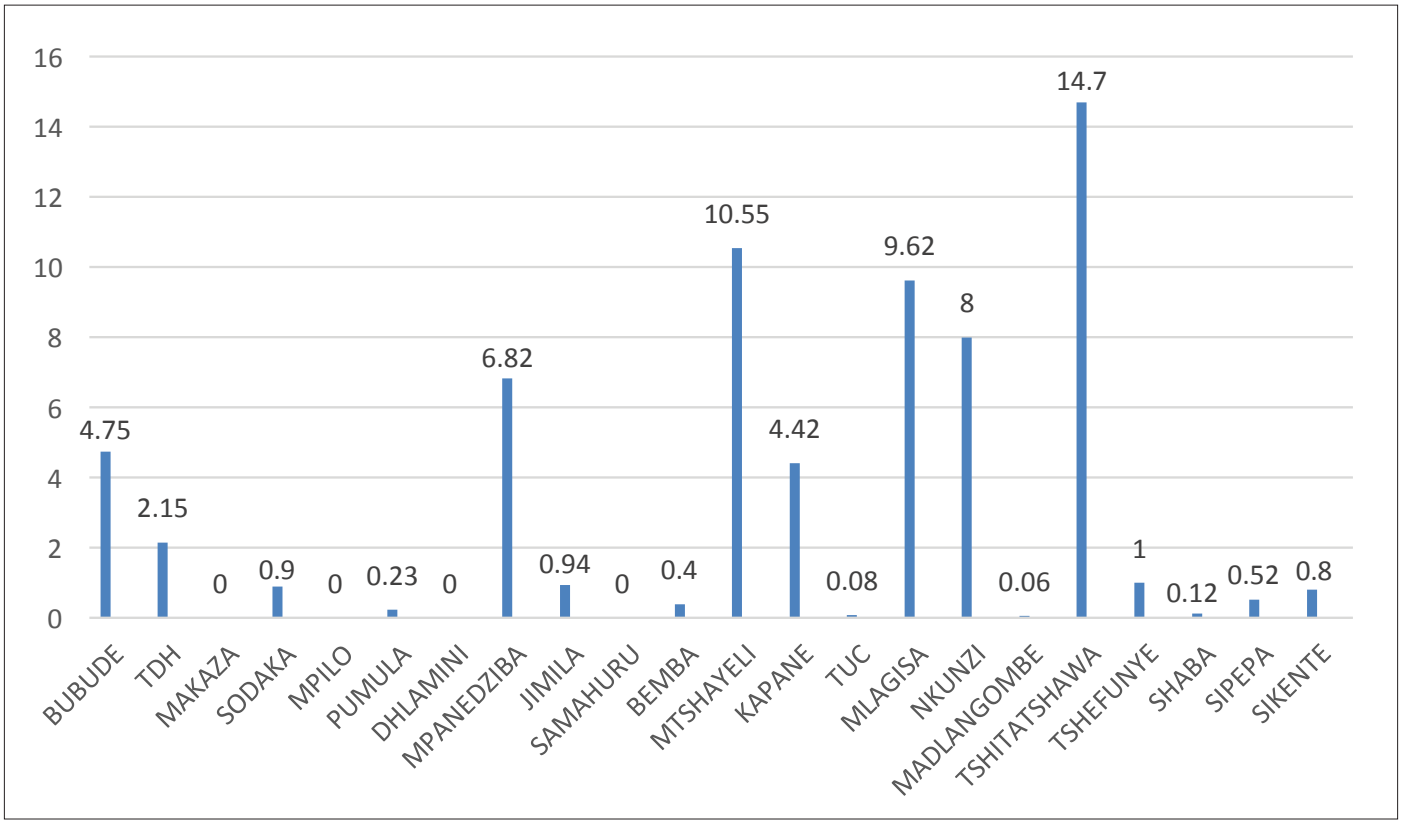

Figure 5: Moderate Stunting Prevalence By Health Facility

4.7.4 Prevalence Of HIV/AIDS Morbidity

HIV prevalence for Tsholotsho District was estimated to be at 14% according to the Ministry of Health's 2021 HIV estimates, and this was classified as a high prevalence although it has significantly dropped as compared to previous years. This can be attributed to a number of interventions across the district. The district was also classified as an HIV hotspot according to the UNAIDS hotspot analysis that was conducted in 2014. Tsholotsho has the highest number of people on treatment for HIV and Aids in Matabeleland North province according to statistics from the National Aids Council (NAC). The key drivers of HIV and AIDS in the province and in the district are separation of spouses where men work in Botswana and South Africa while women are at home. Behavioural change programmes are encouraged to reduce the prevalence of new incidents levels.

5. Main Livelihood Sources

Tsholotsho is in the Kalahari Communal sands zone. This zone is spread across Tsholotsho, Bulilima and Hwange districts in the Matabeleland provinces. Livelihoods are mainly based on agriculture which is rain-fed characterized by growing of traditional grains such sorghum, pearl millet and maize mixed with animal husbandry, and supported by cross-border labour migration (table 7). This low-lying, dryland zone has the advantage of proximity to labour markets in South Africa and Botswana. Thus, an important aspect of the household economy is having someone working in another country or in urban cities of Zimbabwe and remits money back home. Internal Savings and Lending Savings Schemes (ISALS) are becoming a major source of income generation around the district.

Under seasonal livelihood sources, there are activities such as casual labour which involves working in fields, thatching, grass cutting and brick moulding. Perennial livelihood sources include activities such as firewood sales, art and craft, contract employment in safari operators and timber logging, sand abstraction and retailing. However, there are a number of challenges affecting livelihoods activities which include inter alia: inconsistent rainfalls which affect agricultural activities, most people both locally and externally suffered job losses due to COVID-19 and this affected remittances. Closer of the boarders due to COVID-19 induced lockdowns affected remittances leading to severe shortage of food items in the district, families lost their adaptive capacities and prices of basic commodities sky-rocketed. The district is mainly dominated by the rand in a country where the RTGS is the main currency led to prize distortions and suffering of a lot of people, prizes for both inputs and produce also increased. Access to markets is limited, the buyers dictate the prize at the expense of the seller. The road network across the district is very poor, farmers are not accessing markets easily in areas such as Tsholotsho Growth point and Bulawayo. The bad shape of the road network also led to transport fares to become so exorbitant.

Table 14: Tsholotsho Main Livelihood Sources

	Description	Wards
Western Kalahari Sand Veld Communal	This zone is spread across Tsholotsho, Bulilima and Hwange districts in the Matabeleland provinces. Livelihoods are based on the rain-fed cultivation of sorghum and millet mixed with animal husbandry and supported by cross-border labour migration. This low-lying, dry land zone has the advantage of proximity to labour markets in South Africa and Botswana. Thus, an important aspect of the household economy is having someone working elsewhere and who remits money. Other important livelihood activities include craft making, grass cutting and firewood sales.	All 22 wards

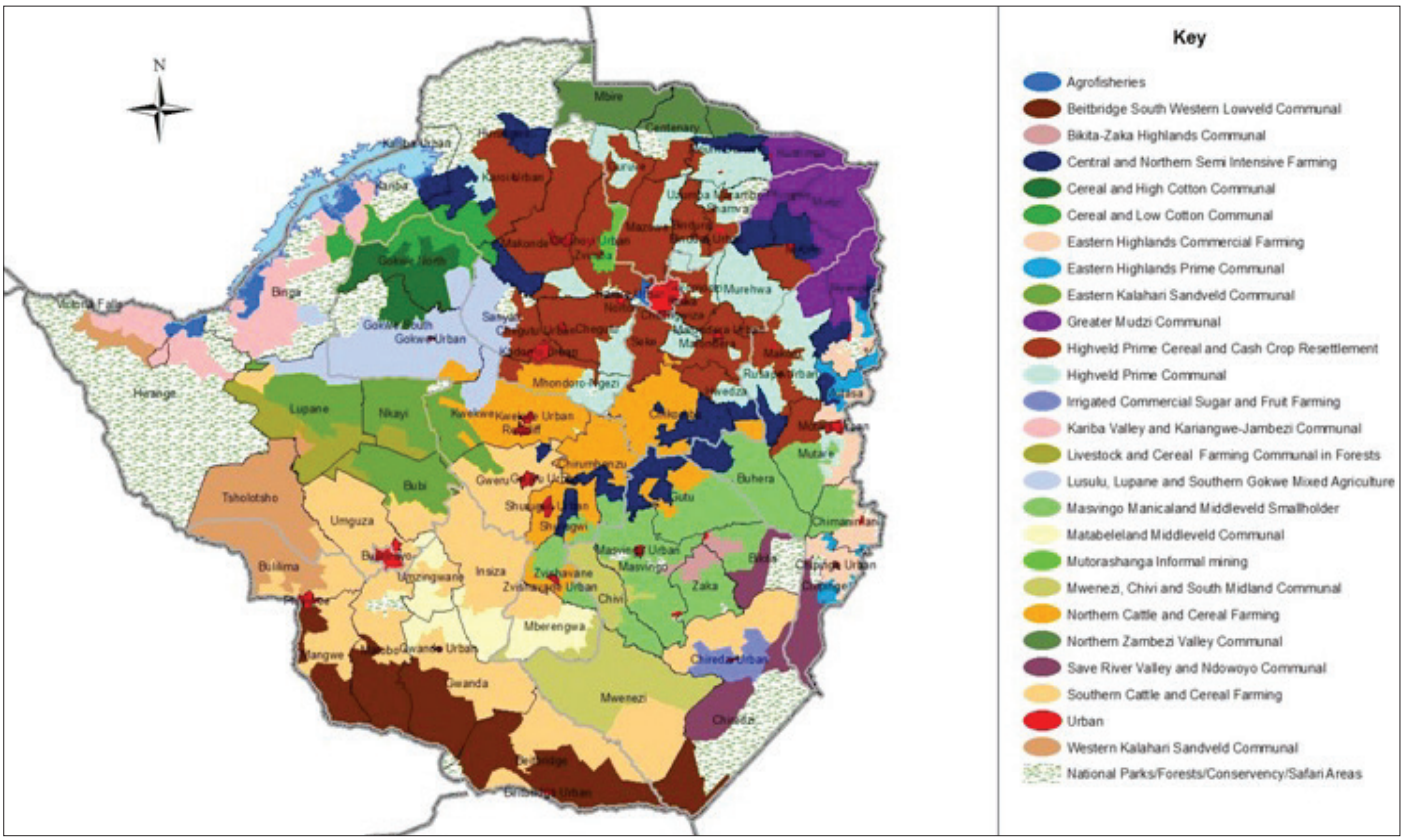

Figure 6: Main Livelihood Sources Map

6. Poverty Levels

The poverty prevalence rate for Tsholotsho was 89.3% in 2015 compared to the national rural poverty prevalence of 76%, according to Poverty Atlas 2015. Ward 3 had the highest poverty prevalence of 93.4% while Ward 22 (77.1%) and Ward 20 (83.6%) had the lowest prevalence rates. Tsholotsho has generally high prevalence of poverty and this might be caused by poor distribution of rainfall and limited livelihood opportunities for wards in the west bordering the Hwange National Park. Wards 22 and 20 have plantations and cattle ranching farms hence better livelihood sources for local households.

