

POLICY BRIEF

PRIORITIZING ESTABLISHMENT OF A PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL IN HOPLEY

INTRODUCTION

Hopley, a peri-urban settlement located 17 km south of Harare, is home to over 200,000 people, with approximately 3,000 school-aged children. However, it lacks essential services such as adequate schools, sanitation, and health facilities, leading to extreme poverty and marginalization. Access to education is challenging due to the absence of public schools. While private schools exist, they are expensive, inadequately equipped, and staffed by underqualified teachers. Consequently, children either travel long distances to neighboring suburbs for education or remain idle, exposing them to social ills.



**HOPLEY
IS LOCATED 17KMS
SOUTH OF HARARE**



**ESTIMATED
POPULATION OF OVER
200 000 PEOPLE**



**3 000
SCHOOL-AGED
CHILDREN**

POLICY AND LEGAL CONTEXT

The 2013 Zimbabwean Constitution, particularly Sections 27 and 75, guarantees the right to education. The Education Amendment Act of 2020 reinforces this right by mandating compulsory basic state-funded education. The Government of Zimbabwe must increase budget allocations for education to facilitate the construction of more public schools, particularly in underserved areas like Hopley.

Corporate Responsibility and Community Benefits Corporates operating near Hopley, such as Boka Tobacco Auction Floors and Irvines, benefit from the local community’s labor and market. Leveraging corporate social responsibility initiatives and taxes could significantly benefit the Hopley community. The Ministry of Finance and Economic Development should allocate a portion of tax revenues from these corporations to support local infrastructure development, including education facilities.

EDUCATION LANDSCAPE IN HOPLEY

Research by ActionAid Zimbabwe and Katswe Sistahood indicates that Hopley has one public primary school, Tariro Primary, established in 2019 through a partnership between the City of Harare and Mashambanzou Care Trust. At present, Tariro Primary accommodates 24% of eligible primary school-age children, while 32% attend private schools within Hopley. Additionally, 13% travel to neighboring suburbs like Glenorah, Highfield, Waterfalls, and Chitungwiza for schooling. Shockingly, 31% of eligible primary school-age children spend significant time loitering around Antony Shops, with some engaging in vending. Despite completing primary education, 80% of these children face barriers to secondary education, with only 35% completing ordinary level studies due to the prohibitive costs of school fees and transportation to suburban schools.



HOPLEY
COMMUNITY IS SURROUNDED BY CORPORATES SUCH AS BOKA TOBACCO AUCTION FLOORS AND IRVINES WHO ARE BENEFITTING FROM LABOUR AND MARKET PROVIDED BY THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.

CHALLENGES AND IMPLICATIONS

The absence of a secondary school in Hopley has dire consequences, including increased exposure to sexual harassment, theft, deteriorating health, loitering, engaging in illicit activities and high dropout rates among students. Girls, in particular, face heightened risks as they travel long distances to attend schools in neighboring areas.



Sexual Harassment: Many learners, especially girls, are exposed to sexual abuse, including rape, when they travel long distances to school. Some even face indecent exposure to foul language in commuter omnibuses, buses, and other private cars. Students attending schools in neighboring areas like Glenorah High 2 in Glenorah B have reported instances of harassment and verbal abuse.



Exposure to Theft: Children traveling to schools outside Hopley are vulnerable to theft. Interviews with parents, guardians, and young people reveal instances of robbery where students have been deprived of their bus fares and school bags. The economic strain exacerbates the situation, with many parents struggling to afford transportation costs due to their limited incomes.



Deteriorating Health and Education Standards: Long journeys to schools have a detrimental impact on students' health and academic performance. Studies conducted locally and internationally highlight the negative effects of fatigue on concentration and overall well-being. Many students arrive at school exhausted and stressed, compromising their ability to learn effectively. Late arrivals and missed lessons further impede educational progress, hindering national development efforts outlined in the National Development Strategy 1.



High Rate of Dropouts: The absence of a public secondary school in Hopley contributes to a high rate of dropouts. Some students opt to spend their days engaging in street activities, vending, and, regrettably, substance and drug abuse, further perpetuating the cycle of social challenges in the community.



Drugs and Substance Abuse: The lack of structured educational opportunities in Hopley exacerbates the prevalence of drugs and substance abuse among young people. Without access to proper schooling and guidance, many students succumb to the allure of drugs, perpetuating social and health challenges within the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS



GOVERNMENT ADVOCACY:

Engage relevant ministries to allocate sufficient resources in the national budget for constructing a public secondary school.

Encourage public-private partnerships with local authorities to enhance school construction, building on successful collaborations like the Tariro School initiative.

EDUCATION TRANSITION FUND:

Revive discussions on establishing an education trust fund to attract bilateral and multilateral donors, supporting the education sector independently of the treasury.

CITY OF HARARE'S ROLE:

Allocate a portion of vendor fees collected by the City of Harare towards education infrastructure, ensuring sustainable funding.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:

Engage corporations like Irvines and Boka in corporate social responsibility initiatives to improve education facilities in Hopley.

In conclusion, addressing the lack of a public secondary school in Hopley requires concerted efforts from government, local authorities, and corporate entities. Investing in education is not only a legal obligation but also a fundamental step towards empowering communities and fostering sustainable development.

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