The Republic of Zimbabwe

2025 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION STATISTICS REPORT

MINISTRY OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADSL	Asymmetrical Digital Subscriber Line
AIR	Apparent Intake Rate
ASER	Age Specific Enrolment Rate
BEAM	Basic Education Assistance Module
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EMIS	Educational Management Information System
ESSP	Education Sector Strategic Plan
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
GIR	Gross Intake Rate
GPI	Gender Parity Index
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
NDS 1	National Development Strategy 1
PTR	Pupil to Teacher Ratio
PTTR	Pupil to Trained Teacher Ratio
MoHTESTD	Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education Science and Technology Development
MoPSE	Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NIR	Net Intake Rate
OVCs	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PTCEC	Part Time Continuing Education Course
SADC	Southern African Development Community
PCR	Pupil to Class(room) Ratio
ZABEC	Zimbabwe Adult Basic Education Course
ZimStat	Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency

Disclaimer

This statistical publication may be used in whole or in part, provided the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education is credited as the source.

The figures presented in the **2025 Primary and Secondary Education Statistics Report** were collected through the official annual ED 46 questionnaire. Data quality assurance began at the school level, where heads of schools certified the accuracy of the census information. Once certified, schools submitted the electronic questionnaires to their District Offices for verification and uploading to the Headquarters (HQ) server. At HQ, the EMIS team carried out further checks and cleaning to improve the reliability of the statistics. Despite these measures, MoPSE cannot be held responsible for any errors, misinterpretations, or consequences be they be financial or otherwise that may result from the use of this report.

The comparative analysis of provinces was intended solely to highlight strengths and gaps within the education sector. It is not in any way designed to elevate or diminish any province. Furthermore, provincial statistics shown in tables and charts represent broad and general trends and do not imply uniformity across districts within a province.

The population projections used in calculating several education indicators were supplied by the Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT). These projections are based on the 2022 Population and Housing Census, with variants developed to reflect assumptions close to 2025 realities. They however, do not account for migration or other demographic shifts. The accuracy of many education indicators is therefore closely tied to the quality of these population projections.

Foreword

Education remains a key pillar for national development and human capital transformation in Zimbabwe. The availability of accurate, timely, and reliable education data is therefore essential for informed decision-making, effective policy implementation, and accountability across the education sector. It is against this background that I present this Education Management Information System (EMIS) Report.

The EMIS serves as the primary mechanism through which the Ministry systematically collects, analyses, and disseminates education statistics from schools and education institutions nationwide. The data presented in this report provide critical insights into pupil enrolment and participation, education infrastructure, human resources, and other core indicators that are vital for planning, monitoring, and evaluation.

This report directly supports the implementation of **Zimbabwe's National Development Strategies 1&2**, which recognise education, innovation, and skills development as fundamental enablers for achieving Vision 2030. By strengthening evidence-based planning and results-based management, the EMIS contributes to improved service delivery, efficient resource utilisation, and enhanced education outcomes in line with national development priorities.

Furthermore, the EMIS Report aligns with **Africa's Agenda 2063**, particularly the continental aspirations for a prosperous, inclusive, and skills-driven Africa. The generation of harmonised education indicators enables Zimbabwe to contribute meaningfully to regional and continental reporting frameworks, while benchmarking progress towards shared African goals in education and human capital development.

I wish to commend school heads, district and provincial education offices, data officers, planners, and our development partners for their dedication and professionalism in the collection, verification, and management of education data. Their continued commitment has strengthened the integrity and credibility of the EMIS, making it a dependable tool for decision-makers at all levels.

While notable progress has been achieved, the Ministry remains committed to further improving data quality, system efficiency, and digital integration to ensure that the EMIS continues to evolve in response to emerging sector needs. Stakeholders are encouraged to utilise the information in this report responsibly and collaboratively, in pursuit of equitable access to quality, inclusive, and relevant education for all pupils.

It is my sincere hope that this EMIS Report will serve as a valuable resource for policymakers, education managers, researchers, and development partners, and will contribute meaningfully to advancing national, regional, and continental education development agendas.