Table 15: Poverty levels Tsholotsho

Ward No.	Projected Population 2016	No. HHs 2012	No. of Poor HHs	Poverty Prevalence (%)
3	5,684	1,030	951	93.40
21	2,405	439	403	93.30
8	9,637	1,741	1,590	93.10
9	7,039	1,287	1,182	93.10
7	4,465	807	743	92.80
2	5,160	973	883	92.20
4	3,014	562	513	91.90
10	3,865	718	651	91.60
1	3,978	739	671	91.40
14	4,000	775	700	91.00
6	7,825	1,531	1,371	90.90
12	7,478	1,469	1,293	89.70
11	4,241	781	690	89.50
5	5,542	1,116	990	89.40
15	8,673	1,658	1,459	89.10
18	4,963	953	833	88.10
17	4,884	964	823	87.80
16	5,932	1,204	1,050	87.70
13	6,548	1,390	1,191	86.30
19	6,078	1,208	1,024	86.00
20	2,003	418	345	83.60
22	9,251	1,867	1,427	77.10
Total	**122, 665**	**23, 630**	**20, 783**	**89.30**
Source: Zimbabwe Poverty Atlas 2015				

Tsholotsho District has a high prevalence of poverty, and this might be caused by poor distribution of rainfall and limited livelihood opportunities for wards in the west bordering the Hwange National Park. There are insufficient water sources that can be used to supplement crop production and improve livelihoods of communities.

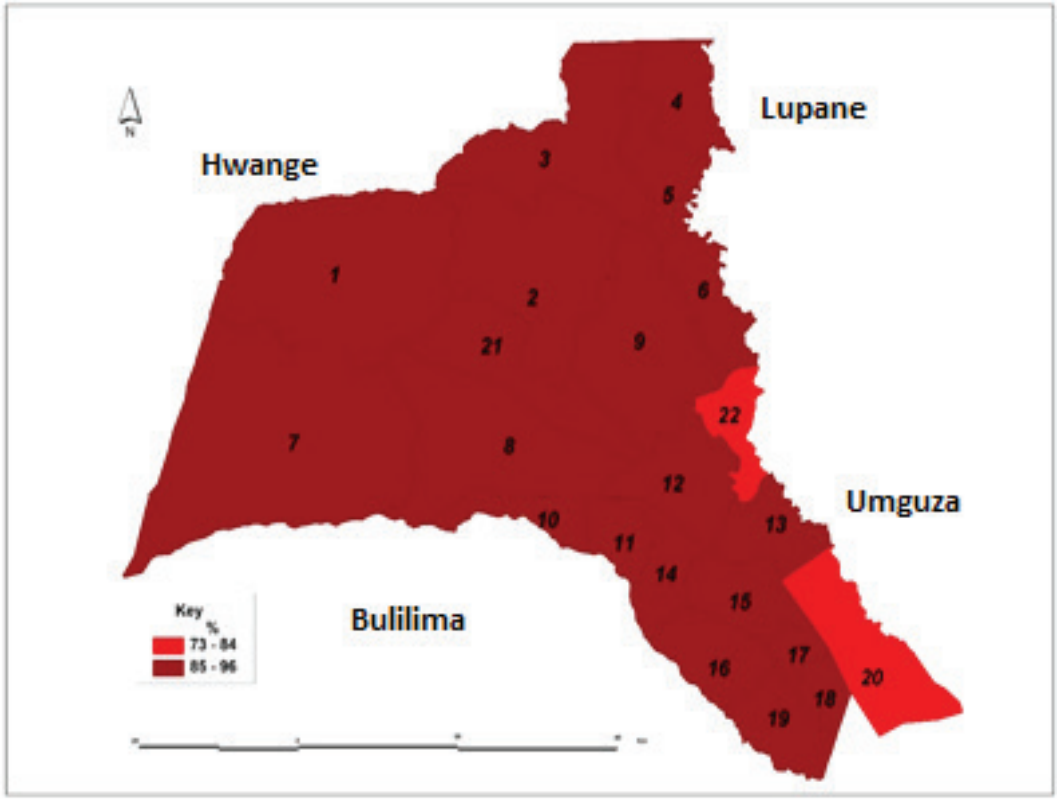

Figure 7: Poverty Map Tsholotsho

7.1 Natural Regions And Climate

7.2 Mean Annual Rainfall

The rainfall partten in the past ten years has not been consistant owing to the global climate change phenominon. According to the metriological forcust, Tsholotsho is described that receives nornal rainfall of 450mml/annum. In the past seassons, the distict has received above normal rainfall during the following rain seasons; 2012/13, 2013/13, 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2020/21. (Fig 6.1)This amount of rainfall is supportive of drought tolerant crops and livestock production.

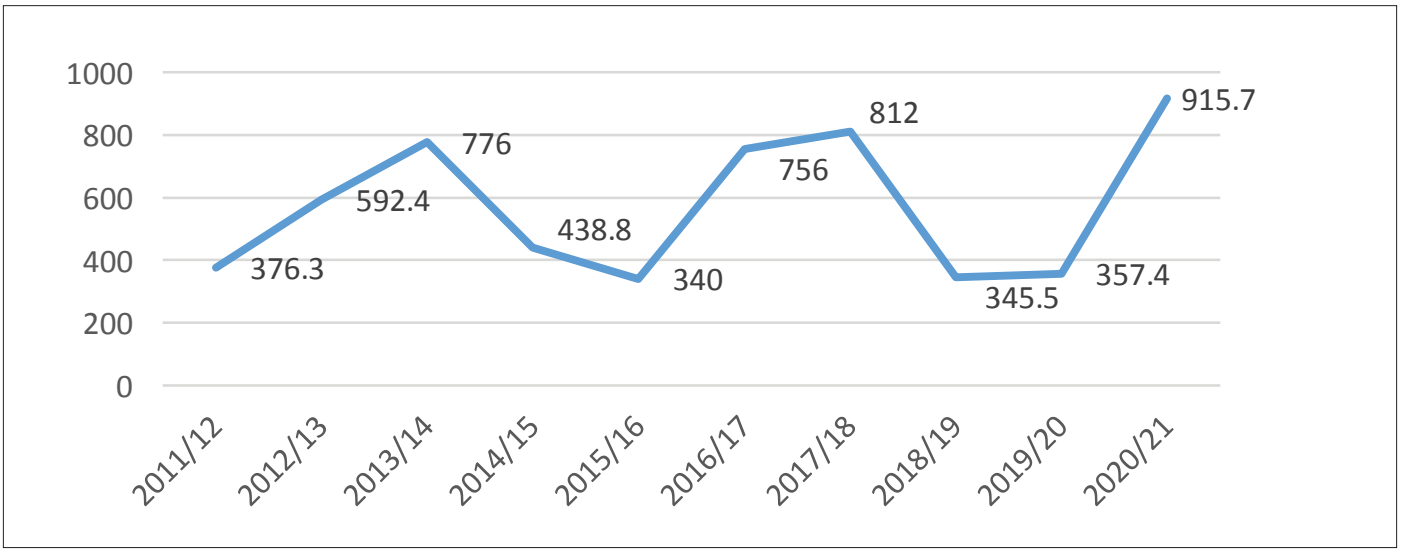

Figure 8: Mean Annual Rainfall

7.3 Hydro-Geological Conditions

There are a number of water pans which have since become seasonal due to climate change and other anthropogenic activities. In 2016 some of these pans were included under major dams. These pans are a major source of water for both humans and livestock and they also work as flood mitigation measure. It is recommended that the water pans be upgraded into dams. The distribution of dams across the district has not changed positively since 2016, instead several wards (2,4 and 7) no longer have dams that were serving the community in 2016.

Table 16: Distribution Of Major Dams By Ward

Ward	Major Dams In The Ward 2016	Major Dams Per Ward 2021
1	1	0
2	2	0
3	0	0
4	1	0
5	1	1
6	1	1
7	5	0
8	4	1
9	4	4
10	2	1
11	2	0
12	1	0
13	2	3
14	0	1
15	4	1
16	3	1
17	1	0
18	3	1
19	2	2
20	2	0
21	0	0
22	0	1

8. Crop Information

Tsholotsho District falls in natural region 4 which is characterized by poor rainfall distribution and pro-longed mid-season dry spells coupled with poor soil fertility. This makes the district a suitable area for small grains production. The small grains produced in the district include pearl millet being the widely grown followed by sorghum and finger millet. Although small grains are suitable crops in Tsholotsho, not all farmers in the district are interested in producing them. Small grains are mostly grown in the northern part of the district and less in the southern part. When the small grains are grown, most farmers do not use fertilizers especially top dressing, instead, they use manure as basal soil fertility enhancement.

Other crops grown include maize, groundnuts, cowpeas and watermelons. Area put under small grain varies depending on rainfall pattern and availability of seed. Although there are improved seed varieties, farmers prefer to mix both indigenous seed and improved varieties. On average, tillage under small grain ranges from 0.5-1.5 ha per household. Yields levels are low due to poor fertility management and poor agronomic practices such as weeding on time.

