

# The Development Potential of Zimbabweans in the Diaspora

No. 17

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ISSN 1607-338X  
© 2005 International Organization for Migration (IOM)

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English language editor: Ilse Pinto-Dobernig  
Layout: Angela Pedersen

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# **The Development Potential of Zimbabweans in the Diaspora**

## **A Survey of Zimbabweans Living in the UK and South Africa**

Prepared for IOM by

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January 2005



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IOM International Organization for Migration

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Rossella Di Mento for initiating the project and my involvement in it, as well as her valuable contribution to the early part of the work in her role as project manager. Thanks also to Karolina Hedström, Elizabeth Baxter and Joyce Mpfu for their hard work as the project assistants. Many thanks to Liselott Joensson, from IOM Petoria, who managed the South African part of the project, and to Dyane Epstein and Inger Johanne Schjerven who both held project manager roles at IOM London.

Thanks also to Kerry Lee from City University (London) for her assistance, and to my colleagues John Solomos from City University (London) and Liza Schuster from Oxford University for their support and intellectual engagement.

The research would not have been possible without the help, assistance, advice and support of those who work with and for Zimbabweans in the UK and South Africa who supported the research and who gave up their time to meet with members of the project team, comment on drafts of the questionnaire and in many cases distributed and publicized the questionnaire. My thanks go to all those people who helped and supported the research and to all the respondents who took the time to complete the questionnaire that provides the data on which this report is based.

Alice Bloch

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report is based on a survey of 1,000 Zimbabwean nationals – 500 respondents in the United Kingdom and 500 respondents in South Africa. The data were collected using self-completion paper questionnaires, a web-based self-completion version and, for those with literacy needs, questionnaires were administered using face-to-face interviews. Different modes of data collection were necessary due to the diversity of potential respondents and the objective of obtaining responses that reflected this diversity. Extensive networking was carried out to identify organizations, employers and individuals who worked with or for Zimbabweans and were prepared to distribute and publicize the questionnaire. The link to the web version was posted on a number of Zimbabwean message boards and relevant web sites with the aim of ensuring as wide and diverse a sample as possible. The fieldwork took place between July and September 2004.

### **Research aim and objectives**

The aim of the research was to obtain a profile of Zimbabweans in the United Kingdom and South Africa in terms of their skills base, transnational links and interest in contributing to development. Within the main aim there were five objectives:

- To compile a skills profile of Zimbabweans on arrival in the UK and South Africa by examining educational qualifications and employment experience.
- To examine participation in education and employment in the UK and South Africa and to explore any capacity building activities that have taken place.
- To examine transnational activities with people in Zimbabwe and the nature of those activities.
- To examine links with Zimbabweans in the UK and South Africa or elsewhere in the diaspora.
- To ascertain aspirations for return migration, participation in skills transfer and/or development activities.

The research was not part of a wider programme of research or developed to evaluate policy, but instead a discreet piece of work from which a range of policy makers and organizations would be able to extrapolate the data relevant to them.

## **Main findings**

### **Social and demographic characteristics of the sample**

The survey of 1,000 comprised of 68 per cent men and 32 per cent women. Thirty-two per cent of respondents were less than 30 years old, 39 per cent were aged between 30 and 39 and the remaining 29 per cent were aged 40 or over. In terms of immigration status, 13 per cent were naturalized EU or South African citizens, 15 per cent were permanent residents or had indefinite leave to remain, 20 per cent were on working visas, 12 per cent were on student visas, 7 per cent had refugee status or a form of humanitarian protection, 12 per cent were asylum seekers and 19 per cent were undocumented migrants. In the UK, 6 per cent were undocumented compared with 32 per cent of the sample in South Africa. Most had emigrated from Zimbabwe recently. Around two-thirds (65%) had last lived continuously in Zimbabwe in 2000 or later. Zimbabweans living in South Africa returned on a fairly regular basis, with 55 per cent returning for a visit from South Africa every six months or more.

The main reason for emigrating related to the economy and employment – 48 per cent had left Zimbabwe due to the economic situation, the lack of employment or to work abroad. Around a quarter (26%) said that their main reason for leaving was political. A further 19 per cent left to study abroad, 5 per cent to join family, 1 per cent for other reasons such as to travel and experience other things and 1 per cent had never actually lived continuously in Zimbabwe but had been born elsewhere. A larger proportion in the UK than South Africa had left Zimbabwe for political reasons (33% and 18%, respectively). In contrast, 63 per cent of those in South Africa had left for reasons relating to the economy and employment compared with 35 per cent in the UK.

### **Qualifications and skills at the time of emigration**

Most people arrived in either the UK or South Africa with a qualification (82%) of which 38 per cent had a first degree or higher, 19 per cent had a diploma in higher education and 3 per cent had a professional qualification. Among those with higher qualifications, e.g. a diploma in higher education, a professional qualification or a degree or post-graduate qualification, the majority had a qualification in business studies (16%). This was followed by high level qualifications in education (14%) then healthcare (11%).

Most people had been working before arriving in the UK or South Africa (71%), 15 per cent had been students, 10 per cent were unemployed and looking for work and the rest (3%) were not working for other reasons, including looking after the home and family. The jobs that people had varied, though the largest proportion had been in managerial positions (18%), followed by 11 per cent who had been teachers. A larger number of those who had been in professional jobs went to the UK than to South Africa.

## **Education and employment in the UK and South Africa**

Thirty-nine per cent of respondents had obtained a qualification – more than half of those in the UK had obtained a new qualification (54%) compared with 24 per cent of respondents in South Africa. In the UK, of those who had obtained a qualification, 48 per cent held one at post-graduate level, compared with 43 per cent in South Africa. Clearly, those who had obtained an education in their country of residence had done so at a very high level.

The profile of respondents' main activity was similar to their pre-migration activity, with 68 per cent working at the time of the survey, 13 per cent unemployed and looking for work, 13 per cent studying and a further 5 per cent not working for other reasons, including looking after home and family or not being entitled to work legally because of their immigration status. Larger numbers were unemployed and looking for work in South Africa than the UK (22% and 4%, respectively).

The largest sector of employment among those who were working or had worked in the UK or South Africa in the past, was in health and social work (22%), followed by agriculture (14%). In the UK, 38 per cent had been active in health and social work, while in South Africa 29 per cent had been in the agricultural sector. In terms of jobs, managerial level jobs were the most frequent – 11 per cent were working or had worked at managerial level in their current or most recent job. A further 10 per cent were working or had worked as agricultural labourers, 8 per cent in carer/care assistant jobs and 6 per cent as nurses.

In South Africa, 23 per cent were working, or had worked most recently as an agricultural labourer. In the UK, more were employed as carers or care assistants than in any other job (13%) followed closely by nurses (12%). There was definitely an element of occupational downgrading and people not work-

ing in jobs commensurate with their skills and qualifications. Thirty-eight per cent said that they had skills they had been unable to use in the UK or South Africa.

## **Transnational and diasporic links**

Nearly everyone maintained regular social contact with family members in Zimbabwe (96%). Nearly half (49%) were in touch with family members once a week or more. There were also strong economic ties with family in Zimbabwe. Around three-quarters of respondents (74%) sent remittances, and of those that sent remittances, 85 per cent said their main reason for doing so was to support family members. Money was more likely to be remitted through the informal routes of family, friends and personal visits to Zimbabwe than through formal financial institutions. Two-thirds also sent non-monetary gifts to Zimbabwe, most often clothes (85%) followed by food (43%). Respondents also provided other help and support to people in Zimbabwe, most often providing accommodation for new arrivals to the UK and South Africa (37%).

Respondents to the survey also engaged in a number of activities with other Zimbabweans in the country of residence, in Zimbabwe and in the rest of the diaspora. Eighty-one per cent reported being involved in activities with other Zimbabweans in their country of residence. The main types of activity were informal social activities (47%) followed by church and religious activities (31%) and clubs and groups (21%). Fewer participated in activities with people or organizations based in Zimbabwe (48%). Among those who did participate, internet discussion groups was the activity mentioned most often (21%), followed by political activities (14%) and contributions to charities (12%). A little over half (51%) participated in activities with Zimbabweans in diaspora countries other than their own. Again, internet discussion groups was the activity mentioned most often (25%). A further 14 per cent participated in political activities, 13 per cent sent remittances and 12 per cent sent non-monetary gifts.

## **Skills transfer, development and return migration**

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of respondents wanted to participate in a skills transfer programme and an additional 16 per cent thought they might be interested. More than half (53%) of those who were interested in a programme said that they would be interested in one lasting 12 months or more. Seventy-seven per cent wanted to contribute to the development of Zimbabwe, and 14 per cent

said they might want to. More people were interested in investing in business (58%) than any other development related activity. This was followed by skills transfer through working in Zimbabwe (38%) and skills transfer through training in Zimbabwe (37%).

When asked what changes would help them to contribute, or contribute more effectively, to development, the factors most often mentioned were related directly to Zimbabwe – political changes (60%), economic opportunities (50%) and voting rights (49%). A better exchange rate and dual nationality were also mentioned as changes that would help people to contribute to development (47% and 42%, respectively). Other factors related to the country of residence and included a better paid job (29%), skills training (27%) and legal immigration status (27%).

Two-thirds of respondents said that they would like to return to Zimbabwe and to live there at some point in the future, and 21 per cent said that they might like to. Only 12 per cent definitely did not want to return. In terms of conditions for return, improvements in the political situation and improvements in the economic situation were mentioned most often (80% each). Those who did not want to return, referred most often to a better standard of living in the country of residence (51%), followed by the political situation in Zimbabwe (48%) and the lack of employment (47%).

# 1. GENERAL OVERVIEW

The aim of this study was to investigate the skills and expertise of Zimbabweans living in the United Kingdom and South Africa, to ascertain the level of interest in participation in development related activities, including capacity building from outside Zimbabwe and to investigate transnational activities among Zimbabweans in the diaspora.

## 1.1 Emigration from Zimbabwe

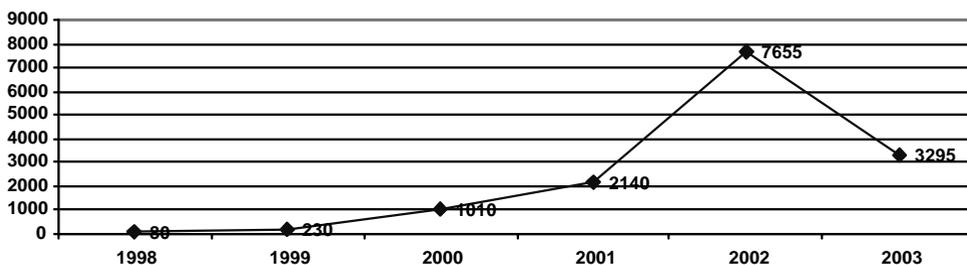
Historically, Zimbabwe was a country of immigration, which was unusual in the Southern African context (Tevera and Zinyama, 2002). However, since 1980, the year of Zimbabwe's independence, migration patterns show a net loss in the population with emigration occurring in three main waves. First was the emigration of white Zimbabweans after independence, the second followed the massacres in Matabeleland in the 1980s, and the most recent wave of emigration occurred among black Zimbabweans for political and economic reasons (Zinyama, 2002).

It is difficult to quantify the numbers of Zimbabweans in the diaspora, as some take the citizenship of the country of immigration, and many are undocumented. Research carried out by the Scientific and Industrial Research and Development Centre (SIRDC) among documented Zimbabweans estimated that 535,609 Zimbabweans had gone to live in the diaspora since 1990. The largest numbers were based in the UK (36.8%) followed by Botswana (34.5%), the USA (6.9%), South Africa (4.6%) and Canada (3.4%). A further 13.8 per cent of Zimbabweans were living elsewhere in the diaspora (Chetsanga and Muchemje, 2003). The figures underestimate the number of Zimbabweans in the region as the the number of undocumented migrants who either entered neighbouring countries, usually South Africa and Botswana, through official ports and then over-stay, and those who travel without valid travel documents had increased (Zinyama, 2002). There are no reliable data on the number of undocumented Zimbabwean migrants in South Africa and Botswana, though data from the South African High Commission in Harare reported that in 1998 about 75,000 Zimbabweans in South Africa had over-stayed their temporary residence visas (Zinyama, 2002). More recently, the Zimbabwean central bank estimated a total of 1.2 million Zimbabweans living in South Africa (Associated Press, 2004).

The factors that resulted in emigration from Zimbabwe are both economic and political. Unemployment in Zimbabwe is estimated at around 70 per cent. The economic crisis has led to an increase in the numbers of skilled and unskilled workers leaving Zimbabwe (Tevera and Zinyama, 2002). The SIRDC survey found that more than half of their respondents had emigrated for work related reasons (54.5%). A further 24.7 per cent cited educational factors as motivating their migration and 10.4 per cent identified marriage and relationships as their main factor for leaving. Only a minority, 7.8 per cent, cited political factors as the main reason for leaving Zimbabwe, and the remaining 2.6 per cent referred to *wanderlust* (Chetsanga and Muchemje, 2003). The actual impact of political factors is likely to be significantly higher, as the SIRDC survey targeted respondents who were in contact with Zimbabwean embassies abroad but also, as stated earlier, it was only concerned with documented migrants. The emphasis on documented migrants in the SIRDC survey also meant that the skills profile among migrants was very high. Nearly a quarter (24.4%) had post-graduate qualifications while more than a third (34.1%) had a bachelor degree. The skills base of those involved in irregular seasonal farm work, or of informal cross-border traders would be lower.

Emigration is also politically motivated owing to political violence and violations of human rights in Zimbabwe (see Human Rights Watch, 2003 and Amnesty International, 2003). The consequence of this has been an increase in the numbers of Zimbabweans seeking asylum since 2000 with the largest proportion seeking asylum in the UK (UNHCR, 2004). Figure 1 shows the numbers of asylum seekers since 1998. It should be highlighted that visa requirements were introduced for Zimbabwean nationals travelling to the UK in 2002.

FIGURE 1  
APPLICATIONS FOR ASYLUM TO THE UK FROM ZIMBABWE,  
EXCLUDING DEPENDANTS: 1998 TO 2003



Source: Heath et al., 2004.

A skills audit of refugees<sup>1</sup> and persons with exceptional leave to remain (ELR), carried out by the UK Home Office found that 22 per cent of Zimbabweans had a degree or higher qualification, and that 78 per cent had been employed or self-employed before coming to the UK (Kirk, 2004). Only 5 per cent had been unemployed and looking for work. Most Zimbabweans in the UK were well qualified and economically active prior to leaving Zimbabwe. The Home Office study showed that Zimbabweans had much higher levels of qualifications than other nationalities in the study.

## **The feminization of migration**

Traditionally migration from Zimbabwe was dominated by young single men looking for work in neighbouring countries, particularly South Africa. This was due, in part, to the strict regulation of South African mines but also the risks involved in travelling to South Africa during the Apartheid era (Zinyama, 2002). The gender profile of migration has changed as a result of the declining economic situation in Zimbabwe and the very high levels of unemployment that make it imperative for households to diversify their livelihood and survival strategies to cope with economic hardships. One coping strategy has been the increase in cross-border travel for informal trade that is dominated by Zimbabwean women going to South Africa and Botswana to sell items and to purchase goods in short supply for resale in Zimbabwe.

A survey of 947 Zimbabweans in Zimbabwe carried out by the Southern African Migration Project (SAMP) explored cross-border activities between Zimbabwe and South Africa (Zinyama, 2002). It found that 22 per cent of the sample had visited South Africa at least once in their lives, and that men were only slightly more likely to have visited than women (23% and 19%, respectively). It is the younger age groups that are most likely to have visited South Africa, especially among women. Cross-border migration from Zimbabwe to South Africa is circulatory in nature and is much more prevalent among women than among men. While 45 per cent of women had visited South Africa once a month or more during the five years leading up to the survey, the same was true for only 10 per cent of the men. Women were much more likely to be involved in informal trading than men, as shown in Table 1.

Those involved in this migration were for the most part less well educated than either respondents in the SIRDC survey, or those in the UK's skills audit (Kirk, 2004) with 8 per cent of men and 2 per cent of women having participated in tertiary level education (Zinyama, 2002).

TABLE 1  
PURPOSE OF MOST RECENT VISIT TO SOUTH AFRICA  
OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS BY GENDER

Purpose of visit	Men (%)	Women (%)
Shopping: buying and selling goods	32	65
Work	20	3
Looking for work	21	1
Visit family/friends	11	16
Business	8	8
Holiday	3	4
Medical treatment	2	1
School/college/university	3	1
N=191		

Source: Zinyama (2002), Table 2.9, p. 39.

UK asylum statistics for 2003 show that 69 per cent of principal asylum applicants were men. The profile of Zimbabweans is much more equal by sex than that of other asylum seekers. In 2003, 53 per cent of asylum seekers from Zimbabwe were male and 47 per cent female (Heath et al., 2004). Zimbabweans also come to the UK through the work permit and family reunion routes. One key aspect of emigration is among health care professionals. In 2002, Zimbabwe rated fourth in terms of the number of applications for UK work permits from nurses (Dovlo, 2003), which resulted in increasing numbers of Zimbabwean women migrating to the UK among those outside the asylum system. Secondary sources show that the migration trajectories and characteristics of Zimbabweans in the UK differ from that of Zimbabweans in South Africa – an area that this survey will examine in much more detail.

## 1.2 Brain drain and skills base

Brain drain is one of the features of emigration from Zimbabwe, according to the House of Commons International Development Committee (HCIDC) “the loss of educated and skilled personnel at a rate faster than they can be replaced, resulting in a shortage of skills” (2004: 27). The loss of skilled people can be especially serious for developing countries because of the loss of tax revenue from these potential high-earners and the crucial role of human resources in the development process (Newland, 2003; Wickramasekara, 2003). However, the relationship between migration and development is complex because migrant

workers also contribute to the country of origin through remittances and, while overseas, can gain new qualifications and skills that can be used on return. There are also schemes to include diaspora populations as a development resource, such as the South African Network of Skills Abroad and the Thai Reverse Brain Drain Project. Such initiatives tend to focus on networking and short-term exchanges with expatriate scientists and professionals as well as the transfer of technology (Wickramasekara, 2003: 13).

The loss of skilled people is very acute in Zimbabwe with one article estimating that between 70 and 90 per cent of all Zimbabwean university graduates are working outside the country (Hill, 2004). The brain drain can have an even more severe impact in Zimbabwe where the HIV/AIDS crisis has hit the economically active population particularly hard. Estimates by the World Health Organization of the proportion of the total adult population aged 15 to 49, infected with the virus ranged from 21.7-27.8 per cent (<http://www.who.int/entity/3by5/en/Zimbabwe.pdf>). A problem for Zimbabwe is the large number of trained health care professionals leaving the country. The survey by SIRDC (Chetsanga and Muchemje, 2003) found that 24.6 per cent of Zimbabwean emigrants were trained doctors, nurses or pharmacists. A further 23.1 per cent were engineers or scientists, 20 per cent were teachers, and accountants made up 16.9 per cent of documented emigrants. The acute shortage of medical personnel in Zimbabwe has resulted in the government's relying on doctors from abroad, in particular from Cuba and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Data from the Home Office Skills Audit provide information on the pre-migration activities of respondents and reinforces the high skills base of those leaving Zimbabwe to go to the UK. Immediately prior to leaving Zimbabwe, 85 per cent of Zimbabwean men had been employed or self-employed, while the proportion among women was 69 per cent. Only 4 per cent of men and 5 per cent of women described themselves as unemployed and looking for work. Eight per cent of men and 10 per cent of women were students and the rest were economically inactive, including those looking after the home and family and retired (3% of men and 7% of women) (Kirk, 2004). The data show the very high level of economic activity among this group when compared with the 70 per cent rates of unemployment in Zimbabwe. The breakdown by occupation immediately prior to leaving Zimbabwe among respondents in the Home Office survey is shown in Table 2.