Honourable Dr. Torerayi Moyo (MP)
Minister of Primary and Secondary Education

Preface

The Education Management Information System (EMIS) remains a fundamental tool for evidence-based planning, policy formulation, monitoring, and evaluation within Zimbabwe's education sector. This 2021-2025 EMIS Report presents a comprehensive statistical account of the status and performance of the education system, based on data systematically collected, validated, and consolidated from schools and education institutions across the country.

The report is aligned with Zimbabwe's National Development Strategies 1& 2 (NDS1&2) which recognise education and human capital development as key enablers for national economic growth and social transformation. By producing timely, accurate, and disaggregated education data, the EMIS supports results-based planning, efficient resource allocation, and performance monitoring in line with NDS1&2 priority areas, including access, equity, quality, relevance, and skills development.

In furtherance of Vision 2030, which aspires to transform Zimbabwe into an upper middle-income economy, this report strengthens the evidence base required to guide strategic investments in education as the foundation for sustainable development, innovation, and productivity. The EMIS enables policymakers and planners to track progress towards inclusive and quality education outcomes necessary for building a skilled, competent, and competitive workforce.

The report is also guided by prevailing sector policies and education legislation, including the Education Act and other relevant policy frameworks governing primary, secondary, and skills development sub-sectors. Alignment with these statutory and policy instruments ensures coherence between education planning, implementation, and regulatory requirements, while enhancing accountability, transparency, and effective service delivery across all levels of the education system.

Furthermore, this EMIS Report contributes to Africa's Agenda 2063, particularly the continental aspirations for a prosperous Africa driven by inclusive growth, sustainable development, and a skilled and empowered citizenry. By generating harmonised education indicators, the EMIS supports regional and continental reporting obligations and facilitates benchmarking of Zimbabwe's education outcomes against shared African development objectives.

The report presents key indicators on pupil enrolment and participation, education infrastructure, human resources, and learning environments. These indicators provide a robust basis for assessing system performance, identifying disparities, and informing targeted interventions aimed at improving access to quality and inclusive education.

The successful production of this report reflects the collective efforts of school heads, district and provincial education offices, education planners, statisticians, and development partners involved in data collection, verification, and analysis. Their continued commitment

to strengthening data quality enhances the credibility and usefulness of the EMIS as a national decision-support system.

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the data presented, users of this report are encouraged to interpret the findings within the broader socio-economic and environmental context. Ongoing efforts to strengthen digital data systems, quality assurance mechanisms, and analytical capacity remain a priority as the education sector transitions into the NDS2 period and advances towards the aspirations of Vision 2030 and Africa's Agenda 2063.

It is anticipated that this report will serve as a valuable reference for policymakers, education managers, researchers, and development partners, and will contribute meaningfully to the continuous improvement of Zimbabwe's education system in line with national, regional, and continental development frameworks.

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Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education

Executive Summary

Zimbabwe's school system is broadly formalised, with registered institutions accounting for roughly 73% of both primary and secondary schools. However, registration gaps are more evident at the primary level and in geographically large, rural provinces such as Manicaland, Midlands, Mashonaland Central and Mashonaland West. Urban provinces mainly Harare and Bulawayo show stronger registration at secondary level but still carry notable pockets of unregistered primary schools, reflecting rapid urbanisation, migration, and settlement expansion. Priority areas include accelerating registration and upgrading of primary schools while sustaining the relatively strong regulatory compliance evident at secondary level.

The minimal presence of P1/S1 schools in rural areas points to limited availability of lower-category infrastructure outside cities. Urban provinces are skewed towards lower-category schools, while rural provinces are dominated by higher-category institutions, signalling structural imbalances with implications for equitable resource allocation, infrastructure investment, and quality assurance. System planning should emphasise transition pathways such as upgrading lower-category schools and ensuring that rural localities receive appropriately scaled facilities and services.

Government authorities operate the largest share of schools across both phases, underlining the central role of public provision, especially in rural communities. Primary education is overwhelmingly day-school based, reflecting proximity and policy intent, whereas secondary provision is more diversified. It includes boarding and day-and-boarding options to mitigate travel distances in rural provinces such as Mashonaland East Mashonaland West, Manicaland and Midlands.