In a typical year, surplus produce is sold on a very low scale due to unavailability of ready markets. The major challenge in the production of small grain in Tsholotsho are quelea birds. One of the successful stories in Tsholotsho district on small grains is that there are farmers who were trained in seed multiplication. Such farmers are already producing quality seeds. These are found in selected wards. In a given farming period, farmers are encouraged to plant the small grains in large numbers to reduce the damage caused by the quelea birds. Farmers are encouraged to plant early so that grain formation for small grains coincides with grain formation for the grass. (Quelea birds prefer grass grains as compared to small grains).

Consumption of millet (finger or pearl) and sorghum by the majority of households is considerably low due to palatability and preference issues. The consumption of small grains is highest during bad years and the lean season of typical years. Consequently, the consumption pattern results in poor dietary diversity, leading to potential issues of malnutrition. Millet and sorghum also contribute significantly to incomes for the most vulnerable households as it is utilized for beer brewing. Overall, small grains are labour intensive and hence the acreage grown by the majority of households is insignificant. Moreover, qualia birds affect these smaller grains to larger extent before maturity thereby impacting yields. This trend seems to reduce the crop yields that are critical for food and nutrition security. Wild animals, maize stalk borer and Smut are some of the challenges affecting crop production.

8.1 Farming Sectors And Crops Grown

The district has mainly three farming sectors, that is Communal sector, new resettlement A1 and old resettlement. The main crops grown are pearl millet, maize, sorghum and legumes which include groundnuts, roundnuts and cowpeas.

Table 17: Main Farming Sectors In The District

Farming Sector	%
Communal Land	95
Large Scale Commercial Farms	
Small Scale Commercial Farms	
State Farms	
Urban Land	
State Parks and Urban Land	
Old Resettlement Land	4
New Resettlement A1	
New Resettlement A2	
Unallocated Land	

8.2 Irrigation Schemes

Table 18: Distribution Of Irrigation Schemes By Ward

Ward	Name of Irrigation Schemes	Total Area (Hectares)	Status
1	Sodaka	1	functional
2	Nil		
3	Nil		
4	Nil		
5	Togetherness	1	functional
6	Silwalendlala	1	functional
7	Nil		
8	Nil		
9	Nil		
10	Nil		
11	Nil		
12	Eluhlaza	20	6 hectares is underutilization.
13	Manzimahle	1,5	functional
14	Nil		
15	Nil		
16	Dingilwazi,didela	1,2 each	functional
17	Nil		
18	Nil		
19	Denge, nthuthuko	1,2 and 1,5 respectively	functional
20	Newcross	1,5	Non functional
21	Nil		
22	Nil		

Tsholotsho District has only one major irrigation scheme which is Eluhlaza in ward 12, the rest are micro irrigation schemes.

8.3 Challenges

Major challenge faced by irrigation schemes is the availability of water especially during the dry season since the water is drawn from boreholes which are about 120 metres deep. There is also lack of farming equipment to enhance mechanization which in turn has the potential of increasing production and productivity.

8.4 Crop Production Trends

The area planted to the major cereals continue to vary as indicated in the table below. This can be linked to the amount of rainfall received that is further compounded by the late onset of the season. In the 2020/2021 season for instance, millet had the highest area planted, followed by maize and then sorghum this is probably because of adaptation to climate change, pearl millet is better compared to maize and sorghum. Also, in terms of taste, communities prefer pearl millet to sorghum and maize. Although maize had a low average area planted, it had the highest average yield this is probably because of the normal to above normal rainfall patterns which the district received, the rainfall pattern in also cyclone induced.

Table 19: Crop Production Trends

Year	Area Planted/ Yield	Sorghum	Millet	Maize
2020/2021	Area Planted	2,667.3ha	13,299.2ha	7,253.3 ha
	Average Yield	1,5 t/ha	1.6 t/ha	2.5 t/ha
2019/2020	Area Planted	2,966.5ha	11,304.94ha	5,753.06ha
	Average Yield	0.23t/ha	0.25t/ha	0.22t/ha
2018/2019	Area Planted	2,116.35ha	11,420.7ha	9,064.24ha
	Average Yield	0.11t/ha	0.12t/ha	0.13t/ha
2017/2018	Area Planted	2,934.65	13871.87	8,948.12
	Average Yield	0.38t/ha	0.32t/ha	0.39t/ha
2016/2017	Area Planted	3,676.3ha	16,929.11ha	10,517.12ha
	Average Yield	0.33t/ha	0.49t/ha	0.33t/ha
2015/2016	Area Planted	2,093.5 ha	12,082.6 ha	4,509.3 ha
	Average Yield	0.15 t/ha	0.08 t/ha	0.07 t/ha
2014/15	Area Planted	1,704.4 ha	7,492 ha	10,212 ha
	Average Yield	0.2 t/ha	0.2 t/ha	0.2 t/ha
2013/14	Area Planted	2,987 ha	18,112 ha	11,641 ha
	Average Yield	0.11 t/ha	0.41 t/ha	0.48 t/ha
2012/13	Area Planted	3,157.6 ha	12,385 ha	10,685 ha
	Average Yield	0.11 t/ha	0.17 t/ha	0.10 t/ha
2011/12	Area Planted	29,463 ha	15,972 ha	12,733 ha
	Average Yield	0.25 t/ha	0.3 t/ha	0.24 t/ha
2010/11	Area Planted	5,904 ha	19,246 ha	21,409 ha
	Average Yield	0,29 t/ha	0.35 t/ha	0.24 t/ha
2009/10	Area Planted	15,610 ha	39,984 ha	9,293 ha
	Average Yield	0.31 t/ha	0.42 t/ha	0.45 t/ha
2008/9	Area Planted	6,006 ha	10,710 ha	6,473 ha
	Average Yield	1.15 t/ha	1.04 t/ha	1.5 t/ha
2007/8	Area Planted	10,259 ha	10,283 ha	3,966 ha
	Average Yield	0.11 t/ha	0.11 t/ha	0.01 t/ha
2006/7	Area Planted	15,161 ha	12,888 ha	6,669 ha
	Average Yield	0.38 t/ha	0.38 t/ha	0.13 t/ha

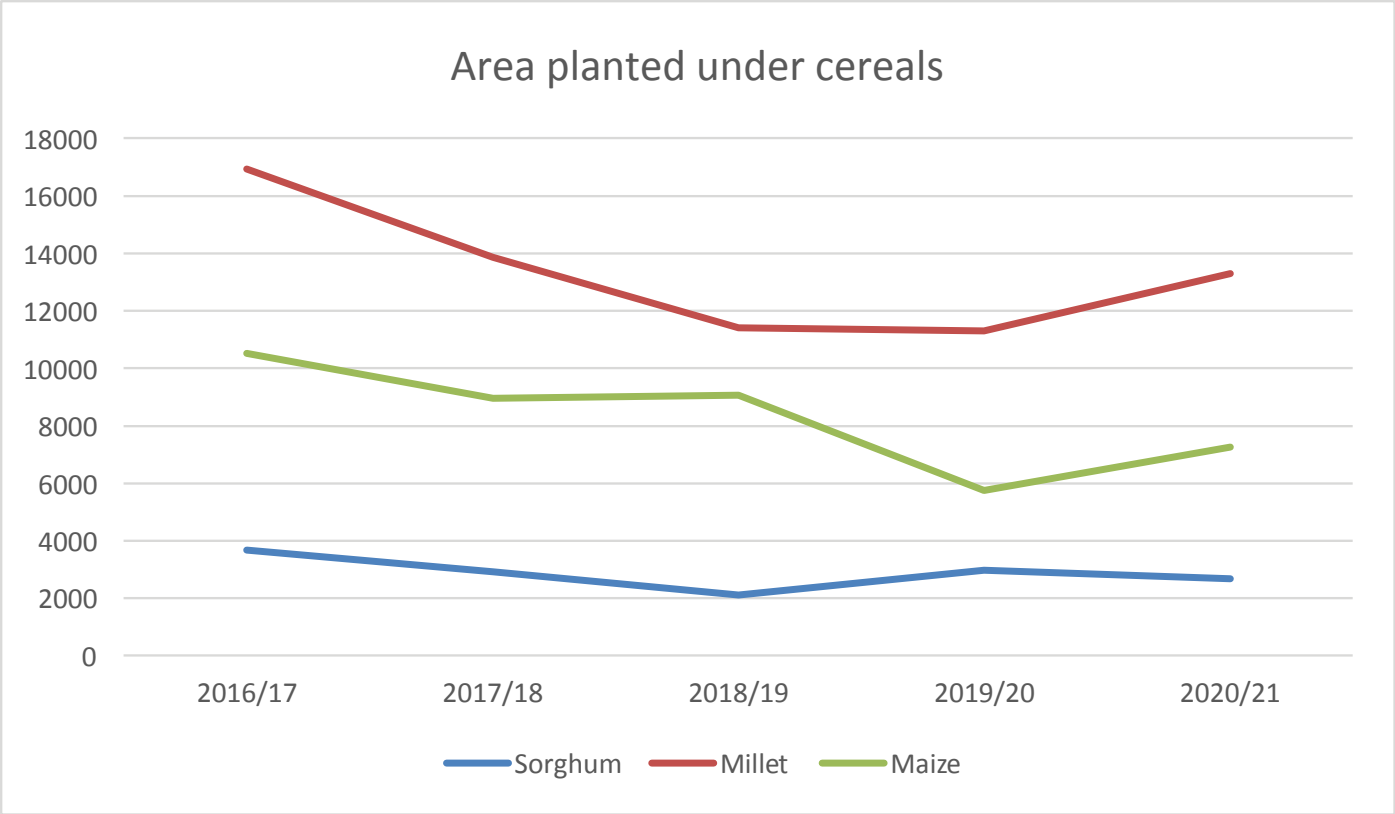

Figure 9: Major Cereals Map Tsholotsho

The area planted under major cereals seems to be going down each year. This is to do with rainfall amount and its distribution across the district. As well as input challenges that is not readily available in the district. The only nearest market for the agricultural input is Bulawayo which is 100km from the district capital and further away for some rural communities. Sorghum crop is the least grown in terms of area among the three cereal crops grown in the district.

