

**An Analysis of the Precarious Livelihoods of Zimbabwean Migrants in the
Informal Economy in Makhanda, South Africa.**

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Abstract

The movement of people across borders is a complex phenomenon that has far-reaching social, political, and economic implications. In recent years, Zimbabwean migrants have become increasingly visible in the informal economy across South Africa. Through qualitative data collection methods, this study sought to broaden our understanding of the precarious livelihoods of Zimbabwean migrants working in the informal economy in South Africa. This study examined Zimbabwean migrants in the informal economy in Makhanda, Eastern Cape in South Africa. Underpinned by the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) as the theoretical anchor, this thesis offers a comprehensive examination of not only the challenges but also the opportunities faced and presented to Zimbabwean migrants in the informal economy in Makhanda. The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach was used as a framework to guide the analysis aimed at understanding the precarious livelihoods of Zimbabwean migrants working in the informal economy in terms of the vulnerability context they find themselves in, the assets they use, the organizations or institutions that affect their activities and the results they get out of their efforts in the informal economy. Data was collected from a sample of 10 participants, consisting of 4 self-employed participants and 6 “employed” in the informal economy. Through in-depth interviews and thematic analysis, this thesis examined the strategies that the migrants adopt to cope with the challenges they face and the impact that these strategies have on their livelihoods. The findings suggest that working in the informal economy evolves as a sustainable livelihood strategy, which depends on external support for it to flourish.

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Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction

The development of the capitalist world market has always been linked to social inequality (Muller, 2013:30). In recent years there has been a global rise in precarious employment and a decline in standardized employment which has led to an increase in the number of people working in the informal economy (Kallerberg, 2014:14). To attain livelihood goals, people have been compelled to adapt to 'fluid' living situations by engaging in different household livelihoods strategies such as agriculture, informal work, entrepreneurship, and migration. (Ruckert & Mohindra, 2014:23). The need to create sustainable livelihoods as a means to get billions of people around the world out of poverty has become a major issue from the perspectives of both policy and global development discourse (United Nations, 2008).

The absence of adequate formal employment has become a major characteristic of developing countries, as a result when trying to understand how people generate income to get themselves out of poverty it is best to think within the framework of 'livelihoods' as opposed to employment. In the face of scarcity of formal employment, participation in the informal economy emerges as a way of building and sustaining livelihoods in many parts of the world, including South Africa (Masuku & Nzewi, 2021:2). In this regard, this study sets to better our understandings of the livelihood strategies of Zimbabwean migrants working the informal economy in Makhanda, South Africa. The sustainability livelihoods framework is employed, which necessitates drawing a tentative link between the informal economy and the broad concept of sustainable livelihoods (Chambers, 1995:5). This chapter briefly sets out the roadmap to this study: the background, the goals, the methods employed, and the methods of analysis involved.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.2.1 Zimbabweans in South Africa

Zimbabwe was both a migrant-sending and migrant-receiving country in the 1970s and 1980s (Hadebe, 2022:39). However, in recent years Zimbabwe has become a migrant-sending country. In recent years, the number of Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa has doubled from two decades ago. An estimated 15,000 migrants and refugees from Zimbabwe and other countries cross the Beitbridge border into South Africa daily either through the official border

post or at illegal crossing points (Matsa, 2020:2). Since the early 2000s, migration trends in Zimbabwe have been primarily outward, with very little inward movement (Rutherford & Addison, 2007:619). Chief amongst the reasons for the outward migration has been the Zimbabwean governments decision in the year 2000 to redistribute land from white-owned commercial farms to black farmers (Mathekga, 2022). Since the land reform was implemented the Zimbabwean economy has been spiralling downward. The international backlash against the policy is still felt today. The country was put under financial sanctions by several governments because of the land reform program (Katsinde, 2022:254).

The financial sanctions placed upon Zimbabwe have consequently resulted in an economic meltdown, which has resulted in high unemployment, poor living conditions, and poverty within the country (Katsinde, 2022). As a result, many are leaving the country to seek better living conditions or find employment. Many Zimbabweans come to South Africa because it is the nearest and it has lower barriers to entry for Zimbabweans as only a valid passport – no - visa is required for a short stay of 90 days (Mhaka, 2023). The economic meltdown in Zimbabwe has begun to affect South Africa, especially with South Africa's high unemployment rate. This has led to continuous tensions between South Africans and migrants from other African countries. Locals blame migrants for stealing their jobs which has sparked social tensions, including xenophobic attacks against African migrants (Mathekga, 2022).

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the extent of the rising tension between poor black South Africans and poor migrants within the country. During the pandemic in 2020, an online solidarity movement called, "Put South Africa First" started on X, formerly Twitter, where members were frustrated that migrant-run businesses were operating, whilst locals were affected by the economic shutdown (Mabasa, 2023). The online solidarity movement transitioned into "Operation Dudula", directly translated as "Operation Force Out", in June 2021, recruiting unemployed South African youths and people who had lost their jobs. On its launch day, "Operation Dudula" targeted street traders, truck drivers, and informal businesses of foreigners, the majority being from Zimbabwe (Ford & Charlie, 2023). Some lost their lives others their homes and businesses (Fisher, 2023). The issue of Zimbabwean foreign nationals has become a highly politicized issue, creating an unpredictable and unsafe environment for Zimbabwean migrants trying to secure employment and improve their livelihoods (Nkomo, 2023).

According to a 2023 study by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), 6.7 percent of the population in South Africa are migrants, and they contribute as much as 9 percent to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Foreign nationals living in South Africa make a significant contribution to the economy, rather than being a burden (Pezzini & Tomei, 2018:18). However, the media focus has been on competition between poor migrants and poor locals instead of the inefficiency of the government in creating employment opportunities (Matsa, 2020). It is within this murky and uncertain context that this study seeks to make sense of the livelihood strategies of Zimbabwean migrants in the informal economy. It is important to highlight that while South Africa has become the destination of choice for most Zimbabweans, the stability and sustainability that the migrants are after is often threatened because of competition for scarce resources between the migrants and locals.

1.2.2 The Informal economy and precarious work in South Africa

The informal economy has been referred to as the shadow economy (Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), 2023). It is defined as any component of the economy that is not recognized by the government, registered, regulated, or protected by labour laws (Chen & Mathur, 2018:325). The informal economy is also known as the parallel economy, and the second economy, among other descriptive terms (Hammer & Nes, 2021:52). The informal economy exists in both developing and developed countries. According to Jutting and De Laiglesia (2009), far from being the exception, informality has become the norm, across the world. The growth of the informal economy particularly in developing countries has been explained as being a result of the failure of the formal economy to create enough jobs to accommodate the ever-increasing number of unskilled jobseekers with a much lower level of educational achievement (McKay & Thorbecke, 2015:162). It has also been argued elsewhere that the informal economy persists and grows at a relatively faster rate in countries, that suffer from the combined effects of inadequate economic growth or recession, which are associated with losses of income in the official economy thereby driving people into the shadow economy (Katsinde, 2022).

According to Ncube, Shimeles, and Verdier-Chouchane (2014), the economy of South Africa is one in which an advanced formal economy, by regional standards, operates side-by-side with a sizeable informal economy. The size of South Africa's informal economy is estimated to be 29% which represents approximately \$236 billion at GDP levels (ACCA, 2023). In South Africa, the unemployment rate stands at 32.6% (Stats SA, 2023). The Eastern Cape Province's

average unemployment rate in December 2023 stood at 52.4%, more than two percentage points higher than the national average. Informal economic participation in the Eastern Cape Province, in which Makhanda is based, may also be explained by the fact that the province has a relatively smaller mainstream economic activity when compared to other provinces such as Gauteng and the Western Cape (Geyer, 2023). Understandably, those excluded from mainstream economic activity may be forced to seek solace in the informal economy.

Workers in the informal economy often work in the most hazardous jobs, conditions, and circumstances across all economic sectors – agriculture, industry, and services (Hodgson, 2023:14). Precarious employment is defined as work that is temporary, short-term, or seasonal (Standing, 2011). It is related to a lack of security, little formality, a low salary, a lack of control, and restricted access to regulatory safeguards. The informal economy and precarious employment overlap because both have a high-risk exposure combined with low salaries and little social security coverage, putting these people in a vulnerable position (Kallerberg, 2014:13). However, the two are distinct since precarity refers to a certain group of workers. However, it has a broader connotation and recognizes other forms of resultant insecurities and consequences, such as the lack of citizenship (Hodgson, 2023:20).

Undocumented migrants are often precarious by virtue of no documentation and often lack access to formal employment opportunities and are forced to work in the informal sector (Thukral, 2010:65). Additionally, undocumented migrants are often excluded from social protection programs, such as health care and social security, which exacerbates their vulnerability (Mhaka, 2023). It is for this reason that this study inserts precarity into a study primarily about sustainable livelihoods. South Africa is a regional destination for cross border migrants who are also increasingly participating in the informal economy. The informal economy has, thus, become a common denominator of sustainable livelihoods as it occupies the centre-stage in especially poor people's livelihoods, including those of immigrants who are being drawn to South Africa because of prospects of better economic opportunities (Hlatshwayo, 2019).

While precariousness exists everywhere at varying levels, the migrant status is a devalued identity that leads to exclusion from certain basic rights at work and worsens the situation for most unskilled and semi-skilled Zimbabweans (Tawodzera & Crush, 2022:2). Zimbabweans have certain characteristics that sometimes create advantages and disadvantages for them as they interact with employers. Employers know this fully well and capitalize on these

characteristics, especially on the lack of documentation needed to work and stay in South Africa (Hlatshwayo, 2019:160). The precarious nature of Zimbabwean migrants is an outcome of a combination of various factors which are: a very strict migration legal framework, institutionalized xenophobia, capitalists whose interests are in lowering labour costs and thus go for cheap Zimbabwean labourers, desperate Zimbabwean workers who would accept anything offered because it is believed to be far much better than what they would receive 'back home' (Boonzaie & Katsere, 2021). The precariousness of Zimbabwean migrants is both as much a product as it is also a factor of a vicious cycle of precariousness. The intersection of migrant status (whether documented or undocumented but even worse for the undocumented), low educational qualifications (for most migrants studied), race (black), poverty, and desperation creates barriers and constraints for most Zimbabwean migrants rendering their existence quite precarious (Moyo, 2020). It is for this reason that this study positions the migrants, in this study, as precarious.

1.3 Research Goals

The main aim of this study is to analyse the livelihoods of Zimbabwean migrants in precarious working conditions in Makhanda, South Africa. The aim will be achieved through the following objectives:

- To investigate the livelihood strategies and tactics used as a response to their precariousness;
- To do a comparison of the impact of precarity across gender lines and how it impacts the livelihood strategies and tactics they come up with; and
- By examining how the immigrants make sense of their precarity.

1.4 Research Methods & Methodology

This section of the research explains the research design I have chosen as well as the instruments I will be using. I will start with a quick overview of the research design and a full breakdown of the research instruments. In addition, I will justify my choice of design and instruments.

1.4.1 Type: Qualitative Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design. The underlying reason for carrying out any qualitative research is to gain a richly detailed understanding of a particular topic, issue, or meaning based on first-hand experience (Drummond & Camara, 2004:21). For this exploratory study on livelihoods, it was deemed suitable to examine the participant's lived experiences in a manner that would facilitate the acquisition of thick descriptions from them and thus qualitative methodology was employed. This rendered a qualitative methodology the most suitable design for my research because the main aim of my research is to understand the livelihoods of Zimbabwean immigrants in Makhanda. Qualitative research designs not only account for what is said or done but also the manner in which something is spoken or carried out by a participant (Haven & VanGrootel, 2019: 219). Sometimes these mannerisms hold answers to questions in themselves and body language and the tone of voice used by respondents are key considerations (Bryman, 2012).

1.5 Case Study

A qualitative case study research design is used for this study. Case studies, one of the most common qualitative designs, are used to examine a person, group, community, or institution (Haven & VanGrootel, 2019: 221). For a case study to be successful, all participants must have something in common, such as a relationship to the research question or topic under study. In this research, this common connection is that all participants are Zimbabwean migrants who entirely depend, whether self-employed or not, on the informal economy in Makhanda, South Africa.

1.6 Semi-Structured interviews

Face-to-face interviews with the participants were conducted for this study. The participants were selected through a non-probability sampling method in which purposive sampling was used. Purposive sampling allowed the researcher to select the most useful group for the study. The in-person interviews were semi-structured. Face-to-face interviews provide more data for analysis because participants can be observed giving non-verbal signs such as gestures, voice changes, body language, and more (Bryman, 2012).

I interviewed ten participants in total, five men and five women. All participants were migrants from Zimbabwe who now live in Makhanda, Eastern Cape. The men selected from Mr. D's food delivery platform, and three of the women were hairdressers and the other two are laundry ladies. Interviews entailed a thorough investigation of the participant`s; experiences, beliefs, and thoughts, enabling me to record pertinent information. The researcher had an interview schedule which outlined the questions upon which the interviews threaded (See Appendix 1). All the participants had to sign the informed consent form (see Appendix 2) before the interview. The researcher took time to go through the form with the participants. All participants were informed that they could either withdraw at any point or refuse to answer questions they deemed inappropriate or invasive. I transcribed the interview audio after conducting and recording the interviews.

Table 1: **Profiles of the Participants**

Name	Gender	Age	Arrival Date	Occupation	Household Members in Makhanda

TK	Male	25	2017 Cape Town, 2018 Makhanda	Checkers Sixty60 food delivery service.	None
Tafara	Male	31	2013 Makhanda	Checkers Sixty60 food delivery service.	Wife, 1 baby in Makhanda.
Chipo	Female	35	2018 Makhanda	Machine Operator at Laundry Mart	Husband, 2 children, and 2 in-laws in Makhanda
Madam Boss	Female	42	2008 Makhanda	Hairdresser	Husband, and 3 children in Makhanda
Mafuta	Female	35	2016 Johannesburg, 2022 Makhanda	Cashier at restaurant	Husband
Dudzai	Female	35	2022 Makhanda	Hairdresser	Young Sister
Madumbe	Female	28	2019 Makhanda	Hairdresser	Cousin sister
Tonderai	Male	25	2007 Port Elizabeth, 2019 Makhanda	Uber Eats driver	1 cousin brother.
Rebecca	Female	35	2016 Makhanda	Nail Technician	1 friend.
Leonard	Male	34	2010 Makhanda	Mr D driver	1 girlfriend

1.7 Coding & Analysing the data

The data gathered from the interviews was then coded. Coding involved examining data to identify patterns and themes and categorizing them accordingly (Haven & VanGrootel, 2019: 224). The process of coding qualitative data varies widely depending on the objective of your research. But in general, it involves a process of reading through your data, applying codes to excerpts, conducting various rounds of coding, grouping codes according to themes, and then making interpretations that lead to your ultimate research findings (Tomaszewski *et al*, 2020:225).

I employed thematic method of qualitative coding. Thematic analysis is a method for analyzing qualitative data that involves reading through a set of data and looking for patterns in the meaning of the data to find themes (Bryman, 2012:575). This method of analysis was most suitable for my research because it is a versatile technique that can be utilized for both exploratory research where you don't know what patterns to look for and more deductive studies where you see what you're searching for (Bryman, 2012:576).

1.8 Study Limitation, Researcher positionality, and Challenges

While this study sought to have a broad application particularly in relation to the theoretical framework and concepts employed, there are various limitations that the researcher is aware of. Firstly, the data was collected in a small town in the Eastern Cape. While this was intentional because most studies on migrants in the informal economy are often in metropolitan cities, the researcher is aware that this limits the generalizability of this study. This because the social dynamics in small cities versus big cities are different. Secondly, the sample for this study is relatively small. The smallness in size of the sample is not fundamentally a limitation because qualitative research does not prescribe in terms of sample size. However, the researcher is aware that this has an impact on the study's generalizability. Lastly, insofar as limitations, the time period within which this study was carried out. This study was part of a one year masters (coursework and thesis) thus the researcher had limited time in the field if the study was to be completed within the required time to avoid having to register for another year.

The first notable challenge for this researcher was access to participants. The researcher, being a Zimbabwean woman, had assumed that it would be easy to get participants for the study.

However, the first group of people that the researcher approached were very reluctant. The researcher had to constantly re-assure potential participants that this was purely for research purposes. Being of Zimbabwean descent made it slightly easy to convince participants. The researcher is fully conversant in Shona, the home language of the participants. This was advantageous throughout the data collection period.

1.9 Ethicality

Adequate measure to safeguard the identities, safety, privacy and the dignity of the participants were employed in this study. As previously mentioned, all participants had to sign the informed consent form before any interview was done. Additionally, ethical clearance for this study was approved by the Rhodes University Humanities Faculty Research Ethics Committee (see Appendix 3). Pseudo-names, instead of their real names, were used to safeguard the identities of the participants in this thesis.

1.10 Conclusion

The informal economy is present in both developed and developing countries. In developing countries its growth has been linked to rising unemployment and poverty. As a result of scarcity of formal employment, Zimbabweans have come up with other livelihood strategies such as migrating to South Africa and participating in informal economic activities that include selling of labour or self-employment. Rising unemployment in South Africa has resulted in the informal economy becoming a cushion for people with diminished formal employment prospects. Especially in provinces that have been historically disadvantaged such as in the Eastern Cape, the area of study. Undocumented Zimbabwean migrant workers in Makhanda, either work on food platforms as delivery people, as street traders, as hairdressers, or as “employed” in informal businesses. These migrants face numerous challenges, which threaten the sustainability of informal economic activities as a livelihood strategy. An understanding of the livelihood strategies of Zimbabwean migrants working in the informal economy from a sustainable livelihood’s perspective includes, in part, an assessment of human, financial, physical, and social capital accumulation. A research of this nature is envisaged to complement existing knowledge on undocumented Zimbabwean migrants, livelihoods, and sustainability. This introductory chapter has attempted to provide a general understanding of the methodological aspects underpinning this study. These include the research design, data collection, sampling, research ethics, and data analysis. The next chapter builds on the introduction given in this chapter and looks at, migration, livelihoods, the informal economy,

and the experiences of undocumented Zimbabwean migrants working in the informal economy in South African in more detail.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW CHAPTER

2.1 Introduction

The movement of people across borders has become a global phenomenon, Zimbabweans are among those who have migrated to various parts of the world in search of better economic opportunities (Maphosa, 2007). South Africa has been one of the preferred destinations for Zimbabwean migrants due to its proximity, ease with which they can enter, and the availability of informal employment opportunities. However, the experience of Zimbabwean migrants in the informal economy in South Africa has been characterized by precarious livelihoods, with challenges such as low wages, lack of legal protection, and xenophobic attacks (Mhaka, 2023).

This literature review chapter aims to contextualise the precarious livelihoods of Zimbabwean migrants in the informal economy in South Africa. In this literature review section, I present and discuss four main themes; pertinent to this study: livelihoods, precarity, migration, and the informal economy. The chapter will explore the existing literature on the experiences of Zimbabwean migrants in the informal economy, with a focus on the challenges they face and the coping mechanisms they employ. The chapter will also examine the factors that contribute to the precariousness of their livelihoods, such as the legal and regulatory framework, the nature of informal employment, and the social and political context.