In 2025, total enrolment reached 4,671,149 pupils across ECD, primary, and secondary, with gender parity at the system level 50.2% females. ECD enrolment peaked in 2023 and stabilised by 2025 at (641,295; 50.59% female 74% rural), anchored in P3 registered schools. Primary enrolment similarly peaked in 2023 before dwindling to 2,871,839 in 2025 remaining predominantly rural (70%), P3-based (73%), and registered (90%). A critical concern is over-age enrolment reported at 70% in Grades 1–4 and 64.9% in Grade 7 signalling issues in age-appropriate entry, repetition, and progression.

Secondary enrolment grew to 1,158,015 by 2025 with an increased female share of 51.4%. Lower secondary is comparatively broad-based standing at 1,080,102, while upper secondary remains depressed at 77,913. Rural areas enrol 65% of secondary pupils, with 60% of them in S3 schools and 88% in registered institutions. Cohort shrinkage is pronounced from Form 1 (298,653) to Form 4 (229,966) and steep at A-Level (Lower 6: 40,500; Upper 6: 37,413). Notably, female retention strengthens at A-Level at 52% of the total enrolment, suggesting differing gendered pathways and resilience patterns.

Despite high Apparent Intake Rates (AIR: 98.8% in Grade 1; 69.4% in Form 1), Net Intake Rates remain low (NIR Grade 1: 27.95%; NIR Form 1: 22.6%), evidencing delayed entry and age-grade distortion. Rural areas account for less than 85% of over-aged Grade 1 entrants,

indicating persistent geographic inequities. Females exhibit stronger age-appropriate transition into secondary (NIR GPI 1.28). Provincial disparities persist, with Bulawayo and Matabeleland provinces being typically stronger with Mashonaland provinces and Manicaland lagging, underscoring the need for targeted, localised access strategies.

By 2025, ECD GER reached 78.9% (NER 43.3%), with higher participation in ECD-B and several provinces exceeding 100% GER which are clear indicators of late entry and age mixing. Primary access is near-universal (GER 99.9%, NER 85.3%), though junior NERs vary by province. Lower secondary remains constrained (GER 66.6%, NER 52.5%), and upper secondary is narrow (GER 11.9%; NER 8.5%), with sharp drops in age-specific enrolment beyond 16 years. Across secondary levels, females maintained a consistent participation advantage (Form 1–6 NER GPI 1.07; Form 5–6 1.20).

Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs) declined after 2022 across levels, hinting at improvements in social conditions, retention, or support programme effectiveness; however, secondary school education maintains the highest OVC prevalence and female over-representation, pointing to adolescent-specific risks. Poverty-linked vulnerability dominates over orphanhood, with BEAM remaining as the primary assistance channel with coverage higher in rural provinces while NGO/donor bursaries play complementary roles. Pupils with functional difficulties are concentrated in ECD/primary and drop off markedly at secondary, especially where impairments are severe, highlighting demand for inclusive education and transition support.

Teacher professionalism strengthened between 2021 and 2025. ECD teacher training rose to 81.75%, with pupil–teacher ratios improving from 50 to 37, though rural PTRs remain higher at (40 versus 30 urban) amid stronger rural training coverage. Primary staffing is robust (97.8% trained; PTR 31), with a stable, experienced workforce; yet women are under-represented in leadership positions only accounting for 36% Heads and 44% Deputy Heads. Secondary staffing comprises of 91.4% trained; PTR 21 features high qualification and experience, but only 20% of Heads and 31% of Deputies are female, underscoring persistent leadership gender gaps.