The table shows that nearly half of Zimbabweans had been in management and senior or professional jobs prior to coming to the UK, a larger proportion than the average among all refugees. If Zimbabweans are excluded from the

TABLE 2  
OCCUPATION OF RESPONDENTS WHO WERE WORKING  
BEFORE COMING TO THE UK

	Zimbabwe (%)	All refugees (%)
Managers and senior officials	15	22
Professional	31	15
Associate professional and technical	11	8
Administrative and secretarial	17	6
Skilled trades	9	23
Personal services	2	2
Sales and customer services	8	9
Process, plant and machine operatives	4	8
Elementary occupations	2	7
Total number	287	1,070

Source: Kirk (2004), Table 2.4, p. 15.

proportion of all refugees, the difference in terms of professionals is even more acute with around 9 per cent of refugees in professional jobs before coming to the UK, compared with 31 per cent of Zimbabweans.

### **1.3 Employment activities in South Africa and the United Kingdom**

Migrants can contribute to their country of origin by acquiring skills and experience elsewhere that they bring back with them on return. However, one feature of migrant and refugee employment is occupational downgrading and the inability to use skills and qualifications commensurate with pre-migration experiences. In the UK the asylum system also results in deskilling among professionals who are unable to work legally while waiting for their case to be determined, and are often unable to practice their chosen profession as qualifications obtained overseas are often not recognized at the equivalent level (Bloch, 2002a). Research by Stewart on refugee doctors noted that it is crucial, “not to let time pass when people could become deskilled because once in an unskilled position or on welfare it will become increasingly difficult to re-enter the medical profession” (2003: 9).

Research focusing on refugee women doctors, nurses, teachers and associated professions found a huge disparity in terms of pre-migration employment

and occupations in the UK. Ten per cent were trained doctors, 23 per cent nurses and 23 per cent teachers from their country of origin, but were not working as doctors or nurses in the UK, and only 4 per cent were working as teachers (Dumper, 2002).

Following a legal case in 2003,<sup>2</sup> asylum seekers are now able to work in South Africa, but have difficulties obtaining the correct and necessary documentation or access to social and financial services, which leaves them excluded and vulnerable (Landau, 2004). As in the UK, the potential for deskilling is evident, though secondary sources suggest that the skills base is varied and that Zimbabweans are engaged in a range of regular and irregular activities in a wide range of sectors and industries. A survey carried out in the latter part of the 1990s found that 14 per cent of Zimbabweans in South Africa were working in construction, 9 per cent in mining, 9 per cent as domestic workers, 8 per cent in factories and 2 per cent in farm work (Crush and Williams, 2001).

South Africa's mining and agricultural industries have long depended on migrant workers from the region. Zimbabweans and others are documented seasonal agricultural workers in South Africa, often on farms in border areas, due to a special arrangement whereby those who live in the border region can obtain a short-stay South African work visa to work on commercial farms within 50 km of the border. South African farmers can also apply for 3-6 month working visas for Zimbabwean employees on their farms (Crush and Williams, 2001). Irregular employment is also a feature of agricultural production. This is clustered mainly in the border areas but also with smaller clusters in the sugar fields of Kzazulu Natal and the fruit and wine growing areas in the Western Cape (Crush and Williams, 2001).

The key issues to consider are the extent to which deskilling might be occurring among Zimbabweans in the diaspora and, conversely, the extent to which Zimbabweans are acquiring new skills through education and/or work that could potentially contribute to the development of Zimbabwe. The focus, such as the work by Ammassari and Black (2001) has been on the benefits of return migration for the country of origin. This includes financial capital, which is the transfer of savings accumulated by migrants to the country of origin. The return of human capital refers to education, training, skills and experience acquired by the migrant in the receiving country, and social capital which refers to cross-border social networks, the ability to work with people from different cultures, familiarity with foreign customs and norms (Ammassari and Black, 2001).

The different migration patterns, reasons for migration and skills base among Zimbabweans in the UK and South Africa will mean that migration will affect their potential in different ways. Also, the interaction of social, economic and political factors in any decision to return to Zimbabwe will also differ depending on the circumstances of the migration.

#### **1.4 Transnational links and activities**

Contributions to development and the alleviation of poverty in the country of origin are not dependent on return. Improvements to transport and communication technologies have facilitated long-distance travel and contacts, which makes it easier for migrants to maintain multiple relations across borders – familial, social, economic, political, organizational and religious. The importance of transnationalism is also borne out by the fact that migration is often used by households as a risk diversification strategy, and such strategies are necessarily based on the assumption that migrants will remain linked to their families and communities through networks of mutual obligation (Curran and Saguy, 2001).

Transnational approaches to migration see migration as a process that links together countries of origin and destination. Over time, the nature of the contacts can become more diverse and are not restricted to the sending and the receiving countries, but can include people in a number of different locations facilitated by developments in technology and communications. Increasingly governments of sending countries are promoting and guiding the nature of economic transnational activities (Portes et al., 2001). African governments see the diaspora as a potential development resource and governments in some sending countries have started encouraging transnationalism by fostering stronger links with members of their diaspora and have facilitated their contributions through such schemes as the granting of dual citizenship rights, the right to vote in national elections and providing cultural and religious programmes abroad (Nyberg Sørensen et al., 2003a).

The activities that are carried out under the umbrella of transnationalism are varied, though Portes et al. (1999) provide a working typology around the three main concepts, or transnational fields of economic, political and socio-cultural activities. They also distinguish activities by the levels of institutionalization, that is activities at the institutional level and those carried out at the grass roots level, drawing on the work of Guarnizo (1997) who uses the terms transnationalism from “above” and from “below”. Portes et al. (1999) map out the differing

forms of economic transnationalism which include at the grass roots level informal cross-country traders, small businesses created by returning migrants in their country of origin and long-distance circular migration.

Work by Al-Ali, Black and Koser (2001a) also highlights the multi-faceted nature of transnational activities, noting the different levels and different networks and institutions that are involved. These include social and kinship networks but also community and international organizations. Through their research with Eritrean and Bosnian refugees, Al-Ali, Black and Koser draw out what they term “transnational features” (2001b: 618) that might contribute to reconstruction. Four main areas of activity are identified: economic, political, social and cultural which they divide into home country focus and host country focus. Economic home country focus includes remittances, investments, charitable donations, taxes and buying entry into government programmes, while the host country focus includes charitable donations and donations to community organizations. Political home country focus includes membership of political parties, while the host country focus includes participation in political demonstrations and mobilization of political contacts.

The context in which people leave their country of origin, the political situation at any given time in the sending country as well as the status of migrants in a destination country will all impact on transnational activities. Vertovec notes that the “politics of the homeland” connects transnational communities in different ways (1999: 455). For example, political parties might establish offices abroad to increase their support and can provide a base for migrants to lobby home governments. In the case of Eritrea, members of the diaspora participated in the 1993 Referendum for Independence (Al-Ali et al., 2001a). It has also been noted that social and cultural activities with a home country focus include social visits and contributions to newspapers, while those with a host country focus include participation in internet discussion groups, membership of social clubs and events to promote culture (Al-Ali et al., 2001a). Their research found that activities as well as transnational capabilities varied between the two communities and the country in which they were living – Eritreans in the UK and Germany, and Bosnians in the UK and the Netherlands.

## **1.5 Economic activities**

Transnational economic activities include remittances but might also include a broader range of financial exchanges that might have a greater impact on development as they are less focused on immediate consumption needs. Newland

(2003) identifies five different types of transnational networks: foreign direct investment by emigrants in their home countries, tourist visits by members of the diaspora to their country of origin, philanthropic donations by individual migrants or diaspora communities providing resources for development, fundraising targeting political candidates or causes in diaspora communities, and nostalgia for foods and produce from the country of origin that leads to local production, new markets and trade.

Migrant entrepreneurs and business people can also have an important impact on their countries of origin. A study of transnational enterprises among the Salvadoran migrant communities in the US carried out by Portes et al. (2001) identifies four different types of transnational enterprises: circuit firms that facilitate the transfer of goods and remittances to the country of origin, cultural enterprises that sell products from the country of origin, ethnic enterprises such as retail outlets and restaurants that target the diaspora community and import food and goods from the country of origin, and return migrant enterprises which are firms established by returnees using their savings from their period abroad to set up a business.

## **Remittances**

Remittances in their broadest meaning can take the form of cash, goods and social exchanges in the form of ideas and social capital (Nyberg Sørensen, 2004). This report is concerned with international remittances – those that are transferred by migrants across international borders. The majority of remittances are cash payments that are transferred by individuals, although some are collective and are transferred by groups of migrants through community or church groups (Nyberg Sørensen, 2004). Money is transferred formally through banks and transfer companies, or informally by carriers or family and friends. Formal remittances enter the national financial system and contribute to the balance of payments and foreign exchange reserves (International Organization for Migration, 2004). Informally transferred remittances remain undocumented and do not contribute to the state in the same way. Estimates of the volume of remittances, such as by the World Bank in 2003 that put the sum at USD 93 billion to the developing world, underestimate the value of remittances (Lowell et al., 2004). When informal remittances are added to formal remittances their estimated value increases to around 200 billion dollars (Sander and Maimbo, 2003). One of the problems with formal channels are the amounts taken as fees for the transfer, normally considerably more than for informal transfers (Sander and Maimbo, 2003). This means that less money is available for consumption, investment and poverty reduction (HCIDC, 2004).

In order to benefit from remittances, governments in some migrant sending countries are trying to attract remittances and/or ensure that remittance money benefits the country more widely. Means of encouraging remittance flows include setting aside a proportion of remittances for a development fund, offering investment breaks and establishing joint ventures with migrant associations (Nyberg Sørensen et al., 2003b).

In terms of development, remittances are not without their critics. On the positive side, most remittances go directly to the migrant's family in the sending country and can help to reduce poverty within particular households. However, remittances can also increase inequality as it is often the wealthier that migrate and send back remittances, making the already better off relatively richer still (Ratha, 2004). Moreover, they rarely contribute to the production or investments that generate income or jobs (Newland, 2003). Analyses of how remittances are spent in the country of origin show that usually they are used first for basic family maintenance, including improvement of housing, second on "conspicuous" consumption, that is spending on imported status-enhancing goods. Only at a third stage are remittances channelled into "productive" activities such as improvements in land productivity or setting up small businesses (Nyberg Sørensen et al., 2003b).

## **1.6 Aim and objectives of the research**

The Zimbabwean diaspora communities are involved in economic, political and socio-cultural transnational activities, and the extent to which people are involved in different types of activities is likely to vary according to the reasons for their migration, the location of their close family and their aspirations for returning to Zimbabwe. The skills base and migration trajectories of Zimbabweans in the UK and South Africa differ, and it is likely that their experiences and the nature, regularity and capacity to participate in transnational activities will also vary. This research set out to explore the skills and transnational links of the Zimbabwean diaspora to provide quantitative information that could be extrapolated and used by different organizations for different purposes. The research was not designed to develop or evaluate a particular strand of policy, or as part of a programme, but rather to be used more generally by providing baseline information.

The aim of the research was to obtain a profile of Zimbabweans in the United Kingdom and South Africa in terms of their skills base, transnational links and

interest in contributing to development. Within the main aim there were five objectives:

- To compile a skills profile of Zimbabweans on arrival in the UK and South Africa by examining educational qualifications and employment experience.
- To examine participation in education and employment in the UK and South Africa and to explore any capacity building activities that have taken place.
- To examine transnational activities with people in Zimbabwe and the nature of those activities.
- To examine links with Zimbabweans in the UK and South Africa or elsewhere in the diaspora.
- To ascertain aspirations for return migration, participation in skills transfer and/or development activities.

## **1.7 Structure of the report**

The report is divided into six parts. Chapter 2 examines the research design and the main characteristics of the sample, including their migration patterns and reasons for migration. Chapter 3 explores the language skills, educational qualifications and work experience that Zimbabweans had on arrival in South Africa or the UK. Chapter 4 explores capacity building activities in the form of education and employment but also the potential loss of skills through under-employment. Chapter 5 assesses the extent and nature of links with Zimbabweans in the same country but also transnational links with people in Zimbabwe and elsewhere in the diaspora. Chapter 6 examines aspirations for return migration and participation in development activities. The final part presents the conclusion.

## **2. RESEARCH DESIGN AND MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE**

In this chapter, the main characteristics of the sample will be explored as well as respondents' migration trajectories and their reasons for migration. It is this chapter that will provide the context for the analysis presented in the remainder of the report.

### **2.1 Research design**

This research was carried out using multiple approaches to data collection. Data was gathered using secondary sources of literature, exploratory interviews and focus groups with community representatives, and a survey that used self-completion paper questionnaires, a web-based self-completion version and, for those with literacy needs, face-to-face interviews. The diverse characteristics of the survey population, the transnational nature of the research as well as the geographical distribution of respondents within the case study countries made it necessary to use different modes of data collection for the survey in order to reach as diverse a range of potential respondents as possible.

Extensive work was carried out identifying organizations and individuals working with Zimbabweans, and a database was set up. Initial meetings with community representatives in the UK and South Africa were held to try and map the profile of Zimbabweans in the respective countries, including geographical location, size of the communities, gender balance and socio-economic status. It also provided some background information about the migration patterns of Zimbabweans in the two countries and their transnational links and activities. Given the sensitive nature of the research owing to the prevalent political situation and the large numbers of Zimbabweans in the UK as asylum seekers, and the many undocumented Zimbabweans in South Africa, community representatives proved crucial as gatekeepers. They also provided advice about the questionnaire in terms of the type of questions that might not be suitable and could lead to problems in gaining responses.

#### **Questionnaire design**

The questionnaire was designed and piloted by holding meetings where the questionnaire was completed and detailed verbal feedback was given, and by

distributing it for feedback and completion to community representatives and Zimbabweans. It was then revised based on comments from the piloting exercise. The final version of the questionnaire was divided into four sections: education, qualifications and languages, employment, links with Zimbabwe and Zimbabweans living abroad, and social and demographic information.

## **Questionnaire distribution and modes of questionnaire administration**

The questionnaire was distributed and administered using different methods and this differed between the UK and South Africa owing to the different characteristics of the target population. The questionnaire was administered using self-completion paper and web versions in the UK, and in South Africa questionnaires were also administered using face-to-face interviews. Using different methods of data collection can result in mode effects (de Vaus, 2002) but the diversity of the target populations and access to them made this necessary. Using a self-completion mode resulted in some gaps in the data on particular questions of which due note was taken during the presentation of the findings.

### *Paper questionnaires*

In both the UK and South Africa 2000 questionnaires were printed and business reply services set up so that questionnaires could be sent to IOM at no cost to the respondent. In both countries questionnaires were distributed through different types of organizations working with Zimbabweans or with Zimbabwean participants. This included Zimbabwean community groups, refugee organizations, African community groups, church groups, HIV/AIDS projects, a student charity, student associations, training providers, political forums and groups, cultural events organizers, consular and embassy services, human rights groups and individuals with large numbers of Zimbabwean contacts. In South Africa farm workers were accessed through farm owners and community organizations. The reason for using a wide range of different types of organization and locations was to try and ensure that the sample was as heterogeneous as possible. Relying on a few organizations with similar remits and concerns would have resulted in respondents with more similar characteristics (Bloch, 2004).

### *Web*

A web-based version of the survey was also developed as a mechanism to reach a greater geographical spread of respondents rather than only those clustered in areas with community-based activities. It also ensured a higher degree of anonymity as the web questionnaires were returned directly to an e-mail address and avoided gatekeepers as potential respondents were able to access

the survey directly. Exploratory interviews and feedback from the pilot in both the UK and South Africa indicated that a web-based version would definitely be accessible to Zimbabweans and was likely to yield responses.

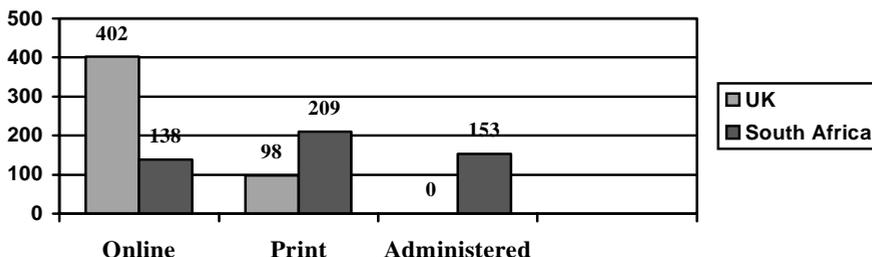
The web version was launched after the paper version and information about the survey was placed on a number of Zimbabwean websites, messages about the project and a link to the questionnaire were posted on a number of Zimbabwean message boards and chat rooms, and in the UK an interview was held with a Zimbabwean radio station based in the UK giving an overview of the project. The radio station’s website also carried a link to the web version of the questionnaire. Email invitations that included information about the project and the URL address for the questionnaire were also sent to everyone on a mailing list that we had developed and they were asked to forward the email to other contacts they had.

*Face-to-face*

The questionnaire was also administered using face-to-face interviews among a minority of respondents in the border areas in South Africa and among seasonal farm workers, where levels of literacy would otherwise have prevented participation in the project. These informal circular migrants and seasonal workers form a part of the Zimbabwean migration to South Africa and it was therefore important to include them in the survey.

In the final 1,000 questionnaires, 540 were completed online, 307 were completed using the printed version and 153 were administered. Figure 2 shows the different response formats used in South Africa and the UK. A larger proportion

FIGURE 2  
RESPONSE FORMAT OF COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES:  
UK AND SOUTH AFRICA (FREQUENCIES)



Base number 1000

of questionnaires were filled out online in the UK than in South Africa, while in South Africa a larger proportion used the printed format or were administered which, as we shall see, demonstrates some of the variation in characteristics among Zimbabweans in the two countries.

## **The sample**

There is no sampling frame of Zimbabweans available in the UK or in South Africa and so it was not possible to use probability sampling techniques. The large number of forced and undocumented migrants among the Zimbabwean diaspora make the research sensitive and the target population hidden. To increase the representativeness of the sample multiple contact points were used alongside the different modes of data collection. However, ultimately the sample, especially those who completed the questionnaire using the web version, were self-selecting, which means that the data produced must be interpreted with this caveat in mind and can, therefore, not be generalized to the Zimbabwean populations as a whole.

The fieldwork was carried out between July and September 2004. The target number of responses 1,000: 500 from each of the two countries was achieved. The survey achieved slightly in excess of this number, so that some of the incomplete questionnaires received were not used.

## **2.2 Limitations of the research**

The main limitation of the research and data analysis is due to a lack of a sampling frame for Zimbabweans in the UK and South Africa. This meant that the research relied on networks, and the questionnaire was completed by those who selected themselves to be part of the study. The result is that it is not possible to generalize from the data regarding the population of Zimbabweans in either country. Moreover, it is not possible to measure the bias in the sample or how the sample in this study is likely to differ from Zimbabweans in the UK and South Africa as a whole.