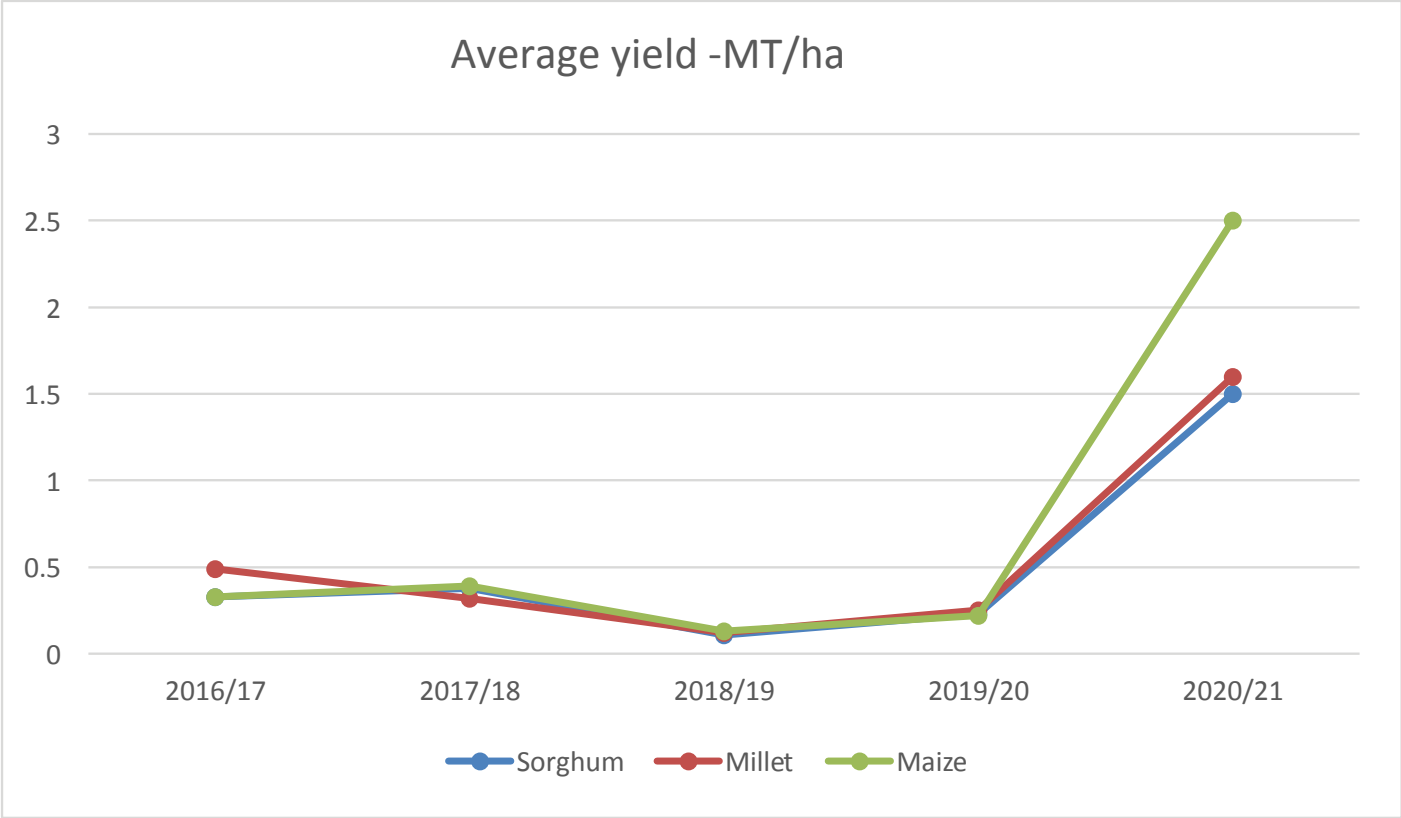

Figure 10: Average Yield - Mt Ha

Generally, the average yield for the district from 2016 to 2019 season, has been very low due to a number of reasons which include poor rainfall distribution, erratic rainfall compounded by mid-season dry spells which are long up to 20 days of the dry spell. The other reasons for low yields are poor soil fertility management and in availability of labour to weed crops on time. There was a sharp rise in the average yield for both cereal crops in season 2020/2021 owing to the new climate-proof programme (Pfumvudza) introduced by the government, and the good rainfall season.

The district has not been able to produce adequate quantities of cereals to last the whole consumption period. Most wards produce cereals enough to last less than a month. The district has been relying on food assistance to meet the gap. The main reasons contributing to low cereal production include low erratic rainfall, which is compounded with poor rainfall distribution, poor soils, farming inputs challenges, reduced labour due to HIV/AIDS pandemic and migration are amongst the top contributing factors. It is important to note that there is a mindset shift by most farmers as reflected by the increased hectarage under small grains in comparison to maize. There is still a need to continue promoting the production of drought tolerant crops because of the erratic rains and climatic variability.

Table 20: Average Cereal Production And Adequacy By Ward

Ward	Cereal Adequacy (Months)
1	4-6
2	7-9
3	7-9
4	4-6
5	3
6	6
7	3
8	10
9	10
10	3
11	3
12	3
13	7-9
14	3
15	3
16	4-6
17	4-6
18	4-6
19	3
20	9-11
21	3
22	7-9
Average	4 months
Source: AARDS	

Cereal adequacy for the district generally does not last for the whole consumption period, and this is attributed to erratic rainfall and its distribution over space and time.

9. Livestock

The commonly owned livestock in Tsholotsho are cattle, goats, donkeys and chicken. Free grazing on communally held spaces is the common source of pasture. Tsholotsho like any other district in Matabeleland thrive on livestock (mainly cattle and goats) production as its main agricultural activity. This is due to the climatic condition of the region and its inability to support crop production. The district has a herd of 92,318 cattle, 105,352 goats, Poultry 158,883, Pigs 822 and 1,621 sheep. On average a household has 5 cattle and 10 goats. Generally, the district cattle herd has been on a declining trend due to livestock drought resulting from poor water supply and pastures. Surface water bodies have been affected by land degradation and siltation of numerous pans scattered around the district. There are no rivers across the district, leaving most farmers facing challenge of watering their livestock during the dry season to the extent of sharing water source with human consumption.

Table 21: Average livestock holding per ward

Ward	Average Cattle Holding	Average Goats Holding	Average Chicken Holding	Average Sheep Holding
1	5	5	5	0
2	4	6	12	0
3	6	6	10	0
4	5	4	8	0
5	4	5	6	0
6	7	6	4	2
7	4	8	14	0
8	3	6	9	3
9	5	5	10	3
10	4	6	8	3
11	4	6	9	5
12	5	6	8	5
13	5	6	7	3
14	3	4	6	3
15	4	8	6	3
16	3	4	6	1
17	3	5	7	1
18	3	5	7	2
19	5	6	9	0
20 A1	12	5	10	1
20 OR	5	5	13	0
21	3	7	7	0
22	4	4	9	0

Source: Livestock Production Department

The upper middle class own most of the livestock in the district as indicated below

Table 22: Average Livestock Ownership By Wealth Group

Livestock	Lower Middle Class	Middle Class	Upper Middle Class
Cattle	0	1-5	6-10
Goats	0-5	6-10	11-15
Sheep	0	1-3	3-5
Donkeys	0-2	3-6	6-10
Pigs	0	0-2	5-10

Source: Livestock Production Department

9.1 Main Livestock Diseases

The main livestock diseases and wards affected are shown in table below. Generally, all the 22 wards are affected by most livestock diseases except anthrax which affects Wards 2,9,15 and 21 only.

Table 23: Main Livestock Diseases

Livestock Disease	Wards Mostly Affected (Number And Name Of Wards Affected)
Rabies:	All 22 wards
Newcastle disease:	Nil
Anthrax	2, 9, 15 and 21 (Dlamini, Mpanedziba, Mbamba and Tshibizina)
Foot and Mouth:	Nil
Lumpy skin	All wards
Blackleg	All wards
Internal parasites	All wards
Opthalmia	All wards
Gall sickness	All wards
Pulp kidney	All wards
Heart water	All wards
Theileriosis	Nil

9.2 Dipping Facilities

All wards except 20 and 21 have at least one functional dipping facility. The majority of dipping facilities in the district require rehabilitation.

Table 24: Dipping Facilities

Ward	Number Of Dip Tanks	Number Of Functional Dip Tanks	Number Of Dip Tanks Currently Under Rehab	Number Of Dip Tanks Requiring Rehab
1	5	3	0	2
2	1	1	0	0
3	3	1	0	2
4	2	1	0	1
5	2	2	0	0
6	3	1	0	2
7	3	1	0	2
8	4	2	0	2
9	1	1	0	0
10	2	1	0	1
11	2	2	0	0
12	2	2	0	0
13	2	2	0	0
14	2	2	0	0
15	3	3	0	0
16	2	2	0	0
17			0	0
18	3	2	0	1
19	3	1	0	2
20	3	0	0	3
21	1	0	0	1
22	2	1	0	1

Source: VET Department

9.3 Animal Health Centres

The district is serviced by five animal health facilities and three of these are non-functional. There are however 25 community animal health workers in the district.

Table 25: Animal Health Centres

Number of functional Animal Health centres	5
Number of Non-functional animal health centres	3
Number of Community Animal Health Workers/Paravets	25
Source: VET Department	

9.4 Livestock Holding

Forty percent of households in the district own cattle while 44% own goats.

Table 26: Livestock Holding

	Number of Households	% Who Own Cattle	% Who Own Goats
All Households	25,957	40%	44%
Farm Households	22,657	9,062 HH	9,969 HH
Non-Farm Households	3,300	0	0
Source: 2021 ZimVAC			

9.5 Distribution Of Herd Size

60% of households do not own cattle, 13% own less than 5 cattle and 27% own more than five cattle.

Table 27: Distribution Of Herd Size

Number Of Livestock Per Household	Cattle (%)	Goats (%)
0	60	56
<5	13	33
>5	27	11
Source: ZIMVAC		

9.6 Other Livestock Establishments

There are other livestock establishments in the district to include apiculture (100) and aquaculture (4).