2.2 MIGRATION

2.2.1 Definition of Migration

Migration is a complex phenomenon that has been studied extensively by scholars from various fields such as sociology, anthropology, geography, and economics. It refers to the movement of people from one place to another with the intention of settling or residing there temporarily or permanently (Shimeles, 2010:4). The human population has always been on the move, and many individuals and households have depended on migration as a livelihood strategy to improve their standards of living (Dokos, 2017).

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), migration is defined as the movement of a person or a group of persons, either across an international border or within a State, for the purpose of establishing a new residence.

2.2.2 Definition of Migrants

A migrant is a person who moves from one place to another, either within a country or across borders, with the intention of settling or residing there temporarily or permanently (Oxford Dictionary, 2023). The term migrant is often used interchangeably with immigrant (Ellis, 2003).

2.2.3 About Migration

As previously mentioned, migration is an age-old, global phenomenon. As of 2013, a total of 232 million international migrants were recorded worldwide with 59% living in developed countries and 41% in developing countries (Betts, 2011:34). For developing countries, such as those in the Global South migration regionally or internationally has become a source of poverty alleviation and a strategy for improving the livelihoods of migrants and those left behind (Dotsey, 2017:9). Literature on migration shows that people migrate in search of job opportunities and better livelihoods, which happens by joining the labour force either in the formal economy or informal economy (Shimeles, 2010).

According to Görlach & Kuske; (2023:54), in the short run, migrants can create challenges in local labour markets, potentially affecting wages and displacing some native workers who compete with them. On the other hand, especially in the long run, migrants can boost output, create new opportunities for local firms and native workers, and supply abilities and skills needed for growth. Moreover, both in the short and long run, different groups of high or low-educated workers, owners of capital, owners of property, and young or old individuals may benefit to different extents from the inflow of migrants (Görlach & Kuske, 2023:71). The interplay of these factors affects the political economy of migration: public perceptions of migration and policies chosen by the governments often depend on which groups gain more, less, or possibly lose from migration (Betts, 2011:40).

The prospect of a better livelihood certainly is one of the most important factors behind people's decision to migrate (Haas, 2021:7). In their studies HDR (2009) & Shaw, (2007) additionally discovered that the ability to migrate was an important element which introduced a threshold effect on the decision to stay or migrate. The poorer the country the higher the percentage of outward migration. Depending on socioeconomic factors, migrants either have the option to migrate from rural to urban, across the border, or abroad (Schewel, 2019:17). Migration patterns, internationally and regionally in Africa, are also affected by colonisation. Internationally, the destinations that African migrants go to have colonial roots. For example,

most migrants from Southern Africa migrate to the United Kingdom, and those from Western Africa often, migrate to France (Eldridge, Kalter & Taylor, 2022:160).

2.2.4 Migration in South Africa

Within the African continent, there are a couple of hotspots for migrants. South Africa is among the economic powerhouses in Africa therefore attracting other potential job seekers from neighbouring countries (Mathekga, 2022). Provincial migration is also popular within South Africa, with those in poorer provinces such as the Eastern Cape and Limpopo for example migrating to provinces with more opportunities such as the Western Cape and Gauteng. Migration patterns within the country have been heavily influenced by the country's apartheid history (Reed, 2013). Before independence in 1994, the movement of black people in South Africa was very much restricted by the Apartheid policies. The law specified the black people's place of work and residence as a result they had to migrate from their homelands to work in the minefields or on White-owned farms (Barchiesi, 2008:115).

Since the new political dispensation in 1994, new policies and legislation, that allow everyone to enjoy equal rights to freedom and movement without discrimination were passed. This changed the situation for the local black people whose movement was previously restricted and who now could freely move from rural areas and homelands to urban areas in search of jobs to advance their livelihoods (Martiz & Venter, 2022:55). In the Eastern Cape, the area of study, there has been an increase in people of a working age migrating to other provinces in search of better livelihoods, and the province is one of those that have the highest levels of negative net migration, losing its people to the big cities (Makhetha-Kosi *et al.*, 2017:103). In addition to the internal migration taking place within the country, there is also an influx of external migrants coming into the country, among them are Zimbabweans. While there are different dynamics at play between internal and external, what is common is that migration is used as a livelihood strategy to which the migrant-sending households expect remittance as they have sacrificed to send one of their own (Haas, 2005).

2.2.5 Migration as a livelihood strategy

Migration is a common response to economic and environmental pressures and an integral part of livelihood strategies in many parts of the world (Sundari, 2005: 2295). Migration plays a vital role in keeping families and children out of poverty. Additionally, it is a common

phenomenon that presents both challenges and opportunities in today's globalized world (Mago, 2018:231). How it is perceived depends on whether migrants are migrating from the developed world to developing countries or from developing countries to the developed world (Shimeles, 2010:6). In developed countries, the migration of people is considered a threat to stability and a challenge to established cultures and lifestyles. In contrast in the developing world, migration is both a survival and livelihood strategy and inseparable from identity (Nawyn, 2016:164). For this research study, migration is being examined as a livelihood strategy.

There's always been a large scale of migration from the global South to the global North. Undocumented immigrants account for about three-quarters of those migrating from the global South to the global North (Dokos, 2017:103). Migration is not a new phenomenon in Africa; what has changed are the patterns. The terrain changed as colonial influences affected the traditional patterns of migration (Mago, 2018:231). Most of the African migration takes place within the continent as migrants seek employment in neighbouring countries that are thriving economically and offering opportunities for them. South Africa, Côte d'Ivoire, and Nigeria are among the top five destination countries on the continent, revealing their status as economic powerhouses in their respective subregions (Shimeles, 2010:7).

Maphosa (2007), states that the primary reason for household members migrating is to send remittances back home. Remittances from a migrating member may result in a positive shift towards better welfare standards in that household. On the other hand, sacrifice by households and migrating members of households may result in poor households failing to improve their welfare (Maphosa, 2007:123). The success of migration as a livelihood strategy is dependent on the skills of the migrating member. It also depends on the migrating destination. Some migrating destinations offer minimal returns and subject migrating members to a high possibility of being exploited (ILO, 2016).

According to (Haas, 2005), local migration and international migration are different. International migration comes with costs, as it does not guarantee automatic livelihood improvements, in that the policy context for poor people to use migration as a route out of poverty often remains limited (Global Migration Group, 2013:8). Immigrants have to face harsh realities of life; their legal standing is always questioned and when they are illegal immigrants it's harder to access certain livelihood strategies (Haas, 2005:65). International immigrants are vulnerable to migration policies. For example, as of 2023, the South African

government decided to discontinue the Zimbabwean Exemption Permit (ZEP) (Mabasa, 2023). This permit allowed every Zimbabwean, skilled and unskilled to work in South Africa legally. Unfortunately, migration laws have become so politicized, that it often puts vulnerable migrants in difficult positions as they try to make a living.

There is also a gendered dimension to migration. Migrant women are often a more vulnerable group in the labour force depending on the type of work, and if they work in the informal economy, they are even more disadvantaged (Kawar, 2005:71). Migrant women working in the informal economy are often safer self-employed. According to Sundari, (2005) after migrating women are more dependent on social networks in the destination area than men. In a study conducted in Durban on Zimbabwean women working in the informal economy, it was established that migration had helped migrant households avoid hunger and starvation, though it had failed to improve the economic well-being of about 43 percent of the families, particularly the female-headed households (Ncube & Bahta, 2022:20).

While discrimination and prejudice leading to incomplete integration are significant barriers to immigrants' economic success, most migrants are willing to overcome these difficulties by moving and remaining in the destination country in order to achieve a significant income gain (Dokos, 2017:108). The amount of time spent in the destination country also has a role in the decision to return. Return migration rates peak in the first decade after arrival and subsequently plateau (Mathekga, 2022). Some migrants return home because they did not achieve the success they expected in terms of employment, earnings, or quality of life (Hammer & Ness, 2021). Other migrants' decision to return may be part of their initial strategy: they move briefly to accumulate savings and human capital before returning to their native country to benefit from it (Mhaka, 2023).

2.3 LIVELIHOODS

According to Serrat, (2017:21), a livelihood consists of the capabilities, assets, and activities required for a living. It is considered sustainable when it can withstand and recover from stresses and shocks, as well as maintain or improve its capabilities, assets, and activities now and in the future, without jeopardizing the natural resource base. This school of thought is taken from the sustainable livelihoods approach (SLA) which is aimed at understanding the livelihoods of the poor (Chambers,1995). The SLA organizes the factors that constrain or enhance livelihood opportunities and shows how they relate. These factors are impacted by the

livelihood assets, which the poor must often make trade-offs and choices about. The livelihood assets comprise human capital, social capital, natural capital, physical capital, and financial capital (Serrat, 2017:22). Studies have shown the importance of livelihood assets in supporting the well-being of individuals and communities. For example, a study conducted in rural South Africa found that households with greater asset wealth were more likely to have access to improved sanitation, healthcare, and education, and were less likely to experience food insecurity (Lund & Saito, 2014). Another study conducted in Zimbabwe found that access to financial assets was critical for supporting the livelihoods of female-headed households, who faced significant barriers to accessing formal employment (Munyati & Muchabaiwa, 2014).

One of the key characteristics of livelihoods today is diversification or the multiplicity of livelihood activities, assets, or incomes (Ellis, 2007). A household may engage in diversification for a variety of reasons. It may mean investing in many activities for wealthy households, while it may also entail devising a survivalist strategy for disadvantaged homes (Alemu, 2023:3). Migration and participation in the informal economy are two significant methods by which poorer households attempt diversification, either as a primary or secondary livelihood strategy (Mago, 2018:235). Mago's study (2018) on informal traders identified diversification in terms of the products that they sold in addition to agriculture and subsistence. Similarly, Marumo (2021) on informal traders and the lockdown period during the COVID-19 pandemic identified product diversification in terms of what they sold.

2.3.1 Livelihoods in South Africa

Many people in South Africa face economic challenges, including high unemployment rates and poverty. Livelihoods in South Africa vary significantly depending on the province, with some regions facing greater economic challenges than others (Scoones, 2016:17). The historical background of South Africa has had a lasting impact on the livelihoods of poor South Africans, even in the new democracy (Hajdu, Neves & Granlund, 2020:745). The legacy of apartheid, including discrimination and economic disparities, has left many individuals and communities at a disadvantage when it comes to accessing opportunities for economic advancement (Beall, Crankshaw & Parnell, 2000:379). While progress has been made in addressing these issues, there is still much work to be done. Poor South Africans often draw their livelihoods from a range of assets, including physical, financial, social, and human assets.

Additionally, poor governance in South Africa has had a significant impact on the livelihoods of many individuals and communities (Mabebe, 2021:164). Corruption, inefficiency, and

mismanagement have led to a lack of access to resources and opportunities for economic advancement (Mathiba, 2021:565). This has been particularly challenging for those who are already facing economic barriers, such as poor black South Africans. The influx of migrants in South Africa has also created challenges for individuals and communities seeking to secure livelihoods (Landau, 2005). Increased competition for jobs and resources makes it more difficult for South Africans, particularly those who are poor or marginalized, to find safe and fair work opportunities (Visser, 2021:32). However, it is important to note that migrants also face significant challenges in securing livelihoods, and policies must be put in place to support the needs of all individuals in the country. In this regard, it is within a context of high unemployment, high poverty rates, competition for resources, poor governance, and the ever-looming threat of xenophobic violence that the migrants in this study are eking out sustainable livelihoods.

2.3.2 Livelihoods of Zimbabwean migrants Working in the informal economy in SA

Livelihood assets are essential for individuals and communities seeking to secure their livelihoods. Migrants often navigate livelihood assets in creative and resourceful ways (Global Migration Group, 2013). When faced with limited resources and opportunities, migrants may draw on a range of assets to secure their livelihoods and support their well-being. For example, financial assets, such as savings or remittances, can be used to invest in new opportunities or to provide a safety net in the face of economic shocks. Social assets, such as networks and relationships, can provide access to information, resources, and opportunities that would not be available otherwise (Carr, 2023:14). Finally, human assets, such as education, skills, and knowledge, are critical for securing safe and fair work opportunities.

Migrants may also use a combination of these assets to navigate their livelihoods. For example, a migrant with limited financial resources may draw on their social networks to find work opportunities or may invest in education or job training to increase their employability (Dokos, 2017:104). Similarly, a migrant with limited physical assets may draw on their human assets to engage in entrepreneurial activities or may use financial assets to invest in income-generating activities. Overall, migrants often navigate livelihood assets in creative and resourceful ways, drawing on their strengths and resources to secure their livelihoods and support their well-being in challenging and often difficult circumstances (Ellis, 2003:5).

Livelihoods are essential for people to sustain their lives and those of their families. It is important that individuals have access to opportunities to earn an income and support

themselves (Mukwedeya & Mudhara, 2023:40). However, for vulnerable migrants, navigating the challenges of a new country and unfamiliar laws can make it difficult to secure a livelihood (Kawar, 2005:71). Undocumented Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa face numerous challenges in securing livelihoods due to their status. They are often unable to access formal employment or government support, leaving them in vulnerable and precarious positions (Mhaka, 2023). However, many still find ways to make a living through informal work and entrepreneurship, often in low-paying and unsafe conditions. Additionally, these individuals are often highly motivated and resourceful and find ways to make a living despite the challenges they face (Ncube & Bahta, 2022:20).

2.3.3 Livelihood Assets Explained

Social Capital

Social capital refers to networks of mutual support that exist within and between households, extended families, and communities and that people can use to gain access to services such as loans, childcare, food, and housing, as well as information about employment and opportunities (Kark, 2021:267). The concept of social capital emerged from sociologists such as Pierre Bourdieu to refer to resources, other than financial, that people may rely upon to better their lives. Put differently, it refers to ties that bind upon which people may draw advantage. The poor migrants rely upon and cope using their social networks. Xu *et al.*, (2015) in their research on migrant farm workers in the mountains discovered that social networks improved their livelihoods significantly. The social networks were available for assistance when seeking non-farm work, and the social network was available for assistance when in urgent need of money (Xu *et al.*, 2015:55). If migrants have relatives or acquaintances in the city, it might function as motivation and as a pull factor to move since it would bring more security (Koczan *et al.*, 2021). Relatives who have migrated often constitute social networks. Men and women social networks differ and correspondingly men and women have different levels of access to information (Mago, 2018).

Financial Capital

Financial capital is the capital base of cash, credit/debt, savings, and other economic assets (Natarajan *et al.*, 2022:54). Income from the sale of labour is often one of the most important assets for immigrants and the urban poor, and it is one that they prioritize (Farrington *et al.*, 2002:9). In most cases the poor, locals or immigrants do not have the capital base to recover from external shocks. Most poor people borrow from friends, relatives, stokvels and illegal

loan sharks (Mathekga, 2022). Xu *et al.*, (2015:15) discovered that among the poor immigrants, households that were led by single parents, or low-skilled parents had lower wages and even lower if the household had one income.

Human capital

Human capital refers to the skills, knowledge, ability to work, good health, and physical capabilities (Kark, 2021:267). In terms of access to employment and earnings, financial capital is heavily dependent on adequate human capital. Human capital, in turn, is highly dependent on adequate nutrition, health care, safe environmental conditions, and education (Serrat, 2017:26).

Physical capital

Physical capital includes assets such as housing, tools, and equipment owned, rented, or used by people, as well as public infrastructure to which they have access (Serrat, 2017:25). Housing is one of the most important assets for poor urban households because it is used for both shelter and productive or income-generating purposes, such as renting out rooms or using the space as a workshop (Kark, 2021:268). Housing ownership or secure access to housing can be vital in gaining access to other resources. Housing in informal settlements, for example, can be used as collateral for credit if registered (Natarajan *et al*, 2022:55).

Numerous studies have highlighted the importance of livelihood assets in supporting the well-being of individuals and communities. For example, a study conducted in rural Ethiopia found that access to credit and other financial assets was critical for supporting the livelihoods of poor households, who faced significant challenges in securing access to formal employment (Hagos & Hjort, 2012). Another study conducted in South Africa found that social assets, such as community networks and relationships, were essential for supporting the livelihoods of vulnerable households (Karaan & Patel, 2012). Access to stable and regular employment is crucial in securing decent well-being for migrants (Carr, 2023). Whilst legal documents allow migrants to participate in the labour market, legal status does not automatically translate into a job. As such migrants draw on personal and migrant social networks to access information on job vacancies and financial assistance (Betts, 2011:41). The size and composition of networks for migrants are crucial in defining and improving ones well-being. In some instances, these networks overlap with each other. For example, they might hear about a job opportunity through relatives, friends, or church (Ellis, 2007). Overall livelihood assets are important in the survival and wellbeing of migrants.

2.4 PRECARIOUS WORK

The concept of ‘precarious employment’ has become prominent in response to the restructuring of the global economy and labour markets (Campbell & Price, 2023:5). Globally, there has been an increase in non-standard work. Non-standard work, on the other hand, is not new to developing countries in the global South (Hammer & Ness, 2021:2). Precarious employment can exist outside of but, also within a clear employment relationship (Grimshaw, 2022:2).

2.4.1 Definition of precarious work

Precarity is understood in the social sciences and humanities as an effect that arises from neo-liberal practices, particularly related to work that is temporary, insecure, and poorly paid. Precarious work refers to employment that is characterized by uncertainty, insecurity, and low pay. This type of work can take many forms, including temporary or contract work, part-time work, and work in the informal economy. Precarious work is often associated with a lack of job security, limited access to benefits and protections, and low wages. Workers in precarious employment are often vulnerable to exploitation and abuse and may struggle to make ends meet (Lakhyar & Baoussy, 2019:2).

The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines precarious work as work that is uncertain, unpredictable, and insecure, and which does not provide workers with adequate social protection or the opportunity for collective bargaining (ILO, 2019). This definition highlights the lack of security and protections that are often associated with precarious work, as well as the limited opportunities for workers to advocate for their rights and interests.

2.4.2 Precarious Work in South Africa

Precarious work is a significant issue in South Africa, particularly for workers in the informal economy and those in low-paying, non-standard employment (Barchiesi, 2008). Precarious work in South Africa is connected to the country's history of apartheid and the legacy of economic inequality and discrimination that resulted from it (Hlatshwayo, 2018:3). This has led to significant disparities in access to decent work and economic opportunities, particularly for historically marginalized groups such as black South Africans and women (Dor & Runciman, 2022). The apartheid labour market was marked by racial discrimination and inequality (Mariottii, 2012:1100). Black people, in particular, had the hardest time they had the lowest wages and faced employment instability. Under the new democratic government, however, the labour market is still faced with an often-uncomfortable reality characterized by

lasting social inequality (Barchiesi, 2008:122). As South Africa's economy emerged from apartheid-age isolation and protectionism to embrace globalization, the black working class has remained in a condition of social vulnerability.

A study conducted by the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) found that workers in the informal economy, who are disproportionately black and female, faced significant challenges in securing decent work and earning a living wage (SAHRC,2016). Another study conducted by the Casual Workers Advice Office (CWAO) found that workers in the domestic and agricultural sectors in South Africa faced significant barriers to securing fair wages and decent working conditions (CWAO, 2017).