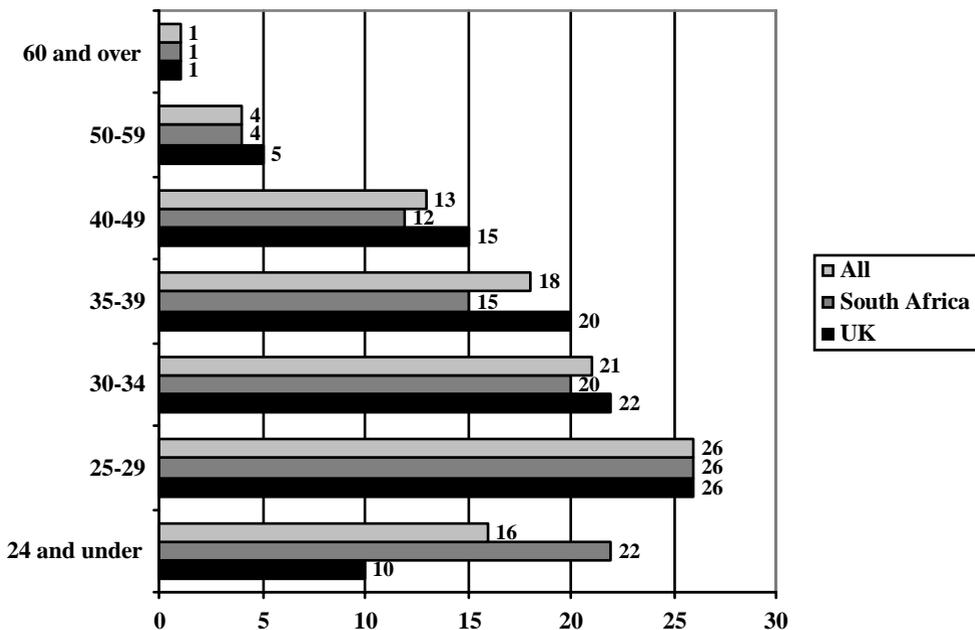
However, the wide range of organizations, groups and individuals that helped to facilitate the survey through distributing questionnaires and e-mails to Zimbabweans, as well as networking through other media such as web sites, chat rooms and radio broadcasts were all used to ensure as wide and diverse a sample as possible.

## 2.3 Social and demographic characteristics of the sample

### Gender and age

In total, just over two-thirds of the sample was male (68%) and 32 per cent female. In the UK, 64.5 per cent of respondents were male and 35.5 per cent were female, while in South Africa the proportions were 71 per cent and 29 per cent, respectively. Respondents belonged to the younger age ranges with 81 per cent aged 39 or below. Figure 3 shows that Zimbabweans in South Africa were more likely than those in the UK to be in their early 20s, while a larger proportion of those in the UK are in their 30s.<sup>3</sup>

FIGURE 3  
AGE OF RESPONDENTS, UK AND SOUTH AFRICA (%)



Base number: 998  
Missing: 2

## Immigration status

In total, 23 per cent of respondents had at some point been a refugee or an asylum seeker in the UK, South Africa or elsewhere. The proportion of those living in the UK who had been a refugee or asylum seeker was 24 per cent, and 22 per cent in South Africa. At the time of the survey there were differences in the status of those living in South Africa and the UK as shown in Table 3. The main differences concern the numbers of undocumented migrants that were much higher in South Africa (32% of all respondents in South Africa) while a much larger proportion in the UK were on working visas.

TABLE 3  
IMMIGRATION STATUS BY COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE (%)

	UK	South Africa	Total %
British/EU or South African citizen	14	12	13
Permanent resident or indefinite leave to remain	19	12	15
Working visa	27	12	20
Student visa	13	10	12
Refugee status	5	4	5
Exceptional leave to remain/ Humanitarian protection/Discretionary leave	3	-	2
Asylum seeker or appealing against refusal of asylum case	10	14	12
Undocumented	6	32	19
Other	3	3	3
Total Number	498	492	990

Missing: 10

The length of time respondents had last lived continuously in Zimbabwe affected immigration status. Those who last lived continuously in Zimbabwe before 2000 were more likely to be in an insecure status or without regular status than those who last lived in Zimbabwe in 1999 or earlier. Nearly three-quarters of undocumented migrants and 84 per cent of asylum seekers last lived in Zimbabwe in 2000 or later. Conversely, 62 per cent of those who were either EU or South African nationals, or had permanent residence status, had been living outside Zimbabwe since 1999 or earlier.

## Region or province of residence in the UK and South Africa

Although no quotas are set for region, respondents were drawn from different regions/provinces in the UK and South Africa. For the UK, responses were placed within the regional divisions of National Asylum Support Service (NASS). Since the introduction in 2000 of the Immigration and Asylum Act, 1999, in the UK asylum seekers who arrive spontaneously and need help with accommodation, are dispersed around the country. Prior to the introduction of disper-

TABLE 4  
REGION OR PROVINCE, UK AND SOUTH AFRICA

	Frequency
<b>UK</b>	
North East	6
North West	24
Yorkshire and Humberside	52
East Midlands	23
West Midlands	51
East of England	56
London	159
South East	75
South West	14
Wales	8
Scotland	11
Northern Ireland	3
Total	482
<b>South Africa</b>	
Gauteng	270
Kwazulu-Natal	47
Western Cape	19
Eastern Cape	26
Limpopo	120
Free State	4
North West Province	4
Northern Cape	1
Mpumalanga	2
Total	493

Missing: 25

sal and NASS, new arrivals tended to cluster in areas where they had pre-existing kinship and/or community networks, but since 2000 asylum seekers have been spread across the country. In South Africa respondents were placed within the province of their residence. The region or area of residence is potentially important owing to variations in local labour markets. As shown earlier, in South Africa there are cross-border traders and seasonal agricultural workers located in border areas and responses from these areas enable a more accurate assessment of the situation of Zimbabweans in South Africa.

In the UK a third of the respondents were based in London, while more than half of respondents in South Africa (55%) were living in the Gauteng region, which includes Johannesburg and Pretoria, while around a quarter (24%) were living in Limpopo, bordering Zimbabwe. Table 4 shows the regional distribution of responses in the UK and South Africa.

In the UK, 28 per cent of those who had been refugees or asylum seekers were living outside of London or the Greater London area, compared with 15 per cent of those who had never been a refugee or asylum seeker. This shows the greater geographical spread of those who had been through the asylum system.

## **2.4 Migration patterns and reasons for migration**

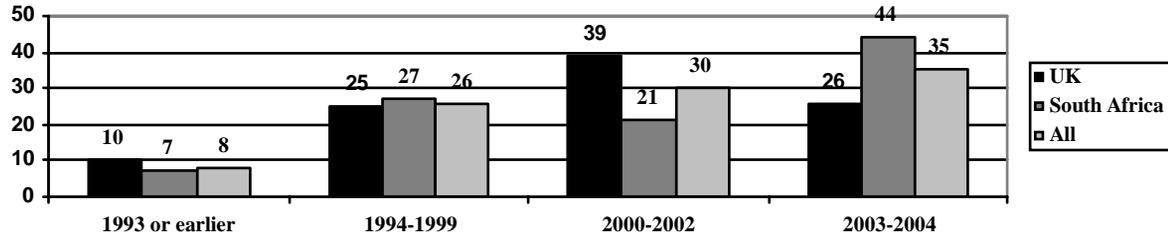
To establish their migration trajectories, respondents were asked when they last lived continuously in Zimbabwe. Figure 4 (overleaf) shows that Zimbabweans in South Africa were more likely to have last lived in Zimbabwe in 2003 or 2004, while in the UK the largest proportion had last lived continuously in Zimbabwe between 2000 and 2002. There was little difference in terms of migration patterns between men and women.

### **Visits to Zimbabwe**

Nearly two-thirds (64%) had visited Zimbabwe since living outside the country continuously. Those least likely to return were those with refugee status (21%) and asylum seekers, and those appealing a decision (26%). Permanent residents in either the UK or South Africa were most likely to have returned (84%) followed by UK/EU and South Africa citizens (78%). Sixty per cent of undocumented workers had visited Zimbabwe, though among those in South Africa the proportion was 69 per cent.



FIGURE 4  
YEAR IN WHICH RESPONDENT LAST LIVED CONTINUOUSLY IN ZIMBABWE BY COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE (%)



Base number: 937  
Missing: 63

In total, 74 per cent of Zimbabweans in South Africa had returned to Zimbabwe, compared with 55 per cent of those in the UK. Those living in South Africa were more frequent visitors than those living in the UK. Fifty-five per cent of Zimbabweans in South Africa returned to Zimbabwe at least every six months compared with 10 per cent in the UK. The frequency of visits between South Africa and Zimbabwe is, in part owing to geographical proximity, but is also indicative of the differing nature of the migration, including the feminization of the cross-border migration between Zimbabwe and South Africa. Eleven per cent of Zimbabwean women in South Africa returned on average every month, a further 10 per cent every two months and 14 per cent every three months. Men in South Africa returned to Zimbabwe less frequently. Five per cent went back every month, 8 per cent every two months and 16 per cent went back every three months.

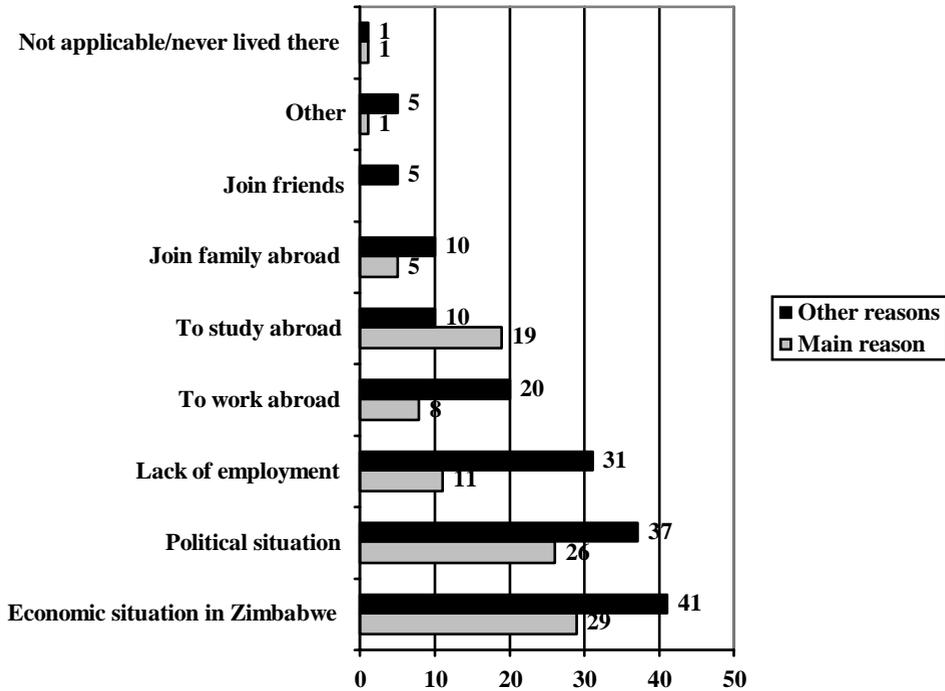
In terms of region, respondents living in Limpopo were more likely to visit Zimbabwe regularly than those living elsewhere. The number of respondents living outside Gauteng or Limpopo was too small to enable meaningful comparisons, but comparing respondents in Limpopo and Gauteng showed that more than three-quarters (77%) of those living in Limpopo returned to Zimbabwe every six months or more often, compared with just over half (51%) of those in Gauteng. Women in Limpopo were slightly more likely to visit Zimbabwe every six months or more often than their male counterparts (83% and 79%, respectively), though the limited numbers of women affects the robustness of the data.

## **Reasons for leaving Zimbabwe**

Respondents were asked to give their main reason for leaving Zimbabwe and any other reasons in addition to that. Reasons that related to the economy and employment were given as the main reason by nearly half (48%). Around a quarter (26%) gave the political situation as their main reason for leaving Zimbabwe. Figure 5 (overleaf) shows the main and all other reasons for leaving Zimbabwe.

There were differences between those in the UK and in South Africa in terms of their main reason for leaving. Zimbabweans in the UK were more likely than those in South Africa to have left for political reasons and to study abroad. Respondents in South Africa were more motivated by economic considerations, especially the lack of employment in Zimbabwe. Table 5 (page 33) shows the main reason for leaving Zimbabwe by country of residence.

FIGURE 5  
 MAIN AND ALL OTHER REASONS FOR LEAVING ZIMBABWE (%)



Base number: main reason: 915

Missing: 85\*

Base number: all reasons: 985

Missing: 15

\*Some respondents wrongly ticked more than one category for the main reason and so it was not possible to use the data for main reason.

Table 5 shows that 63 per cent of respondents in South Africa stated as their main reason for leaving Zimbabwe the economic situation, lack of employment or to work abroad, compared with 35 per cent of those in the UK. Nearly a third of those in the UK had left Zimbabwe for political reasons compared with 18 per cent in South Africa. Family networks had comparatively little influence on migration in either the UK or South Africa.

TABLE 5  
MAIN REASON FOR LEAVING ZIMBABWE BY COUNTY OF RESIDENCE (%)

	UK	South Africa	Total %
Economic situation	24	35	29
Political situation	33	18	26
Lack of employment	3	20	11
To work abroad	8	8	8
To study abroad	23	14	19
Join family abroad	7	3	5
Join friends abroad	1	-	0
Other	2	1	1
N/A	-	1	1
Total	482	433	915

Missing: 85

## 2.5 Kinship networks

Nearly everyone (93%) had close family members living in Zimbabwe. Twenty-three per cent had a spouse or partner, 29 per cent had one or more children, 71 per cent had parents in Zimbabwe, and another 41 per cent had other close family members such as brothers or sisters. Those living in South Africa were more likely to have a spouse or partner in Zimbabwe than those in the UK (31% and 15%, respectively). Around a quarter (24%) of those in the UK had children in Zimbabwe compared with one-third in South Africa.

### Family in the UK and South Africa

More than half (52%) had a spouse or partner in their country of residence. The majority of spouses or partners were from Zimbabwe (73%). However, 27 per cent of those with a partner or spouse in South Africa had a South African spouse or partner, while 13 per cent of those in the UK had a partner or spouse from the UK. Ten per cent of those in the UK had a spouse or partner from elsewhere as did 6 per cent of those in South Africa. Those in the UK were more likely to have children in the UK than those in South Africa: 45 per cent and 28 per cent, respectively.

## 2.6 Summary

This chapter documented the research design, the main social and demographic characteristics of the sample and reasons for migration. Though, the results of the research cannot be generalized regarding the population of Zimbabweans in the UK and South Africa, the characteristics of the sample show that the diversity in their profiles and the differences between South Africa and the UK are what might be expected from the literature, especially in terms of migration patterns and the reasons for leaving Zimbabwe. However, a comparison of the survey data with other research and secondary sources suggests that this survey over-represents men, although there are sufficient women in the sample to explore the gender dimension. Some of the findings presented in this report replicate or mirror the trends identified by previous research, which suggests that the survey method achieved the key objective of accessing a broad and diverse range of Zimbabweans in the UK and South Africa by networking through a wide range of organizations and individuals.

There was diversity in the survey sample in terms of immigration status. Most notable was the much larger proportion of undocumented migrants in South Africa compared with the UK. Variations in the characteristics of those in the UK and South Africa also differed in terms of the frequency of visits to Zimbabwe, which were more regular among those living in South Africa. This is due, in part, to the geographical proximity, but must also be affected by immigration status, economic and transnational activities (as the report will show) and kinship networks. Although most people had close family in Zimbabwe, a greater proportion of those in South Africa had their spouse/partner and/or children still in Zimbabwe.

Finally, the reasons for migration show different patterns between respondents in the UK and South Africa, especially in terms of the balance between political and economically motivated migration. Nearly two-thirds (63%) of respondents in South Africa had left for economic reasons compared with just over a third (35%) in the UK. A larger proportion of those living in the UK had left Zimbabwe for political reasons (32%) than those living in South Africa (18%). The report will show that the different motivations for migration also impact on the extent and nature of transnational activities.

### **3. QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS BASE ON ARRIVAL IN SOUTH AFRICA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM**

Research carried out by the Home Office with Zimbabwean refugees in the UK found them as a group to be very well qualified, with excellent language and literacy skills and more likely to be employed in high-level jobs than other refugee groups to the UK (Kirk, 2004). Ninety-four per cent of the 386 Zimbabweans in the Home Office survey held a formal qualification on arrival in the UK. The data in this survey mirrors that of the Home Office study with 97 per cent of Zimbabweans arriving in the UK being qualified: 98 per cent of the men and 94 per cent of women held a qualification on arrival. In this chapter, language and literacy, education and qualifications and recent work experience before arriving in South Africa or the UK will be explored to provide a base line of the skills respondents had when they left Zimbabwe.

#### **3.1 Language and literacy skills**

Zimbabweans have high language and literacy skills and the majority were multilingual. The main languages that respondents have knowledge of were Shona, Ndebele and English. Though English is the official language of Zimbabwe, the majority speak either Shona or Ndebele as their main language. In the context of this research, English is especially important as it is the primary official language in South Africa and the official language in the UK. Command of English would therefore have an impact on employment and education opportunities in the receiving country. Being fluent in the language of the country of migration has an important effect on social and economic integration, and is an important factor that, in the UK, has resulted in refugees carrying out jobs that are not commensurate with pre-migration skills and qualifications, or their being unable to access the labour market (Bloch, 2002a).

At 98 per cent,<sup>4</sup> nearly all had knowledge of Shona; 65 per cent spoke the language fluently, 60 per cent could read fluently and 57 per cent could write fluently in that language. Eighty-five per cent had knowledge of Ndebele and 41 per cent could speak it fluently, 39 per cent could read and write it fluently. Nearly everyone in the study had knowledge of English and the findings were similar to the Home Office Survey (Kirk, 2004), which had found that with the exception of a tiny proportion of respondents, Zimbabweans were fluent in all aspects of English or had a fairly good command of the language. In this study,

84 per cent could speak and write, and 86 per cent could read English fluently. An additional 12 per cent spoke English fairly well, 11 per cent wrote English fairly well and 10 per cent read English fairly well. This left a minority of 4 per cent who either spoke or read English poorly or not at all, and 4 per cent who wrote English poorly or not at all. There were differences in English language fluency and literacy by country of origin. While 7 per cent of Zimbabweans in South Africa spoke English slightly or not at all, the proportion in the UK was 1 per cent.

### 3.2 Education and qualifications

The profile of Zimbabweans in South Africa differed from those in the UK, as fewer in South Africa held a formal qualification on arrival there (66% and 97%, respectively). There was also a greater gender differential, with 71.5 per cent of men holding a qualification compared with 52 per cent of women in South Africa, while in the UK there was little difference between men and women (98% and 94%, respectively).

TABLE 6  
HIGHEST LEVEL OF QUALIFICATION ON ARRIVAL  
BY COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE (%)

	UK	South Africa	Total %
Doctorate	2	2	2
Masters	8	7	8
Post-graduate Diploma	7	4	6
Degree	26	16	22
Diploma in Higher Education	21	16	19
Diploma/ professional qualification	3	2	3
National Certificate	4	6	5
'A' levels	13	18	15
Cambridge Higher School Certificate	-	2	1
'O' level	14	23	17
Cambridge School Certificate	1	2	1
Other	1	1	1
Total	484	329	813

Missing: 33

Those living in the UK with qualifications were more geographically mobile in terms of their pre-migration education than those in South Africa. Nineteen per cent of those who arrived in the UK with a qualification had obtained it from outside Zimbabwe, compared with 9 per cent of those in South Africa. There were also variations between respondents in South Africa and the UK regarding the highest level of qualifications held. Table 6 shows that a larger proportion of those in the UK had a degree or a diploma in higher education, while those in South Africa were more likely to hold an “O” level as their highest qualification.