Classroom expansion generally kept pace with demand (ECD ratio 54 to 45; primary 46 to 44; secondary steady 38). Electricity access improved (primary 70% and secondary 77%), yet gaps persist in rural provinces and lower-grant schools. Water access is high at around 97%, but treatment and reliability are uneven, and some schools source water from sources more than 500m away. Sanitation remains Blair-dominant, with urban–rural technology differentials. Acute seating/writing place deficits persist at ECD/primary, while secondary schools show mixed surpluses/deficits. ICT is uneven. Internet is present in 39% of primary and 56% of secondary schools, with urban advantage; satellites (VSAT/Starlink) extend rural reach, but pupil access to computers especially in primary is still lagging behind.

Non-Formal Education (NFE) served 54,263 learners in 2025 with a female majority (58%), spanning primary (51.8%) and secondary (48.2%). Skills Development and Part-Time/Continuing Education constitute 88% of the enrolment, anchored by 2,418

delivery schools and marked provincial variation (high in Manicaland/Masvingo/Harare). System-wide priorities are clear: (i) age-appropriate entry and promotion (ECD to Grade 1; Grade 7 to Form 1; Form 4 to Lower 6); (ii) targeted registration/upgrading of primary schools in rural and peri-urban hotspots; (iii) equitable resourcing for infrastructure, WASH, electricity, and ICT (with a focus on seating/writing places in ECD/primary); (iv) OVC and disability-inclusive support with adolescent-girl protection; (v) teacher deployment and leadership parity initiatives; and (vi) scaled NFE pathways for re-engagement, skills, and gender inclusion.

To strengthen Zimbabwe's education system and address the structural, access-related, and efficiency gaps identified across chapters, a multi-pronged strategy is recommended. Priority actions include enforcing timely entry at ECD and Grade 1 through strengthened community mobilisation, birth registration linkages, and early-learning readiness programmes; improving transition rates at Grade 7 to Form 1 and Form 4 to Lower 6 by expanding places, revising promotion policies, and scaling targeted financial support for vulnerable children especially adolescent girls. Investments should focus on upgrading unregistered and lower-category primary schools, expanding rural boarding and transport solutions, and improving infrastructure for sanitation, electricity, seating, and ICT connectivity. Strengthening inclusive education requires expanded screening, assistive devices, and specialist teacher deployment. Workforce equity can be enhanced by promoting gender-responsive leadership pathways and incentivising trained teacher deployment to underserved areas. Finally, Non-Formal Education should be scaled as a reintegration and skills-building pathway, particularly for out-of-school youth, young mothers, and adults requiring livelihood-oriented learning.

CHAPTER 1 : Introduction

1.1 Demand for education statistics

Zimbabwe places strong emphasis on the availability of sound, reliable, and timely education statistics as a foundation for evidence-based planning, policy formulation, and effective monitoring of the education system. Robust education statistics are critical for understanding trends in access, participation, quality, equity, and learning outcomes, and for ensuring that national education priorities are aligned with available resources and emerging needs. Without credible data, decision-making risks being reactive rather than strategic, undermining the efficiency and effectiveness of education sector interventions.

At the regional and global level, Zimbabwe requires comprehensive education statistics to track progress against domesticated development agendas such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Indicative Regional Strategic Plan, the African Union's Agenda 2063, and the global Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, particularly Sustainable Development Goal 4 on inclusive and equitable quality education. In addition, education statistics are essential for meeting international reporting obligations to organizations such as UNESCO, UNICEF, and other development partners. These reporting commitments require standardized, comparable, and disaggregated data to demonstrate progress, identify gaps, and inform technical and financial support to the sector.

At the national level, education statistics play an indispensable role in monitoring progress toward priorities articulated in key policy and planning frameworks. These include the National Development Strategies (NDS1&2), Provincial and District Operational Plans, the Devolution Agenda, and the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP). Together, these frameworks emphasize results-based management, decentralised planning, and accountability, all of which depend on accurate and timely education data to guide implementation and assess outcomes at national, provincial, district, and school levels.

The Education Management Information System (EMIS) remains the principal source of administrative education data used to monitor progress under the 2021–2025 Education Sector Strategic Plan. EMIS data supports evidence-based planning by providing regular, system-wide information on pupils, teachers, schools, infrastructure, and education service delivery. Importantly, the ESSP reflects and consolidates key aspects of Zimbabwe's extensive education and development policy environment, including the National Education Act, Vision 2030, the National Development Strategy 2021–2025, the Disaster Risk Management and Resilience Plan, the Inclusive Education Policy, the School Health Policy, the ICT Policy, and the Non-Formal Education Policy.