The South African government has taken steps to address issues of precarious work and economic inequality, including through the implementation of minimum wage laws and other labour protections (Barchiesi, 2008:130). These developments, however, have only partially counterbalanced the adverse socioeconomic trends linked to joblessness and the casualization of employment. South Africa's employment crisis is reinforcing persistent social inequalities that see poor and low-skill Africans increasingly marginalized (Dor & Runciman, 2022). Not only have white South Africans remained the wealthiest sector of the population, but the rising African middle and upper class, which benefited from post-apartheid market opportunities and black economic empowerment policies, contribute to making social disparities within the African population the driving force of overall social inequality (Mariottii, 2012:1115). Approximately one-third of South African workers are employed in contingent jobs, fixed-term contracts, and informal occupations, mostly without employer-funded benefits (Khuluvhe, 2023:5). In general, many black South African workers continue to occupy the low-skill, low-wage ends of the occupational ladder.

Apart from casuals, more and more informal workers are hired as subcontractors by "formal" enterprises, even in manufacturing sectors where the externalization of functions was once limited (Dor & Runciman, 2022). While almost 90% of informal workers have no company-based retirement coverage, this is also true of one-third of formal employees (Geyer, 2023:6). Overall, precarious work is a significant issue in South Africa, particularly for workers in the informal economy and those in low-paying, non-standard employment. In both standardized employment relationships and non-standardized employment relationships, labour security is achieved through associational membership in political and social organisations such as unions, trade associations and community organisations (Lewis *et al.*, 2015). These organisations

enable their members to collectively demand better incomes, more benefits, political advocacy, and improved living conditions. Citizenship is an important aspect of this relationship since ethnicity and residency determine the degree of membership and confer specific political and social rights to citizen workers (Pauli et al., 2020:235).

2.4.3 Precarious work and Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa

It is mostly the undocumented Zimbabwean migrant workers across South Africa who are employed in career-less and unstable jobs that are precarious (Mhaka, 2023). While precariousness exists everywhere, and at varying levels, the migrant status is a devalued identity that leads to exclusion from certain basic rights at work and worsens the situation for most unskilled and semi-skilled Zimbabweans (Carr, 2023:12). This is then exacerbated by being undocumented. Zimbabwean workers possess certain characteristics that both create advantages and disadvantages for them as they interact with employers. Employers know this fully well and capitalise on these characteristics, especially the lack of documentation needed to work and stay in South Africa (Ncube & Bahta, 2022:22). The precarious nature of Zimbabwean migrants is an outcome of a combination of various factors which are: a very strict migration legal framework, institutionalised xenophobia, capitalists whose interests are in lowering labour costs and thus go for cheap Zimbabwean labourers, desperate Zimbabwean workers who would accept anything offered because it is believed to be far much better than what they would receive 'back home' and a sending government (Zimbabwean) which does not seem to care enough about the situation of migrants who are mainly viewed negatively for having left the country in the first place (Res, 2013:18). The precariousness of Zimbabwean migrants is both as much a product as it is also a factor of a vicious cycle of precariousness. The intersection of the migrant status (whether documented or undocumented but even worse for the undocumented) with low educational qualifications (for most migrants studied), race (black), poverty and desperation create barriers and constraints for most Zimbabwean migrants rendering their lives quite precarious (Rutherford, 2011:1315).

A study conducted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) found that Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa faced significant challenges in securing decent work and earning a living wage (ILO, 2010). Another study conducted by the African Centre for Migration and Society (ACMS) found that Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa were often subjected to exploitation and abuse in the workplace and faced significant barriers to accessing legal protections and remedies (ACMS, 2019). Overall, precarious work is a significant issue for

Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa, and one that has important implications for their well-being and economic security.

2.4.4 Consequences of precarious work

Work is inextricably linked to other social, economic, and political issues, thus the rise of precarious work and insecurity have far-reaching consequences for both work-related and nonwork phenomena (Campbell & Price, 2023). Precarious employment causes economic inequality, insecurity, and instability and has an impact on families and homes (Chesters & Cuervo, 2022:78). The challenge of precarity is that these marginalisations shift the economic risks of labour away from capitalists towards the employee (Edralin, 2014). Heads of families or family members that have migrated have exposed themselves to precarious employment and take more than one job or increase the number of working hours to meet their economic needs (Anwar & Graham, 2020:40). Precarious work has an impact on communities as well (Güven, 2012:55). It raises the possibility of criminal activity, such as xenophobic attacks and theft (Conroy, 2020:62). This is due to the fact that everyone at the bottom is competing for the same opportunities and resources (Herod & Lambert, 2016).

Precariously employed workers must either work long hours or assume additional responsibility by working several jobs to compensate for poor wages (Anwar & Graham, 2020:60). Precarious work is also linked to poor physical and mental health consequences. In terms of physical health, vulnerable workers are more prone to suffer on-the-job injuries and diseases (Conroy, 2020). This is not conducive because most immigrants rely on their physical capital to sustain their lives. In food delivery services for example they work on motorcycles which are high-risk. They also lack access to health benefits and paid sick days due to the nature of the labour contracts, which forces employees to disregard injuries and illnesses and refrain from seeking medical treatment (Edralin, 2014:60). Admitting sickness may be accompanied by worry of not being invited back by the employer. This is even more frightening for migrants working in these sectors and without legal documentation.

The insecurity linked with precarious employment has unintended consequences such as damaged personal relationships (Edralin, 2014:58). Many people who work in hazardous jobs have little time for family and friends (Pauli, 2020:40). Many precariously employed people have little opportunity to interact with others outside of their employment, whether due to having several jobs, clashing work schedules, working long hours, or spending free time

looking for additional employment (Keune, 2015). This is even worse for families that have a member or members who have migrated, the distance.

2.5 THE INFORMAL ECONOMY

The informal economy, discovered at the beginning of the seventies, was initially thought to be marginal and peripheral and not linked to the formal sector (Becker, 2004). It was thought to be a transitory phenomenon, which came into being as a result of national economies' failure to achieve adequate growth. It was, therefore, expected that the informal economy would disappear with increasing growth and modern industrial development (Becker, 2004). According to Vanek, Chen, Carre, Heintz, and Hussmans (2014), a distinction can be made between the terms informal sector, informal employment, and informal economy. From that point of view, the informal sector refers to unincorporated enterprises that may also be unregistered and/or small; informal employment refers to employment without social protection, either inside or outside the informal sector; and informal economy refers to all units, activities and workers so defined and the output from them (Vanek *et.al.*, 2014). In this study, however, the focus will be on the informal economy.

2.5.1 Defining the Informal Economy

The informal economy has been defined in various ways, depending on the school of thought one is working from or the major aspects of the informal economy with which one is concerned. The informal economy refers to economic activities that are not regulated by the state or included in official measures of economic activity. This can include a wide range of activities, such as street vending, domestic work, and small-scale production, that are often characterized by low wages, limited access to benefits and protections, and a lack of job security.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines the informal economy as all economic activities by workers and economic units that are - in law or in practice - not covered or insufficiently covered by formal arrangements (ILO, 2018). This definition highlights the fact that the informal economy is not regulated by formal labour laws or included in official measures of economic activity.

2.5.2 About the Informal Economy

Globalisation has had a profound impact on the proliferation of the informal economy. Globalisation includes a mix of factors, from capital flows and diffusion of technology, to international migration of workers and foreign direct investment (Bacchetta & Ernst, 2009). Critics of globalisation argue that the phenomenon is increasing world poverty and lowering standards of living throughout the developing world (Davids & Maphunye, 2009: 92). Davids and Maphunye (2009) contend that economic globalization or global capitalism brings with it global economic competition that is increasing inequalities between rich and poor countries and between the rich and poor within countries, thereby producing “zero-sum outcomes”. Related to this position is the view that globalisation brings about uneven or unequal development whereby Third World countries are left behind the whole process of growth and relegated to a state of perpetual underdevelopment and poverty as they cannot, on the whole, benefit from the positives of a global economy, (Held *et al.*, 2000)). This results in entrenched poverty and inequality in underdeveloped countries and among the disadvantaged populations within countries. Those trapped in poverty may, as a result, be pushed into the informal economy to earn a living.

Neoliberal globalization has changed the labour market (Wilson & Ebert, 2023). Government regulations that set minimum acceptable standards in the labour market have eroded, as did the rules that governed competition in product markets. The balance of power has shifted away from workers and toward corporations (Keune, 2015:17). Deregulation and rearrangement of labour relations have allowed for tremendous capital accumulation (Edralin, 2014). Workers in the informal economy are not recognized, registered, regulated, or protected by labour regulations or social protection (Charmes, 2012:104).

All informal or unregulated practices are broadly assumed to be synonymous with precarious work and all workers working in the informal economy are considered job insecure with poor working conditions. According to Etim & Daramola, (2020), this perspective is not representative of the range of experiences in the informal economy. The informal economy is diversified in terms of activities, skills, and incomes, and can be distinguished between precarious workers, low-skill, low-income employment opportunities, and non-precarious self-employed and skilled workers, opportunity-driven to seek more remuneration and secure employment opportunities through the informal sector (Etim & Daramola, 2020:3). In his study Geyer, (2023) discovered that many workers consciously choose informal employment

opportunities over waged incomes due to the weakening labour regulations and enforcement, and the growth of subcontracting and temporary labour practices.

Numerous studies have documented the prevalence and importance of the informal economy in many countries around the world. For example, a study conducted by the ILO found that the informal economy accounted for 61 percent of all employment in sub-Saharan Africa (ILO, 2018). Another study conducted in India found that the informal economy accounted for over 80 percent of all non-agricultural employment (Chen & Mathur, 2018). Overall, the informal economy is a significant and complex phenomenon that plays an important role in the economic and social lives of many individuals and communities around the world.

2.5.4 The Informal Economy in South Africa

The informal economy is a significant and complex phenomenon in South Africa, accounting for a substantial portion of the country's economic activity and employment (Geyer, 2023). This sector is often characterized by low wages, limited access to benefits and protections, and a lack of job security. Although the rate of South Africa's informal economy as a percentage of GDP was pegged at 23.29% in 2016, it is projected to rise to 24.19% by 2025 due to persistent and increasing unemployment, bureaucratic constraints, inefficient provision of law and order, weak enforcement of regulatory compliance as well as a deliberate government policy of tacit acceptance and accommodation of the informal economy (Etim & Daramola, 2020:5).

Despite its title as an economic powerhouse in the African continent, South Africa has been going through an economic meltdown over the past decade (Vallas & Schor, 2020). Rise in unemployment and decrease in service delivery such as the increase in power cuts, reaching close to nine hours a day in 2022. The continued rise in unemployment has resulted in a growing informal economy (Etim & Daramola, 2020). The informal economy provides livelihoods, employment, and income for about 2.5 million people in South Africa (Hammer & Ness, 2021:3). Almost half of these people work in the urban informal economy which provides about 850,000 jobs (Steward & Stanford, 2023).

The urban informal economy has become of central importance, in large cities and in small towns, as a survivalist strategy for unemployed South Africans and foreigners. Platform work is rapidly spreading across South Africa, and the Eastern Cape, which is the area of study, is no exception (Kavesa & Mbali, 2022:2). The growth and expansion of online platform businesses in South Africa, such as transport services Bolt, DiDi, and Uber; food delivery

services such as Mr D Food Delivery, Uber Eats, and Checkers Sixty60; and other online business services such as Takealot, Shein, and Zara, are one of the main factors contributing to the growth of platform work (Anwar & Graham, 2020:50). As the number of online platforms is expanding, so is the number of independent workers, owing not just to the growth of the urban informal economy but also to its ability to absorb the unemployed, given South Africa's high level of unemployment (Vallas & Schor, 2020:61). One point of view contends that the online platforms generate work opportunities and assist socially and economically marginalized populations such as the unemployed and undocumented immigrants (Wilson & Ebert, 2023). This is due to the fact that these platforms do not necessitate much paperwork (Steward & Stanford, 2023:40).

The informal economy in South Africa is home to a diverse range of workers, including both South African citizens and migrants from other countries. These workers come from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds and engage in a wide range of economic activities, from street vending to domestic work to online platform work to small-scale production. A study conducted by the South African Labour and Development Research Unit (SALDRU) found that workers in the informal economy in South Africa were more likely to be women, black, and have lower levels of education (Rogan, 2017). Another study conducted by the Casual Workers Advice Office (CWAO) found that workers in the informal economy were often young, with a significant portion aged 18 to 24 (CWAO, 2017).

Migrants from other countries, particularly Zimbabwe, are also an important part of the informal economy in South Africa. A study conducted by the African Centre for Migration and Society (ACMS) found that Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa were often forced to take on work in the informal economy due to a lack of formal work permits and limited access to formal work opportunities (ACMS, 2018).

2.6 ZIMBABWEAN MIGRANTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

As previously mentioned, Zimbabwe was both a migrant-sending and migrant-receiving country in the 1970s and 1980s (Hadebe, 2022:39). Since the 2000s, when Zimbabwe was sanctioned and excluded from the global economy, trends have been primarily outward, with little inward movement (Rutherford & Addison, 2007:619). Zimbabwe has become a net exporter of labour. Political-economic instability caused poverty and forced a major portion of the people into the indignity and insecurity of migrant work (Crush, Skinner & Stulgatis,

2012:2). Internal and international migration has been adopted as a livelihood strategy to alleviate poverty in the face of the economic meltdown in the past two decades (Dekker, 2009; Dekker & Kinsley, 2011). Zimbabwe has become a source of uprooted, desperate, and cheap labour for the UK care industry, domestic work, farm labour, and risky security work in South Africa (Hadebe, 2022:40).

In April 2009, South Africa established the Dispensation of Zimbabwean Permit (DZP) to regularise the status of thousands of Zimbabwean nationals who had fled political and economic instability in their country, mostly between 2007 and 2009 but it was cancelled by the cabinet in November 2021 (Mhaka, 2023). In the time period the DZP was established South Africa was to host the FIFA Soccer World Cup in 2010. This was a turning point for both South African natives and Zimbabwean immigrants (Crush *et al*, 2012:3). The number of migrant entrepreneurs who arrived in South Africa peaked between 2005 and 2010, this was at the height of the economic crisis in Zimbabwe from 2007-2008 (Scheen, 2011). Zimbabwe's economic situation at the time had significantly deteriorated by 2008, with hyperinflation, unemployment, and a lack of food; about 298,000 Zimbabweans moved to South Africa to escape escalating poverty (Rogerson, 2018). As a result of Zimbabwe's political and economic issues, as well as South Africa's loosening of immigration regulations, new patterns of migration emerged. This of course has come with social and economic challenges for both the locals and the Zimbabwean migrants. South Africa's high unemployment often sparks social tensions, including xenophobic violence against African migrants (Mathekga, 2022).

South Africa's crisis of xenophobia is defined by the daily discrimination and intolerance to which migrants are exposed (Rutherford & Addison, 2007:25). Xenophobia manifests in "a broad spectrum of behaviours including discriminatory, stereotyping and dehumanizing remarks; discriminatory policies and practices by government and private officials such as exclusion from public services to which target groups are entitled; selective enforcement of by-laws by local authorities; assault and harassment by state agents particularly the police and immigration officials; as well as public threats and violence that often results in massive loss of lives and livelihoods (Mpaka, 2023). Attitudinal surveys clearly show that South Africans differentiate migrants by national origin and that Zimbabweans are amongst the most disliked (Mhaka, 2023). Zimbabweans are certainly not the only small-business owners to have become victims of extreme xenophobia. However, few studies to date have specifically examined the impact of xenophobic violence on Zimbabweans who are trying to make a living in the South African informal sector (Scheen, 2011).

An estimated one million Zimbabweans work and live in South Africa while maintaining ties with their home country, where they customarily send remittances (Mathekga, 2022). Trends over the years have shown that the Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces host the most Zimbabweans followed by Gauteng and other cities such as Cape Town and Durban. Following the rise in political tension around Zimbabwean migrants, increasing numbers of Zimbabwean refugees now move to the countryside and smaller towns instead of cities such as Johannesburg (Scheen, 2011). Most Zimbabwean migrants looking to improve their livelihood through the informal economy enter through the Limpopo border, especially those without passports, visas or permits (Res, 2013). The area between the towns of Louis Trichard and Messina in the province of Limpopo is mainly agricultural and that is where a lot of Zimbabweans settle down (Mhaka, 2023).

Cross-border traffic between Zimbabwe and South Africa has increased significantly, with less than 200,000 people per year in the mid-1980s and over 1.6 million in 2010 (Res, 2013). Literature on Zimbabwean migrants has shown that many of the Zimbabweans visit temporarily, as traders to purchase items to sell back home, to visit family and to seek medical care (Mpaka, 2023). However, due to the worsening economic conditions in Zimbabwe migration is now taking on a more permanent form (Ncube & Bahta, 2022:20). In 2010, two-thirds of Zimbabweans who had come to South Africa after 2005 desired to stay in South Africa on long-term basis.

2.6.1 Livelihood Strategies of Undocumented Zimbabwean Migrants in the Informal Economy in South Africa

The survival strategies for undocumented Zimbabwean migrants begin right from the border crossing phase. The progressively selective and restrictive South African immigration policies, which are manifest at the border, lead to undocumented migration for most Zimbabweans. According to Moyo (2020) most Zimbabweans resort to undocumented migration because of the difficulties they encounter in terms of obtaining legal immigration documents to South Africa. Additionally, South African immigration officers at the border have stopped granting Zimbabweans the full 90-day visitors permit applicable to SADC citizens, instead they have started granting 3-7 days maximum and Zimbabweans must pay a bribe for the full 90 days (Mhaka, 2023). Zimbabwean migrants coming in search of work have resorted to the assistance of an established group of people based in Beitbridge border town, known as *omalayitsha* (human smugglers), who make a living by assisting people to cross the border illegally. The

omalayitsha charge undocumented migrants an average fee of R200. In his study, Moyo (2020:65) found that Zimbabweans coming to look for work did not find the 90-day visa useful for them especially if they wanted to travel to and back from South Africa to Zimbabwe. Instead, they found human smugglers more useful because they only get paid once unlike immigration officers who would have to be paid all the time. Once undocumented migrants have slipped across the border, people usually settle with relatives or friends, who serve as a strategy for many to secure both accommodation and employment.

The survival strategies Zimbabweans have adopted in South Africa are not unique when viewed in comparison with other migrant groups in the country or with migrants elsewhere in the world. Broadly, Zimbabweans in South Africa can be categorised into earlier and recent migrants, and the organising and survival strategies of these migrants vary according to their migration history, social status, and settlement patterns. The older migrants coming in between 2000-2008 mostly found themselves working construction jobs or as farm workers if they were men and as domestic workers in homes for women (Ncube & Bahta, 2022). Commercial farms mostly provided a form of inclusion for undocumented Zimbabwean migrants to earn a livelihood, although low paying. According to a study by Muzondidya (2008), working conditions in these sectors were far from desirable.