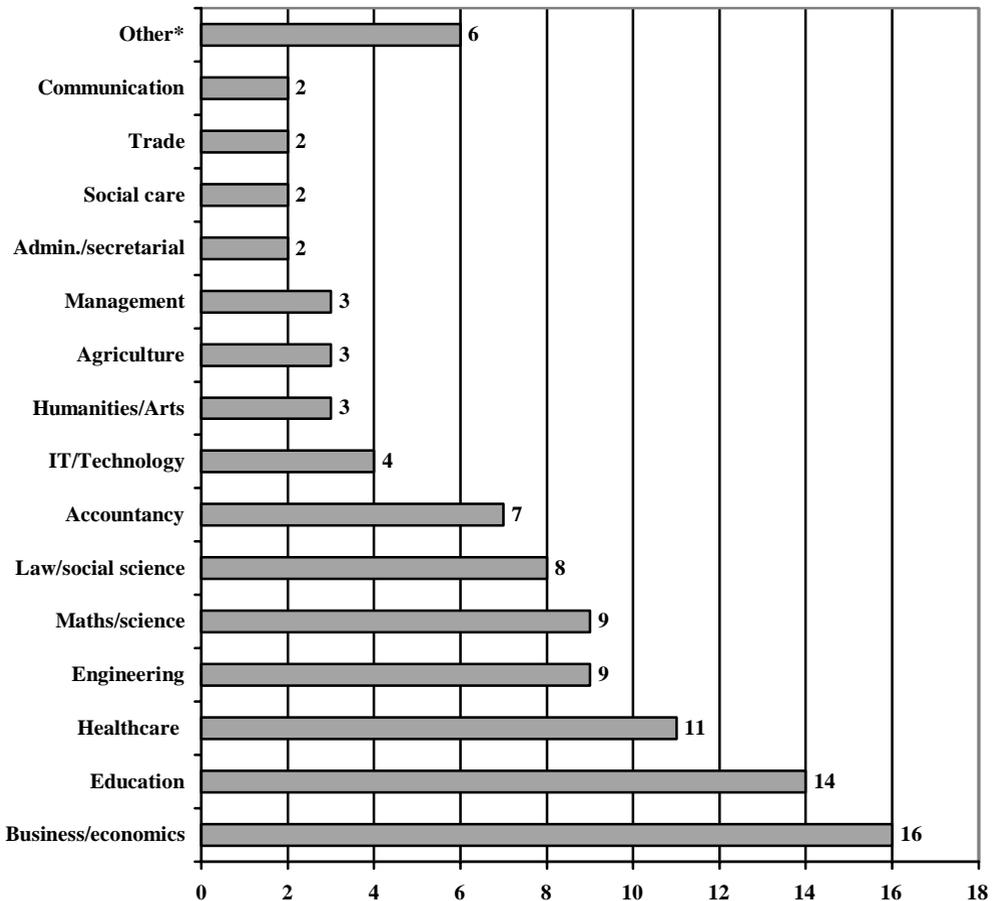
Table 6 shows that nearly two-thirds (64%) of Zimbabweans in the UK, and 45 per cent of those in South Africa arrived with a minimum qualification of a diploma in higher education, ranking them among the educational elite from Zimbabwe. Locating the qualifications of migrants within the context of a 3.9 average rate of enrolment in tertiary education in Zimbabwe serves to amplify the prevalence of the brain drain (<http://www.nationmaster.com/country/zi/People>).

Data for the subject or title of the qualification among those whose highest qualification was a diploma in higher education and above, as well as a professional diploma or qualification, are shown in Figure 6 (overleaf). The data show the emigration of those trained in the healthcare professions, teachers, engineers, those with expertise in economics and business and maths and science. The skills loss reported by the SIRSC survey (Chetsanga and Muchemje, 2003) also found that these were the main areas in which emigrants had been trained.

There was some variation in the subject of educational and health related qualifications between those living in the UK and in South Africa. Nineteen per cent of those in South Africa with qualifications had teaching qualifications, compared with 11 per cent in the UK. Those in the UK were much more likely to have health related qualifications than those in South Africa, 14 per cent and 3 per cent, respectively. In the UK 24 respondents had arrived with a nursing qualification, 11 as qualified doctors, three as physiotherapists and two as radiographers and one as pharmacist.

There were variations by sex in terms of the subject areas of qualifications. Men were more likely than women to be qualified in engineering (13% and 2%, respectively) while a larger proportion of women than men were nurses (15% and 3%, respectively). However, men made up the majority of the other health care professionals.

FIGURE 6  
TITLE OR SUBJECT OF HIGHEST QUALIFICATION (%)



Base number: 446

Missing: 33

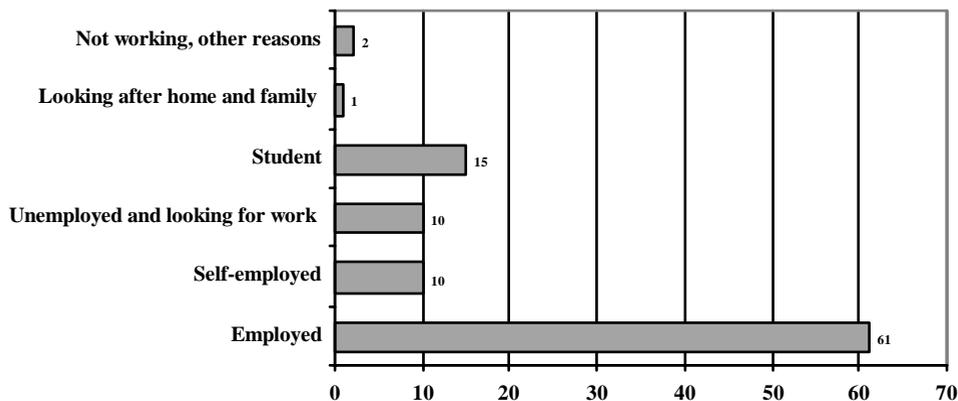
Other\* includes journalism, tourism and travel, people who have joint qualifications.

### 3.3 Main activity before arriving in the UK or South Africa

Nearly everyone in the sample had been born in Zimbabwe (96%) and of those born elsewhere, 85 per cent had lived in Zimbabwe. Only six respondents had never lived outside of either South Africa or the UK. The survey set out to establish the main activity prior to migration of those who had lived outside of

either the UK or South Africa. Figure 7 shows that 71 per cent of respondents were working either as employees or were self-employed before leaving Zimbabwe. However, 10 per cent had been unemployed and looking for work.

FIGURE 7  
MAIN ACTIVITY BEFORE GOING TO THE UK OR SOUTH AFRICA (%)



Base number: 979  
Missing: 15

One of the main differences between the South African and UK respondents was the larger proportion in South Africa who had been unemployed: 17 per cent and 3 per cent, respectively. This also reflects the main reasons for leaving Zimbabwe, which were more likely to be economically motivated among those in South Africa than those in the UK (see Table 5). A larger proportion of women in South Africa (24%) than men (14%) had been unemployed in Zimbabwe.

In addition to the 71 per cent who had been working before their migration, a further 9 per cent had at some point had a paid job before migrating to the UK or South Africa. Information about most recent employment was obtained from all those who had had a job before going to the UK or South Africa.

### Area of employment and job title

The largest proportion had worked in education, health and social work, and financial services as shown in Table 7.

TABLE 7  
AREA OF EMPLOYMENT

	Frequency	%
Education	127	16.5
Health/social work	79	10
Financial	70	9
Construction/engineering	65	8.5
Manufacturing/production	61	8
Agriculture	61	8
Wholesale/retail	46	6
Transport	44	6
Business	44	6
Public administration	31	4
Mining	28	4
Media and communication	26	3
Hotel/restaurant	22	3
Voluntary/community	12	2
Police/private security/military	14	2
Information technology	6	1
*Other	32	4
Total	768	101

Missing:20

\*Other includes cleaning and domestic, legal, tourism and travel.

The jobs held before migrating varied, though Table 8 shows some clustering in managerial jobs, teaching, administration and clerical work and finance. There were also some differences in employment among those who then went to the UK and South Africa. In particular, those who had been managers were more likely to migrate to the UK, while those in unskilled work, such as domestic work, agricultural labourers and street hawkers were more likely to go to South Africa. This reflects the higher educational levels among some migrants to the UK compared with South Africa.

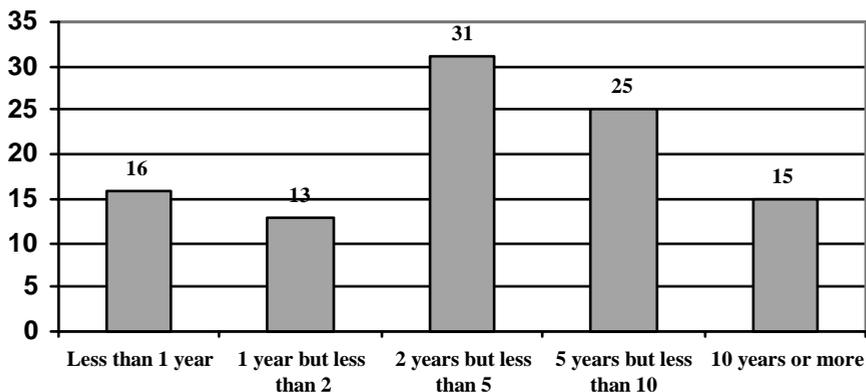
Nearly everyone who had been working, or had worked at some point before migrating, had done so in Zimbabwe (92%). Among the remaining 8 per cent, 4 per cent had worked most recently in South Africa, while the remaining 4 per cent had worked in a number of different countries, including the UK, Botswana,

TABLE 8  
TITLE OF JOB OR MOST RECENT JOB BEFORE MIGRATING,  
BY COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE (FREQUENCIES)

	UK	South Africa	All
All managerial, including managing directors	89	44	133
Teachers	49	34	83
Administration and clerical	34	22	56
Finance: clerks, cashiers, other	29	21	50
Trade	9	24	33
Lecturers	12	13	25
Secretary/PA	20	5	25
Engineering	14	10	24
Technicians/lab assistants	13	8	21
Retail: sales, cashiers and shop assistants	9	11	20
Nurse/sister	17	3	20
Accountants	16	3	19
Factory/production operatives	5	13	18
Agricultural labourers	1	16	17
IT	10	4	14
Hawkers/street vendors	0	13	13
Health other (including radiographer, pharmacist)	11	1	12
Security guards	2	9	11
Media/communications	7	4	11
Drivers	1	10	11
Consultants/analysts	9	2	11
Doctors	9	0	9
Police officers	3	5	8
Legal	6	2	8
Research assistants	5	3	8
Domestic/cleaning	1	6	7
General labourers	0	6	6
Scientists	5	1	6
Surveyors/architects	4	2	6
Social worker	5	0	5
Financial consultants/analysts	4	1	5
Farmers	0	5	5
Receptionists	3	2	5
Miners	0	5	5
Chef/cook/caterer	1	3	4
Other transport	2	2	4
Human resources	3	1	4
Bar/waiter	0	3	3
Geologists	2	1	3
Career/care assistant	3	0	3
Environmental health	2	1	3
Dean/principles (education)	3	0	3
Armed forces	1	1	2
Gardeners	0	2	2
Teaching assistant	1	0	1
Marketing	1	0	1
Other	11	4	15
Total	432	326	758

the USA, Malawi, Namibia, Swaziland, Ireland, Sudan and Egypt. The majority of those who had worked had a great deal of experience in their most recent job, as shown in Figure 8.

FIGURE 8  
DURATION OF JOB OR MOST RECENT JOB BEFORE MIGRATING TO THE UK OR SOUTH AFRICA (%)

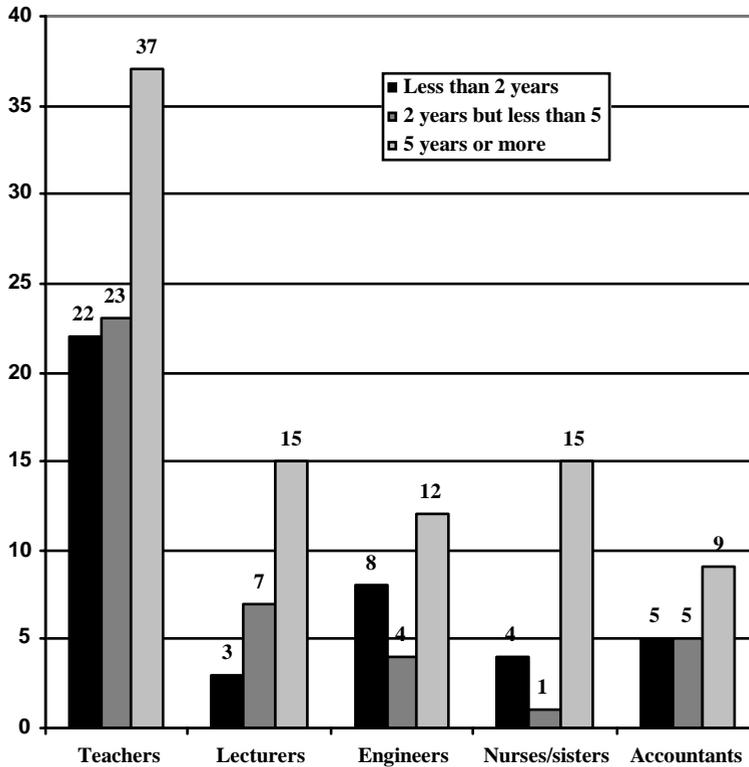


Base number: 770  
Missing: 17

An analysis of the length of time in a job according to job title reveals the depth of experience among some of those working in the professions. Taking as examples teachers, engineers, lecturers, accountants and nurses, Figure 9 shows the extent of the respondents' experience in their careers by the length of time they had been working in their most recent job.

Job titles and length of time in employment help to show the level of skills that those who have left Zimbabwe have taken with them. In the next chapter, the report will examine the extent to which people are capacity building or losing skills in their country of residence.

FIGURE 9  
 DURATION OF JOB OR MOST RECENT JOB BEFORE MIGRATING  
 BY SELECTED JOB TITLES (FREQUENCIES)



### 3.4 Summary

This chapter has shown the high skills base that Zimbabweans had on arrival to either the UK or South Africa. The majority of respondents were multilingual and most spoke and read English fluently, in addition to Shona and/or Ndebele, had one or more qualifications and substantial experience in their professions and jobs before arriving in their country of current residence. There were differences in the skills and qualifications base among those in the UK and South Africa. On the whole, those in the UK had higher levels of skills and qualifications than those in South Africa.

While nearly all respondents in the UK had a formal qualification on arrival, among those in South Africa the proportion was just over two-thirds. In the UK there were negligible differences between men and women in terms of qualifications, while in South Africa there was a disparity with men more likely than women to hold a qualification. The level of qualifications was also high, especially in relation to the levels of qualifications held in Zimbabwe, which replicates research that highlights the “brain drain” of the highly skilled from Zimbabwe.

Thirty-eight per cent arrived in either the UK or South Africa with a first degree or post-graduate qualification. Those with advanced qualifications were most likely to have them in business, education or health subjects. Again, Zimbabweans in the UK were more likely than those in South Africa to hold a high-level qualification (first degree or higher).

The data showed that Zimbabweans arrived in their country of residence with a great deal of previous employment experience – 71 per cent had been working, and 10 per cent were unemployed and looking for work which, within the context of the Zimbabwean labour market, demonstrates that this group of migrants were disproportionately economically active. Most of the 10 per cent who had been unemployed had gone to South Africa for economic reasons.

Those who had been working were most often active in education, health and social work and the financial industries and the largest proportion had been working at a managerial level or higher. A larger proportion of those who had worked in professional jobs were in the UK, while a larger proportion of skilled workers (e.g. carpenters, electricians), semi-skilled and unskilled manual labourers were in South Africa. This reflects their different educational backgrounds, but linked to this is the different resource base required to move from Zimbabwe to the UK compared with South Africa.

Although the data demonstrate that migration from Zimbabwe comprised a disproportionately high number of the country’s educated and skilled professionals and therefore reflects the brain drain out of Zimbabwe, it also shows the differing characteristics of Zimbabweans in the UK and South Africa. Zimbabweans in the UK are the educationally and skilled elite and this links in with their greater propensity to be politically active and to have the social and economic capital necessary for long-distance migration. In the next chapter, the way in which these differences impact on education and employment in their country of residence will be explored.

## **4. CAPACITY BUILDING OR SKILLS LOSS? EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT IN THE UK AND SOUTH AFRICA**

This chapter examines the educational and employment experiences of respondents in the country of residence and explores these experiences within the context of the skills that Zimbabweans brought on arrival in order to see whether there has been a loss or maintenance of skills, or capacity building among emigrants.

### **4.1 Qualifications obtained in the UK and South Africa**

Thirty-nine per cent of respondents had obtained a qualification in the UK or South Africa. Men were slightly more likely than women to have obtained a qualification (40% and 35%, respectively). The main differentiating factor was country. While more than half (54%) of those living in the UK had obtained a qualification, in South Africa the proportion was 24 per cent. A higher proportion of men in both the UK and South Africa had obtained a qualification (55% and 51%, in the UK, and 26% and 21% in South Africa, respectively).

Arriving in the UK or South Africa with a qualification increased the likelihood of obtaining one in the country of residence. While 45 per cent of those who had arrived with a qualification had obtained one since emigrating, only 9 per cent of those who had no qualifications on arrival had done so.

The length of time that had elapsed since living continuously in Zimbabwe also affected the propensity to acquire a new qualification. The longer someone had lived outside of Zimbabwe the more likely they were to have studied and obtained a qualification. Sixty-two per cent of those who had last lived continuously in Zimbabwe in 1993 or earlier had obtained a qualification, compared with 49 per cent of those last living in Zimbabwe between 1994 and 1999, 42 per cent who last lived in Zimbabwe between 2000 and 2002, and 21 per cent of those who had last lived in Zimbabwe in 2003 or 2004. Linked to this was the fact that a larger proportion of those who left Zimbabwe in 2000 or later had been studying at the time of the survey and had not therefore acquired their new qualification (see Table 11).

## Level of qualification obtained in the UK and South Africa

Table 9 shows the level of qualifications that respondents had obtained in the UK and South Africa. In the UK nearly half (48%) had obtained a post-graduate qualification, while in South Africa the proportion was 43 per cent. Table 9 shows that those who had participated in education had done so at a very high level.

TABLE 9

HIGHEST LEVEL OF QUALIFICATION OBTAINED BY COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE (%)

	UK	South Africa	Total %
Doctorate	6	2	5
M.A.	22	26	23
Post-graduate diploma	20	15	18
Degree	21	28	23
Diploma/ professional qualification	27	8	22
National certificate/'A' levels	2	10	4
'O' level/General Education Training Certificate	2	9	4
Other	-	3	1
Total	266	114	380

Missing:9

Thirty-six per cent of respondents had a qualification on arrival and had obtained one in their country of residence. A comparison of the level of qualifications people had on arrival with those they obtained in the UK and South Africa shows an element of progression or capacity building. Table 10 examines the qualifications on arrival and explores them in relation to the highest qualifications obtained in the UK and South Africa.<sup>5</sup> Notable in terms of progression are the 48 respondents who had a bachelor's degree on arrival in the UK or South Africa and had since obtained a master's degree, and the four who had obtained a Doctorate. An additional 65 respondents who arrived in the UK or South Africa with a National Certificate or "A" level qualifications had since obtained a degree or higher.