Table 28: Other Livestock Establishments In The District

Type of Establishment	Number of Establishments
Aquaculture (Capture fisheries)	0
Aquaculture (Ponds)	4
Apiculture	100
Dairy Farms	0
Feedlots	0
Fodder production	0
Source: AARDS	

9.7 Challenges Faced By Livestock Farmers

The following are some of the challenges faced by livestock farmers in Tsholotsho

- Recurrent droughts which result in poor grazing and shortage of water for livestock watering.
- Inadequate dip tanks as there are on average 2 dip tanks per ward.
- unavailability of non-competitive markets exposes farmers to the buyers as the major determinants of prizes.
- Increased cases of stock theft in the district.
- Increased cases of livestock diseases due to lack of dip tanks.

10. Agriculture Markets

10.1 Livestock Markets

Organized cattle sales are conducted through council whilst there is also private individual buying. Relatively the prices are low as the district is in the red zone where FMD (foot and mouth disease) is common.

Table 29: Average Livestock Prices

Commodity	Unit Price	Value As Of 2016	Value As Of 2022	Type Of Markets
Beef cattle	Per beast	$300	$300	Farmer to farmer, local butcheries, private buyers
Milk	Per litre	$1	$1	Farmer to households
Goats	Per animal	$30	$40	Farmer to farmer, private buyers
Sheep	Per animal	$50	$55	Farmer to farmers, private buyers
Pigs	Per animal	$40	$40	Farmer to farmer, local butcheries, private buyers
Indigenous chickens	Per bird	$5	$5	Farmer to private buyers, local restaurants, butcheries
Broilers	Per bird	$6	$7	Farmer to private buyers, local restaurants, butcheries
Eggs	Per dozen	$1.50	$1.60	Farmer to private buyers, local shops
Donkey	Per beast	$40	$150	Farmer to farmer
Source: Livestock Production Department				

The average livestock prices from 2016 have generally remained stable owing to the fact that they are prized in foreign currency. However, due to lack of competition in the sale of livestock particularly cattle, prizes are determined by the buyers and hence they remain low.

10.2 Crop Produce Markets

In terms of markets, the district has got one major market at the business centre for horticultural commodities and fresh farm produce. The GMB depot which is also located at the business centre provides market for cereals and legumes. The major sources of these commodities are local farmers, farmers mainly from Bulawayo and Nyamandlovu. Cereals are also sold from farmer to farmer and can also be purchased using barter trade exchanging with livestock during bad seasons These commodities as of February 2022 were all available.

Table 30: Crop Produce Markets

Market Name	Ward Number	Commodity	Source Of Commodity	Availability
Tsholotsho Business centre	22	Horticultural commodities	Nyamandlovu, Bulawayo, local gardens	Available
		Fresh farm produce	Nyamandlovu, Bulawayo, local gardens	Available
Tsholotsho GMB Depot	22	Cereals, Legume	Local farmers, GMB	Available
Source: Food And Nutrition Committee				

Table 31: Commodity Availability And Prizes Per Ward As Of February 2022

Ward	Commodity					Price					
	Maize Meal	Maize Grain	Cooking Oil	Beans	Other Small Grain	Rice	Maize Meal $/10kg	Maize Grain $/Bucket	Cooking Oil $/2ltre	Beans $/500g	Other Small Grain $/Bucket
1	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	8	-	5	2	7
2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	7	-	4	2	7
3	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6	-	5	2	7
4	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	7	-	5	2	-
5	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	6	-	4	2	-
6	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	7	-	5	2	-
7	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	10	-	5	2	7
8	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	7	-	5	2	7

Table 31: Commodity Availability And Prizes Per Ward As Of February 2022 (Continued)

Ward	Commodity					Price					
	Maize Meal	Maize Grain	Cooking Oil	Beans	Other Small Grain	Rice	Maize Meal $/10kg	Maize Grain $/Bucket	Cooking Oil $/2ltre	Beans $/500g	Other Small Grain $/Bucket
9	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	7	-	4	1	7
10	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	7	-	4	2	7
11	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5	-	4	2	7
12	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5	-	4	1.50	7
13	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	5	-	4	1.50	-
14	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6	-	5	2	7
15	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	7	-	4	2	7
16	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	7	-	4	2	7
17	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	7	-	4	2	7
18	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	7	-	4	2	7
19	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	7	-	4	2	7
20	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	7	7	5	2	-
21	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	7	-	4	2	7
22	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5.50	-	3.50	1.25	7
Source: Food and Nutrition Committees											

Table 32: Labour Markets

Labour Opportunities	Ward Offering This Opportunity	Ward Providing Labour	Proportion Of Households Accessing This Opportunity (%)
Timber Logging	1, 3, 6, 7 and 22	1, 3, 6, 7 and 22	25
Construction	All 22 wards	All 22 wards	15
Brick Moulding	15, 13, 19, 8 and 4	4, 8, 13, 15 and 19	25
Retailing	All 22 wards	All 22 wards	30
House Helper	All 22 wards	All 22 wards	30
House sitting	All 22 wards	All 22 wards	5
Short term contracts under NGOs	All 22 wards	All 22 wards	40
Agriculture	All 22 wards	All 22 wards	50
Mining	14, 16 and 20	14, 16 and 20	10
Source: Food and Nutrition committee			

The largest labour opportunity is in agriculture and hence there is need for more investment in that area. NGOs are also helping the district a lot by creating employment opportunities. The growth of the retail sector is also providing labour opportunities, a number of shops are being constructed in the district.

11. Market Challenges

- Poor roads networks in the district results in some areas being shunned by traders.
- Low purchasing power by most rural community's results in low availability of commodities and traders in the market which ultimately results in high prices due to lack of competition.
- Information gaps on prevailing market prices is also a challenge.
- The economy is Rand dominated making it difficult for the users of local currency the RTGS.
- Drought periods livestock prizes significantly drop.
- During the rainy season, erratic power supply affects mainly the butcheries and other services which require refrigeration.

11.1 Markets: Seasonal Calender

During a normal cropping season, households in Tsholotsho purchase food as from September to April of the following year as shown in table below. In a drought year households purchase food throughout the year.

Calendar Of Food Purchases - Normal Years

Item	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Food Purchases												
Lean/Hungry Period												

Calendar Of Food Purchases - Drought Period

Item	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Food Purchases												
Lean/Hungry Period												

12. Common Hazards

In the past, Tsholotsho district experienced droughts on average of once every 5 years but since 2000 the frequency of shocks has doubled and the district experience drought every 2 to 3 years. Drought years are happening more frequently and hence the recovery time between shocks has been reduced significantly. People have become more and more vulnerable as assets are depleting more rapidly. This requires improved planning that can mitigate the effects, enable people to cope better with shocks and ultimately build resilience of communities against those increased shocks. Floods are also becoming a common feature with the district with the most severe one experienced in 2017 Cyclone Dineo which ravaged the communities in ward 6 leading to their displacements from their traditional land near the Gwayi river where their major livelihoods activities are embedded.

12.1 Periodic And Chronic Hazards

- Drought/Dry spells which occur almost every 3 to 4 years.
- Flooding.
- Crop pests Human and wildlife conflicts.
- Livestock Diseases.
- High HIV/AIDS cases.

12.2 The Drought Prone Areas

Tsholotsho district is severely prone to drought according to the UNDP hazard mapping that was done in 2015 as shown in the map below. The severity of the drought differs across the district. Wards 2, 13, 16, 20 and 22 experience less severe drought compared to the rest of the district.

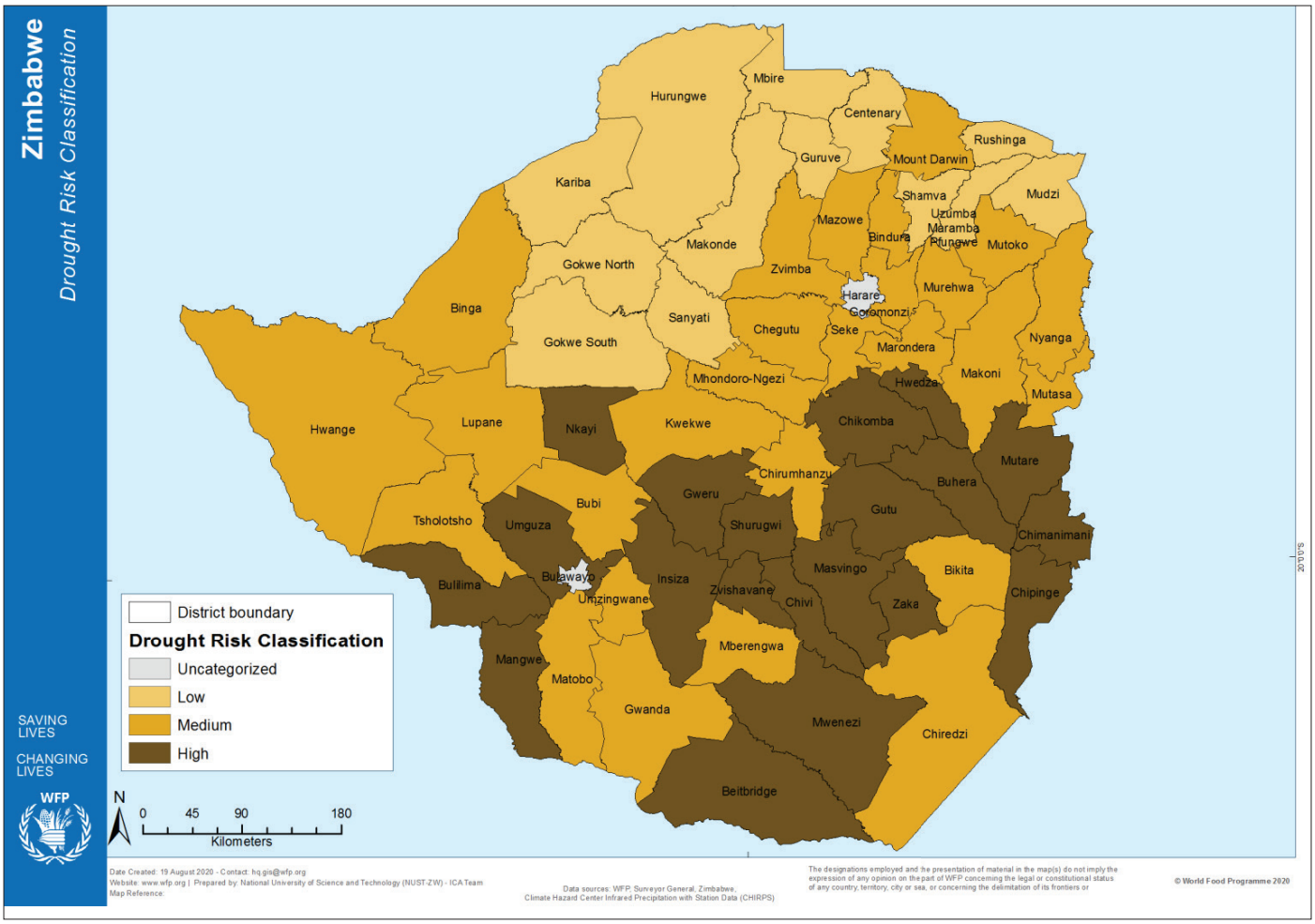

Figure 11: Drought Hazard Map (Source: WFP)