The new migrants coming in from 2011 to date have struggled to secure jobs on the South African job market which has, over the years, not been generating enough jobs to absorb both the domestic and foreign supply (Dor & Runciman, 2022). According to Muzondidya (2008), in the different livelihood strategies migrants participate in, women are particularly vulnerable. They have limited employment opportunities than their male counterparts. The few who manage to secure employment usually work as domestic servants in the homes of South Africans or shop assistants in retail shops owned by Asian migrants, where wages are low and sexual abuse is also rampant (Makhetha-Kosi, 2017:105). Others get employed in hair salons, usually owned by local black South Africans or other migrant African entrepreneurs and are paid on commission. To make ends meet, some female migrants end up turning to prostitution or taking up low-paying jobs such as being employed as street sales agents by small private companies and other self-employed migrants.

Lekogo (2006) suggests that due to migrant networks, people from the same country usually follow the same trades. Many undocumented Zimbabwean men, in recent years, have found themselves working on food delivery platforms or as self-employed. According to Rutherford

(2011), undocumented migrants are affected by what he calls modes of belonging. Modes of belonging are the routinized discourses, social practices, and institutional arrangements through which people make claims for recognition and rights, the way through which they become incorporated or not within the social fabric of everyday life in particular sites (Rutherford, 2008). Modes of belonging are always entangled in trans-local processes. A study by Matshaka (2009) on Zimbabweans migrants working in the informal economy in Cape Town found that upon arrival the young men had been introduced, advised, and guided into informal street trade through existing support networks. Additionally, they had also been taught the craft of wire and bead art from seasoned craftsmen (Matshaka, 2009:70). These informal activities are guided by the fact that Cape Town is a tourist town. Therefore, the modes of belonging and experiences of undocumented Zimbabwean migrants working in the informal economy will differ based on the location.

Migrants who are not able to find employment usually resort to self-employment. Literature on migrant entrepreneurship shows that structural factors such as social exclusion and discrimination, poor access to markets and unemployment are key driving forces and motivations for self-employment (Mago, 2018:235). Mozondidya's (2008:10) study discovered that those that became entrepreneurs were heavily involved in informal trade. Some Zimbabwean women, for instance, survive as independent traders, owning small grocery or spaza shops, running backyard workshops and shebeens that operate in the informal settlements and townships where most of these migrants live and do not have to apply for operating licenses and permits (Mhaka, 2023). Literature on Zimbabweans who are self-employed shows that it is more rewarding to be self-employed than to be in formal employment (Betts, 2011).

After securing employment, sharing of accommodation and groceries is one of the major strategies deployed by migrants to cut down on living costs and to maximize their savings. Muzondidya (2008) in his study discovered that as Zimbabweans try and establish their settlement in South Africa, some resort to tactical marriages with locals, simply for the convenience of getting a residence permit or becoming a citizen. The more enterprising young female migrants sometimes find a "boyfriend" who is South African and provides both shelter and food (Mhaka, 2023). The same survival strategy is also adopted by their male compatriots who sometimes find live-in South African partners. The migrants who fail to secure formal employment survive through theft, prostitution, and informal trade (Hadebe, 2022).

2.6.2 Experiences of Undocumented Zimbabweans working in the Informal Economy

The undocumented migrants with no recourse to the law are severely exploited by farm owners who capitalize on migrants' vulnerability (Mhaka, 2023). They are sometimes paid wages far below the minimum wage and are subjected to a wide range of exploitation and abuse that include racism, sexual abuse, and poor working and living conditions (Rutherford, 2011:1317). Living conditions for these Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa are crowded and often unsafe. They live in makeshift, plastic houses in informal settlements, where the majority of poorer South Africans reside (Ncube & Bahta, 2022:20). Others are found in the inner-city areas where the rent is low, but crime rates are high. On top of all the above problems, Zimbabwean migrants have to deal with the hostility of their host communities towards African migrants (Mpaka, 2023). As many studies and reports have shown, South Africa has increasingly become a hostile environment for African migrants, and Zimbabwean migrants in particular. For instance, South African government officials, ranging from immigration officials at the Department of Home Affairs to soldiers and police officers, have been accused of ill-treating Zimbabweans and other migrants (Ncube & Bahta, 2022). In a study on Zimbabwean migrants in northern South Africa Rutherford (2011) discovered that undocumented and documented Zimbabweans working on farms had to deal with raids from South African security forces who carried out raids looking for illegals and occasionally picking up those with corporate permits. Additionally, Rutherford (2011:1313) discovered that in certain instances soldiers ripped the permits of Zimbabwean farm workers and deported them.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the literature around the key concepts underpinning this study namely, migration, livelihoods, precarious work, and the informal economy. In so doing, this chapter has set out the context within which Zimbabwean migrants are either positioned or position themselves within the informal economy in South Africa. Based on the reviewed literature, it can be concluded that Zimbabwean migrants working in the informal economy, in South Africa face precarious livelihoods owing to various factors. These factors include xenophobia, discrimination, low wages, lack of access to social services, and limited employment opportunities. Despite these challenges, the migrants have adopted various strategies to cope with their precarious livelihoods, including solidarity networks, informal savings groups, and informal money transfer systems.

CHAPTER 3

Theoretical Framework

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the concept of sustainable livelihoods with reference to livelihoods in general, and to urban livelihoods in particular as the focus of this study. This chapter will begin by giving a brief outline of the Sustainable livelihood approach (SLA) and the importance of adopting such a framework for this research. This will be followed by definitions of livelihoods, sustainable livelihoods, and the overarching concept of livelihood diversification, which underpins livelihood security, and impacts on the livelihood. The discussion then proceeds to unpack the various assets that urban livelihoods draw from followed by discussing the vulnerability context of livelihoods in urban spaces. The framework will be discussed and assessed in relation to undocumented migrants living in urban spaces and working in the informal economy. The framework will then be assessed and critiqued. The chapter will end with a conclusion, summarising everything.

3.2 Overview of the SL Approach

The SL approach focuses on ways to understand the practical realities of poor men and women, such as what they do to make a living, the assets they can draw on, and the challenges they face in doing so (Krantz, 2001:4). SL goes beyond the traditional ways to studying the lives of poor men and women, such as looking at low income, it takes it a step further and looks at their vulnerability and social exclusion (Farrington, Ramasut, & Walker, 2002: 4). Vulnerability and social exclusion have become important factors when studying the livelihoods of the poor because of the rapid rise in precarious jobs and precarious workers. The aspect of vulnerability in the livelihoods of the urban poor is of particular importance to this research because the participants in this study are undocumented migrants who, work in the informal economy which is known to consist of precarious work. Therefore, they are vulnerable on two fronts and this theoretical framework allows for a fair assessment of the livelihoods of the migrants. The SL approach pays attention to the different factors and processes that either limit or enhance poor people's ability to make a living (Natarajan *et al*, 2022:51). According to Serrat, (2017:10) understanding the complex ways livelihoods are constructed requires an examination of the institutional processes and organizational structures that link these various elements together (Farrington *et al*, 2002:4).

3.2.1 Defining Livelihoods

The definition of a livelihood is commonly used at the household level (Farrington *et al*, 2002:5). A livelihood consists of the capabilities, assets, (including both material and natural resources), and activities required for a means of living by a household. In other words, a livelihood can be defined as “the means of gaining a living, including livelihood capabilities, tangible assets, and intangible assets” (Chambers, 1995: 174).

3.2.2 Defining Sustainable Livelihoods

A sustainable livelihood refers to a living that is adequate for the satisfaction of basic needs, and secure against shocks and stresses (Chambers, 1995: 175). It is considered sustainable when it can withstand and recover from stresses and shocks, as well as maintain or improve its capabilities, assets, and activities now and in the future, without jeopardizing the natural resource base (Serrat, 2017:21).

'Stress' in this context is defined as a small, regular, predictable disturbance with a cumulative effect, while a shock is a large, infrequent, unpredictable disturbance with immediate impact (Scoones, 1998). In the context of this study, an example of 'stress' is a drop in customers for hairdressers and nail technicians or a drop in the number of delivery trips for the food delivery guys, while an example of a 'shock' is the loss of a job, or sudden questioning of documentation by regulatory authorities such as immigration officers, or the outbreak of a pandemic, or the outbreak of xenophobic attacks in the city. Shocks also include sickness and death (Neves, 2017), which have a potentially debilitating impact on a household's livelihood structure. Both 'stress' and 'shock' have the potential to threaten, to varying degrees, the sustainability of informal work as a livelihood strategy. The definition of sustainable livelihoods embodies resilience, the ability to cope, adapt, and improve well-being, without undermining or depleting the natural resource base. Ratner (2000) links the concept of sustainable livelihoods to livelihood security and defines “sustainable livelihood security” as “an adequate, decent and secure livelihood,” which includes: a level of wealth and stocks and flow of food and cash that provide for physical and social well-being. This includes security against sickness, early death, and becoming poorer. It includes secure command over assets as well as income and good chances of survival (Ratner 2000: 5).

3.3 Livelihood Assets

The SL framework organizes the factors that limit or enhance livelihood opportunities and demonstrates how they interact with one another (Natarajan *et al*, 2022:51). A central notion is that different households have different levels of access to livelihood assets, which the sustainable livelihood approach seeks to expand (Krantz, 2001:9). The poor must frequently make trade-offs and decisions about their livelihood assets. The livelihood assets comprise human capital, social capital, natural capital, physical capital, and financial capital (Serrat, 2017:22).

Natural capital – refers to environmental assets such as land and common property resources, as well as open access to natural resources such as water, forests, and/or grazing land (Serrat, 2017:23). Natural resources are generally less used in the livelihood strategies of the urban poor because they are scarce, particularly in large urban areas (Farrington *et al*, 2002:9).

Economic or financial capital – is the capital base of cash, credit/debt, savings, and other economic assets which the household either possess or has access to (Natarajan *et al*, 2022:54). Income from the sale of labour is often one of the most important assets for the urban poor, and it is one that they prioritize (Farrington *et al*, 2002:9).

Human capital – refers to the skills, knowledge, ability to work, good health, and physical capabilities (Kark, 2021:267). Human capital determines the person’s ability to engage in livelihood strategies and tactics to achieve a sustainable livelihood. In terms of access to employment and earnings, financial capital is heavily dependent on adequate human capital. Human capital, in turn, is highly dependent on adequate nutrition, health care, safe environmental conditions, and education (Serrat, 2017:26).”

Social capital – refers to networks of mutual support that exist within and between households, extended families, and communities and that people can use to gain access to services such as loans, childcare, food, and housing, as well as information about employment and opportunities (Kark, 2021:267). These are the social relationships within which an individual or household is embedded.

Physical capital – includes assets such as housing, tools, and equipment owned, rented, or used by people, as well as public infrastructure to which they have access (Serrat, 2017:25). Housing is one of the most important assets for poor urban households because it is used for both shelter and productive or income-generating purposes, such as renting out rooms or using

the space as a workshop (Kark, 2021:268). Housing ownership or secure access to housing can be vital in gaining access to other resources. Housing in informal settlements, for example, can be used as collateral for credit if registered (Natarajan *et al.*, 2022:55).

Differentiating between different types of capital assets draws attention to the variety of assets and resources that people rely on for a living. In practice, not all assets are fully owned or controlled by men and women attempting to use them in their livelihood strategies (Farrington *et al.*, 2002:12). In fact, some, such as common property resources, cannot be owned by individuals or even households, while others, such as social capital, cannot be owned but imply a negotiated relationship (Farrington *et al.*, 2002:12). As a result, it is critical to assess and distinguish between asset access and asset control. Men and women may have access to resources, either within or outside the home, and be able to use them in different ways. However, they may not always have control over these resources. Control over resources implies more than just use, as it implies power and decision-making authority over how and when the resource should be used or distributed (Natarajan *et al.*, 2022:56). Different men, women, and children have different access to and control over resources, both within households and more broadly rural and urban communities.

3.4 Livelihood Diversification

Livelihood diversification refers to “a process by which households construct, a diverse portfolio of activities and social support capabilities to improve their living standards and manage risk, (Mathebula, Molokomme, Jonas & Nhemachena, 2017: 1). Livelihood diversification is mostly practiced by poor urban households in the developing world in an attempt to take themselves out of poverty. It entails undertaking multiple livelihood strategies simultaneously. The livelihood strategies may be undertaken in different contexts or places, in different periods, and different seasons (Neves, 2017). Twine (2013) highlights the importance of livelihood diversification as a way of enhancing livelihood resilience, which in turn underpins livelihood sustainability. Livelihood diversification cushions households from uncertainty and buttresses their resilience to shocks and stresses which are characteristics of urban communities (Twine, 2013). Livelihood diversification includes asset diversification (Loison, 2015), income diversification (an increase in the number of sources of income) (Mathebula *et.al.*, 2017), and activity diversification. Conversely, poorer households, often with less material resources and lower education levels are confined to low-income, labour-intensive activities like street trading and doing informal piece jobs that leave them trapped in

structural poverty. Diversification amplifies and deepens social differentiation and the two mutually reinforce each other since by diversifying into high-return activities, the wealthier become even much wealthier (Neves, 2017). Livelihood diversification can be either survival-led or opportunity-led.

3.4.1 Types of Livelihood Diversification

Researchers (Loison, 2015; Mathebula *et. al.*, 2017) classify practices of livelihood diversification into two main types, namely, survival-led diversification and opportunity-led diversification. Survival-led diversification is mainly driven by push factors and occurs when poorer households engage in low-return activities to ensure survival, reduce vulnerability, or avoid falling deeper into poverty (Mathebula *et. al.*, 2017: 2). Push factors are negative factors associated with certain livelihood activities. Opportunity-led diversification is mainly driven by pull factors and it occurs when wealthier households engage in high-return activities with accumulation objectives, to increase household income by maximizing returns from their assets (Mathebula *et.al.*, 2017: 2). Pull factors are positive factors that attract households to engage in additional livelihood activities to enhance their income status and living standards (Loison, 2015).

3.4.2 Livelihood Diversification among Workers in the Informal Economy

Mubaiwa (2014) found diversification of livelihood strategies among informal fishermen in Cape Town. For instance, besides their informal fishing business, they also relied on remittances to support their livelihood. In another study in Cape Town, it was found that besides selling snoek, during the off-season in terms of fish stock, the fish traders also engaged in the taxi business, fruit and vegetable vending, and running shebeens (Mubaiwa, 2014). A study by Neves and Du Toit (2013) in the Eastern Cape reveals a pattern of diversification, with livelihoods often founded on social capital, remittances, state transfers, on-farm and off-farm activities, with evidence of linkages between formal and informal economic activities (Neves & Du Toit, 2013).

Some of the studies referred to above were conducted in a different political, social, economic, and cultural context to that of this current research study. The informal workers in this study react to a political, economic, social, and cultural environment that is peculiar to the context in which the study is based. This has an important bearing on how livelihood strategies are constituted. That notwithstanding, this study has derived a lot of lessons from the above-mentioned studies.

3.5 SLA and Vulnerability Context

Another crucial aspect of the SL approach is the particular attention paid to vulnerability in its considerations and definitions of poverty. Vulnerability is characterized as insecurity in the well-being of individuals, households, and communities in the face of changes in their external environment (Kark, 2021:267). Chambers (1995) identifies two sides to vulnerability: an external side of exposure to shocks, stress, and risk; and an internal side of defencelessness caused by a lack of ability and means to deal with these. Vulnerability may better be understood as the negative outcomes of processes of change, which may be economic, social, environmental, or political and may take the form of long-term trends, 'shocks', or cyclical processes such as seasonality (May, 2000). The ability of individuals to cope in the face of the threat posed by vulnerability is largely determined by the level of assets they have. The key point to underline here is that the vulnerability context, which may sometimes be compounded by structures and processes lies outside people's control, but people can capitalize on the positive aspects of the vulnerability context to improve their resilience. This may be achieved in part through strengthening the asset base.

In the context of this study, the vulnerability context in which people find themselves includes factors like precarious employment and a lack of documentation. Standing (2014) refers to people in precarious situations as the "precarariat," emphasizing the rise of such people in many societies over the last few decades. The term precariat refers to “a group of people who have insecure precarious livelihoods as a result of precarious employment.”

3.5.2 Framing the vulnerability context of Zimbabwean Migrants working in the Informal Economy in Makhanda

The Zimbabwean migrant informal workers in Makhanda, who are the participants in this study, can be framed within the vulnerability context based on six factors, namely: participation in the informal economy; low income; lack of basic needs; social exclusion; lack of sustainable livelihoods; and a lack of documentation.

The link between poverty and the informal economy is symbiotic and feeds both ways in that, on the one hand, poverty drives people into the informal economy to construct livelihoods. On the other hand, people engage in informal economic activities as a strategy to fight poverty. The traditional view of poverty has been a tendency to associate it with quantifiable economic indicators like income, but it is now being increasingly appreciated that an understanding of poverty should ideally go beyond income to include other intangible, abstract aspects of

wellbeing. According to Davids (2009), poverty and vulnerability can be conceptualized, defined, and understood through the income perspective, basic needs perspective, social exclusion perspective, sustainable livelihoods perspective, and human development perspective. This is particularly important for this research because participants had intersecting vulnerabilities. Their nationality and immigration status socially and economically excluded them which affected everything else including the ability to live sustainable livelihoods.

3.6 SLA Policies and Institutions

Livelihood strategies and outcomes are not just dependent on access to resources and assets or constrained by the vulnerability context; they are also influenced by the structures and processes in place (Natarajan *et al*, 2022:57). Structures are the public and private sector organizations that set and implement policy and legislation, provide services, and purchase, trade, and perform a variety of other functions that affect livelihoods (Kark, 2021:265). Processes include the laws, regulations, policies, operational arrangements, agreements, societal norms, and practices that govern how structures function (Kark, 2021:256). Policy-making structures cannot function effectively in the absence of appropriate institutions and processes for policy implementation (Farrington *et al.*, 2002:13). Processes are important to every aspect of livelihoods as they provide incentives that stimulate people to make better choices (Farrington *et al*, 2002:13). They grant or deny asset access or asset control. Through markets, they enable people to convert one type of asset into another (Kark, 2021:257). They have a significant impact on interpersonal relationships. One of the main issues that the poor and vulnerable face, such as migrants, and precarious workers, is that the processes that frame their livelihoods may systematically restrict them unless the government adopts pro-poor policies, which then filter down to legislation and even fewer formal processes (Natarajan *et al*, 2022:57).

3.7 Livelihood Strategies

Livelihood strategies, also known as adaptive strategies, is the overarching term used to denote the range and combination of activities and choices that people undertake to achieve their livelihood goals or livelihood outcomes (DFID, 1999). Livelihood strategies are determined to a large extent by the assets that the people possess as well as the transforming structures and processes which include the institutions, policies, and laws which govern certain activities. Ideally, people should have a wide range of livelihood strategies from which to choose, to

reduce their vulnerability. However, in the context of this study, the participants were forced, as is normally the case with poor people, into informal work as the only option due to a host of factors mentioned above. To widen poor people's choices, and pave the way towards sustainable livelihoods, the challenges that have been pointed out in the literature and those that this study will uncover what needs to be addressed.

