

# **Do Children Matter in the Quest for Sustainable Development Goals Attainment? Children's Vulnerability and Water Scarcity in Zimbabwe**

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## **Abstract**

More than 48% of Zimbabwe's population are children and 2.5 million of these live in water-stressed rural areas although their urban counterparts are not any better. This makes children important stakeholders in the country's quest to achieve sustainable development goals by 2030. The article reviews children vulnerability to water scarcity in Zimbabwe. Within the qualitative research design, the study deployed a systematic documentary analysis of 79 documents which created an epistemological front for knowledge production. Findings revealed that there was no study that specifically examined the vulnerability of children to water scarcity in Zimbabwe since a lot of literature was looking at water scarcity, water shortage, and water quality in general and would mention some children's vulnerabilities in the process. From the review process it was established that the causes of vulnerability of children to water scarcity include inconsistency in policies and legislation on child protection in Zimbabwe, weak immune system amongst the children, among other factors. Children are then exposed to risks of water-borne diseases like diarrhoea and their education is affected as they bear the burden of fetching water in most households. The study concludes that for better measures to be implemented to solve the issue of vulnerability of children to water scarcity there is a need for empirical research to be conducted in order to map the areas most affected, identify the different age groups most at risk amongst the children and the factors which make the children vulnerable to water scarcity. This research recommends that the government of Zimbabwe and various NGOs that deal with children and water-related issues assist researchers with funding so that extensive research is carried out in Zimbabwe on the vulnerability of children to water scarcity. This will help to make better-informed decisions on what must be done and how it must be done to ameliorate the problem in order for the country to be able to meet the targets of Sustainable Development Goals.

Keywords: Children, Water scarcity, Vulnerability, Sustainable development, SDGs, Zimbabwe