The development of the ESSP was informed by a wide range of evidence and consultative processes. These included the Ministry's education priorities, findings from the 2020 Education Sector Analysis, the In-depth Study on Barriers to Education, lessons learned from the 2016–2020 Education Sector Strategic Plan, extensive stakeholder consultations at national and sub-national levels, and alignment with international and regional education

policies and strategies. As a result, the ESSP provides a coherent and comprehensive framework for addressing both long-standing and emerging challenges in the education sector.

The overarching purpose of the 2021–2025 ESSP is structured around four interrelated domains: access, quality, equity, and inclusivity. These domains are operationalized through five strategic priorities, which are mutually reinforcing and collectively designed to improve education outcomes for all pupils. In total, the ESSP comprises 20 core programmes distributed across these strategic priorities. The five strategic priorities are: (i) improving school infrastructure to enhance access to quality, equitable, and inclusive education; (ii) strengthening curriculum and assessment systems to improve relevance, quality, and learning outcomes; (iii) enhancing safeguarding mechanisms and pupil support services to promote safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environments; (iv) strengthening teacher capacity to improve the quality and equity of education delivery; and (v) enhancing the capacity of the Ministry's leadership and institutions for effective governance, planning, and implementation of ESSP core programmes.

The Strategic Policy Planning, Research, and Statistics Department (SPPRSD) plays a central leadership role in ensuring that the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education effectively monitors and implements the ESSP as envisaged. In recognition of this mandate, the Ministry has invested in strengthening SPPRSD's capacity for data collection, processing, storage, analysis, and dissemination through the Education Management Information System. EMIS serves as a critical tool for tracking education sector performance, supporting policy dialogue, and informing resource allocation decisions.

The key performance indicators generated through EMIS capture both overarching and cross-cutting dimensions of the education system. Disaggregated data at provincial and district levels enables the Ministry to assess the extent to which equity and inclusivity objectives are being met, including using gender parity indices and other equity-focused measures. Indicators related to access to education include enrolment, regular attendance, retention, participation, completion, performance, transition rates, continuation across education cycles, and the availability and accessibility of school infrastructure. Infrastructure indicators encompass classrooms, toilets and ablution facilities, and other essential physical assets, as well as access to safe, secure, and pupil-friendly school environments.

Quality of education is primarily monitored through learning outcome indicators, notably examination pass rates in specific subjects or learning areas. Together, these indicators provide a comprehensive evidence base for monitoring progress, identifying disparities, and guiding targeted interventions aimed at improving access, quality, equity, and inclusivity across Zimbabwe's education system.

1.2 Education Statistics Supply

In response to the increasing demand for education data, the Ministry of Primary and Sector Education taps into its traditional sources of data. Education statistics in the country are mostly from Annual School Censuses, followed by household surveys and censuses. Alternative sources of data, such as citizen-generated data and big data are yet to be exploited.

The annual school census data collection tools gather data that is based on school administrative records. This data, deemed administrative data, is information collected primarily for administrative or management purposes, such as registration, performing a transaction, and record keeping, usually during the delivery of a service.

1.2.1 Annual School Census (2025)

The Annual School Census (ASC) 2025 in Zimbabwe was conducted using a standardised administrative data-collection process led by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) through the Education Management Information System (EMIS). The process followed established national procedures to ensure consistency, completeness, and data quality across all schools.

First, the census was implemented during Term 2 of the 2025 academic year (May-June 2025) All registered public and private primary and secondary schools were required to complete standard ASC data collection instruments, capturing information as at the beginning of the school year. Schools reported data on pupil enrolment (by age, sex, grade, and special needs), teacher establishment and qualifications, school infrastructure, water and sanitation facilities, and pupil welfare and support services.