The livelihoods approach posits people's choice of a livelihood strategy and is to a great extent determined by the assets (human, financial, physical, social, and natural) at their disposal. The poor come up with livelihood strategies such as working in the informal economy to try and escape from a situation of poverty and vulnerability. For them to be able to use their capabilities to engage in activities in the informal economy they need, human capital. Arguing from the capability approach perspective, Chambers and Conway (1999: 4) assert that the capability to engage in a livelihood strategy is "proactive" as well as "reactive." When applied to informal work it follows the logic that the poor should be proactive to use their capabilities and exploit opportunities offered by informal work as much as they may be partaking in the informal economy as a natural reaction to a situation of unemployment, poverty, and vulnerability.

3.8 Strengths and Weaknesses of the SL Approach

3.8.1 Strengths

The SL Approach produces a more holistic view of how resources, or combination of resources, are important to the poor by drawing attention to the multiplicity of assets that people use or need for a sustainable livelihood, that can deal with shocks and stresses (Natarajan *et al.*, 2022:58). The approach provides an understanding of the underlying causes of poverty by focusing on a variety of factors at various levels that directly or indirectly determine or constrain poor people's access to various types of resources/assets, and thus their livelihoods (Farrington *et al.*, 2002:16). Finally, it provides a more realistic framework for assessing the direct and indirect effects on people's living conditions than, for example, one-dimensional productivity or income criteria (Kark, 2021).

3.8.2 Weaknesses

The SL approach's shortcomings are that it downplays elements of the vulnerability context, such as macroeconomic trends and conflict (Natarajan *et al.*, 2022:56). It assumes that capital assets can be increased in a generalized and incremental manner. It does not pay enough

attention to power inequalities such as how resources and other livelihood opportunities are distributed locally, which is often influenced by informal structures of social dominance and power within the communities themselves (Serrat, 2017:266). It downplays the fact that improving one group's livelihood can harm another's (Farrington *et al.*, 2002:20). Improving the lives of migrants, for example, has an impact on the local poor, who are also struggling to secure employment and put food on the table.

3.9 Differences Between Urban and Rural Contexts in SL

To comprehend the implications of using SL approaches in urban areas, it is necessary first to comprehend the characteristics that distinguish urban areas from rural areas. This section is important for this research because it provides context to the environment the livelihoods in this study are operating. In the urban setting, livelihoods are largely drawn from labour markets within non-agricultural production. Whereas in rural areas, livelihoods are largely sourced from crop cultivation, livestock, or forestry, as a result, access to natural capital is critical (Farrington *et al.*, 2002:21). Access to land for housing in urban areas is extremely difficult; housing and land markets are highly commercialized. Access to land for housing and building materials is generally not a problem in rural areas (Krantz, 2001:4). Livelihoods in urban centers are more vulnerable to poor governance. People's livelihoods in Makhanda, for example, have been threatened by a lack of water as a result of poor governance (Pather, 2019:1). In rural settings, livelihoods are more distant from the government as regulator and provider of services.

Access to infrastructure and services in urban areas is difficult for low-income groups due to high prices, the illegal nature of many of their homes, and poor governance (Kark, 2021:66). In the context of the South African reality, informal settlements are so common within the poor communities. There is a greater reliance on cash in urban areas for access to food, water, sanitation, and employment (Serrat, 2017:256). There are fewer opportunities for earning money in rural areas and more for self-sufficiency. There is a greater reliance on the house as an economic resource in urban areas e.g., renting out rooms or using the house as collateral to access credit (Kark, 2021:67). In the context of South Africa renting out back rooms which are often informal shacks is a common trend. Natural capital is the primary asset and source of income in rural areas. However, there are some rural characteristics in urban areas, such as urban agriculture, and non-monetary traditional forms of access to land for housing (Farrington *et al.*, 2002:21).

3.9.1 Sustainable Livelihoods in the Urban Setting

According to the literature review on poverty in rural areas, while the shocks and stresses that people are vulnerable to are related to specific events and circumstances, poor men and women in urban areas frequently face a similar set of vulnerabilities (Serrat, 2017). As outlined below, these can be broadly classified as sources of vulnerability related to the social context of cities, the nature of the urban economy, the urban environment, and urban governance systems (Farrington *et al.*, 2002:22).

3.9.2 The Social Context of Cities

In most cases, urban spaces are more culturally diverse, more socially fragmented, and less likely to be safe (Kark, 2021:66). Furthermore, urban neighbourhoods have a diverse range of household types, which are often fluid in their structure, and income inequality is often at its most striking in these spaces (Farrington *et al.*, 2002:22). Social networks and traditions can be a double-edged sword, and they can also be a source of vulnerability due to the obligations they impose (Serrat, 2017:268). Migrants, for example, are more vulnerable to social exclusion due to nationality or language barriers, preventing them from participating in certain social networks.

3.9.3 The Urban Economy

Urban economies are characterized by a greater degree of commercialisation, and most basic goods such as food and accommodation must be bought or rented through the market (Farrington *et al.*, 2002:22). Poor urban men and women, in contrast to their rural counterparts, who may rely more heavily on subsistence agriculture or payment in kind and are more likely to have access to free or common property resources, require higher cash incomes to survive (Kark, 2021:67). As a result, the urban poor must survive by engaging in a variety of income-generating activities (Serrat, 2017:267). In most urban spaces, a large portion of these income-generating activities take place in the informal sector; for example, it is estimated that the informal sector accounts for 10.2% of total employment in the Eastern Cape (Pather, 2019:2). In general, informal sector activities provide poor men and women with low cash incomes and insecure living conditions (Kark, 2021:68). Informal workers frequently lack labour rights. As a result, they are vulnerable to layoffs and the risks associated with unprotected working conditions, such as long hours, low pay, and unsanitary or unsafe working conditions (Farrington *et al.*, 2002:23).

Another source of vulnerability for the urban poor is the interdependence of cities and the global economy (Kark, 2021:68). Urban economies are part of a larger economic system that is influenced by national and international macroeconomic policy (Natarajan *et al*, 2022:63). Such policies and global forces frequently have contradictory effects on poor households, particularly employment conditions (Serrat, 2017:268). Since the 1980s, liberalization and structural adjustment policies have had an impact on employment in developing nations. The loss of formal jobs, as well as downsizing in the public sector, has resulted in a large number of men and women seeking work in other areas, such as part-time services sector employment or the informal sector. This has increased the vulnerability of many poor men and women by replacing secure employment with irregular or informal sources of income (Kark, 2021).

3.9.4 Environment and Health

The urban poor are typically concentrated in high-density areas where they can afford to live - either in areas with low rent or on urban land that is vacant and can be squatted on, both of which generally reflect the poverty of the environments and the resulting low demand for such locations (Farrington *et al.*, 2002:23). These areas are frequently located on polluted land near industrial facilities, waste dumps, and contaminated water courses, or on hillsides and river plains prone to landslides and flooding (Kark, 2021:69). Unfortunately, this is the reality in South Africa; because of apartheid spatial planning that separated people based on race. The black majority found themselves in polluted land or on flood-prone hillsides (Gwedla & Shackleton, 2021:21). Despite significant changes in land and labour laws, as well as economic policies, between the apartheid era and the present, significant inequalities between communities remain a defining feature of the post-apartheid landscape (Gwedla & Shackleton, 2021:21).

As a result, the urban poor are frequently exposed to serious environmental and health risks (Kark, 2021:69). Disease and injuries caused by toxic and hazardous wastes, a lack of clean water and sanitation, and noise pollution affect the urban poor (Serrat, 2017:270). Water and sanitation are major issues in Makhanda, particularly in densely populated areas, where people can go for weeks or even days without access to water (Pather, 2019:2). These environmental hazards are not only a source of vulnerability in and of themselves; for example, the high cost of illness treatment is a major source of indebtedness for the urban poor (Farrington *et al*, 2002:24).

3.9.5 Governance

The relationship of the urban poor to city governance systems is typically determined by their legal status (Serrat, 2017:268). As previously stated, the high cost of housing in urban spaces frequently forces people to illegally occupy marginal land, and many poor men and women work in informal or unregistered jobs (Natarajan *et al.*, 2022:60). As a result, they lack the tenure rights that are normally associated with the right to register and vote. Migrant workers, in general, lack formal registration or rights, even if they live in cities for extended periods (Kark, 2021:70). Lack of legal status may also limit informal residents' access to basic social services such as health and education or financial services e.g., bank loans (Serrat, 2017:270). Furthermore, because of the prevalence of illegal infrastructure connections, these services may be abruptly withdrawn, and households with illegal connections may be fined or face legal consequences (Kark, 2021:71).

3.10 Conclusion

The sustainable livelihoods approach provides the overarching framework through which livelihoods, especially in a rural context can be understood. Exploring the link between sustainable livelihoods and the informal economy involves an honest assessment of the extent to which the informal economy as a livelihood strategy satisfies economic sustainability, environmental sustainability, and social sustainability. The concept of sustainability lies at the core of the theoretical framework in this study, which is the sustainable livelihoods approach. Through sustainability, one can be able to see the extent to which the informal economy provides adequate income for the unemployed in their efforts to fight poverty. The sustainable livelihoods approach (SLA) from which this study draws is built on the premise that people in constructing livelihoods do not depend on one livelihood strategy but on a portfolio of diversified strategies. This study, in its quest to understand the sustainable livelihood strategies of Zimbabwean migrants working in the informal economy in Makhanda, in the Eastern Cape, thus, invariably takes into account the other livelihood strategies that undocumented migrants working in the informal economy depend on apart from informal economic participation. This can be evaluated, by and large, through an assessment of the extent to which the five capital assets (financial, human, physical, social, and natural) are enhanced in the lives of the migrants in this study.

CHAPTER 4

Data Analysis Chapter

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapters reviewed the available literature on this topic, outlined the theoretical framework underpinning this study, as well as the research methods and process through which the researcher seeks to achieve the goals of this study. This chapter aims to provide an analysis of the data collected for this research. As mentioned in the methodology chapter, thematic analysis will be used to identify and interpret data patterns. The purpose of this analysis is to investigate the livelihoods of Zimbabwean migrants working in the informal economy in Makhanda and how it links to their precarity. Several themes, discussed below, emerged from the interviews.

4.1.1 Main Themes

- I. Migrating from Zimbabwe to Makhanda;
- II. The livelihood strategies and tactics adopted in the Informal Economy;
- III. The impact of gender on livelihood strategies and tactics; and
- IV. How the immigrants make sense of their precarity.

The sections that follow will analyse the data. As will be shown their occupation impacts their livelihoods. In addition to that household members also impacted their livelihood strategies and tactics. Lastly, their nationality and lack of permits significantly impacted their livelihoods.

4.2 Migrating from Zimbabwe to Makhanda

When analysing participants' responses regarding their reasons for migrating to South Africa, it was evident that there were push factors and pull factors on both sides of the border. Pull factors are what drew them into South Africa and push factors are what drove them out of their home country Zimbabwe. I will start by discussing the push factors followed by the pull factors. While the push factors were predominantly similar across the time periods, there were notable differences, depending on the period, which require some elucidation to contextualise and position this study. The periods of migration in question were a) 2007-2009, b) 2010-2016, and c) 2017 to 2022. What was similar was persistent economic hardships within the country being the main push factors.

4.2.1 Push Factors from Zimbabwe

a) 2007-2009

According to the participants who had migrated during this period, 2007-09 were some of the worst years in the country, especially for those who resided in urban spaces. There were food shortages, fuel shortages, lack of job opportunities, and hyperinflation (Mutuzu, 2009). The economic crisis in Zimbabwe between 2007-2009 is well documented in literature (Munangagwa, 2009) & (Besada & Moyo, 2008). Drawing from the SL Approach Urban economies are characterized by a greater degree of commercialization, and most basic goods such as food and accommodation must be bought or rented through the market (Farrington *et al*, 2002:22). From the interviews it was evident that during 2007-09 participants had no access to money which was the main resource required to sustain their livelihoods. Urban economies are part of a larger economic system that is influenced by national and international macroeconomic policy (Natarajan *et al*, 2022:63). In this period several instances of policy mismanagement by the Zimbabwean government resulted in hyperinflation. The implication of this for the participants was starvation, unemployment, and the inability to sustain their livelihoods for themselves and their families.

MADAM BOSS — The inflation in 2008 was so bad, you would catch a taxi to work and by the time you come back the price of the taxi would have gone up. The stores were empty and importing was difficult because the Zimbabwean dollar had no value. The situation became impossible to provide for the family and sustain our livelihoods, this was when my husband, the kids and I decided to migrate to South Africa.

Urban economies are part of a larger economic system that is influenced by national and international macroeconomic policy (Natarajan *et al*, 2022:63). In this period several instances of policy mismanagement by the Zimbabwean government resulted in hyperinflation. The implication of this for the participants was starvation, unemployment, and the inability to sustain their livelihoods for themselves and their families. In 2007, there were shortages and queues of basic commodities such as milk, sugar, bread, and meat; empty shelves became the order of the day (Mutuzu, 2009). The year 2008 marked the height of the economic crisis for the people of Zimbabwe, as they were unable to access their money, which was rapidly losing value and becoming useless (Munangagwa, 2009:121). The absence of banknotes brought about immense suffering and standing in lines and facing shortages turned into a way of life.

In 2008 Zimbabwe had the highest inflation rate ever recorded since recording began. With an official rate of 231 million percent as of October 2008 (Besada & Moyo, 2008:8).

TONDERAI — *What pushed me out of Zimbabwe was the starvation. There was no food, no jobs, and the money was useless. It was just impossible to survive so I packed my bags and left in 2007.*

b) 2010-2016

The predominant sentiment amongst the participants who had migrated during this period was that the prevalence of corruption in the country made it inhabitable. They stated that corruption was everywhere in the public service industry, in schools, and in the labour market. What became evident in the interviews was that the average person could not secure a spot for nursing school or police training unless they knew someone or paid bribes.

LEONARD — *I left Zim because “zvinhu zvakadhakwa” statement often used in Zimbabwe to say things are tough. I tried to join the police force but there was so much corruption until I got to a point where I was like fuck it's not gonna work.*

The labour market was worse stated the participants, the employment opportunities were scarce and if they did surface the average person did not stand a chance unless they had connections. Drawing from the SL approach poor urban men and women need higher cash incomes to survive, unlike those in rural areas who may rely more heavily on subsistence agriculture or payment in kind and who are more likely to have access to free or common property resources (Farrington *et al*, 2002:23). The implication for the participant was that they could not secure employment, making it hard to sustain their livelihoods because there was no flow of cash.

In the labour market in Zimbabwe between 2010-2016 there was corruption which took form in the politicization of the civil service. According to a report published by the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) in 2014, the civil service was infiltrated by the ruling party. They used their positions to victimize opposition supporters and to deny them employment opportunities. The report also alleged that the government was using the civil service to reward its supporters and punish its critics, resulting in a culture of political patronage and corruption. This level of corruption contributed to a significant number of educated and skilled Zimbabweans migrating to South Africa in search of better job opportunities.

c) 2017 - 2022

What emerged among this group of participants was that the political environment had pushed them out of the country. According to the participants, there have not been free and fair elections in Zimbabwe since 2002. Voting power is important for the poor, as it is their route out of poverty (DFID, 2010:3).

DUDZAI — As Zimbabweans, we were hopeful after former President Robert Mugabe was removed through the military coup however things worsened since the coming of the new President Mnangagwa.

This group of participants made comparisons between Mugabe's tenure as president and Mnangagwa's term as president. The participants stated that since Mnangagwa came into power things have worsened. Mugabe was better, they said. Chief amongst their concerns was the fact that, after Mnangagwa came into power, there was no price control, the bond inflated, and unemployment and poverty increased. Participants stated that during Mugabe's time, they always knew that the Zanu Pf would win the elections, but they thought after Mnangagwa the voting system would change.

TAFARA — Zim mal(statement used in Zimbabwe to express hardships) that's why I left; I came in 2018 after realizing the ZANU PF was not going to step down from power.

Drawing from SLA, governance makes a huge difference for all of society but for the poor and vulnerable it makes all the difference. For the poor and most vulnerable, the difference that good, or particularly bad, governance, makes to their lives is profound: the inability of government institutions to prevent conflict, provide basic security, or basic services can have life-or-death consequences; lack of opportunity can prevent generations of poor families from lifting themselves out of poverty; and the inability to grow economically and collect taxes can keep countries trapped in a cycle of aid-dependency (DFID, 2010). The implications of poor governance, repeated unfair elections and an unchanging economy have left many Zimbabweans without hope, pushing them out to migrate.

REBECCA — What pushed me to SA was the situation in Zim, the voting system does not work, and now the mixed currency situation which is now out of control. You will be earning in bond notes yet on the market things are sold and priced in US dollars. In the end, you realize you are working for nothing, the system is just messed up.

The implications of premature migration or migration out of desperation are precarious conditions in various forms. The participants had been pushed to migrate out of desperation to improve their livelihoods. The implication of this for the participants was that they migrated without all the necessary documents required to sustain their livelihoods. As a result, participants experienced various challenges which will be revealed in the analysis and how these challenges have impacted their livelihood strategies and tactics.

4.2.2 Pull Factors

According to the International Organization for Migration (2016), migrants are pulled in for various reasons, such as economic growth in the desired country, and employment opportunities. In analysing the participant's responses as to what had pulled them into South Africa, I became clear that, unlike the push factors that were influenced varied depending on the period of migration, the pull factors were not influenced by time periods. Participants stated that what had pulled them in was the fact that most Zimbabweans migrated to South Africa to improve their livelihoods. It became clear that the already existing pattern of migration from Zimbabwe to South Africa was one of the pull factors. One of the participants stated, *“You know something is working when everyone is doing it.”* It became evident that for migrants, having other migrants go before them was important and it was the biggest pull factor, it gave them the confidence to proceed with the migration process.

In the interviews, participants stated that what pulled them to South Africa was the fact that it was performing better economically compared to the other neighbouring countries.

MAFUTA - Compared to Zim, South Africa has a stable currency, affordable things, and job opportunities.

REBECCA – I migrated to South Africa because things seemed to be making sense in this country, at least they have a stable currency and job opportunities are easily accessible.

Similar to the claim by the International Organization for Migration (2016) cited above, it became evident that for the participants their pull factors were motivated by the desire to improve their livelihoods. Both participants quoted above made mention of the stable currency and job opportunities as factors that pulled them to South Africa. Literature on migration is littered with narratives of migrants searching for better opportunities to improve their lives. Therefore, this was theme I had anticipated would come up. Additionally, participants also added that what pulled them in was the fact that it was cheaper to migrate to South Africa and

it was easier. Therefore, the distance between the sending country and the receiving country is another consideration in terms of the factors that play a role in the decision to migrate.

Tafara - *You just need one bus, and bam you are in South Africa.*

This illustrates that convenience is an important pull factor, especially for the poor. Speaking of convenience, in 2009 South Africa opened its borders to Zimbabweans and declared that the only requirement for entry is a valid passport (Refugee Right News, 2009). Before this, Zimbabweans had to apply for a visa to enter South Africa legally and were often asked to provide large sums of money. The cost associated with acquiring a visa placed serious constraints on Zimbabweans trying to cross the border and improve their livelihoods (VOA News, 2009). The shift made South Africa accessible to any Zimbabwean with a valid passport and even though participants were more focused on economic gains as pull factors the convenience of coming to South Africa was also an underlying pull factor.