TABLE 10  
HIGHEST LEVEL OF QUALIFICATION ON ARRIVAL  
BY HIGHEST QUALIFICATION OBTAINED (FREQUENCIES)

Highest qualification obtained in the UK or South Africa						
Highest qualification on arrival	Doctorate	Masters	Post-graduate diploma	First Degree	Diploma professional qualification	National certificate 'A' levels
Doctorate	3	1	1	-	1	0
Masters	5	10	3	3	2	1
Post-graduate diploma	1	5	8	1	5	-
First degree	4	48	22	12	15	-
Diploma/professional qualification	-	1	3	4	5	-
Diploma in higher education	1	6	11	17	18	1
National certificate, 'A' levels	3	14	16	32	17	2
Cambridge Higher School Certificate	-	-	-	3	-	1
O'level	-	3	6	9	12	6
Total	17	88	70	81	75	11

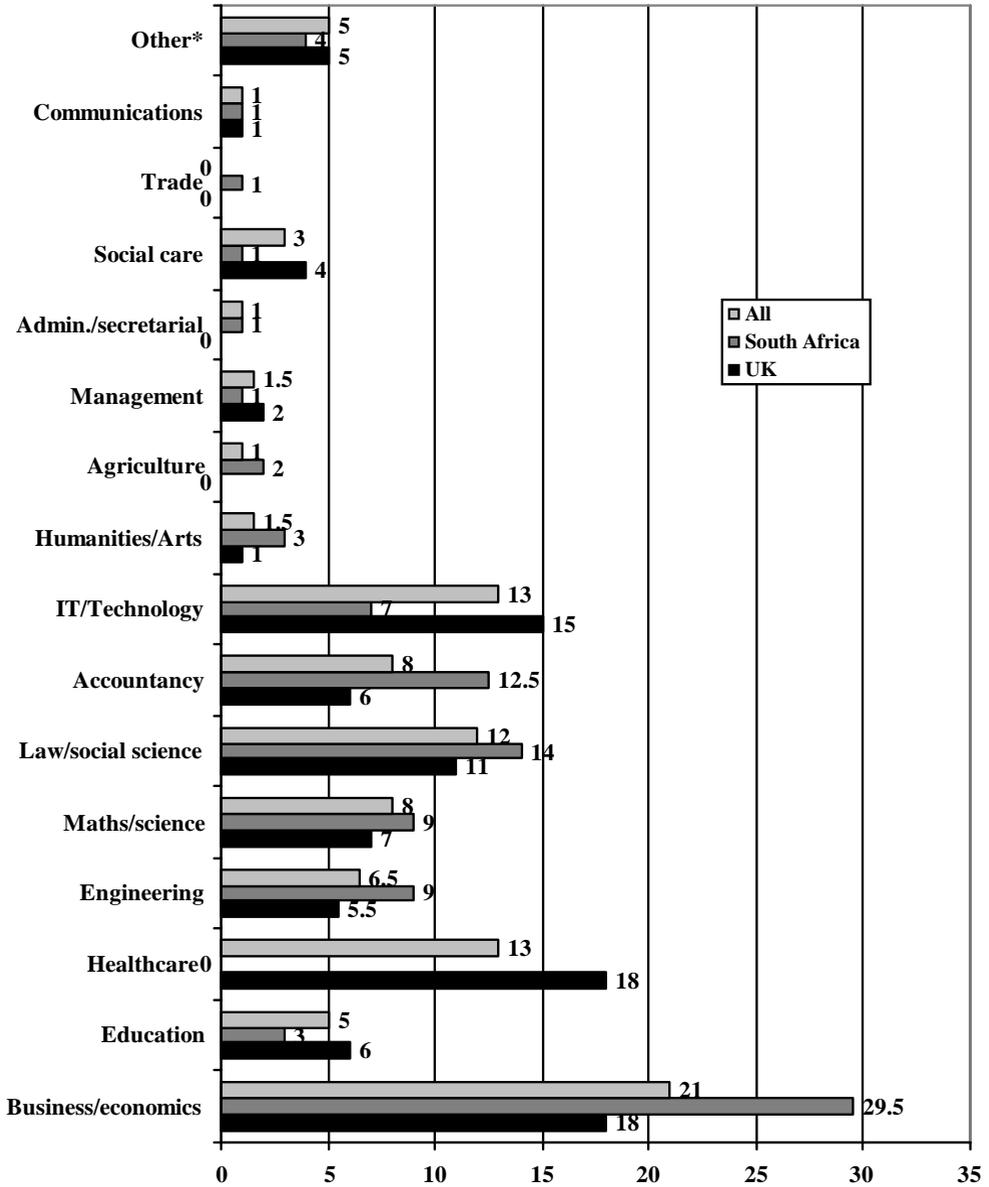
Base number: 342

### **Subject or title of highest qualification obtained in the UK or South Africa**

The subject or title of the qualification for those who had obtained a first degree, post-graduate or professional qualification, was examined. Figure 10 (overleaf) shows the differences between the UK and South Africa. Twelve per cent of those living in the UK had studied for health care related qualifications, the majority of whom were nurses or midwives (33 out of 42 people). Respondents living in South Africa were more likely to have studied for business or economics qualifications.

There was some replication of the subject area of the qualification on arrival and those obtained in the UK and South Africa. For example, 18 people had business or economics qualifications from two countries, 12 had engineering qualifications, eight had qualifications in education, eight in accountancy and four in nursing. There was progression in terms of the level of qualification

FIGURE 10  
 TITLE OR SUBJECT OF HIGHEST QUALIFICATION OBTAINED  
 IN THE COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE (%)



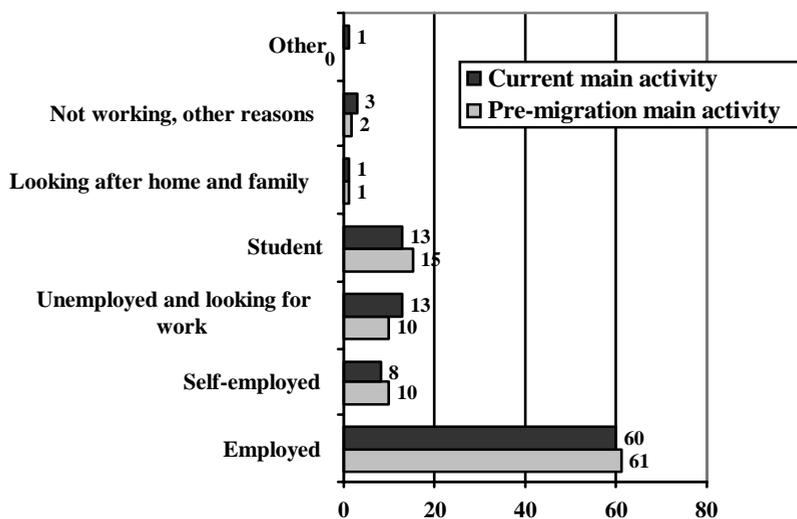
Base number UK: 237  
 Base number South Africa: 88  
 Base number: 325

obtained among some respondents, but others had also taken lower level qualifications and some had obtained qualifications at the same level. For some there was capacity building through higher level qualifications, while for others there was no evidence of this.

## 4.2 Main activity at the time of the survey

At the time of the survey, 60 per cent were employed and a further 8 per cent were self-employed. Figure 11 compares the main activity in the UK and South Africa with that prior to emigration. The figure shows little difference in activities between the two places of residence.

FIGURE 11  
CURRENT AND PRE-MIGRATION MAIN ACTIVITY (%)



Base number pre-migration: 979

Missing: 15

Base number in South Africa and the UK: 971

Missing: 29

Where key differences come into play are the different activities among those living in South Africa and those living in the UK. While 73 per cent of respondents in the UK were employed or self-employed, in South Africa the proportion was 64 per cent. While only 4 per cent in the UK were unemployed and looking for work, 22 per cent of respondents in South Africa were in this situation. A larger proportion of those not working for other reasons were in the UK than South Africa (5% and 1.5%, respectively) due to their immigration status in the UK that excludes asylum seekers from working legally.

Length of time since last living continuously in Zimbabwe affected the main activity in South Africa or the UK. The more striking difference was the large proportion of the more recent arrivals to South Africa who were unemployed and looking for work. Table 11 shows that those who left Zimbabwe in 2000 or later were less likely to be working than those who had left in 1999 or earlier. Among those in South Africa, nearly a third (31%) of the more recent arrivals were unemployed and looking for work. In both the UK and South Africa a larger proportion of more recent arrivals were students.

TABLE 11  
MAIN ACTIVITY ACCORDING TO LAST CONTINUOUS RESIDENCE IN ZIMBABWE  
BY COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE (%)

	UK		South Africa		Total (nos.)
	1999 or earlier	2000 or later	1999 or earlier	2000 or later	
Employed/ self-employed	83	69	85	52	626
Unemployed and looking for work	1	5	7	31	119
Student	11	18	5	14	120
Looking after home and family	0	1	1	1	9
Not working, other reasons	4	6	1	2	30
Other	2	1	1	1	9
Total (nos.)	161	303	157	292	913

When the current activity in South Africa and the UK is correlated with the main reason for leaving Zimbabwe, it shows that 16 per cent of those who left for economic reasons (because of the economic situation in Zimbabwe, lack of

employment opportunities and for work) were unemployed and looking for work. Among those in the UK, the proportion was 3 per cent while for those in South Africa it was 25 per cent.

Labour market activity was also affected by immigration status. Asylum seekers cannot work legally in the UK and have only recently been able to work in South Africa, which meant that they had lower levels of labour market participation than others. In the UK, 26 per cent of asylum seekers and those appealing against a Home Office decision were working, and as such were working irregularly. In South Africa, the proportion was 45 per cent.

Undocumented migrants were only slightly less likely to be working than the average for the sample as a whole – 66 per cent were working. However, the disparity by immigration status becomes more apparent when the data for those with secure status (citizens, residents, refugees and those with indefinite leave to remain) are considered, revealing that 85 per cent of this group were working at the time of the survey. This reflects research carried out with refugees that show the relationship between immigration status and labour market participation (Bloch, 2002b).

### **4.3 Labour market activity**

Of those who were neither employed nor self-employed at the time of the survey, 46 per cent had held a paid job in the UK or South Africa. This provided information about current or most recent employment data on industry and jobs for 81 per cent of the sample. Of those who were working or had worked in the past, a quarter had been working in more than one job.

#### **Industry of employment and job title**

Table 12 (overleaf) shows the industry of employment before migration to and in South Africa and the UK. It reveals some shifts in the industry of employment, most notably away from education and into health and social work or agriculture.

There were differences in the industry of employment by country of residence. A larger proportion of Zimbabweans in South Africa were employed in agriculture than in any other industry (29%) while in the UK the largest single industry of employment was health and social work. Thirty-eight per cent were

TABLE 12  
INDUSTRY OF EMPLOYMENT, PRE-MIGRATION AND AT THE TIME  
OF THE SURVEY (%)

	Pre-migration	In the UK or South Africa
Education	16.5	9
Health/social work	10	22
Financial	9	7
Construction/engineering	8.5	5
Manufacturing/production	8	7
Agriculture	8	14
Wholesale/retail	6	7
Transport	6	3
Business	6	5
Public administration	4	3
Mining	4	1
Media and communications	3	2
Hotel/restaurant	3	6
Voluntary/community	2	2
Police/private security/military	2	1
Information technology	1	1
Cleaning/domestic	1	2
*Other	3	4
Total	768	781

Missing pre-migration: 20

Missing UK and South Africa: 37

\*Other includes legal, tourism and travel, beauty and health.

working in health and social work at the time of the survey or in their most recent job. Similar proportions were working in education in the UK and South Africa (9% and 8%, respectively).

There were also differences in industry of employment between men and women. A higher proportion of men were involved in the agricultural industry than women (16% and 9%, respectively). Women were much more likely to be working in health and social work than men (35% and 17%, respectively). Country of residence and gender also interacted. Fifty-six per cent of women living in the UK who were working at the time of the survey, or had worked in the past, had been in the health and social work sectors.

An examination of job titles shows a change in the employment for some since migrating. Table 13 (overleaf) shows job title before coming to the UK or South Africa relative to current or most recent job title for those who are not currently working but have worked in their current country of residence.

The major changes between work prior to migration and current or most recent employment in the UK or South Africa concerned the decrease in the numbers working as teachers, managers and in the trades, and the increase in those working as agricultural labourers, carers or care assistants, nurses, consultants and analysts and as bar tenders/waiters. Clearly the majority are not transferring their skills from one country to another and there are notable downward shifts in job levels. Taking teaching as an example because it shows the largest decrease in numbers, reveals the occupational downgrading of some people. Of the 83 teachers who were working or had worked in this profession before emigrating, 60 were working or had worked in either the UK or South Africa. Of those only 18 were working as teachers. Other areas of work mentioned most often were care/care assistant work (7), factory/production operative (4), agricultural labourers (2), cleaning/domestic (2), sports coach (2), teaching assistants (2), financial clerk (2), accountant (2), retail sales/cashier (2). There was little evidence of career progression, though one person was working as a lecturer.

Looking at changes from the perspective of jobs done at the time of the survey, or most recently, also shows some downward occupational mobility and shifts in the area of work. For example, those working as carers came from a range of employment backgrounds, including managerial positions (13), teaching (7), finance (5) and administration (3). Only one person had been a carer before emigrating. They were also very well qualified, as an examination of pre-migration and post migration qualifications shows. Of the 60 respondents who were working or had been working in their most recent job as a carer or care assistant, 57 had a qualification on arrival and 29 had obtained a qualification in the UK. Of those with a qualification on arrival, 12 had a degree or higher, and 15 had a diploma in higher education. Sixteen had obtained a qualification since emigrating, including one Ph.D, six at M.A. level and seven had obtained a B.A. degree.

Nursing was an area where people had retrained and found employment. For some it represented career progression, while for others it represented downward mobility. Fifty people were working as nurses or had worked as a nurse in their most recent job. Of those who were nurses in their current country of residence, 14 had been nurses before emigrating. Other areas of work included

TABLE 13  
JOB TITLE BEFORE MIGRATING AND CURRENT OR MOST RECENT JOB TITLE  
(FREQUENCIES)

	Job before emigrating	Current or most recent job title	Increase (+) or decrease (-)
All managerial, including managing directors	133	88	-45
Teachers	83	33	-50
Administration and clerical	56	42	-14
Finance: clerks, cashiers, other	50	32	-18
Trade	33	11	-22
Lecturers	25	15	-10
Secretary/PA	25	15	-10
Engineering	24	18	-6
Technicians/lab assistants	21	12	-9
Retail: sales, cashiers and shop assistants	20	19	-1
Nurse/sister	20	50	+30
Accountants	19	14	-5
Factory/production operatives	18	26	+8
Agricultural labourers	17	81	+64
IT	14	8	-6
Hawkers/street vendors	13	25	+12
Health other (including radiographer, pharmacist)	12	11	-1
Security guards	11	20	+9
Media/communications	11	4	-7
Drivers	11	14	-3
Consultants/analysts	11	36	+25
Doctors	9	9	0
Police officers	8	0	-8
Legal	8	6	-2
Researchers	8	6	-2
Domestic/cleaning	7	15	+8
General labourers	6	5	-1
Scientists	6	5	-1
Surveyors/architects	6	5	-1
Social worker	5	13	+8
Financial consultants/analysts	5	3	-2
Farmers	5	2	-3
Receptionists	5	4	-1
Miners	5	2	-3
Chef/cook/caterer	4	8	+4
Other transport	4	1	-3
Human resources	4	4	0
Bar/waiter	3	24	+21
Geologists	3	0	-3
Carer/care assistant	3	60	+57
Environmental health	3	1	-2
Dean/principals (education)	3	0	-3
Armed forces	2	0	-2
Gardeners	2	2	0
Teaching assistant	1	4	+3
Marketing	1	3	+2
Other	15	19	+4
Total	758	775	

TABLE 14  
CURRENT OR MOST RECENT JOB TITLE BY COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE  
(FREQUENCIES)

	UK	South Africa	All
All managerial, including managing directors	43	45	88
Teachers	24	9	33
Administration and clerical	29	13	42
Finance: clerks, cashiers, other	21	11	32
Trades	1	10	11
Lecturers	4	11	15
Secretary/PA	10	5	15
Engineering	15	3	18
Technicians/lab assistants	8	4	12
Retail: sales, cashiers and shop assistants	9	10	19
Nurse/sister	49	1	50
Accountants	8	6	14
Factory/production operatives	24	2	26
Agricultural labourers	1	80	81
IT	2	6	8
Hawkers/street vendors	0	25	25
Health other (including radiographer, pharmacist)	11	0	11
Security guards	3	17	20
Media/communications	2	2	4
Drivers	6	8	14
Consultants/analysts	21	15	36
Doctors	9	0	9
Legal	3	3	6
Researchers	4	2	6
Domestic/cleaning	5	10	15
General labourers	3	2	5
Scientists	5	0	5
Surveyors/architects	5	0	5
Social worker	13	0	13
Financial consultants/analysts	2	1	3
Farmers	0	2	2
Receptionists	2	2	4
Miners	0	2	2
Chef/cook/caterer	3	5	8
Other transport	1	0	1
Human resources	1	3	4
Bar/waiter	8	16	24
Carer/care assistant	58	2	60
Environmental health	1	0	1
Gardeners	0	2	2
Teaching assistant	1	3	4
Marketing	3	0	3
Other	13	6	19
Total	431	344	775

finance (6), administration (6), retail sales and cashier work (3), management positions (2), trades (2), a carer/care assistant (1), teacher (1), dean of a nursing school (1), scientist (1) lecturer (1) and engineer (1). It is clear therefore that among nurses both deskilling and some capacity building was taking place.

Some people were able to use their skills in the country of residence. For example, of the nine respondents who were doctors before emigrating, seven were working as doctors in their country of residence and six of the engineers were still working as engineers, but this was not the usual pattern.

There were clear trends in terms of areas of employment between the UK and South Africa. In the UK the largest number of Zimbabweans are employed as carers and care assistants, followed by nursing. In South Africa agricultural labourers make up the largest single employment sector (Table 14, previous page).

What is very clear is the clustering in a few types of employment in the UK and South Africa. There was a gender and, to a lesser extent, a regional dimension to area of employment. All nine doctors were men, while more of the nurses were women (31 and 19, respectively). Men were more likely to be agricultural labourers than women (60 and 20, respectively) managers (73 and 15, respectively), factory and production operatives (24 and 2, respectively) and teachers (23 and 10, respectively). In terms of region, of the 80 people who were working as agricultural labourers in South Africa, 76 were based in the Limpopo province and 72 of these were undocumented migrants. This is not surprising given that it is a border province where people from Zimbabwe go to find agricultural work.

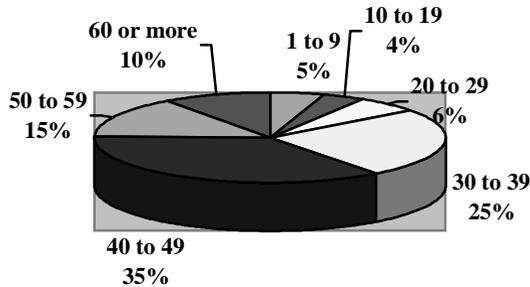
## **Hours of work and pay**

Some people were working very long hours or had worked very long hours in their last job. Figure 12 shows the number of hours worked each week.

Fifteen per cent worked less than 20 hours a week, while 25 per cent worked 50 hours or more a week on average. More than a third (36%) who worked 50 hours a week or more held more than one job.

Certain industries were associated with longer hours of work. In order to ensure that there was no bias in terms of hours worked where respondents held more than one job, they were filtered out. The two largest sectors of employ-

FIGURE 12  
 AVERAGE TOTAL NUMBER OF HOURS WORKED EACH WEEK



Base number: 812  
 Missing: 6

ment were associated with the longest hours. Twenty-eight per cent who worked in agriculture worked 50 or more hours a week as agricultural labourers, and 21 per cent who worked in health and social work were working 50 or more hours a week as carers and care assistants.

Respondents were asked about their take-home pay, the last time they were paid and the period of time covered. In order to make the data comparable across cases, all the income data were standardized to a monthly figure. Nearly three-quarters gave a figure for their last pay based on a monthly salary. The differences in the amounts people were paid were very large. In the UK, the mean monthly income was GBP 1,535 with a standard deviation of GBP 794. In South Africa the mean income was 6,521 SA Rands (ZAR) with a standard deviation of ZAR 8,089.<sup>6</sup> Table 15 (overleaf) shows the monthly rates of pay in the UK and South Africa.

Rates of pay were a function of many factors, including the number of hours worked. However, some respondents were working long hours for very low pay, which was most apparent in South Africa in the case of agricultural labourers. Ninety per cent of those earning less than ZAR 500 a month were working in agriculture, of which a third were working more than 50 hours a week, and a third were working between 40 and 49 hours a week.