12.3 Flood Prone Areas

Tholotsho District is prone to flash floods which can be attributed to climate change effects which are causing cyclones, the district is also associated with Kalahari sands which are very poor when it comes to water holding capacity, absence of major dams as water harvetsing sources, and the fact that the land is fairly flat. According to the UNDP Hazard Mapping of 2015, the district was classified as mainly lowly prone to floods with a few wards that are highly prone to floods (figure 9). The wards that are highly prone to floods include wards 5,6,8, 10, 11, 12, 15, and 22. Wards 5 and 6 is the areas that is along the Gwayi river that is mostly affected by floods and this is compounded by the fact that people are cultivating along fertile flood plains. Ward 8 is home to the largest dam in Tsholotsho namely Gariya Dam and when there is excessive rainfall the Dam normally overflows affecting the surrounding communities through backflow and downstream.

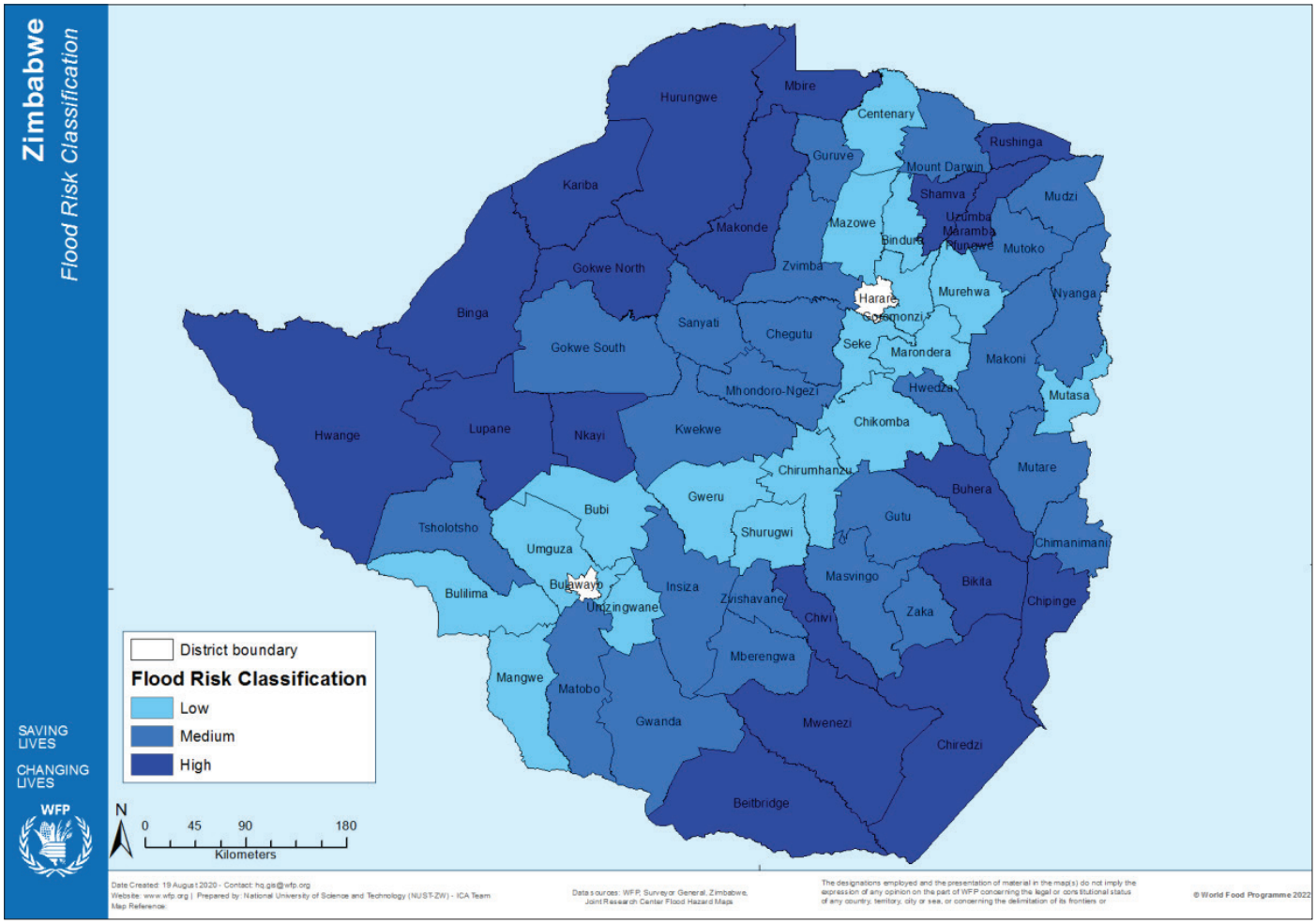

Figure 12: Flood Prone Areas Map (Source: WFP)

These floods have in the past destroyed homes, classrooms, books, crops and livestock. There is usually mobilization of resources by the District Civil Society Unit towards disaster response. Mitigation, emergency preparedness and post disaster recovery need to be prioritized.

Extreme rainfall events for Tsholotsho district were recorded for the rainfall seasons of 1973/1974, 1977/1978, 1980/1981, 1987/1988, 2000/2001 and 2005/2006 (ZINWA, 2008). Historically, high rainfall resulting in floods are common between December and March and are associated with tropical cyclones and the movement of the ITCZ to the south of the Zambezi River. The flooding period also coincides with the cropping season.

Table 33: Periodic And Chronic Hazards

Ward No	Ward Name	Period Hazards	Chronic Hazards
1	Sodaka	Crop pest and diseases	Drought, human wildlife conflict
2	Dlamini	Veld fires	Human wildlife conflict, drought
3	Kapane	Veld fires	Human wildlife conflict, drought
4	Dibutibu		Human wildlife conflict, drought
5	Sipepa	Flooding, plant poisoning (dichapetalum cymosum/umkhwuzane)	Human wildlife conflict, drought
6	Jimila	Flooding, plant poisoning (dichapetalum cymosum/umkhwuzane)	Water shortages, drought
7	Phumula	Water shortages	Human wildlife conflict, drought
8	Tshitatshawa	Flooding, plant poisoning (dichapetalum cymosum/umkhwuzane)	Human wildlife conflict, drought
9	Mpanedziba	Water shortage	Drought
10	Madlangombe	Flooding, plant poisoning (dichapetalum cymosum/umkhwuzane)	Drought
11	Nanda	Flooding, plant poisoning (dichapetalum cymosum/umkhwuzane)	Drought
12	Mhlabangubo-Bhule	Flooding, crop pests and diseases	Drought
13	Ngqoya	Veld fires, drownings	Drought
14	Makhaza		drought
15	Mbamba	Flooding, crop and pest diseases	drought
16	Shaba	Veld fires	drought
17	Bubude	Crop and Animal pest diseases,	drought
18	Nkunzi	Crop and Animal pest diseases,	drought
19	Chefunye	Crop and Animal pest diseases,	drought
20	Dlula	Veld fires, plant poisoning (dichapetalum cymosum/umkhwuzane)	
21	Tshibizina	Water shortages	drought
22	Nembe	Flooding	drought
Source: DCPC			

The district mainly operates on a Rand economy as the dominant currency, leading to high pricing of commodities and creating a problem to most people who do not own the rand as their major source of income. The prize elasticities have also affected the sale of cereal produce and livestock prizing making the district the most expensive in terms of grain and livestock prizing.

13. District Development Priorities

The main development priority across all wards are livelihoods programmes. The other common priorities include value and beneficiation, nutrition gardens and small livestock rearing projects

Table 34: The Main Development Priority Across All Wards

Development Priority	Wards Targeted	Comment
Diverse livelihoods programmes	All wards	We would want to see an increase in livelihoods options throughout the district.
Water provision	7, 2, 6 and 21	The district requires all season water provision for agricultural purposes.
Irrigation Schemes	6, 10 and 8	To promote and support agricultural livelihood options and dietary diversity.
Construction of dip tanks	22, 15, 12, 2 and 5	To improve animal health since the district is into livestock production
Road Rehabilitation	22, 15, 17, 2, 6, 5, 19 and 20	To enhance access to markets and other services.
Construction secondary schools	1, 7, 8, and 6	Learners are walking long distances thereby negatively affecting enrolment.
Construction of clinics	15, 13 and 12	Some wards do not have clinics hence people are travelling long distances to access health care.
Dam construction	6, 15 and 12	Enhancing water harvesting, availability of water for livestock and to support irrigation schemes

14. Food Insecurity Trends

Tsholotsho district is generally a food insecure district, mainly due to low crop production and over reliance on agriculture by households. According to ZimVAC reports for 2016 – 2021, food insecurity for Tsholotsho district is always higher than the national average and compared to most of the districts except for the year 2017. The district is considered highly prone to food insecurity. The food insecurity for the district has been on an upward trend since 2016 to 2021, and it reached its maximum in 2020 at 71% compared to the national average of 44%.

Table 35: Showing Food Insecurity Percentages

District Name	FS-2016/17	FS-2017/18	FS-2018/19	FS2019/20	FS-2020/21	FS-2021/22
Tsholotsho	54	21	43	60	71	51
Based On Rural Zimvac Data.						