Additionally, it also became clear from the interviews that having a relative, friend and colleague was another pull factor. This becomes an added layer of convenience for the migrants. Essentially, convenience in the process of migration is the biggest pull factor whether it is in terms of cost, distance, etc.

Dudzai — *What pulled me in was my young sister, she told me there was an opportunity to make money in Makhanda, so I came.*

This illustrates that in addition to economic pull factors a sense of security was also important for participants, especially the female ones. One participant said, *South Africa is unpredictable, one minute they welcome you and the next minute they are attacking you so having a family member or social connection who is already on this side makes the move easier.*

4.2.3 Journey to Makhanda

A lot of the literature on migration largely focuses on the sending country and the receiving country often in the form of push and pull factors as covered in the previous sections. The journey of the migrants is scarcely tracked. In this section, I tentatively contribute to the body of literature that tracks the journeys of migrants. Scholars such as Marnell (2021) have started the work of capturing the journeys of LGBTI migrants from various parts of the continent to South Africa. This section departs from the acknowledgment that not all migrants' journeys are the same and therefore, it would enrich the social sciences to note the variations in the experiences of migration. The participants' journey to Makhanda differed on whether a) they

came straight to Makhanda and b) they had first settled in other towns and cities before coming to Makhanda. The minority of the participants had first settled in other towns and cities before settling in Makhanda. It was evident in their responses that settling in other towns and cities had made their journey a painful one. Two factors determined the course of their journey to Makhanda, firstly if they had known friends, family, and colleagues in Makhanda upon their departure and secondly, if they did not have any existing connections in Makhanda.

a) Journey to Makhanda via other towns and cities

This group of participants had no known knowledge of Makhanda until after arrival in South Africa. They had migrated from Zimbabwe to well-known cities because it would increase their chances of finding employment and because at the time of migration, there were no known connections in Makhanda. On their journey, they experienced different challenging situations that had placed them in precarious positions. Drawing from SLA, sources of vulnerability are contextually specific to cities or neighbourhoods and are differently experienced by the various groups of people living in any city or neighbourhood (Farrington *et al*, 2002:25). Tonderai one of the male participants had abruptly left Zimbabwe and upon arrival in Port Elizabeth, he indicated that he stayed in squatter camps during his entire stay before he found a job in Makhanda and moved to the townships.

TONDERAI — After arriving in PE, it was difficult to secure a job, there was a lot of competition and after two months one of the guys in my squatter camp told me about Makhanda and that is how I ended up here.

TK, another participant who had first settled in Cape Town before Makhanda stated:

TK — My journey leading to Makhanda has been a painful one. From Zimbabwe, I bought a one-way ticket to Cape Town. Upon arrival in Cape Town, I looked for cheap accommodation in the townships whilst trying to secure employment, but it was not easy finding employment, so I ended up going to look for employment in the farms. The farm work was extremely painful and unbearable, but I had to stick it out because I needed the money. After a couple of months working on the farm, I was ready to return to Zimbabwe that's when a friend of mine reached out and told me about Makhanda.

The findings here indicate that migrants who migrate without skill and a plan are more prone to vulnerable situations. In addition to that the lack of a work permit limited their options in terms of where they could seek out employment. Furthermore, they had landed in big cities,

which are highly competitive, especially in the informal economy, both locals and foreigners are trying to secure employment in the informal economy.

b) *Journey straight to Makhanda*

REBECCA — *The journey to Makhanda was straightforward, a colleague of mine back in Zim got me a job with her aunty who was this side so I just got on the bus and came straight here, someone was waiting to welcome me and upon arrival, I arrived at their place. The problems I faced were after arriving in Makhanda.*

The participants who had journeyed straight to Makhanda stated that the journey had been straightforward. One participant stated, Other participants stated that the only problem they faced in their journey was at the border.

MAFUTA — *There is a lot of corruption and bribery that takes place by the border, it does not matter that you have a valid passport, there is an amount that has to be paid.*

The participant's response illustrates the power the media can have over the way people are treated. Over the years there has been a lot of negative talk about Zimbabweans from the politicians and because of persisting economic hardships in the country, there has been an attitude from the locals to treat them anyhow (Chinyakata, Raselekone & Gwatimba, 2019). As a result, immigration officers at the border are now using their vulnerability to exploit them making the journey of those without permits financially uncomfortable (Moyo, 2020:61).

I was curious to know how participants had heard about Makhanda because it is such a small town with very little to offer so it would not be a source of attraction for most migrants looking to improve their livelihoods. In their responses, it came up that social connections and job opportunities from third parties were how they had heard about Makhanda. In their journey to Makhanda both groups of participants, stated that social connections at the arrival destination are pivotal to the livelihood of a migrant.

T.K — *The journey was difficult because I had nobody I knew in Cape Town and if it was not for my friend who invited me to Makhanda I would have returned to Zim because life was tough alone.*” Another participant said, *“Having a connection in the town you are going to makes the journey better, it's like having a guardian angel who has gone before you but when you have no social connections you have to figure out things on your own which can be distressful.*

The above illustrates that social connections are key to the successful journey of many migrants. The literature on social capital/networks serving “as the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network” rings true in this case (Bourdieu, 1992).

Two of the participants Leonard and Mafuta had come to Makhanda through their jobs. In interviewing them, I picked up that their lack of work permits even though they were skilled had placed them in vulnerable positions which made their journeys challenging.

LEONARD — My journey to SA has been one hell of an experience. Johannesburg was my first destination, I was working for a steel company and staying with my brother. The company moved to Makhanda and when we started working this side, he stopped paying us. So, I quit the job. From there I had 400 rand and I was staying in a shack on a sponge. Luckily, there was a guy I knew whom I used to work with in Joburg. This guy was working close by in PE so I gave him a call and he said he was doing tree felling and he could get me a job, only to get there, and it was an orange farm but at least I got some money to get by, thanks to this guy I knew.

MAFUTA — My first destination was Johannesburg before coming to Makhanda. I ended up in Makhanda because the restaurant I was working for opened a branch down this side, so I was one of the employees who had to move. When we arrived to set up the restaurant the bosses told us they would be changing the salary which I did not agree with, luckily I found fellow Zimbabweans in this town who then helped me to look for another job.

REBECCA — Makhanda was my first destination in South Africa. I came in 2016 after a workmate back home in Zimbabwe got me a job opportunity to do nails in her aunt's saloon. Upon arrival I stayed with my workmate's aunt, then I moved into my place after two months.

MADUMBE — I came to Makhanda in 2019. My sister's daughter linked me up with a hairdressing job, upon arrival I stayed with my sister's daughter and I still stay with her.

The above responses suggest that having fellow Zimbabweans in the radius had made an impact on their journey. Upon further investigation, I discovered that Mafuta had to stay with a fellow Zimbabwean and it was months before she got the new job. Drawing on the work of Bourdieu (1992) social connections are key for safety, support, and job security in the journey of the migrant, and for migrants without permits, the journey is made smoother because social connections within similar circumstances can easily point them in the same direction. Upon

arrival in Makhanda, many of the participants had stayed with a relative, friend, or acquaintance before staying by themselves.

4.2.4 First Gig in South Africa

All ten participants upon arrival only had valid passports except for one participant who later got a permit. This of course set the course on the types of jobs they could apply for. All participants indicated that their first gig (job) was either informal or in the informal economy. The participants used the term informal job to describe part-time jobs, gigs that had no contracts and no work benefits but were in a formal setup. According to the participants working informal jobs and in the informal economy as their first gig was a strategy and tactic to sustain their livelihoods. They stated that upon arrival they did not have the luxury to wait and apply for formal jobs or choose; all that mattered was getting an income. Leonard and TK are an example of the types of jobs the participants worked in upon arrival.

LEONARD — *My first gig was an informal job on a steel plant in Johannesburg. I was working as a loader and sometimes I would work at the cooler melting iron ore into a molten state.*

TK — *My first gig was picking oranges on a farm in Cape Town.*

While the informality and insecurity of the informal economy are not attractive to many, it became clear during the interviews that the absence of bureaucratic processes is appealing to migrants who are often seeking for opportunities. Both of the narratives above also reveal the exploitation of migrants because of their precariousness – as both jobs exist within the formal economy but have clearly been informalized to exploit the condition of the migrants. TK's response to his first gig is an indication of the level of desperation the participants had upon arrival.

None of the participants had worked in the formal economy and then changed to the informal economy. Literature shows that undocumented Zimbabwean migrants often work in the informal economy as their first gig in South Africa due to a lack of legal status and documentation and because it's usually easier to secure employment in the informal economy (Moyo, 2020). According to a report published by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2017, many undocumented migrants in South Africa face barriers to accessing formal employment due to their legal status. The report states that migrants without papers are often confined to the informal sector, where wages are low, working conditions are poor, and basic rights are denied.

Another reason why the Zimbabwean participants in this study worked in the informal economy was due to a lack of education and training. According to a report by the African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS) at the University of the Witwatersrand, many Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa have limited education and skills, which makes it difficult for them to access formal employment. The report states that "low levels of education and a lack of formal qualifications limit Zimbabweans' access to skilled and semi-skilled jobs in the formal sector."

In his study on undocumented Zimbabwean migrants in northern South Africa, Rutherford (2011) found that discrimination and a lack of social protection were also factors that contributed to undocumented Zimbabwean migrants working in the informal economy. In a study published in the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* in 2019, researchers found that undocumented migrants in South Africa are often subjected to discrimination and abuse by employers and authorities. The study states that "undocumented migrants are often excluded from legal protections and face discrimination in the workplace, making it difficult for them to access formal employment." These factors make it difficult for them to access formal employment.

4.3 Livelihood Strategies and Tactics Adopted

According to the sustainable livelihood framework the livelihood strategies and tactics that are employed by the poor are highly dependent on the capital assets available to them. In this section I will begin by discussing the types of capital assets that were available to the participants and how those shaped the course of the livelihood strategies and tactics they could engage in.

4.3.1 Type of Livelihood Capital Employed

The SL approach focuses on ways to understand the practical realities of poor men and women, such as what they do to make a living, the assets they can draw on, and the challenges they face in doing so in their everyday lives. In this regard, a livelihood is considered sustainable when it can withstand and recover from stresses and shocks, as well as maintain or improve its capabilities, assets, and activities now and in the future, without jeopardizing the natural resource base (Scoones, 1998; Serrat, 2017:21). The SL framework organizes the factors that limit or enhance livelihood opportunities and demonstrates how they interact with one another

(Natarajan et al, 2022:51). SLA emphasizes the assets of poor men and women, rather than, as with previous development approaches, focusing on their needs or 'deficiencies'. The assets that the poor can draw from have a direct impact on the livelihood strategies and tactics they can adopt.

a) Financial Capital

Financial capital is the capital base of cash, credit/debt, savings, and other economic assets that individuals or households have access to (Natarajan *et al*, 2022:54). In urban spaces, individuals or households tend to rely on income as their key asset. Income for participants in this study came from the sale of labour, and it is one that they prioritized (Farrington *et al*, 2002:9). Participants stated that they prioritized income from the sale of labour as their capital base because it was their greatest asset and as migrants, it was hard to access loans and credit. I discovered that it was only after some time that migrants would access other forms of capital such as credit and loans and accumulate savings. This was however determined by the type of labour and the responsibilities one had for those who were breadwinners and had children, it was difficult to save up and have other forms of capital.

Participants stated that having multiple jobs or side hustles was the only way to increase their capital base, be it economic assets, savings, or access to loans. The participants working on the food delivery digital platforms and the participants who were hairdressers and nail technicians said that the COVID-19 pandemic had presented an opportunity for them to build their capital base. For the hairdressers and nail technicians they stated that COVID-19 had introduced the aspect of house calls to their business. They stated that they charged extra for house calls and after the pandemic, they continued with both house calls and walk-in clients after the pandemic.

Rebecca — The pandemic was a blessing in disguise for me as a hairdresser, I had to start doing house calls, and after the pandemic, I had clients who wanted to continue with house calls, so I charge them extra for the convenience, this has been an addition to my income, and I managed to put money towards buying a taxi that transports students.

While the pandemic presented a plethora of negatives for both lives and livelihoods, it was interesting to learn from this group of participants that it also came with opportunities for them. In this regard, more research needs to be conducted about the opportunities that the pandemic presented. Rebecca, for example, and other participants in the beauty industry identified

various opportunities that the pandemic presented to build their capital base. For most of them, it was house calls which is something they had not done prior to the pandemic.

The four participants working on digital platforms for food delivery services such as Mr. D, Uber Eats, and Checkers sixty60 mentioned that the companies rented out bikes to them when the pandemic started, but now they do not rent out. They stated that over time you could own the bike if you make small monetary payments each month. The other two now owned the bikes whilst the others indicated that they were still renting the bikes.

Leonard — *I decided to make those small instalments so now I own the bike and at times I rent it, so I now get income from the bike and from the work I do.*

The findings here demonstrate that migrants working in the informal economy are highly dependent on the sale of labour as their financial capital base. The findings also illustrate that opportunities to grow their capital base rarely come, Leonard and Rebecca had been lucky because of the pandemic. Drawing from SLA, a lack of legal status limits the migrant's access to financial services for example bank loans (Farrington *et al*, 2002:20). Formal banking institutions close their doors to illiterate people with no assets or security of employment. Migrants, such as the ones interviewed for this study, are then left with the income of labour to depend on and limited opportunities to grow their financial base.

b) Human Capital

Human capital refers to the sum total of the skills, knowledge, and ability to work of individuals and households to work and earn a living. It follows from this that financial capital, in terms of access to employment and earnings, is strongly dependent on adequate human capital (Farrington *et al*, 2002:20). Many of the participants in this study had specialized skills. One of the hairdressers had a degree in Financial Management, another had a diploma in beauty therapy; while the other two had hair braiding certificates. One of the food delivery guys was a professional tree feller and steel worker. Another lady from the participants was a chef by profession but was working as a cashier. Three out of the ten participants were using their skills, whilst the majority depended on their ability to work.

LEONARD — *My highest level of education is high school, but I am a professional tree fella. Currently, I work as a food delivery guy for Mr D.*

The evidence suggests that for migrants without permits, their ability to work, the capacity to labour, is much more important than skill. The participants in this study depended more on their ability to work for both human capital and financial capital.

c) Social Capital

Social capital refers to networks of mutual support that exist within and between households, extended family, and communities, which people can mobilize to access, for example, loans, childcare, food, accommodation, and information about employment and opportunities (Farrington et al, 2002:9). Social networks were how some participants in this study had accessed employment information. Some of the participants had accessed this information whilst in Zimbabwe, which was their reason to migrate.

REBECCA — I ended up in Makhanda through a work colleague back in Zimbabwe who told me her aunt was looking for someone to do nails in her saloon, that's when I left Zim and made my way to Makhanda.

The evidence illustrates that social networks extend beyond borders; they are not confined to the immediate environment.

In Makhanda participants stated that they had established social connections with other local community members, with other foreigners, and other Zimbabwean migrants. The hairdressers working in saloons stated that they had established relationships with other foreign women hairdressers. According to the hairdressers, these links became important when for example they have many clients on their hands, and they need a helping hand.

MAFUTA — Sometimes it gets so busy that you are not able to attend to all your clients, so I will ask for help in our WhatsApp group for hairdressers and the one who's not busy will come and assist me. I also do the same if others are busy and help is needed.

Participants also stated that as Zimbabwean migrants in Makhanda, they had a WhatsApp group to post and advertise jobs, to contribute towards a funeral if someone passed. Social capital is important in the survival of migrants and one they depend on (Moyo, 2020).

4.4 Strategies and Tactics: Employed by Zimbabwean Migrants

4.4.1 Migration as a strategy and tactic

MADUMBE — *I left Zim to try and find a better living this side.*

All participants in this study had migrated as a strategy to improve their livelihoods. The account quoted above was one of the many similar responses that participants gave. They also added that migration was a way to alleviate poverty for them and their families back home. Because of the situation in Zimbabwe, participants stated that migration to South Africa continues to be a livelihood strategy for most Zimbabweans. Essentially, it became clear that migration for most of the participants was undertaken as a means to an end of better livelihood. As previously mentioned in this chapter, this is nothing new in migration literature. The most common reason people leave their countries is because of the search for a better livelihood.

Dudzai — *I have plenty of friends and relatives back home, looking for an opportunity to come to South Africa and work. I recently brought my sister a year ago to come and help me in the saloon.*

The above response illustrates that migration is a livelihood strategy for both Zimbabweans in Makhanda and back in their home country. Dudzai's response suggests that the Zimbabweans back home are always on the lookout for a job opportunity to migrate to South Africa as a strategy to improve their livelihoods. Her response also illustrates that there is a new pattern that has emerged among Zimbabweans back in Zimbabwe and those in South Africa. Once one person from the family finds an opportunity to migrate to South Africa immediately, they start bringing the others over. This is not new however among the migrant community, especially for the migrants escaping hardships, war, and so forth.

4.4.2 The Informal Economy as a strategy and tactic

It became evident during the interviews with the participants that working in the informal economy was a strategy and tactic. The participants stated that working in the informal economy would not have them asked about documentation constantly and it was also the quickest way to secure employment because it had low barriers to entry. In recent years there has been an increase in unemployment in South Africa, and both locals and foreigners have had to seek self-employment in the informal economy to sustain themselves. The Zimbabwean migrants in this study had persistent economic hardships back home and being breadwinners worked as a push factor for them to seek employment in the informal economy and continue

persevering despite the harsh conditions associated with it. In addition to that, for Zimbabwean migrants, there is a huge challenge of acquiring legal documentation, and over the years there has been growing apathy and resentment towards Zimbabweans from the local black people which has manifested in the form of xenophobic attacks (Mathekga, 2022). Madam boss, despite having a South African ID she found herself working in the informal economy because of her nationality and race.

MADAM BOSS — During my first days in SA, I was afraid of interacting with other people because of the Xenophobic attacks so I kept to myself and avoided doing anything. Eventually, I got tired and I started invigilating part-time at a local private- school. After some time, the school promised me a position as a matron, and I applied but for years they kept me in circles. Sometimes after the interview, they would say I got the job but would immediately withdraw and offer the position to a white woman. They also kept saying it was because I did not have a South African ID. I proceeded and applied for an ID and got one but when I presented it to them, they started telling me about employment equity, it was an unending cycle. Until I realized I was wasting my time and these people were not going to offer me the job which then led me to seek employment in the informal economy.

It is important to note that while there are disadvantages to working in the informal economy, there were also advantages for the participants in this study working in the informal economy. Access to income: working in the informal economy provided undocumented and low-skilled Zimbabwean migrants in Makhandu with access to income and quick cash which they would not have had access to through formal employment. This was especially true for migrants in this study who lacked formal qualifications and work permits. In addition to that the informal economy provided more flexibility than formal employment. Some participants, especially the hairdressers, nail technicians and the food delivery guys were able to set their working hours, which worked out to be advantageous for them and their families. Rebecca enjoyed the benefits of working in the informal economy because she got to set her own working hours and she always had access to cash, which came in handy for her because she was expected to send remittances back home.