TABLE 15  
MONTHLY RATES OF PAY, GBP AND ZAR

Monthly pay UK (GBP)	GBP
Less than 499	4
500 but less than 1,000	20
1,000 but less than 1,500	29
1,500 but less than 2,000	23
2,000 but less than 2,500	11
2,500 or more	13
Total: 440	
Missing: 14	
Monthly pay South Africa (ZAR)	Rand (ZAR)
Less than 500	22
500 but less than 1,000	14
1,000 but less than 2,000	10
2,000 but less than 5,000	14
5,000 but less than 10,000	13
1,0000 or more	27
Total: 308	
Missing: 53	

#### 4.4 Skills that remain unused in the UK and South Africa

When asked whether they had any educational or employment experience that they were unable to use in the UK or South Africa, 38 per cent responded in the affirmative. What is striking is the extent to which people did not really identify their skills as not being utilized, which contrasts with the data on job titles that show that people are not necessarily working in jobs commensurate with their skills and experience, and that there has been a subtle though apparent downward shift in occupational status.

Among those who had unused skills, most frequent mention was made of education (17%), finance (16%) and administration and clerical work or engineering and science related skills (8%). There was little overall difference in the proportions of men and women with unused skills: 39 per cent and 35 per cent, respectively. Similar proportions of men and women were not using their educational skills (17% and 19%, respectively) or their skills in finance, sales and

banking (16% and 17%, respectively). Differences by gender sex were apparent in the particular types of skills. Among women who stated having unused skills, 17 per cent had administration and clerical experience and 14 per cent had nursing and health related experience. Men identified experience in the trades (9%), engineering (9%) and in information technology and technology (6%).

There were differences also between the UK and South Africa. Exactly half of those living in the UK said that they had unused skills compared with around a quarter in South Africa (26%). Table 16 shows the skills areas that respondents were unable to use in the UK and South Africa. In the UK people were less able than those in South Africa to use their management experience, while in South Africa a greater proportion were unable to use their expertise in a trade.

TABLE 16  
SKILL AREAS UNUSED BY COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE (%)

	UK	South Africa	Total %
Education	16	20	17
Management	9	2	7
Legal	2.5	1	2
Finance, sales and banking	16.5	15.5	16
Administration/clerical	7.5	10	8
Engineering and science	9	5	8
IT and technology	5.5	2	4
Security/police	0.5	3	1
Tourism/hotel management	3	4	4
Agriculture	4	4	4
Driving	0.5	3	4
Retail/general services	3	7	4
Trades	5	11	7
Health professionals	7	6	6
Media, communications and publishing	3.5	1	3
Social and care work	1	0	1
Mining	1	1	1
*Other	6	3	4
Total	200	97	297

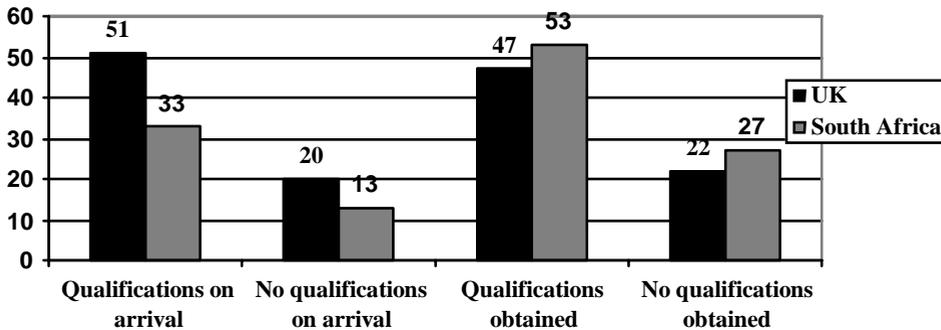
Missing: 67

\*Other includes: a statistician, quantity surveyor and urban planner.

The length of time since last living continuously in Zimbabwe had an effect on whether someone had been unable to use available skills in the UK or South Africa. The more recent migrants were less likely to be using their skills than those who had been living outside Zimbabwe longer. While 29 per cent of those who last lived continuously in Zimbabwe in 1999 or earlier had skills they were unable to use, among those who arrived in 2000 or after the proportion was 43 per cent.

An examination of qualifications on arrival and qualifications obtained in either the UK or South Africa shows that the main differences between the countries are among those who arrived with qualifications, as shown in Figure 13.

FIGURE 13  
 PROPORTION WITH UNUSED SKILLS BY QUALIFICATIONS ON ARRIVAL  
 AND OBTAINED BY COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE (%)



Base number qualifications on arrival: 966  
 Missing: 34  
 Base number qualifications obtained: 963  
 Missing: 37

Figure 13 shows that more than half (51%) of those who said they had unused skills arrived in the UK with a qualification compared to a third in South Africa. Less difference was evident among those who had acquired a qualification in the UK or South Africa, though a larger proportion in South Africa than in the UK of those who had obtained a new qualification there said they had skills that they had been unable to use.

## 4.5 Summary

This chapter has shown that 39 per cent of respondents had obtained a qualification in their country of residence, and that more had done so in the UK compared with those in South Africa. More than two-thirds (69%) of those who had obtained a qualification had obtained a first degree or higher. There was some capacity building in terms of the level of qualifications obtained, especially among those who had arrived in their current country of residence with a degree and had since obtained a post-graduate diploma, a master's degree or a doctorate. The subject areas in which respondents had most often achieved a professional qualification, a first degree or a post-graduate qualification were business and economics, healthcare, IT and technology, law and the social sciences.

The survey data showed that the main activity varied little between the country of residence and the main activity before emigration, with similar proportions working, studying or being unemployed and looking for work. At the time of the survey, 68 per cent were employed or self-employed, 13 per cent were unemployed and looking for work, a further 3 per cent were not allowed to work mainly due to their immigration status, and 13 per cent were studying. There were differences between the UK and South Africa with unemployment levels much higher in South Africa.

Among those who had worked in the UK or South Africa, health and social work and agriculture were the two main sectors of employment, and within those most worked as agricultural labourers, carers and care assistants or nurses. There was evidence of downward occupational mobility and, to a lesser extent, some capacity building in terms of job titles. However, the level of unskilled and semi-skilled work had definitely increased. This pattern of employment, especially away from some of the key professions, such as education, and into semi-skilled and unskilled work has implications for the individual in terms of levels of income and skills loss, and for both the sending and receiving countries.

The sending countries will lose out if migrants return with a lower skills base than when they left. Moreover, low paid work reduces the amount of economic and other remittances that are sent back to Zimbabwe. The downward occupational mobility affects earnings and therefore the amount of taxes paid in the country of residence. This also means that migrants are not filling the gaps in the labour market for which they are qualified. This results in lost opportunities

for the receiving countries as they are not maximizing the potential labour force. In the UK, for example, the teacher shortage could be addressed, at least in part, by employing those who are already qualified as teachers or financing fast-track courses to convert qualifications that would then enable rapid entry into the labour market.

## **5. TRANSNATIONAL AND DIASPORIC LINKS**

This chapter explores the transnational activities of Zimbabweans and the nature of those activities in the country of residence, in Zimbabwe and with other Zimbabweans in the diaspora.

In Chapter 2 it was already shown that nearly everyone (93%) had close family members in Zimbabwe. The survey asked questions about social and economic contacts with family members, including remittance behaviour. The survey also established the nature of the linkage with other Zimbabweans in the UK or South Africa, organizations in Zimbabwe and with Zimbabweans outside of Zimbabwe and the country of current residence. The data showed strong linkages with kinship networks.

### **5.1 Social and economic contacts with Zimbabwe**

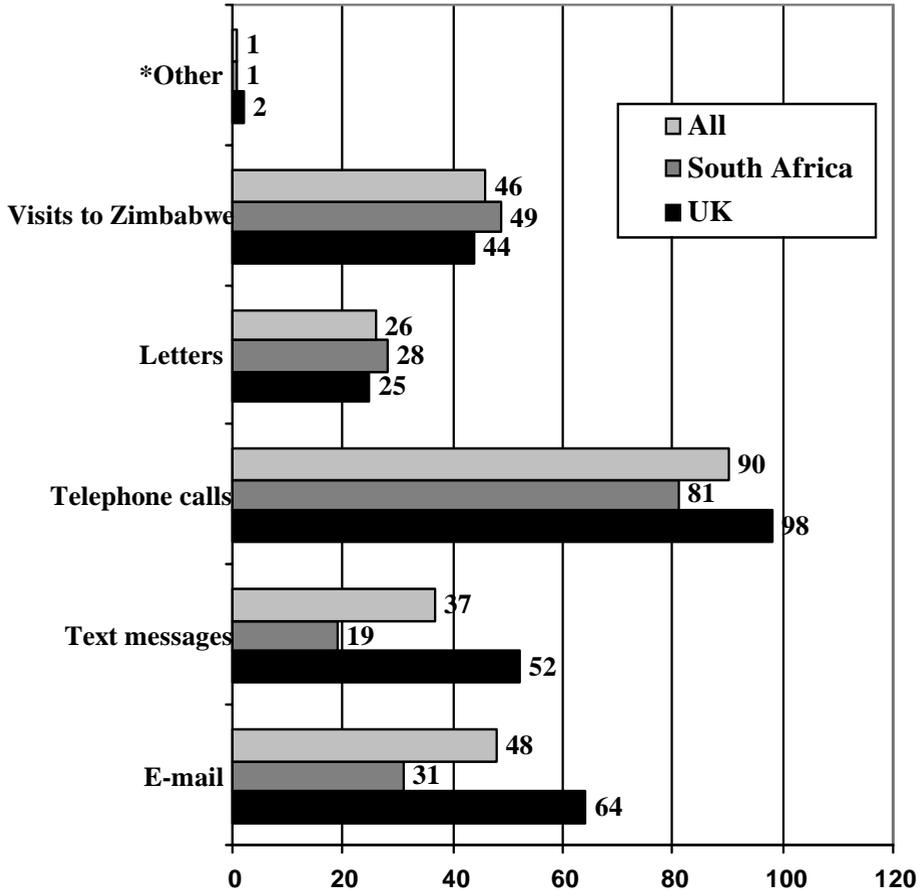
Nearly everyone who had family in Zimbabwe maintained social contact with them (96%). There was regular contact with family members using different strategies that varied by country of residence, as shown in Figure 14 (overleaf).

Respondents used multiple strategies to keep in touch with family members in Zimbabwe, with telephone calls the most often used. In the UK people used e-mail and text messaging much more than in South Africa. There was little difference in the proportion of respondents who either visited Zimbabwe or wrote letters. The methods of keeping in touch with family members differed little between men and women, except that women were more likely to use text messaging to do so: 45 per cent compared with 33 per cent of men.

Contact with family in Zimbabwe was regular. Close to half (49%) were in contact once a week or more, and a further 31 per cent were in touch with family in Zimbabwe every four weeks or more. People in the UK were in more regular contact with their families than those in South Africa. Seventy per cent of those in the UK were in touch with their family once a week or more, compared with 27 per cent in South Africa. The greater use of e-mail and text messaging among those in the UK and the relative ease and low cost of these contact strategies enabled regular contact between the UK and Zimbabwe.

FIGURE 14

WAYS OF MAINTAINING SOCIAL CONTACTS WITH FAMILY MEMBERS IN ZIMBABWE  
BY COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE (%)



Base number UK: 463; Base number South Africa: 430  
 Base number All: 893; Missing: 2  
 \*Other: family visit them

### Economic remittances: sending money to Zimbabwe

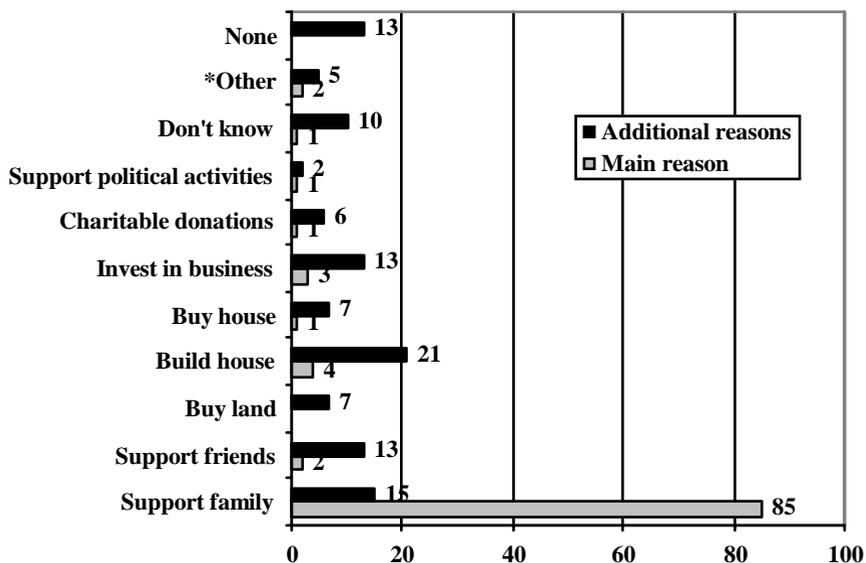
Remittances can be important in terms of development but, as noted earlier, remittances generally benefit mainly the family of the migrant. In this study, three-quarters of respondents (74%) sent remittances to Zimbabwe. A larger

proportion of Zimbabweans in the UK sent remittances than those in South Africa: 80 per cent and 68 per cent, respectively. The differences in the remittance behaviour between men and women were small (76% and 71%, respectively). However, the current main activity and the main reason for leaving Zimbabwe in the first place affected remittances.

Not surprisingly, a greater proportion of those who were working or self-employed sent remittances back to Zimbabwe than those who were unemployed. Eighty-one per cent of those working sent money to Zimbabwe, compared with 46 per cent of those who were unemployed and looking for work, or not working for other reasons (e.g. immigration status).

The main reason for sending remittances was to support family members: 85 per cent of those who sent remittances gave this as their main reason. Figure 15 shows the main reason given and any additional reasons for sending remittances. The minority (15%) of those who did not state family support as their

FIGURE 15  
MAIN AND ADDITIONAL REASONS FOR SENDING REMITTANCES (%)



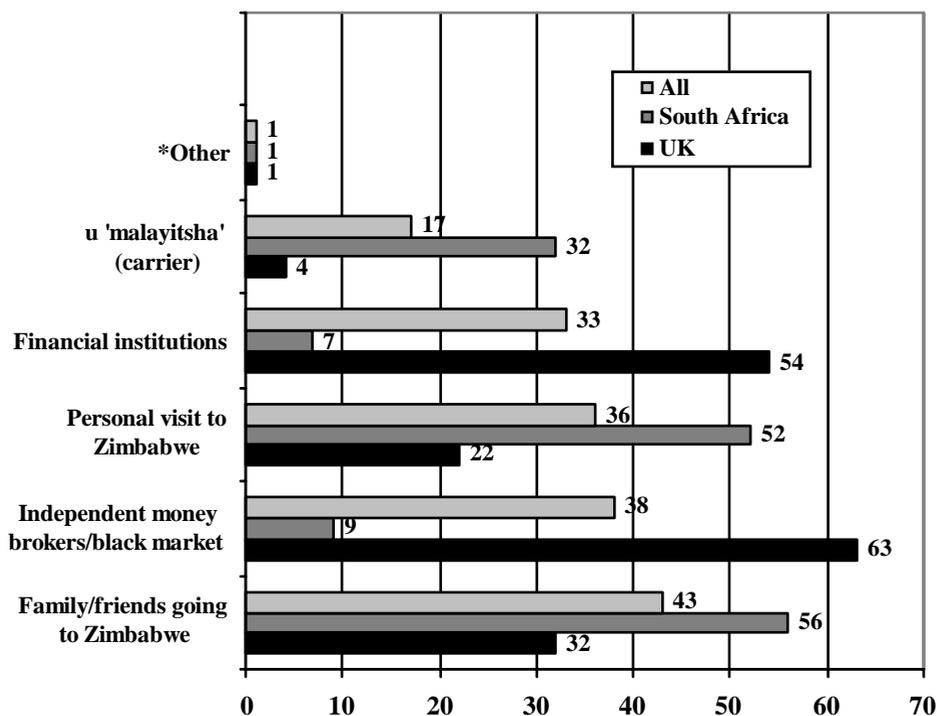
Base number main reason: 707; Missing: 34

Base number additional reason/s: 740; Missing: 1

\*Other includes fuel, one off money for weddings or funerals, food, education costs.

main reason for sending remittances gave it as an additional reason, reinforcing the familial aspect of remittances. The most frequently mentioned additional reason for sending remittances was to build a house in Zimbabwe, which suggests a strong element of commitment to Zimbabwe and to a future living in Zimbabwe.

FIGURE 16  
THE WAYS OF SENDING REMITTANCES BY COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE (%)



Base number UK: 397

Base number South Africa: 339

Missing: 5

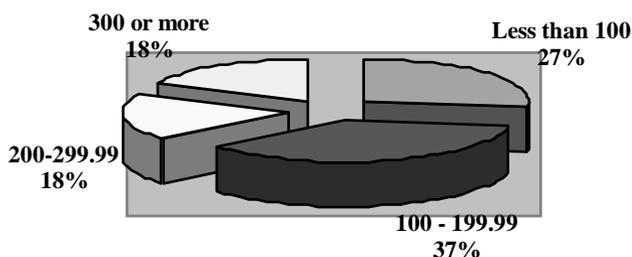
The regularity with which remittances were sent varied. Around three-quarters sent remittances every two months or more regularly, of which a third sent remittances at least every four weeks, and 41 per cent sent them every one to two months. A further 19 per cent sent remittances every three to six months, 6 per cent every 7 to 12 months, and 1 per cent less than once a year.

Remittance money can be sent or transferred in a number of ways, which determines whether or not it is documented (International Organization for Migration, 2004). Respondents in South Africa were much more likely to use informal routes for transferring money, either taking the money themselves, or sending it through friends or carriers, than those in the UK. Those in the UK used independent money brokers and financial institutions more often.

Figure 16 shows that money is transferred through financial institutions by only a third of respondents some of whom also use other strategies for money transfer. The data show that in the majority of cases money is transferred informally and is being predominately used to support family members.

Respondents were asked about the amounts of money they remitted to Zimbabwe in a month on average. Figures 17 and 18 show the data for the UK and South Africa, respectively.

FIGURE 17  
AMOUNT REMITTED ON AVERAGE EACH MONTH FROM THE UK (GBP)

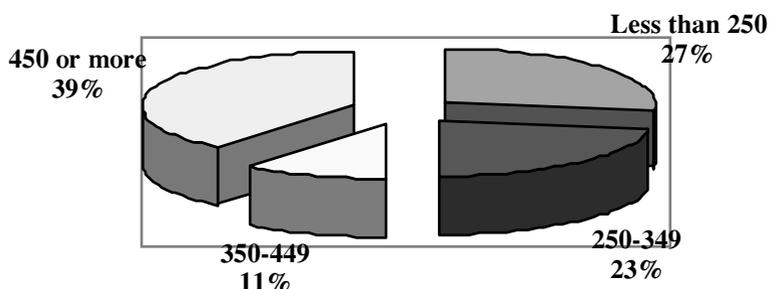


Base number: 397

Missing: 4

FIGURE 18

AMOUNT REMITTED ON AVERAGE EACH MONTH FROM SOUTH AFRICA (ZAR)



Base number: 338

Missing 2

Tables 17 and 18 show the aggregate amount of remittance money sent to Zimbabwe by income. The tables show clearly the relationship between earnings and remittances. In the UK, for example, 60 per cent of those earning less than GBP 500 a month sent less than GBP 100 a month to Zimbabwe. At the other end of the income scale, only 17 per cent of those in the highest earnings bracket of GBP 2,500 or more a month sent less than GBP 100. In fact, more than a third (33%) sent back GBP 300 or more a month in remittances. For some, especially those on lower incomes, remittances accounted for a large proportion of their monthly income.