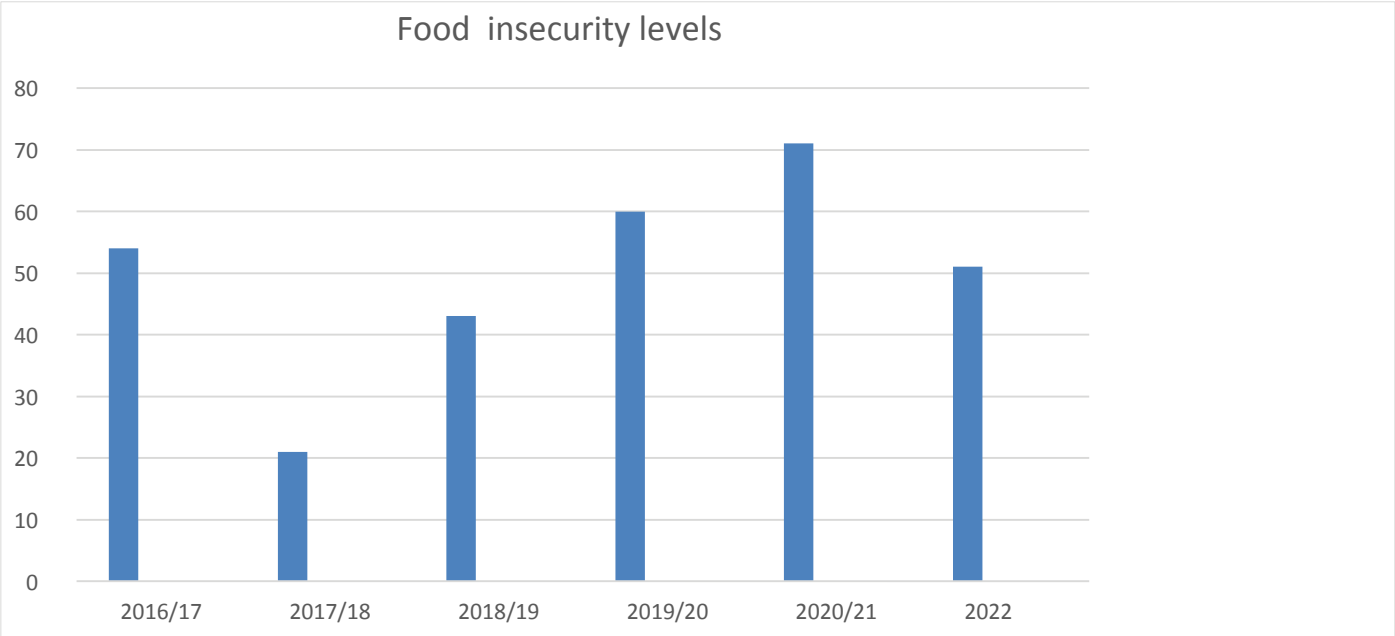

Figure 13: Table Showing Food Insecurity Percentages (Based On Rural ZimVAC Data)

The food insecurity levels have been very high serve only for the 2017/18 season where the previous season had received good rains. The persistent food insecurity levels affect the preceding season thereby contributing to these high insecurity levels.

14.1 Chronic and Transitory Food Insecurity (Based on ICA – WFP to compute)

Tsholotsho district has a 2016 estimated population of about 122,665. According to the WFP analysis of chronic and transitory food insecurity, 28,300 people are estimated to be chronically food insecure at any given time and they need external assistance to meet their food requirements. 16,800 are estimated to be transitorily food insecure and are normally food insecure during the hunger period (January – March) and also after a shock. 15,500 people are estimated to be resilient to minor shocks and are only affected by major shocks where they become vulnerable to food insecurity. 62,200 are estimated to be food secure and resilient to shocks and stressors as they have the necessary assets and coping strategies to absorb the shocks. Figure 14 shows the graphical illustration of the different groups.

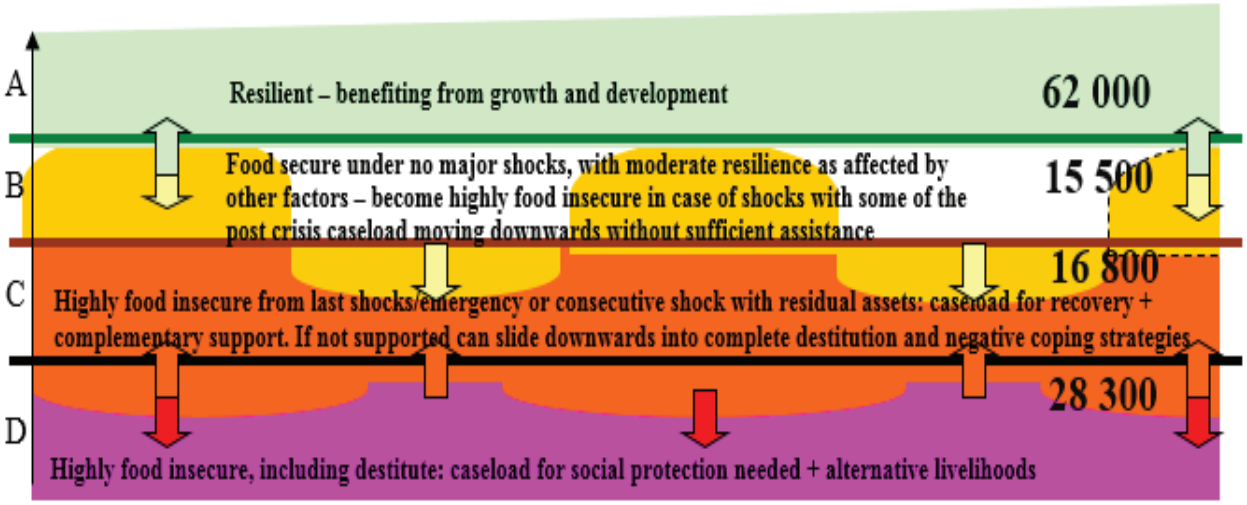

Figure 14: Illustration Of The Different Groups Of In District

Key:
Category A: Households in category A would not require any food assistance.
Category B: Households in category B could require relief assistance during times of acute stress.
Category C: Households in category C and D represent an important niche for recovery activities. Households in category C would particularly benefit from productive recovery activities, such as resilience building risk reduction and disaster preparedness.
Category D: Households in category D, on the other hand, are an ideal ground for both protective and productive safety nets i.e. a mix of social protection and livelihood enhancement measures. A period of Conditional Transfers (CTs) in the form of asset building (CFA or FFA) may follow a period of Unconditional Transfers (e.g. GFD or cash transfers) that may be required to stabilize consumption needs for a specific part of the year. To determine this, however, a seasonal analysis of livelihood patterns would be required to establish the best combinations of response options and the support modalities (i.e. CFA, FFA, GFD etc.) required.

Table 36: Socio Economic Groups And Vulnerability Classification

Group A Already Resilient 62,000 People (50%)	These households are food secure and resilient, already benefitting from growth and development through their own efforts. They are likely to manage difficult seasons and shocks without requiring emergency assistance, and would benefit from social programmes – such as health, education, further capacity development, early warning, etc. Participants described this group as being employed, having salaries and can have reliable remittances, could have business ventures or are traders, have access to irrigated lands/schemes, own 20 or more livestock, could own tractors, have reserve stocks, bigger houses, and employ others.
Group B Food secure under major shocks 15,500 people (13%)	These households are moderately resilient and vulnerable to not meeting food needs during difficult seasons or in the event of shocks, without compromising assets or livelihoods through negative coping strategies. On top of social programmes, this group may require seasonal support or emergency assistance during crises to safeguard assets. It was identified that for households that lost significant assets in recent years are at risk to sliding downwards (into Group C or D) if not supported with development and asset creation programmes. Participants identified that these households could have access to seasonal irrigation schemes, and small arable farms with adequate farming equipment and household labour. During harvest periods they can hire others yet will work as casual labourer's during lean season. They have 10 cattle or more, own ploughs and have draught power (adequate farm power),and own more small animals. Some have remittances.
Group C Highly food insecure from last or consecutive shocks 16,800 people (14%)	These households have become highly food insecure as a result of eroded coping strategies from the war, coupled with constant exposure to difficult seasons and shocks, hindering their ability to recover by rebuilding lost assets and livelihoods. They would benefit from recovery and resilience building interventions whilst simultaneously improving their access to food, together with other complementary support (e.g. social programmes). Without such support, they risk sliding downwards into eventual destitution (Group D). This group has no reliable sources of income, works as casual labour, and may receive irregular remittances. Have limited livestock (around 5 livestock), limited draught power which they share with others, small plots of land (less than 4 ha) with inadequate farming equipment and rely on small gardens. Households are larger with more dependents – tend to be more polygamous. Caring for extended families overburdens their resources.
Group D Highly food insecure, including destitute 28,300 people (23%)	These highly food insecure households – including the destitute - are the most vulnerable groups, with little or no asset ownership, they are labour-constrained, and are likely to be supported by the community. This group is likely to be persistently (chronically) food insecure and require a different set of programming support (e.g. social protection and alternative livelihoods). Identified by participants as those households with few means for self-support, are labour-constrained, are dependent on others, and receive little, irregular, or no remittances. They have few or no assets and will own only small livestock (but no cattle) and agricultural equipment. They have limited food stocks and no reserves and own less than 1 ha of land

14.2 Visible Vulnerabilities For The Socio-Economic Groups
Group A
Group B
Group C
Group D – Characteristic of poor & food insecure HHs

- Relatively low number of livestock, no draught power and thus usually misses out on early rains.
- No tangible income sources.
- Low or nil remittances.
- Relatively low education levels in most cases, school drops as they cannot afford fees.
- Lack of inputs like seeds and fertilizers.
- Labour constraints.
- Poor sanitation facilities no toilets.