REBECCA — Being self-employed is an advantage because I decide when I take a day off and how I manage the cash flow. In the event that money is needed back home, I do not have to wait for pay day because every day is payday.

The participants in this study also enjoyed the ease of entry into the informal economy; entering the informal economy can be easier than securing formal employment (Estifanos, 2023). Migrants in this study were able to find work in the informal economy without facing the same barriers they would in the formal economy. Chipo who was without a permit and qualifications was able to find employment as a laundry operator.

CHIPO — I work as a laundry operator; it's not much but at least I can put food on the table and all I have to use are my hands.

Additionally, the participants in this study enjoyed the entrepreneurial opportunities that came with working in the informal economy; the informal economy provides opportunities for migrants to start their own businesses or work as independent contractors (Estifanos, 2023:15). This allows them to earn more money and have greater control over their work. This was the case for the food delivery guys working for Uber Eats and Mr D, they worked as independent contractors and they had control over their working hours and the money they made. Lastly, the informal economy often relies on strong social networks and relationships (Moyo, 2020). Participants in this study with time all became part of tight-knit groups that provide support and protection.

4.4.3 Smaller towns as a strategy & tactic

In this study, some participants had migrated straight from Zimbabwe to Makhanda, whilst others had migrated from Zimbabwe to metropolitan cities in SA and then to Makhanda which is a smaller town. In both instances, they decided to stay in Makhanda. This was an interesting fact to discover in the study because a combination of geographical location, and employment opportunities affects the livelihoods of the poor more so undocumented foreigners. The livelihood strategies and tactics undocumented foreigners can engage in are especially impacted by the geographical location, the environment, and employment opportunities. Makhanda is a small town, located in a province without much activity. In addition to that, it is much further from the Zimbabwean border. Therefore, in terms of geographical location the Zimbabwean migrants in Makhanda were further from their home and were settled in a town that does not have many employment opportunities to draw from. It was interesting to discover that the participants did not mind these factors. These are the factors that normally affect the local people who usually end up migrating to larger and busier provinces like Gauteng. All participants were just glad to be working and getting an income despite the limited employment

opportunities and the working conditions. They prioritized their safety and well-being over money. This interestingly brought out the extent of their precarity.

CHIPO — *Staying in Makhanda has been worth it because I get to feed my family. At the moment I'm not looking for other opportunities because the one I have is feeding my family.*

REBECCA — *Staying in Makhanda has been worth it but recently things have changed in the economy and the town is small, so opportunities remain limited, but the town is safe, especially in terms of xenophobic attacks. I also like the fact that in Makhanda there are no police parading like in Joburg asking people to show their passports and all. It's more peaceful here.*

Tension between South Africans and foreigners, especially Zimbabweans, has increased in the past few years. This has increased Xenophobic attacks on Zimbabwean migrants, documented and undocumented. As a result, most Zimbabweans are now opting to stay in smaller towns as a livelihood strategy. All participants interviewed, indicated that they felt safe in Makhanda, although safety was not the initial reason they came.

4.4.4 Staying in the Townships as a Strategy

Drawing from the SL approach the urban poor are typically concentrated in high-density areas where they can afford to live either in areas with low rent or on urban land that is vacant and can be squatted on (Farrington *et al*, 2002:23). Majority of the participants in this study opted to stay in the townships as a strategy to save on costs, even though it was potentially dangerous for them. Townships in South Africa are historically disadvantaged areas because of apartheid and are where the majority of poor South Africans reside. Townships are usually distinguished from suburbs even though both are in the vicinity of town. Suburbs, particularly in small towns such as Makhanda, are usually within walking distance to the central business district while townships are a taxi commute away. As a result, townships have the highest levels of poverty, crime, and poor sanitation. In most cases, xenophobic attacks usually happen in townships, but the participants were willing to stay there regardless. The following account gives a glimpse to their reasons for staying in the townships despite the lack of safety. It became evident that the decision to stay in the township was a strategy to ensure money saving and a better livelihood overall.

Leonard — *With my income, it only makes sense that I stay in the townships, it's one area I can use to save my money.*

This illustrates that more than anything saving money was at the forefront of their minds more than their safety. According to Crush & Msibi,(2004:27), undocumented cross-border migrants, are more likely to live in the inner city and suburbs than in township areas because they face less prejudice and xenophobic attacks in the suburbs. Contrary to this, migrants in Makhanda opted to stay in townships, without regard of other issues that might follow.

4.4.5 Joining Social Groups as a strategy and tactic

A common theme that kept coming up was having a connection to a group of people. The participants indicated that they were part of various social groups as a livelihood strategy and tactic for employment opportunities and assistance when needed. The participants acknowledged that being migrants working in the informal economy, came with its challenges. For them joining professional and social groups was a tactic to combat some of those challenges.

T.K — You know when you work informal jobs like ours, sometimes the money does not add up and you need an extra gig to make money, so by joining social groups on different platforms, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram, you can post and advertise what you are willing to do.

Exhibit A of Job-related Social posts

JOB NEEDED (Placed ad in two GPN Emails & Facebook)

I am a Zimbabwean man of 46yrs of age. I am a hard working man who can do all the general work, including gardening.

I also have a class 4 Zimbabwe's drivers license.

Contact [REDACTED]

EMPLOYMENT SOUGHT (Placed ad in two GPN Emails & Facebook)

I am a hardworking Zimbabwean lady looking for a job as a domestic worker or nanny. I am 27 years of age. I am also experienced working in a shop as an assistant. I once worked at a hunting Safari lodge for 1 year.

Please contact [REDACTED]

Participants circulated advertisements of the nature amongst each other. Participants stated that having the ads circulating out there increased the chances of them getting an extra gig. This according to the participants was one of the ways they combated money challenges. While the participants admitted that they were relatively safe in Makhanda, thus the decision to settle, in comparison to bigger cities such as Johannesburg and Cape Town, they, however, did not feel safe staying by themselves. So, they stayed in communal groups with other foreigners, that way should a challenge arise they could defend themselves in numbers.

The groups that the participants formed and joined were not only about job opportunities in Makhanda. It emerged during the interviews that the participants frequently had to send either groceries, clothes, or electronic gadgets back to Zimbabwe to their families. In this regard, they stated that sending them via courier companies such as DHL was pricey. Therefore, they formed and joined groups that facilitated sending goods back home. The groups were a cost-cutting strategy to get goods to their loved ones at home.

4.5 The impact of gender on livelihood strategies and tactics

Because the societies we live gendered worlds that have organized all aspects of our lives - including work - according to gender, men and women have always participated in different livelihood activities. Gender has always played a role in determining the activities one can participate in, the position one can hold, and how much one can make. Work and jobs have been either masculinized or feminized. However, the civil rights movements and gender equality or gender mainstreaming policies have made some inroads insofar as opening up industries that were previously closed-off to women, in particular. However, research has shown that in the informal economy, activities are increasingly gender-neutral you find both men and women being able to participate in the same activities. In this study, all participants participated in gender-neutral activities. However, there were notable differences and similarities in their strategies and tactics that require some discussion.

4.5.1 Women's experiences

Six out of the ten participants in this study were female and so women were the majority. Of the six, four were married, one was a single mother, and the other was single with no children. Two out of the six participants were employees and the other four were self-employed. Their profiles and marriage status shaped the way they engaged in their strategies and tactics. Of the four that were married, three lived with their husbands in Makhanda. The fourth married participants husband was back home in Zimbabwe. Aside from marital status, the women had shared strategies and tactics they engaged in.

Women recognized the shortfall in their salaries which was due to the instability of their jobs in the informal economy. To make up for the shortfall, they engaged in a variety of strategies and tactics. The women would, in addition to their main jobs, also sell Zimbabwean food products, hair products such as braids, and beauty cosmetics such as lipsticks and perfumes. For the women who worked in hair and beauty saloons, it was easier for them to sell and display items, because they had the space to do so. For the women who were employed in other spaces,

it was harder for them to sell items because they could not display them at their place of work. They stated that if they wanted their items displayed in hair and beauty saloons of other Zimbabwean workers, they would refer customers and clients to one another. Mago (2014) and Musiyandaka (2018) whose studies both looked at the livelihoods of informal traders recognize this as livelihood diversification or multiplicity of livelihood strategies. Mago (2014: 64) identifies different types of diversification such as activity diversification, income diversification, and asset diversification which all “highlights the importance of livelihood diversification as a way of enhancing livelihood resilience, which in turn underpins livelihood sustainability”. Musiyandaka (2018) argues that poor households normally diversify by either engaging in migration or the informal economy. It was therefore interesting, in this study, to discover that both strategies of diversification are at play. Furthermore, even more interesting is to note that the participants are creating more diversification within the informal economy.

In addition to selling product diversification these women stated that they were part of different stokvel groups, your money just determined the type of stokvel you would join. Stokvels are rotational savings clubs; a form of informal social security signed to respond to the problems of poverty and income insecurity in communities (Matuku and Kaseke, 2014). According to participants stokvels served both economic and social functions in their lives. The economic function was the use of stokvels to promote income security whilst the social function speaks to social capital, which manifests itself through friendships and social networks. The participants were most grateful for the social function of stokvels in their lives because being a migrant according to them sometimes made it hard to form friendships.

CHIPO — I have no friends, but I have a stokvel group and we give each other R300 per week and now we want to start doing R500 per week as of next year. The stokvel group has got Zimbabweans and two locals whom I met at my first job. The stokvel has been a support structure in my life, through that stokvel I met other Zimbabwean women and formed new social connections which have come in handy.

As can be gleaned from Chipó’s account, the stokvel serves as a mechanism of saving money and as a point through which social connections are formed. Both these functions of the stokvel have been discussed in literature on sustainable livelihoods particularly among poor people. Mago’s (2018) study on sustainable livelihoods strategies of informal traders in Mount Frere in the Eastern Cape similarly identified rotational savings club as a coping strategies to deal

with the challenge of lack of money. Additionally, it was noted that social capital also forms the basis on which rotational group savings clubs are formed” (Mago, 2014: 160).

Married women vs single women

While there is a lot of literature on women and the sustainable livelihood strategies, very little is said about the material benefits of being married. In economic terms, double income households fare better than single income households. Similarly, in this study, I discovered that being married came as an advantage. The women who were married in this study expressed that having a partner increased their household income and lessened the burden on them. They stated that two incomes were better than one. According to them being married gave them better access to credit and financial capital. If you apply for a loan as a single adult, you have only your income for the loan shark person to consider. Two married couple's combined income is likely to qualify for a larger loan with better terms. They also indicated that it increased the odds of finding better opportunities for their family. According to the married participants being married lessened the pressure of finding strategies and tactics to improve their livelihoods. Two of the participants, Madam Boss and Chipo had come to Makhanda because their husbands had found job opportunities.

MADAM BOSS — Marriage has its challenges but it's an advantage in terms of sustaining the livelihood of the family. I am married, and I have three children. When things started getting bad in Zim my husband applied for a job this side and he found one in Joburg, which was in 2008. In 2009 he applied for a new job in Makhanda. He got the job, and then he came to take me and the kids since then we have been here. Just imagine if I was a single mother of three, I would probably have had to leave my children back home in Zim with my mother.

What we see in this household is, in the first instance, diversification through migration. Secondly, it becomes clear that marriage alone plays a role in improving livelihoods. In the case of Madam Boss, one of them left in search of better opportunities and when settled, sent for the rest of them.

CHIPO — I am married, with two boys. Marriage has been an advantage because it lessens the burden on me in terms of finances, I have someone to share the load with. Marriage is also the reason I am here; my husband came here first then the kids and I followed.

DUDZAI — Marriage has been an advantage for me. You know things are so hard back in Zim, so we must do what we have to. In this case, I got an opportunity to come and do

hairdressing on this side, so I had to pack up and leave my husband and children. Because I am married at least my children stayed behind with their father. His back home doing what he can, and I am here doing what I can.

Similar to the account by Madam Boss above, Chipo and Dudzai being married also plays a positive function in the search for better livelihoods. As can be seen from Dudzai's account, it is only advantageous in terms of the double income. It also helps to have someone "manning" the household while the other goes out there to search for better. Additionally, it serves as a support structure. Marumo (2023) in her study of female vendors' coping strategies in Lichtenberg during the lockdown also identified the importance of support structures in creating sustainable livelihoods.

The single women in this study indicated that it was a disadvantage not being married. Low household income was the theme that came up the most amongst the unmarried women. Having one income according to single mothers affected how they could provide for their children's needs. They also indicated that being a single parent meant spending less time with your children because you are busy trying to fulfil the roles of both parents, being a provider and a nurturer. This according to them affected both the parent and the children. This was a painful subject for the participant because as she spoke her body language and voice changed, she was emotional.

REBECA — *I am a single mother to one baby girl. My daughter is back home with my mother. There are no advantages to being single when you have a child, you have to work overtime to balance things out. Right now, I am here working, I only get to see my daughter once a year, but since COVID I have not been able to go home, just imagine living like that. I have no one to turn to, emotional and financial support are all expected from me.*

It is interesting that all the women, both married and unmarried, saw marriage as an advantage insofar as the creation of better livelihoods is concerned. I am of the view that their perspectives in this regard are linked to societal ideas about men being the heads of households, and the expectations that women must depend on men. I am of the view that more comparative research, between men and women, on sustainable livelihood strategies will enhance our understandings of the ways in which men and women differ and are alike insofar as livelihood strategies are concerned.

4.5.2 Men's Experiences

All men interviewed for this study were in the service food industry but were working for different platforms. They had strategies and tactics to sustain their livelihoods within their workspace and outside of their workspace. Within the workspace, men would share each other's digital profiles. For example, those who worked for Checkers 60sixty would sometimes use their friend's Uber Eats profiles on their off days and so on. Outside of the workspace men did not have formal support structures like women did. Men did not have stokvel groups they just had trusted friends they knew they could depend on.

Married men vs unmarried man

Out of the four male participants that I interviewed, one was married, and the other was in a long-term committed relationship with a girlfriend he lived with. Interestingly, the men did not place the same value on marriage as the women did. According to them being married was not an advantage at all. They viewed marriage as a part of life, and something expected of them but not necessarily as something that improved their livelihoods. because either way they were expected to provide.

LEONARD — *I am not married on paper but I've been in a long-term committed relationship with my girlfriend for some time now, we even have a kid together so technically one could say I am married. I would say there are no advantages to being married, yes I like the companionship, but I still have to provide, if you ask me it's just more financial responsibility.*

In this pool of participants, there were no single fathers but just single men. Single men were able to adopt certain strategies and tactics that married men could not adopt. Single men lived in shared spaces as a strategy to save costs. Unlike women, single men were able to stay in the townships in addition to sharing the space. So, they were able to save more in terms of rent than single women. As a tactic to save costs, they shared groceries, something married men could not do. This group of participants said being single gave them extra time to do side hustles outside their jobs because they did not have families to get home to. When asked if being single was an advantage, they stated being single was an advantage in the strategies and tactics because they did not have anyone to think so they could even engage in illegal strategies of survival. However, according to them being a single man did not excuse them from responsibilities. They still had to send remittances home, so to them, marriage was going to be another expense that they were not ready to take on. However, they also indicated that it was an advantage to be single because they could focus on building themselves and they could sustain their livelihoods.

TK— *I am not married, and I have no kids, but I have responsibilities. I send most of the money back home to my family to take care of them and I am trying to build my future back home, I want to buy myself a stand to build.*

4.6 Zimbabwean Immigrants and Precarity

Precarity is not experienced equally and can be considered an indicator of societal inequities. It reflects uneven power relations along lines such as gender, race/ethnicity, and citizenship, and this varies depending on space, time and context. Precarity is worse for workers in the informal economy and catastrophic for migrants working in the informal economy. A bulk of the research on sustainable livelihoods approach often overlooks precarity as either a causing or correlating factor. It was one of the aims of this study to look at precarity and how the participants navigate it while simultaneously work towards livelihoods strategies and tactics. In my findings, I discovered that the participants in this study were precarious in various and intersecting ways. I found that the Zimbabwean migrants were precarious because of their nationality, their lack of documentation, gender, and the jobs they were employed in. I will discuss each of these facets of precarity below

4.6.1 Precarity by Nationality

The participant's nationality made them vulnerable, socially and in work settings. This is because, over the last two decades, there has been growing tension between black South Africans and Zimbabweans (Moyo, 2020). Locals say that Zimbabwean migrants have stolen jobs that belong to them. Participants in this study stated that they had experienced unpleasant treatment starting at the border, in healthcare facilities, at work and in social settings mostly because of their nationality. According to Moyo (2020:61) undocumented (without a permit but with a valid passport) Zimbabwean migrants trying to cross the South African border experience unfair treatment from immigration officers, they have to pay a bribery fee to get the 90-day visitor's visa which is applicable to all SADC citizens, all that is required is a valid passport. Rebeccas account supports Moyo`s (2020) research.

REBECA – *My documents are not exactly in order. I have a valid passport, but I do not have a work permit. These days it doesn't matter anyway if you have a permit or not, a valid passport or not because at the border we are all now being treated the same including those without passports. By law, you are supposed to get 90 days by the border if you have a valid passport*

but as of late, they give you 7-14 days unless you pay bribes to get the full 90 days. So now upon entering South Africa if you have a valid passport but no permit you have to pay the bribery price to get the full 90days and for some of us who work here we go home way past the 90 days so you have to put aside money for a fine otherwise your passport will be blacklisted.

Research has noted the extreme xenophobia present in South Africa, directed against other Africans and also the extortion and victimization of undocumented migrants by the police (Bloch, 2008:8). Literature shows that amongst other African migrants undocumented Zimbabwean migrants experience the most discrimination and xenophobic violence from South African locals (Ncube & Bahta, 2022). Madam bosses experience supports the claims above.

MADAM BOSS – Xenophobic attacks have become a bit too much for us Zimbabweans; I have clients who ask me when I am leaving. There is a guy who works next door to my saloon when he gets drunk, he usually comes and starts verbally abusing me “You need to go back to your country” but I put him in his place and dealt with him I told him if anything happens to me, they are people who will come for you. You just must be strong. Sometimes clients will come and do their hair and not pay the entire fee, they take advantage.

Two things are illustrated by Madam Boss’s response. Firstly, making an honest living does not protect Zimbabwean migrants from attacks. Secondly, it also illustrates the level of confidence the locals have in attacking Zimbabwean migrants. Publicly attacking them is a sign of overconfidence. Guy Standing (2011) speaks of the second faction in the precariat which consists of migrants and ethnic minorities who are denied a sense of home. Mostly, they keep their heads down and put up with insecurity, concentrating on survival.

4.6.2 Precarity by Documentation

All participants had valid passports and only one had a work permit. The lack of documentation also posed a significant problem for the Zimbabwean migrants in Makhanda. It made them vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Without proper documentation, migrants cannot access basic services, including healthcare, education, and employment opportunities (Bloch, 2008:10). This precarious situation further exacerbates their already difficult living conditions, this is the account for Mafuta.