TABLE 17

LAST MONTHLY SALARY BY AVERAGE MONTHLY REMITTANCE, UK (%)

	Average monthly remittance sent (GBP)				Total
	< 100	100 - 199.99	200 - 299.99	300 or more	
< 500	60	27	7	7	15
500 - 999.99	38	38	19	6	74
1000 - 1499.99	24	38	24	15	110
1500 - 1999.99	20	39	16	25	84
2000 - 2499.99	13	33	20	35	40
2500 or more	17	32	22	29	41

Base number: 364

TABLE 18

LAST MONTHLY SALARY BY AVERAGE MONTHLY REMITTANCE, SOUTH AFRICA (%)

Average monthly remittance sent (ZAR)					
	<250	250 - 349	350 - 449	450 or more	Total
< 500	67	26	2	6	54
500 - 999	33	33	13	21	39
1,000 - 1,999	15	27	23	35	26
2,000 - 4,999	3	32	13	53	38
5,000 - 9,999	12	12	6	70	33
10,000 or more	7	11	11	71	55

Base number: 245

In addition to those who are working as their main activity, three-quarters of those whose main activity is studying send money back and half of those who are unemployed and looking for work.

### **Non-monetary gifts to Zimbabwe and other forms of support**

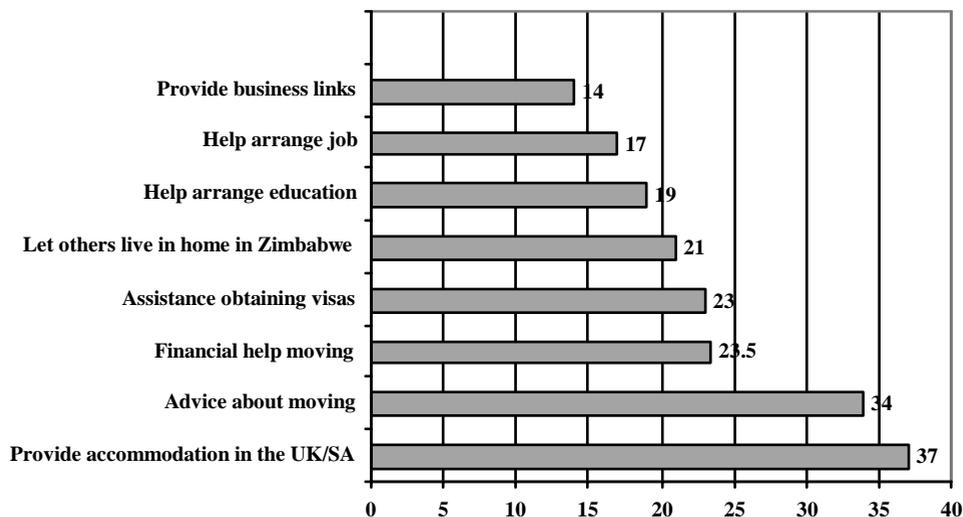
Respondents were also asked whether they sent any non-monetary gifts to Zimbabwe with more than two-thirds saying that they did. Respondents living in the UK were more likely to send non-monetary gifts than those in South Africa (74% and 64%, respectively). Clothes (85%) were sent to Zimbabwe more than any other non-monetary gifts. This was followed by food (43%), books (39%), electrical goods (35%), used cars and trucks (11%) and used machinery (8%). An additional 3 per cent sent other non-monetary items that included recorded music, stationery and jewellery.

Not surprisingly, there were a few differences in the gifts sent by those living in the UK and South Africa. Most notable was that 77 per cent of those sending non-monetary gifts from South Africa sent food, while the proportion in the UK was 14 per cent. A greater proportion living in the UK sent used cars or trucks than those in South Africa: 18 per cent and 2 per cent, respectively.

Zimbabweans in the diaspora also provide other forms of help and support to family and friends in Zimbabwe, and in this survey nearly three-quarters (73%) provided other assistance. Respondents in the UK were more likely to provide support for family and friends in Zimbabwe than those in South Africa

(79% and 69%, respectively). Figure 19 shows other help and support given to family and friends in Zimbabwe.

FIGURE 19  
WAYS OF PROVIDING HELP AND SUPPORT TO THOSE IN ZIMBABWE (%)



Base number: 706

Missing: 37

Help with accommodation followed by advice about moving were mentioned most often as ways of helping family and friends in Zimbabwe. Just over a fifth (21%) let others live in their home in Zimbabwe. There were some differences between help given among those in the UK and those in South Africa. Zimbabweans in the UK were more likely to help with visas than those in South Africa (30% and 17%, respectively) and let others live in their home (29% and 14%, respectively).

## 5.2 Activities with other Zimbabweans in Zimbabwe and the diaspora

The survey also examined a range of different activities that Zimbabweans might potentially be involved in with other Zimbabweans in Zimbabwe, the UK or South Africa and elsewhere in the diaspora. What is most evident from the

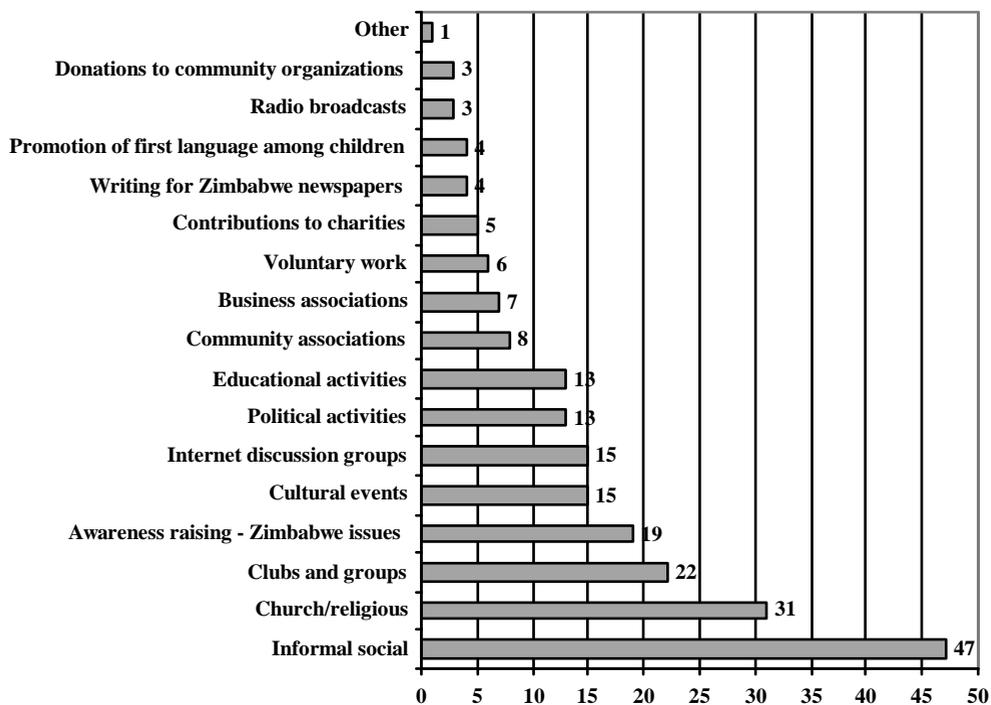
data is that Zimbabweans are involved in activities and associations with others in either the UK or South Africa much more than in Zimbabwe or the rest of the diaspora.

### Activities relating to Zimbabwe or other Zimbabweans in the UK or South Africa

Most respondents (81%) were involved in one or more activities with other Zimbabweans in their country of residence. Figure 20 shows that informal social activities were engaged in most often with other Zimbabweans (47%) followed by church and religious activities (31%).

FIGURE 20

PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES IN THE UK OR SOUTH AFRICA RELATING TO ZIMBABWE OR OTHER ZIMBABWEANS IN THE UK OR SOUTH AFRICA (%)



Base number: 801  
Missing: 15

There were differences in the proportions participating in activities between the UK and South Africa. While 90 per cent of those in the UK participated in at least one activity with other Zimbabweans in the UK or relating to Zimbabwe, in South Africa the corresponding proportion was 72 per cent. The main reason for leaving Zimbabwe and the immigration status also affected participation. Those who said their main reason for leaving was political were more likely to be involved in activities that directly related to Zimbabwe or Zimbabweans in the country of residence than others. The proportion of those leaving for political reasons involved in one or more activity was 93 per cent compared with 87 per cent among those who left to study, and 75 per cent among those who left for economic reasons. In terms of immigration status, the group that was least likely to be involved with other Zimbabweans were the undocumented migrants of whom only 58 per cent said that they participated in activities.

### **Activities with Zimbabweans in Zimbabwe**

Less than half of all respondents (48%) participated in an activity or activities with people/and or organizations based in Zimbabwe. Of those that did participate, internet discussion groups were the most regular form of activity (21%), followed by political activities (14%), contributions to charities (12%), business associations (10%), donations to community organizations (7%), writing for Zimbabwean newspapers (5%) and radio broadcasts (4%). Two per cent were involved in other activities that included church and religious activities. A larger proportion of those living in the UK were involved in activities with people or organizations in Zimbabwe than those in South Africa (60% and 37%, respectively).

The main reason for leaving Zimbabwe was also influential in determining other contacts that were not directly related to remittances and gifts, and suggested a more continued association with the country of origin among those who left for political reasons. Thirty-six per cent of those who stated that their main reason for leaving Zimbabwe was economic were involved in activities and/or organizations in Zimbabwe, compared with 72 per cent of those whose main reason for leaving was political. Certainly, the data reinforce the thesis that the context in which people leave their country of origin will impact on transnational activities. When this was explored in relation to whether respondents had ever been a refugee or asylum seeker, the same pattern emerged, with 59 per cent of those who had been participating in activities and/or organizations based in Zimbabwe compared with 45 per cent of those who had never been a forced migrant. More significant was the lack of involvement of undocumented

workers compared with others: only 23 per cent of undocumented migrants participated in activities or organizations based in Zimbabwe.

### **Activities with Zimbabweans in other diaspora countries**

Around half of Zimbabweans (51%) participated in activities with Zimbabweans in diaspora communities in other countries, that is outside their country of residence and outside Zimbabwe. Internet discussion groups were the main form of diaspora activity (24.5%) followed by political activities (13%), sending remittances (13%), sending non-monetary gifts (12%) and business associations (9%). Fewer participated in writing for Zimbabwean newspapers, contributing to charities (both 4%), radio broadcasts and donations to community organizations (2%). Two per cent also participated in other activities that were for the most part social activities through e-mail and phone with family and friends.

Once again there were differences between those living in the UK and those in South Africa. Respondents in the UK were more likely to participate in wider diaspora activities than those in South Africa (61% and 40%, respectively). Undocumented workers again showed less involvement in activities with other Zimbabweans, with 29 per cent participating in activities.

## **5.3 Summary**

This chapter shows a high level of social and economic interaction and commitment to family members in Zimbabwe through regular social contact as well as the sending of remittances to support families there. Respondents also participated in a number of different activities with other Zimbabweans in the country of residence, in Zimbabwe and elsewhere.

Nearly all kept in regular touch with their family. Telephone calls were the most popular form of contact. E-mail and text messages to keep in touch with family members were used more by people in the UK than in South Africa, reflecting the better access to technology and resources among those in the UK. In addition to social contact with families in Zimbabwe there was a great deal of economic remittance activity. Around three-quarters sent economic remittances back to Zimbabwe that, for the most part, were used to support family members. The survey showed that for some the remittances sent made up a substantial proportion of their monthly earnings and would have left them with little income.

Most remittance money was transferred informally with only a third going through financial institutions, which keeps this money outside of the formal financial structures of Zimbabwe. In addition to economic remittances, more than two-thirds were non-monetary gifts to Zimbabwe, most often clothes followed by food, in particular from South Africa, from where more than three-quarters (77%) sent food to Zimbabwe. Respondents also helped family and friends in Zimbabwe in other ways than remittances, such as in the form of practical assistance and/or advice about migration. For example, 37 per cent provided accommodation in either the UK or South Africa and a third (34%) gave advice about moving.

There were also community associations with other Zimbabweans in the same country, in Zimbabwe and elsewhere. A larger proportion participated in activities with other Zimbabweans in their country of residence (81%) than in Zimbabwe or elsewhere (48% and 51%, respectively). Informal social activities and church and faith activities were participated in most with other Zimbabweans in the country of residence. Internet discussion groups were most frequently used to participate with other Zimbabweans outside the country of residence. Similar proportions were involved in political activities in different countries, and a small proportion also sent remittances to Zimbabweans living outside the country of residence and Zimbabwe. This indicates a global network of Zimbabweans participating in different social, political and economic transnational activities.

The degree of association was affected by the initial main reason for leaving Zimbabwe. Those whose main reason for leaving was political were more likely to participate in activities with other Zimbabweans than others. Those in the UK participated more in activities with other Zimbabweans in their country of residence, in Zimbabwe and elsewhere, than those in South Africa. This is in part due to their greater likelihood of leaving for political reasons and interest in maintaining a strong association and commitment to Zimbabwe. However, even with these variations, it is clear that most Zimbabweans are involved with other Zimbabweans in their country of residence and to a lesser extent in Zimbabwe and elsewhere.

## **6. VIEWS ABOUT PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT AND RETURN MIGRATION**

One concern about migration from the south and east to the north and west is the potential loss of skills resulting from this pattern of migration. In some cases the skills loss is permanent, while in others it is temporary. However, we have already seen that some respondents were working in jobs that were not commensurate with their skills and some skills loss was therefore taking place. Some migrants participate in development related activities from their country of migration. This chapter will examine aspirations for return migration and interest in participating in development related activities.

### **6.1 Return migration**

Exactly two-thirds of respondents said that they would like to return to Zimbabwe to live there at some point in the future, 21 per cent were hesitant and 12 per cent said no. Previous research found a large variation in aspirations and attitudes towards return migration. Research carried out with refugees and asylum seekers in the UK found that fewer wanted definitely to return home (47%) than in this study, though there were variations by country of origin (Bloch, 2002a). A study of nationals from the Somali regions in the UK found that a larger proportion than in this study, definitely wanted to return to their country of origin at some point in the future (78.5%) (Bloch and Atfield, 2002). In this study being a refugee or having been a refugee at some point in the past did not affect aspirations for return migration. Table 19 (overleaf) shows the attitudes regarding return to Zimbabwe by a number of different variables.

Having no close family in Zimbabwe and being a citizen of the UK (or EU) or South Africa had the greatest impact regarding return migration, where these groups were least likely to want to return. Whether or not someone had a qualification had no significant effect on the wish to return. Analysis of the level of qualifications either obtained prior to emigration or in the UK and South Africa showed little difference regarding return to migration. More highly skilled were neither more nor less likely to definitely want to return to Zimbabwe than those with lower level qualifications or no qualifications.

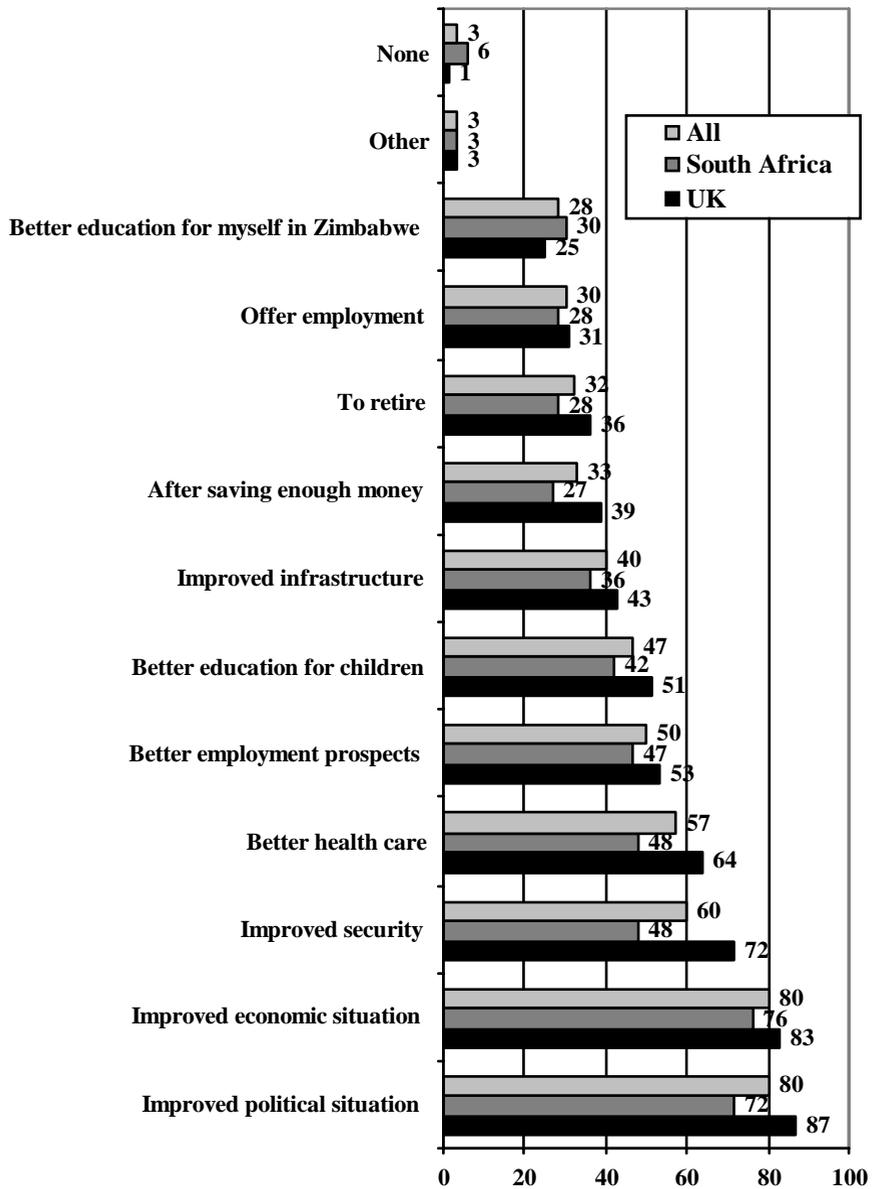
All who wanted to return to Zimbabwe, either definitely or maybe, were asked what conditions would have to be in place for them to return. Figure 21

TABLE 19

ATTITUDE TO RETURN MIGRATION BY IMMIGRATION STATUS, COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE, AGE, QUALIFICATIONS ON ARRIVAL AND QUALIFICATIONS OBTAINED IN THE UK OR SOUTH AFRICA, CLOSE FAMILY IN ZIMBABWE AND CURRENT MAIN ACTIVITY (%)

	Yes	Maybe	No	Total N <sup>o</sup>
<b>Immigration status</b>				
Citizen	47	31	22	130
Permanent resident	52	32	19	107
Working visa	69	26	5	194
Student visa	73	23	3	116
Refugee status/indefinite leave to remain	70	21	9	93
Asylum seeker, humanitarian status or appealing	69	20	9	134
Undocumented	76	4	20	182
Other	78	18	4	21
<b>Country of residence</b>				
UK	72	22	6	498
South Africa	62	20	18	496
<b>Age</b>				
Under 24	57	27	17	161
25-29	72	16	12	257
30-34	68	23	10	207
35-39	66	25	9	175
40-49	64	23	13	134
50 and over	72	12	16	57
<b>Qualifications on arrival</b>				
Yes	68	24	8	808
No	65	10	25	176
<b>Qualifications from the UK or South Africa</b>				
Yes	67	25	8	383
No	66	19	15	607
<b>Close family in Zimbabwe</b>				
Yes	68	21	10	927
No	41	21	38	66
<b>Current main activity</b>				
Employed/self-employed	65	23	12	664
Unemployed, looking for work	63	15	22	124
Student	71	25	22	126
Other	76	14	10	50

FIGURE 21  
 CONDITIONS FOR RETURN TO ZIMBABWE BY COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE (%)



Base number: 875

shows that improvements to the political or economic situation in Zimbabwe were mentioned most often. Respondents in the UK were much more concerned about the security situation in Zimbabwe than those in South Africa, with 72 per cent making this a condition for their return.

Figure 21 shows that just under a third (32%) said that they would like to go back to Zimbabwe to retire. This means that any skills that this group of respondents have are potentially lost to Zimbabwe. This group included some of the very highly educated as well as those working in professional jobs.