14.3 Coping Strategies – District Level, Or Ward Level (If Possible)
14.4 Ranking Of Food Insecure Wards Per District

Table 37: Ranking Of Wards By Food Insecurity Levels

Ward	Proportion Of Population 2021 HHs (%)	Prevalence Of Poverty (%)	Average Cereal Adequacy From Own Production	Food Insecurity Rankings
1	3	91.4	4-6 months	
2	4	92.2	7-9 months	
3	5	93.4	7-9 months	
4	2	91.9	4-6 months	
5	5	89.4	3 months	
6	6	90.9	6 months	
7	4	92.8	3 months	
8	8	93.1	10 months	
9	6	93.1	10 months	
10	3	91.6	3 months	
11	3	89.5	3 months	
12	6	89.7	3 months	
13	5	86.3	7-9 months	
14	3	91	3 months	
15	7	89.1	3 months	
16	5	87.7	4-6 months	
17	4	87.8	4-6 months	
18	4	88.1	4-6 months	
19	5	86	3 months	
20	2	83.6	9-11 months	
21	2	93.3	3 months	
22	8	89.3	7-9 months	
Source: Zimbabwe Poverty Atlas 2015				
For updated population figures, refer to Zimstat Census report (https://www.zimstat.co.zw)				

Key

	Extremely food insecure
	Moderately food insecure
	Food secure

Most of the wards in the district are extremely food insecure due to unfavourable rainfall patterns and the persistent dry spells experienced throughout the year. Where the district experience above normal rainfall, crops are water-logged leading to poor yields. Households do not have disposable assets in case of hunger thereby limiting their purchasing power.

Table 38: Summary Of Calendar For A Typical Year

Better Period – Harvests (April-July)	Preparing Period - Before The Lean Season (Aug-Dec)	Difficult – lean season (Jan –March)
• Shift from rainy to dry season • Harvesting time for cereals and other field produce which have an impact on increasing the diet of most households. • High stocks from harvested maize, sorghum and millet which means asaving in terms of cash and cheaper lifestyle in the communities. • High volume of green vegetables for nutritional purposes and pick sales of fresh vegetables at the onset of the production season are pronounced • Availability of stover for livestock and cattle fattening for sale at abattoirs, trade fair • Exhibition of crops at fairs. • High volumes of cattle fetching high prices as cattle are in good health condition • Other sources of income concentrate on cutting thatching grass, poultry, petty trading, selling of field produces and remittances which are found throughout the year. • Expenditure is only experienced in church conferences, gardening inputs and on medication for malaria cases. • There is high concentration of tick borne and internal parasites due to increased multiplication in water sources and grass • Castration and de-horning of livestock activities by men	• The season starts with persistent dry period and end with light showers in November and December. • This period has the hottest times of the year, starting with windy and increasing temperatures. • Low quantities of maize and groundnuts with high prices. • There is starting of low volumes for livestock with high prices due to scarce/ shortage of feeds. • Water sources such as dams and pans are drying up and towards the end of December where there are light showers, these can fill the pans and people start drinking from these sources, which is unsafe for human beings. On this note women and children queue for long hours waiting for water for domestic uses and drinking livestock. • Land preparation characterised by fencing and spreading of manure, ploughing, planting and first weeding towards the end of year are more pronounced. • Cowpeas stock depletion is seen due to sales and there is high stock volumes of tomatoes and wild fruits such as matamba and xakuxaku • This period is characterised by low prices for maize grain due to market flooding and most of the cereal is sent to GMB. Sometimes some people barter exchange for domestic needs. • There are distressed cattle sales for school fees with low prices whilst goats fetch highest prices in December during the festive season. • Vegetable prices drop due to increased production and gardening activities continuing up to mid-October • Thatching of houses, poultry and remittances are the main income sources obtained by most people in Tsholotsho district and remittances which are experienced throughout the year are at peak during the Christmas festive season. • Most of the expenditure are on buying cereals especially for those poor wards, beer drinking during the off agricultural period, buying inputs following the agricultural season and medication to those who are suffering diarrhoea due to own set of rain season where they are exposed to open water sources for drinking. • Under crop and pest diseases, red spider mite is low at onset and increase towards harvesting time for tomatoes and there is also high levels of aphids in vegetables. • Due to low grazing areas, anthrax is on high spring as animals pick spores when grazing. Also, gifblaar poisoning is pronounced since the pastures would be dry and therefore these poisonous plants are the first to sprout out attracting livestock. • HIV and STI infections increased the number of people seeking treatment as diasporas returned home for holiday and also, injuries especially road traffic accidents and gender-based violence cases are high during the same period (festive season). • Formation of edutainment clubs, netball and district agricultural shows are conducted during this time of the year, (better times for women). • Mobilisation of school fees, herding cattle, protection of pasture- paddocking, dosing and dipping tick control are activities mostly done by men.	• The most difficult time of the year for men. • The weather is characterised by short dry spell in January and heavy showers in February and March. • There is intensified weeding and cultivation which is mostly done by women. The first harvesting, consumption and selling of green produce is realised in the month of March. The produce includes green maize, groundnuts, roundnuts and cowpeas. • High milk production due to availability of green pastures and water. • High availability of wild fruits such as mtshwankela and mviyo for nutritious purposes. • Low level of remittances is caused by that most of the Diasporas leave their homes in the month of January and therefore, could not afford to send some goods since they would have not worked for the month of January after the festive season. • Casual labour (weeding) for extra food provision. • Diarrhoea and malaria infections are prominent due to the tendency by communities of drinking unsafe water from open pans and availability of mosquito breeding place since stagnant water would be available. It was ted that scabies increased during the rainy season. • Communities pay taxes on livestock and development levy to fund district budget. • First term expenses for school fees, stationery and uniforms. • The conditions in this lean period are favourable to blackleg, tick borne diseases lumpy skin and internal parasites • Vegetable drying is increased lumpy skin and internal parasites • Vegetable drying is increased. • lumpy skin and internal parasites Vegetable drying is increased.
Source: AARDS		

Table 39: Summary of livelihood seasonality and programming implications in a 'Bad Year'

Better Period – Harvests (April - May)	Preparing Period - Before The Hunger Gap (June - October)	Difficult Period – The Hunger Gap (Nov - March) And The Trigger Months (Jan-March)
• No rains at all and few stover or pastures are deteriorating • High quantities of watermelons as there are drought tolerant with low prices in April whilst beginning of May marks deterioration of these melons since most people would be relying on them. • There are high sales of cattle with low prices since their condition would be poor and further deteriorating with time. Most of the people would be selling their livestock to pay school fees. • There is no harvest of maize during this period in a bad year and little (poor) harvest of sorghum and pearl millet at the end of the month of April. • Remittances as source of income are acknowledged by most households as they would have realised that the current year is a bad one since most would not have harvested anything during this time of the year. • There is early production of tomatoes due to bad season and low quantities. However, red spider mite is a major problem especially in May since it favours dry conditions. • Low volumes of green vegetables but high prices due to shortages and these ends early due to limited water sources. • Infectious choryza transmission is intense due to high prevailing winds. • Accidents during the festive season and burns are high due to the cold weather	• As this marks the end of stover, then supplementary feeding for livestock (subsidised by government) is experienced. • Cattle dying in big numbers- some being sold or bartered at give-away prices which give a loss to the farmers. • There is increased barter trading of goats at low prices (distress sale of livestock). • The water shortages for both livestock and people also continued to be the major challenge in the district. Women and children are seen queuing at water points and those with livestock were moving long distances to the water sources to water their livestock. Most of them value livestock as their wealth determinant and their future lies on these cattle. • Some communities share water points where livestock and people relied on a single borehole which was already drying up. • Water prioritization for drinking and hot, dusty conditions compromises hygiene, leading to an increase in diarrhoea cases which affects health. Combined with decreasing food stocks, cases of malnutrition begin to increase. • In August there is onset of low scale land preparation while people search for food (Fencing, spreading of manure) and these activities are done by both men and women. • In mid-October, there is low ploughing and planting rate due to unavailability of inputs as most households would have consumed their inputs due to hunger. • Early onset of cereal purchases from local shops and GMB. • Malaria infection is reduced due to limited water bodies for mosquito breeding. • Due to poor grazing, an increase in anthrax disease is pronounced. • Most animals begin to die as there is intensive contact of jackals and dogs, and this result to high cease of rabies in the district. • Roads accidents are high during the August holidays • Vegetable production ends early due to limited water sources. • Increased number of people sending remittances home. • This period is seen as a difficult one for both men and women due to the start of the lean season, water stresses, and a reduction of disposable income to meet household expenses.	• This difficult period is characterised by prolonged dry spells. • Water stress continues to be the major challenge at the beginning of this lean period and only begins decreasing once the rains start. • Incidents of crawls attacking green soft groundnuts are high, aphids attacking cowpeas at flowering stage and army worms attacking most crops in the fields are experienced in a bad year. • Incidents of quelea birds spread over more fields and grass in the beginning of a typical year, however, this increases damages per field from mid-February to mid-March • Intensification of black leg is pronounced with improving pastures as animals are gaining weight in the last months of this bad year as pastures would have rejuvenated. • The most copying mechanism practised by most households in the communities is increased reliance on remittances from Diasporas mainly from South Africa, Botswana and local towns in Zimbabwe.

16. Summary by Ward

Ward No	HHs	Health Facility	Poverty Level (%)	LiveliHood Zone	Livelihood Zone Description	Agro-ecological Zones	Drought Prone	Flood Prone	Food Insecu Rity Rankings
1	9930	2	85.1	1	Highveld Prime Cereal and Cash Crop Resettlement	2a	No	No	19
2	15630	1	84.5	1	Highveld Prime Cereal and Cash Crop Resettlement	2a	No	No	18
3	4773	2	78.1	1	Highveld Prime Cereal and Cash Crop Resettlement	2a	No	No	10
4	15493	2	81.6	1	Highveld Prime Cereal and Cash Crop Resettlement	2a	No	No	17
5	12897	2	82.5	1	Highveld Prime Cereal and Cash Crop Resettlement	2a	No	Yes	13
6	7135	1	82.3	1	Highveld Prime Cereal and Cash Crop Resettlement	2a	No	No	12
7	3626	1	62.6	4	Highveld Prime Communal	2a	No	No	11
8	30183	2	86.6	1	Highveld Prime Cereal and Cash Crop Resettlement	2a, 8	No	Yes	7

Annex

Tsholotsho District Profiling Team

Name	Designation	Organisation
Name	Designation	Organisation
Rachel Sibanda	DAO	AARDS
Varaidzo Mahachi	SDO	DSD
Memory Moyo	Nutrition Assistant	MOHCC
Aaron Gono	A/DDC	MLG
Mehluli Ndlovu	Project Officer	Plan International

NOTES

NOTES

NOTES

NOTES

TSHOLOTSHO District

Food and Nutrition Security Profile

2022

WFP
World Food Programme