Mafuta — *I am a qualified sushi chef. Not having a work permit has hindered me from using my qualifications. It is difficult to get hired in a formal employment setting without a work permit, if you do get hired usually, they take advantage and underpay you because they feel like they have done you a favour and they also know that you cannot report the situation.*

According to Rutherford (2011) many undocumented Zimbabweans experience heightened levels of stress and anxiety due to their unstable living conditions and the constant threat of deportation. When interviewing participants about their documentation I noticed discomfort in their body. When I investigated the issue further, I discovered that the participants felt vulnerable about not having a work permit and were living with a lot of anxiety.

TAKURA — *There has been a lot of news about Zimbabweans being deported back and the permit holders not getting renewals, you just wonder am I next?*

The participants felt like they were living on borrowed time because if they were discovered by authorities or if someone reported them, they could be deported. The fear and anxiety the participants had was sad. One of the participants after the interview kept asking “*You are not from the authorities, right? You will not report us, right?*” This was after I had asked for their consent and explained how the research and recording work in addition to that I had told them I was from Zimbabwe too. It calmed other participants knowing I was from Zimbabwe whilst others remained in a state of anxiety.

The lack of documentation had also caused many problems for them with employees, they had experienced abuse in different forms.

LEONARD — *Makhanda was not the first destination, Johannesburg was the first destination, I was working and staying with my brother. I was working for a steel construction company, and then we left Johannesburg to come to Makhanda because our boss got a contract down this side but once we came to Makhanda the Murungu (word used to refer to white people) switched up on us and stopped paying us. Varungu, you know them especially if they know that you are from Zimbabwe and you do not have a permit, they can treat you anyhow.*

MAFUTA — *My documents are not in order and it has not been easy. My salary has been changed without notice, and the employer knows there is nothing I can do about it. I feel like just quitting sometimes.*

According to Rutherford (2011) undocumented Zimbabwean migrants working on farms experienced abuse from their employers, by getting paid low wages below the minimum wage. The accounts of Mafuta and Leonard exhibit similar forms of abuse.

4.6.3 Precarity by Employment

In this study, participants experienced precarious employment due to a lack of documentation and limited job opportunities in Makhanda. Many were forced to work in the informal economy where they faced low wages, long working hours, and job insecurity. There is a strong correlation between undocumented migrants and precarious employment in South Africa (Geyer, 2023). A study conducted by the African Centre for Migration and Society found that many undocumented migrants are forced to work in the informal economy, where they face low wages, long working hours, and unsafe working conditions. This is due to their limited employment opportunities, as they are often excluded from the formal labour market due to their lack of documentation. Mafuta's account supports the literature above.

MAFUTA — The working hours are not so favourable; I work every day. If it is not so busy that is when my employer gives me an off by sending me home early. I am the only cashier on the job, the employer does not feel the need to bring in another cashier which is frustrating because everyone else takes shifts and rotates except for me.

TONDERAI — I earn peanuts, all I can say is it ranges between R5000-R7000 with no tips, and just imagine I have kids.

They could not make ends meet on just their basic salary because of the low wages. Diversification of livelihood strategies and tactics is paramount to the sustainable livelihoods of undocumented migrants working in the informal economy. The participants who were self-employed as hairdressers and nail technicians in hair and beauty salons experienced income insecurity as well. According to the hairdressers they have their regular customers who come in for hair and nails, but the income is not predictable. Madumbe shared her experience, highlighting the challenges hairdressers faced when it came to managing family expenses.

MADUMBE — In this industry, people don't get their hair done every day it's not like the grocery shop where people buy bread every day. It makes it hard to plan or budget for something because maybe you might get less than planned or more than planned.

Drawing from SLA the livelihoods of the urban poor are often affected by environmental issues such as the availability of water, electricity, and good sanitation. Madumbe's account reveals

that load shedding and the water crisis in Makhanda added to the challenges they faced as hairdressers.

MADUMBE — *As you know my sister in this town there is a water issue, on the days we do not have water it affects our business because clients want to wash their hair before putting on a new hairstyle. On the days there is no water we sometimes lose clients.*

The findings here show that the environmental issues in Makhanda severely affected the business of hairdressers working in beauty and hairs salons, which in turn affected their income and customer care towards their clients.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter sought to understand the livelihoods of Zimbabwean migrants working in the informal economy in Makhanda. The push factors driving migration were economic instability and political turmoil in Zimbabwe, while the pull factors were the availability of job opportunities and a better standard of living in South Africa. The livelihood strategies and tactics employed by the migrant workers involved working in low-paying jobs with poor working conditions, such as working in saloons, working as food delivery bikers, and forming social networks and groups to counter some of the challenges they faced. Due to their undocumented status, they were vulnerable to exploitation and abuse from their place of work, and from the local people. The precarity of their situation was further compounded by their lack of documentation, lack of access to social services and protection, including healthcare and legal rights. This left them in a state of constant uncertainty and fear, with limited options for improvement. It can be concluded that undocumented Zimbabwean workers in the informal economy, in Makhanda, South Africa face significant challenges but they have come up with a few livelihood strategies to mitigate some of the challenges, however, they still remain precarious and vulnerable.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, discussion, and conclusion of the study. The aim of the study is to analyse, through a sustainable livelihoods lens, the livelihoods of Zimbabwean migrants in precarious working conditions in Makhanda, South Africa. The summary of the key findings are presented in the order of the themes uncovered and research objectives.

The study first sought to contextualise migration in this for this study. In this regard, the study highlighted both the push factors and the pull factors as uncovered during the data collection. Because over the years, Zimbabweans have migrated out of Zimbabwe due to various factors, the researcher divided the participants into time periods and thus highlighted the most common factors from each group. The three groups were those who left Zimbabwe between 2007-2009, 2010-2016, and lastly 2017-2022. The study also shone the spotlight on the journey to Makhanda. A lot of literature on migration often neglects the journey to the destination. The researcher felt it was important to highlight the journey because Makhanda is a small town thus their reasons for coming might offer interesting insights into why migrants settle where they settle.

In terms of the first objective: To investigate the livelihood strategies and tactics used as a response to their precariousness. The study found that the migrants relied on migration as a strategy and tactic to escape economic and political hardships from their home country. Secondly, the participants engaged in the informal economy as a strategy to sustain livelihoods. Additionally, the low barriers of entry into the informal economy render it easy to get into. Thirdly, the participants settled in a small town as a strategy to escape the xenophobic violence that often breaks out in large cities in South Africa. Fourthly, the participants settled in townships rather than the city as a strategy to save on rent money. Lastly, the participants joined social groups as a strategy to get access to opportunities.

The study also explored the precarious livelihoods of Zimbabwean migrants working in the informal economy in Makhanda, South Africa. The findings from this study suggest that Zimbabwean migrants in Makhanda face numerous challenges in the informal economy, including low wages, poor working conditions, discrimination, and a lack of access to social protections and benefits. Despite these challenges, Zimbabwean migrants in Makhanda

continue to rely on the informal economy as a means of earning a living and supporting themselves and their families. This is due to a variety of factors, including limited access to formal employment, lack of formal qualifications, work permits, and discrimination. The informal economy in Makhanda provides Zimbabwean migrants with access to income and entrepreneurial opportunities, as well as a flexible work environment that allows them to work on their own terms. However, the lack of legal status and documentation makes it difficult for them to access basic rights and protections.

In terms of the second objective: The impact of gender on livelihood strategies and tactics. The study found that women and men engage in various and different livelihood strategies. The most notable finding in this regard was that there is a difference in how men and women see marriage. The women saw being married as a tactic that offers a better livelihood. Having two incomes was desirable. However, the men did not see it this way.

In terms of the last objective: By examining how the immigrants make sense of their precarity. The study found that there were various ways in which the participants observed their precarity. There is precarity because of the nationality of origin due to the tensions between South Africans and migrants from other countries. There is precarity because of lack of documentation. There is also precarity because of employment.

The findings in this study also revealed that it was not just the lack of permits that affected the migrant's work experience in the informal economy, but global changes had a hand as well. Structural adjustments in developing countries to suit investors and privatization have turned the informal economy into a permanent feature of most economies. To cope with global terms and global competition most firms have had to cut down on costs. The costs include hiring subcontractors instead of permanent employees and the terms of subcontracting create precarious workers.

This study also revealed how migration trends have changed. Previous migration trends between South Africa and Zimbabwe showed that mostly men migrated in search of job opportunities but in the last decade and especially in recent years, migration trends have changed. More women are migrating into the country, both single and married. In the discussions I had with the participants who were married, their responses indicated that men being sole breadwinners was a thing of the past. Responsibilities had to be shared. Dudzai is married, but she is the one who migrated and left her husband and children back home. Years

ago, that would have been an abomination, a woman leaving her husband with children, especially in Zimbabwe where the society is such a conservative one.

Guy Standing speaks of different forms of vulnerability and in this study, I found that the participants in this study had intersecting vulnerable positions. One that is not spoken of in research is the impact of geographical location. In the data I collected I picked up that the town placed the participants in a vulnerable position in certain seasons. Makhanda is a small town and the University employees and students are their main source of clientele. When the University closes, students return home and employees travel, to their respective homes, very few reside in Makhanda. According to the participants from mid-December to the first week of February business is low.

The research has shown that informal and precarious employment continues to expand and grow in most sectors. There is also growing informality and migrants are being used for those jobs. In South Africa alone, 70% of digital platform workers are undocumented migrant workers. Social protection measures instituted by central and state governments are not available to workers in the informal economy. More research on the precarious livelihoods of undocumented migrants is needed in South Africa. This will help in future policies and in addressing the issues that are the root cause of the rise in precarious workers.

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Appendix 1: Interview Schedule

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Choose a name for yourself

1. Where are you from in Zimbabwe?
2. Why did you leave Zimbabwe? What pushed you and what pulled you to this side?
3. What was your first gig when you came to South Africa?
4. Tell me about your journey to South Africa, where did you first stay? Where are you staying now?
5. Tell me about yourself, Are you married? Do you have children? What's your age?
6. What are the advantages of being married or single?
7. Are you a breadwinner?
8. What is your highest level of education?
9. How did you end up in Makhanda? Was it your first destination? (strategy & tactic)
10. Where do you work? What is your job title? Is this your only job?
11. What's your employment status, temp, permanent, or contractor, or independent contractor? Did you sign any contracts?
12. Do you have any rights that you are aware of in the workspace as employees?
13. What is the relationship like with Mr D?
14. Who do you stay with here? What are your living conditions? Living arrangements? Groceries, rent, bills
15. What activities are you involved in, in detail? What has that been like for you?
 - What are the working hours for these activities?
 - What are the working conditions in these activities?
16. How much do you make? Is it by tips, or do you have a minimum wage per month?
17. Is that money sufficient for their lives? If not, how do you make up for the shortfall, shared space, etc
18. The saloon people – how did you start the business? Where do you live? Why did you start? How did you raise seed money for the business?
19. The delivery guys, how did you start? Do you have to buy the bikes? How long did it take you to raise the money? Are you hustling other things on the side?
20. Do you have extra jobs, how much time do they require?
21. Were you previously involved in other activities? If yes, why did you decide on something different?

22. How many days a week do you work? Who determines your working hours?
23. What are the working hours, do you ever stop?
24. When do you get time to be with your family, call them, eat meals with them, etc.?
25. How do you make up for quality time with family?
26. Since being in the service industry how has been your encounter with South Africans (xhosa people), how do they relate to you?
27. What led you to the service industry? (informal economy) If yes, why the informal sector? If not, does this have to do with your documentation as an immigrant or your qualifications?
28. Are your documents in order? – Limited to ask about the authenticity of documents due to sensitivity limitations.
29. When was the last time you were home? Why haven't you been there in a long time?
30. How has it been like being a Zimbabwean immigrant working in the informal economy in Makhanda?
31. Do you have any support structures in Makhanda? What do they do for you? Eg friendships? Stokvels get together, and share jobs?
32. As men what are your support structures? when not at work what do you do? Who are you with?
33. What are the limitations of being a woman in this industry?
34. Within the informal economy is there a job that is more lucrative that they would instead do but cannot do because they are women?
35. In your own experience is there a difference between the opportunities presented for men and women in the informal economy?
36. If any differences how have they advantaged or disadvantaged, you in trying to make a living?
37. Are these differences geographical? Is it better off in a small town such as Makhanda or worse off and how have these differences contributed to your individual experience?
38. What is the nature of the challenges or advantages that come with being a Zimbabwean informal worker? And what tactics and strategies have you come up with to overcome these challenges or advantages?
39. Judging by how much time you have been here, has it been worth the stay? Are you looking for something outside the informal economy?
40. Is there any information you would like to add that you feel is important and have not touched on?



Appendix 1: Informed Consent Form

PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT DECLARATION

(To be signed by research participant/s)

Project Title: An Analysis of the Precarious Livelihoods of Zimbabwean Migrants in the Informal Economy in Makhanda, South Africa

Nompumelelo Agnes Nderere from the Department of Sociology, Rhodes University has requested my permission to participate in the above-mentioned research project.

The nature and the purpose of the research project and of this informed consent declaration have been explained to me in a language that I understand.

I am aware that:

1. The purpose of the research project is to examine the precarious livelihoods of Zimbabwean migrants working in the informal economy in Makhanda, with the goal of analysing their livelihood strategies and tactics, the challenges they face as immigrants working in the informal economy, and how they make sense of their precariousness.
2. Rhodes University has given ethical clearance to this research project (**Ethics Approval Number**) and I have seen/may request to see the clearance certificate by contacting the Ethics Coordinator (ethics-committee@ru.ac.za)
3. By participating in this research project: This study will contribute scholarly. In addition, it hopes to influence policy-making about the lives of immigrants in the informal sectors, which is done through academic research.

4. I will participate by taking part in an interview process where I will answer questions about navigating a precarious livelihood in the informal sector in Makhanda.
5. My participation is entirely voluntary and should I at any stage wish to withdraw from participating further, I may do so without any negative consequences.
6. I will not be compensated for participating in the research, but my out-of-pocket expenses will be reimbursed.
7. The following risks are associated with my participation: I am aware that the participant's immigration status and possibly lack of valid papers may be a point of vulnerability for this study. However, I am of the view that migrants are not inherently vulnerable nor do they lack agency. Despite this position, the researcher is aware that potential participants may be hesitant because of the history of violence on foreign nationals in this country. The researcher is aware that talking to a researcher about hussling opportunities in the informal market may be seen as a point of vulnerability – particularly because previous xenophobic attacks were about resources and opportunities.
8. The Researcher intends to publish the research results in the form of Masters Thesis. However, confidentiality and anonymity of records will be maintained and my name and identity will not be revealed to anyone who has not been involved in the conducting of the research, ***unless I indicate to the contrary/recognize that as a public figure my identity will inevitably be/become known, in which case I agree to accept the loss of anonymity.***
9. In terms of the Protection of Personal Information Act (No. 4 of 2013) it remains my right to request the Researcher to provide me with a detailed explanation of exactly how confidentiality and anonymity of the data I provide will be achieved. I may also request to know exactly how my personal information will be stored securely, for how long it will be stored.
10. If any data collected from me for this research project is to be used by the Researcher for any further study, I am to be informed in writing and my written consent requested again. I need not give consent for the new research if it is incompatible with the initial purpose of the present study (POPIA, s15(3)). Equally, I can simply reject the request. In such cases, a formal request needs to be made to me by the researcher via the Ethics Coordinator (ethics-committee@ru.ac.za).
11. In terms of the POPI Act, I possess the right to receive feedback about this research. This will take the form of publication - on the Rhodes Library site. ***unless I elect not to receive this feedback.***

12. Any further questions that I might have regarding the nature of the research and/or my participation in it will be answered by Nompumelelo Nderere – nononderere@gmail.com
13. By signing this informed consent declaration, I am not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies. A copy of this informed consent declaration will be given to me, and the original will be kept on record by the Researcher.
14. I **agree/disagree** (delete inapplicable) to the Researcher's request to take photographs, or videoing me as part of this research project, recognizing that agreement here is likely to raise the risk of compromising my anonymity and that steps will be taken to ensure this will not happen if my consent is given.
15. I **agree/disagree** (delete inapplicable) to the Researcher's use of voice recording of my comments and opinions during interviews, the purpose of which is to ensure the accurate recording of my views/responses. Furthermore, I have the right to request a copy of the interview transcriptions to confirm that my opinions are accurately recorded
16. The participants can decline to be recorded and still answer questions if they wish to and they can decline to other forms of recording of the interview if they prefer their voice not to be recorded (such as pencil and paper notes).
17. The participants do not have to reveal their visa status; should they wish not to.
18. The participants have the right to refuse to answer any question that makes them uncomfortable.

I,, have read the above information / confirm that the above information has been explained to me in a language that I understand and I am aware of this document's contents. I have asked all questions that I wished to ask, and these have been answered to my satisfaction. I fully understand what is expected of me during the research.

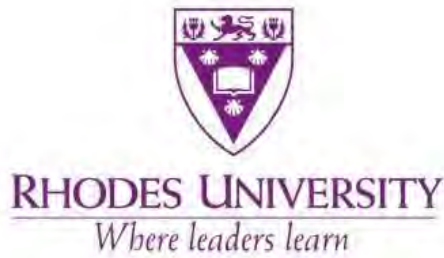
I have not been pressurised in any way and I voluntarily agree to participate in the above-mentioned project.

Participants signature

Witness

Date

Appendix 3: Ethical Clearance Letter



Rhodes University Human Research Ethics Committee

PO Box 94, Makhanda, 6140, South Africa

t: +27 (0) 46 603 772

f: +27 (0) 46 603 882

e: ethics-committee@ru.ac.za

<https://www.ru.ac.za/researchgateway/ethics>

18 August 2023

Nompumelelo NDERERE

Email: g17n4862@campus.ru.ac.za

Review

Reference:

2023-7390-

7964 Dear Ms

NDERERE

Title: An Analysis of the Precarious Livelihoods of Zimbabwean Migrants in the Informal Economy in Makhanda, South Africa.

Researcher: Nompumelelo NDERERE

This letter confirms that the above research proposal has been reviewed and **APPROVED** by the Humanities Faculty Research Ethics Committee (HF-REC). Your Approval number is: 2023-7390-7964

Approval has been granted for 1 year. An annual progress report will be required in order to renew approval for an additional period. You will receive an email notifying you when the annual report is due.

Please ensure that the Humanities Faculty REC is notified should any substantive change(s) be made, for whatever reason, during the research process. This includes changes in investigators. Please also ensure that a brief report is submitted to the ethics committee on the completion of the research. The purpose of this report is to indicate whether the research was conducted successfully, if any aspects could not be completed, or if any problems arose that the Humanities Faculty REC should be aware of. If a thesis or dissertation arising from this research is submitted to the library's electronic theses and dissertations (ETD) repository, please notify the committee of the date of submission and/or any reference or cataloguing number allocated.

Sincerely,

Dr Priscilla Boshoff

Chair: Humanities Faculty Research Ethics Committee