Those who did not want to return to Zimbabwe to live were asked for their reasons. They mentioned most often the better standard of living in the UK or South Africa (51%), the political situation in Zimbabwe (50%), lack of employment in Zimbabwe (48%), uncertain future in Zimbabwe (47%), the economic situation in Zimbabwe (42%) and having a job in the UK or South Africa (40%). A preference for living in the UK or South Africa (33%), feeling settled in the UK or South Africa (30%) and children in school (21%) were referred to less frequently. Clearly the dominant reasons for not wanting to return were economic and political, as were the conditions that would need to be in place for people to return.

## **6.2 Skills exchange programmes and contribution to development**

The survey set out to ascertain levels of interest in participating in development related activities either through skills transfer programmes or from outside of Zimbabwe. In terms of skills exchange, nearly three-quarters (73%) said that they would be interested in such a programme while 16 per cent were uncertain. Only 11 per cent said that they would not be interested in such a programme. Immigration status made a difference to the interest in skills exchange. Those on student visas were most likely to definitely want to participate in a programme (85%), while undocumented migrants were the group least likely to want to definitely want to participate (64%).

Those living in South Africa were more likely to be definitely not interested relative to those in the UK (18% and 5%, respectively). Of those who were interested in a programme, 53 per cent said that they would be most interested in a permanent programme of 12 months or more, 17 per cent preferred a temporary programme of less than 12 months, and 30 per cent were not sure.

## **Interest in contributing to development**

There was also interest in contributing to the development of Zimbabwe in other ways: 77 per cent said they were interested, 14 per cent said maybe and 10 per cent were not interested. Nearly half (47%) of those who were not interested in contributing to the development of Zimbabwe said it was due to the political situation in the country.

Men were more certain about wanting to contribute to development in Zimbabwe than women (80% and 69%, respectively). Women were also more likely to be ambivalent than men, with 21 per cent undecided compared to 11 per cent of men. Eighty-one per cent of those who had left Zimbabwe in 2000 or later, said they wanted to contribute to development, compared with 70 per cent of those who had last lived continuously in Zimbabwe in 1999 or before. However, return visits to Zimbabwe and the regularity of these visits had little impact on attitudes towards contributing to development.

There are a number of different ways in which people can contribute to development, and respondents who were interested in doing so were asked how they would like to contribute. Table 20 (overleaf) shows that investment in business was mentioned most often.

There were some differences between men and women in terms of how they would like to contribute. Men were more likely to want to invest in business than women (63% and 47%, respectively), in land development (31% and 21%, respectively), skills transfers through work (41% and 32%, respectively) and skills transfer through training (40% and 31%, respectively). Women were more likely to be interested in sending non-monetary gifts than men (27% and 21%, respectively).

## **Ways to facilitate contribution to development**

Those who were interested in contributing to development were asked what changes, if any, would help them to contribute or contribute more effectively to the development of Zimbabwe. Figure 22 (page 81) shows that mentioned most often were political changes (60%) followed by economic opportunities in Zimbabwe (50%).

Figure 22 shows that issues related directly to Zimbabwe were of primary importance: political changes, economic opportunities and voting rights. How-

TABLE 20  
WAYS THAT RESPONDENTS WOULD LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE TO DEVELOPMENT  
BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (%)

	UK	South Africa	Total
Investment in business	62	53	58
Transfer skills through working in Zimbabwe	44	31	38
Transfer skills through training in Zimbabwe	44	31	37
By sending remittances (money)	32	27	29
Investment in land development	34	22	28
Exporting goods to Zimbabwe	30	26	28
Importing goods from Zimbabwe	30	21	26
Educational exchanges	28	21	25
Fundraising for projects in Zimbabwe	33	16	24
Sending non-monetary gifts	24	22	23
Voluntary work in the UK or SA for Zimbabwean issues	23	19	21
Sending money for development projects in Zimbabwe with other Zimbabweans in the UK or SA	26	16	21
Political/greater political involvement	23	17	20
Making charitable donations	23	13	18
Providing distance teaching (via computers)	20	11	16
Investment in infrastructure	19	11	15
Voluntary work in Zimbabwe	14	13	14
Payment of tax in Zimbabwe	8	4	6
*Other	2	4	3
Total number	453	430	883

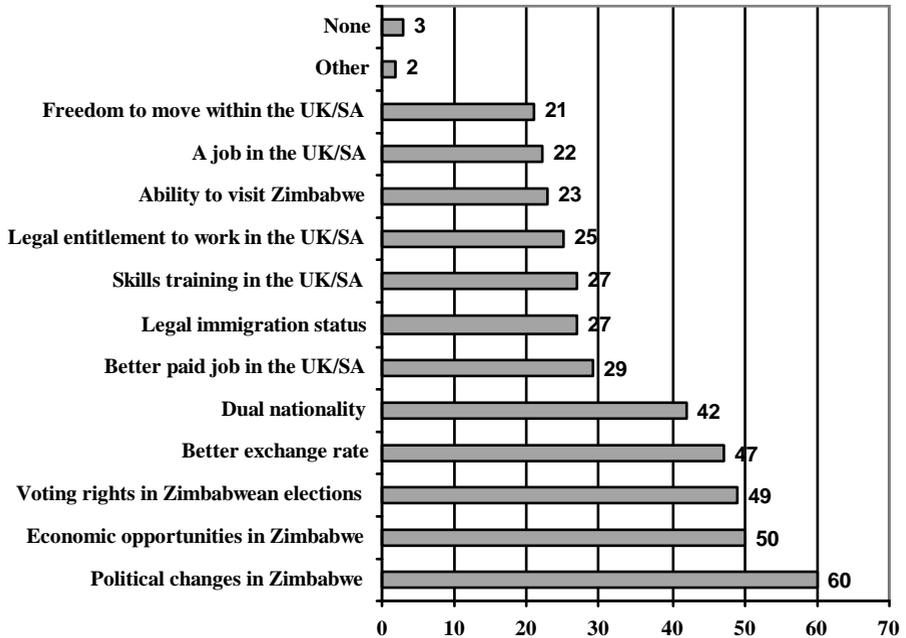
Missing:20

\*Other included cultural exchanges and tourism

ever, some also reflected conditions in the country of residence, including better paid jobs, regular immigration status, legal entitlement to work and having a job. Wider structural circumstances in the sending and the receiving countries impact on development, but so do individual circumstances in the receiving country. There are ways in which both sending and receiving countries can help to facilitate the contributions made by migrants. Lowell et al. (2004) in a discussion about remittances note that while much of the responsibility lies in the hands of sending countries through strategies like investment tax breaks and remittance-backed bonds, the receiving county can also play a part by

FIGURE 22

CHANGES, IF ANY, THAT WOULD HELP RESPONDENTS CONTRIBUTE, OR CONTRIBUTE MORE EFFECTIVELY, TO DEVELOPMENT (%)



Base number: 877

Missing: 26

monitoring banks and financial transfer agents, and by other schemes such as low-cost loans for business investments links to foreign aid packages. Thus, they argue that once diasporas are seen as agents for change, host countries can seek out a nation's expatriates as facilitators of projects for international assistance (2004: 27).

The main reason given by respondents for leaving Zimbabwe, together with their situation in the country of residence affected their views about the changes that would help them contribute to development. Those who left for mainly economic reasons were also more likely to cite economic changes as a factor that would assist them to contribute more effectively than those who had left for political reasons. A greater proportion of those who had left for political reasons identified factors that were political than those who left for economic reasons. For instance, 52 per cent of those who gave economic reasons as their main

reason for leaving Zimbabwe said that a better exchange rate would help them contribute, compared with 35 per cent whose main reason for leaving was political. More than three-quarters (79%) of those whose main reason for leaving was political said that political changes in Zimbabwe would help, compared with 51 per cent whose main reason for leaving was economic. Those who left for political reasons were also more likely than those who left mainly for economic reasons to say that the ability to visit Zimbabwe and to vote in elections would help.

In terms of the situation in the receiving country, undocumented workers and those in the asylum system were much more likely than others to say that legal immigration status would help them to contribute, or to contribute more effectively, to development. They were also the respondents who identified legal entitlement to work as a key factor, along with those on a student visa. In the UK, those in the asylum system were most likely to state that freedom to move would help them contribute to development in Zimbabwe since as recipients of assistance through NASS (see Chapter 2) they are unable to leave their designated accommodation without losing their support. In South Africa, undocumented workers were the group most likely to state freedom to move as a factor. Contributing to development has to be considered within the framework of the structural frameworks of sending and receiving and the circumstances leading to migration for individuals.

### **6.3 Summary**

This chapter explored aspirations for return migration and views about participation in development-related activities. It showed that there was interest in returning to Zimbabwe, and two-thirds of respondents said that they would definitely like to return. The main conditions that needed to be in place for people to actually return were both economic and political. A large number (80%) made return to Zimbabwe conditional on improvements in the political and the economic situation. Other factors included better education for children, better health care and improved infrastructure. More than a third (36%) wanted to return to retire in Zimbabwe. More than half (51%) who definitely did not want to return to Zimbabwe cited the better living standard in their country of residence as a reason for not wanting to return, while half cited the political situation.

The data suggest that if the economic and/or political situation changed in Zimbabwe, the skilled communities outside of Zimbabwe would be likely to

return and participate in the development of Zimbabwe from inside the country. The level of skills of those who had emigrated would vary as some had developed their skills while the skills of others would have diminished compared to those they had when they left.

The survey sought to establish the extent to which Zimbabweans might be interested in contributing to skills exchange programmes and/or development-related activities from the country of residence. There was a great deal of interest in participating in both skills transfer programmes (73%) and development-related activities (77%).

In terms of contributing to development, respondents wanted to contribute most often through investing in business, although there was also interest in a range of other types of possible contributions to development. Those in the UK were more interested in contributing to development-related activities than those living in South Africa. The survey also revealed the changes that could be made, structurally in Zimbabwe and in the UK and South Africa, as well as at the individual level, that would help people contribute, or contribute more effectively, to development and, in so doing, help to maximize the potential of migrants.

## **CONCLUSION**

The preceding chapters presented the social and demographic characteristics of the sample, the qualifications and skills that Zimbabweans had on arrival in their country of residence, participation in education and employment activities in their country of residence, transnational links and activities and attitudes towards return migration and participation in development activities. This section will highlight the main findings of the survey.

### **Main findings**

#### **Social and demographic characteristics**

The sample included a larger proportion of men than women. In terms of immigration status those on a working visa presented the largest single category (20%), followed by undocumented migrants (19%). Most of the undocumented migrants were in South Africa and nearly half (47%) were working as agricultural labourers. Many Zimbabweans had migrated relatively recently, with 65 per cent having last lived continuously in Zimbabwe in 2000 or later.

The main reason for leaving Zimbabwe was either economic or political. Zimbabweans in the UK were more likely to have left Zimbabwe for political reasons than those in South Africa. Only a minority (5%) had left to join family members abroad. Nearly everyone had close family members still living in Zimbabwe and around a quarter (23%) had their spouse or partner in Zimbabwe, with another 29 having one or more children there. Around half (52%) had their partner or spouse, and 37 per cent had one or more children with them in their country of residence. Those in the UK were more likely to have children in the UK than those living in South Africa.

#### **Skills base on arrival to the UK and South Africa**

Language and literacy skills in English were high, although a minority of respondents in South Africa did not speak English. Two-thirds spoke Shona fluently and 41 per cent were fluent in Ndebele. Educational qualifications were also high, especially among those in the UK, where 97 per cent arrived with a formal qualification. An average of 38 per cent arrived in their country of resi-

dence with a first degree qualification or higher. This puts them among the educational elite not just from Zimbabwe but also in their country of residence. In Great Britain in 2003, 18 per cent of men and 15 per cent of women of working age held a degree or equivalent qualification (Summerfield and Babb, 2004), while according to the 2001 census in South Africa 8.4 per cent of the population had studied at the post-school leaving qualification level.

Before arriving in the country of residence, 71 per cent had been either working or self-employed, and an additional 9 per cent had worked in the past. The largest proportion who had worked had done so in the education sector, followed by health and social work. The types of activity were diverse, though the largest proportion had been managers, followed by teachers. The skills base among those leaving Zimbabwe was disproportionately high and ranked among the most highly qualified and skilled in the receiving country as well.

## **Education and employment in the UK and South Africa**

There was a clear element of capacity building through education in the UK and South Africa, with 39 per cent obtaining a qualification in their country of residence. More than two-thirds of those who had gained a qualification had obtained a first degree qualification or higher, and an additional 22 per cent had obtained a diploma or professional qualification. There was clear evidence of progression in terms of qualifications obtained. However, these high levels of qualifications were not necessarily transferred into jobs. Although more than two-thirds (68%) were working at the time of the survey, many held jobs that were not commensurate with their qualifications or pre-migration work experience.

In the UK, the largest sector of employment was health and social worker and the largest number were working in carer/care assistant jobs, followed by nursing. In South Africa more people were working as agricultural labourers than in any other job. There was a noticeable decline in the numbers working as teachers, managers and in the skilled trades. The general trend of downward occupational mobility meant that some respondents were working very long hours for very low rates of pay, and this was most evident among agricultural labourers in South Africa.

Respondents living in the UK were more likely than those in South Africa to identify skills that they have been unable to use (50% and 26%, respectively). The skills mentioned most often were education and finance, sales and banking.

The unused skills and downward occupational mobility means that some Zimbabweans are becoming deskilled in the UK and South Africa, which will have a longer-term impact on them as individuals, on their country of residence and the development in Zimbabwe if they return.

## **Transnational activities and diasporic links**

Nearly everyone who had family in Zimbabwe maintained contact with their family (96%) and such contact was regular with around half (49%) saying they were in touch once a week or more often.

The survey set out to explore, in addition to social contact, the nature of links through remittances and other activities with family members and other Zimbabweans in Zimbabwe and the diaspora. The survey found that around three-quarters (74%) sent remittances back to Zimbabwe. Eighty-five per cent said that their main reason for sending remittances was to support family members. Financial institutions were used by only a third of respondents to remit money, with a larger proportion using family and friends going to Zimbabwe (43%), independent money brokers (38%) or personal visits (36%). The data on remittances show that for those at the lower income levels, remittances accounted for a substantial proportion of their earnings. In addition to economic remittances, non-monetary gifts were sent to Zimbabwe, most often clothes and food.

In terms of activities with other Zimbabweans in Zimbabwe, the UK or South Africa and elsewhere in the diaspora, the data showed that most activities with other Zimbabweans took place in the country of residence, with 81 per cent saying that they participated in one or more such activities. Informal social activities were mentioned most often (47%), followed by church or religious activities (31%). Zimbabweans in the UK were more likely to participate in activities with other Zimbabweans than those in South Africa (90% and 72%, respectively).

Fewer participated in activities with others in Zimbabwe (48%) or elsewhere in the diaspora (51%) than in their country of residence. Those in the UK were more likely to be involved in activities with other Zimbabweans outside of their country of residence than those in South Africa. Internet discussion groups were the most frequent form of participating in activities and this technology was not available to all those living in South Africa, not just in terms of access but also because lower literacy levels prevented them from using this mode of interaction.

However, overall, Zimbabweans in the UK and South Africa maintain strong linkages to their country of origin, especially through social contact with family members and remittances and non-monetary gifts.

### **Aspirations for return migration and contribution to development**

Only a minority (12%) said that they definitely did not want to return to Zimbabwe to live there in the future. Twenty-one per cent said that they may like to return and the rest (67%) said that they would like to return to live there. Those without close family in Zimbabwe and those who were citizens of the UK (EU) or South Africa were least likely to want to return to Zimbabwe to live. The main reasons for not wanting to return to Zimbabwe to live were better standard of living in the country of residence (51%) and the political situation in Zimbabwe (50%). Those who either wanted, or might perhaps like to return, stated political and economic improvements as necessary conditions to facilitate their return.

There was a great deal of interest in participating in skills transfer programmes and to the development of Zimbabwe. Nearly three-quarters (73%) were interested in participating in a skills transfer programme, 16 per cent might be interested and 11 per cent were not interested. In terms of development, a similar pattern of interest emerged, with 75 per cent definitely wanting to contribute, 14 per cent undecided, while 11 per cent definitely did not want to contribute to development. More interest was expressed in the idea of investing in business than in any other development-related activities, especially among men. For those who wanted to contribute to development, political changes in Zimbabwe were mentioned most often as necessary to help them to contribute, or to contribute more effectively. However, the changes mentioned also reflected the circumstances of Zimbabweans in their country of residence and included legal entitlement to work, better paid jobs and legal immigration status.

### **Summary**

The data show that Zimbabweans in the UK and South Africa are, on the whole, well educated with high levels of skills and employment experience that they are not always able to use in their country of residence. For some Zimbabweans the consequence is deskilling and this will impact on their ability to contribute to development from the country of residence or on return to Zimbabwe in the future, though there was a great deal of interest in both possi-

bilities. The deskilling of Zimbabweans also affects the tax revenue of the governments in the receiving countries, as do the large number of undocumented workers who are outside the regularized employment and immigration system.

The difference in the characteristics of Zimbabweans in the UK and South Africa was a constant theme in the report. The differences were due to the different levels of education and qualifications, the larger number who were undocumented and the greater proportion leaving for economic rather than political reasons in South Africa compared to the UK. All this impacted on transnational activities, including remittance behaviour. Zimbabweans in the UK were more involved in activities with other Zimbabweans than those in South Africa, with a larger proportion sending remittances back to family in Zimbabwe.

There is clearly a commitment among Zimbabweans in the diaspora to return to Zimbabwe and a great deal of interest in participating in development. At the moment, much of the activity between Zimbabwe and elsewhere takes the form of social networks and remittances to family members. Because remittances are for the most part transferred informally or through independent money brokers rather than through financial institutions, they do not become part of the balance of payments and foreign exchange reserves. The respondents to the survey suggested institutional and structural changes in both Zimbabwe and in the country of residence, which would help them to contribute, or to contribute more effectively, to development. For some, changes needed to occur in their individual circumstances as well.

Certainly the data from the survey highlights that the diaspora could be a resource for Zimbabwe in the short term if certain changes took place to facilitate this. In the longer term, there are aspirations to return to Zimbabwe if there are changes in the economic and/or political situation. An area of great concern is the effect on the skills base of this very highly skilled diaspora population of not being able to use their skills and qualifications. It is very likely that in future years some Zimbabweans returning from the diaspora will return with a lower skills base than when they left. Given that many Zimbabweans in the diaspora are key workers in the education and health care professions, their emigration and the evidence of deskilling creates clear and obvious concerns for the longer-term future of Zimbabwe.

## ENDNOTES

1. Throughout this report the term refugee shall be used to describe all forced migrants, that is people with humanitarian protection, discretionary leave, ELR and asylum seekers, unless otherwise specified.
2. Cape Town High Court (*Watchenuka v Minister of Home Affairs* 2003 (1) SA 619 (C)).
3. Throughout the report, all numbers are rounded or truncated to the nearest whole number so total percentages may not add up to 100.
4. Language and literacy skills were based on self-assessment.
5. An additional 13 respondents arrived with other qualifications or had obtained other or lower level qualifications that have not been included.
6. All outliers have been coded back to the 95 percentile.

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Since 1999 there has been a huge increase in emigration from Zimbabwe. This study, based on a survey of 1,000 Zimbabwean nationals living in the UK and South Africa, shows that most migrants have not cut their ties with Zimbabwe and are making a vital contribution to the development of the country. For example, nearly half (49%) were in touch with family members once a week or more. Around three-quarters of respondents (74%) sent remittances, and of those that sent remittances, 85 per cent did so to support family members.

Money was more likely to be remitted through the informal routes of family, friends and personal visits to Zimbabwe than through formal financial institutions. Two-thirds also sent non-monetary gifts to Zimbabwe, most often clothes (85%) followed by food (43%).

Migrants are continuing to make a contribution to the development of their country, and many would like to do more to promote development at home. Only 12 per cent reported that they definitely had no intention of returning to Zimbabwe.