Second, data collection was carried out at school level, where heads and designated school administrators compiled returns using official EMIS forms or electronic templates. These returns were submitted to district education offices, where education officers conducted initial checks for completeness, internal consistency, and obvious errors. Verified data were then uploaded into the central EMIS platform, with further validation undertaken at provincial and national levels by the Strategic Policy Planning, Research, and Statistics Department (SPPRSD).

Finally, the census data underwent data cleaning, validation, and consolidation at national level to produce official statistics. This included cross-checking enrolment against previous years, verifying teacher deployment figures, and reviewing infrastructure data. The validated ASC 2025 dataset now serves as the official administrative evidence base for education sector planning, monitoring of the Education Sector Strategic Plan (2021–2025), budgeting, and national, regional, and international reporting.

1.3 The rationale of the EMIS report

The Education Management Information System (EMIS) report is a critical tool for evidence-based planning and decision-making in Zimbabwe's education sector. It provides reliable, timely, and comprehensive data on pupils, teachers, schools, and infrastructure, enabling the

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to plan resources effectively, track progress, and address gaps in access, retention, and quality of education. By consolidating information from all schools across the country, the report supports monitoring of national priorities, including the Education Sector Strategic Plan (2021–2025), the National Development Strategies (NDS1&2), and the Devolution Agenda, ensuring that interventions are targeted and responsive to actual needs.

In addition, the EMIS report promotes equity, inclusivity, and accountability in the education system. Disaggregated data by gender, age, grade, and region helps identify disparities and informs policies to support disadvantaged pupils and underserved areas. The report also serves as the official source for national, regional, and international reporting, meeting obligations to UNESCO, SADC, the African Union, and SDG 4 monitoring frameworks. Beyond reporting, EMIS provides a standardized dataset for research, evaluation, and policy dialogue, ensuring that decisions at all levels of the education system are guided by accurate, actionable evidence.

1.4 EMIS report description

The EMIS report is made up of 11 chapters, which are as follows:
Chapter 1: Introduction: covers demand for education statistics, the data source (annual school census), the rationale of the EMIS report and its contents.
Chapter 2: Demand for Education: presents the school-going age population (4 to 18 years), and primary and secondary schools of different classifications for this age group.
Chapter 3: Education Enrolment: covers enrolment at the primary and secondary level of education, disaggregated by sex, province, and rural/urban domains.
Chapter 4: Access to Education: presents net intake ratios and gross intake ratios at the first year of primary and secondary level of education, with disaggregation by sex, province and, rural/urban.
Chapter 5: Participation in Education: presents net enrolment ratios and gross enrolment ratios at the primary and secondary levels of education, with disaggregation by sex, province, and rural/urban.
Chapter 6: Orphans and Vulnerable Children: covers the participation of orphans and vulnerable children in primary and secondary levels of education, as well as their access to basic education assistance.

Chapter 7: Teaching Staff: presents teacher-to-pupil ratios, qualifications, experience, type of employment by sex, and location (provinces, and rural-urban domains).

Chapter 8: Internal Efficiency in the Education System: examines the internal efficiency in the educational system of Zimbabwe. Internal efficiency of an education system concerns the optimal use of resources (inputs) in producing outputs.

Chapter 9: Facilities: analyses the provision of or access to various school infrastructure and services, namely classroom access, access to electricity, WASH facilities, access to water, health and feeding, information on ICT, and seating and writing places.

Chapter 10: Non-Formal Education: presents non-formal education enrolment and programmes at primary and secondary levels of education. Non formal education provides a second chance to children, youth and adults who have not been able to start school or who have not been able to complete their education

Chapter 11: Learning Outcomes: presents learning outcomes measured by national examination pass rates at Grade 7, 'O' Level; and 'A' Level.

CHAPTER 2 : Demand for Education

This chapter provides estimates of Zimbabwe's school-going population, disaggregated by age, sex, location, and level of education. The estimates include both in-school and out-of-school males and females and serve as a denominator for several education indicators presented in this report. Based on the statistics presented in this chapter, the construction of new schools remains a key output under Core Programme 1 of the 2021–2025 Education Sector Strategic Plan, aligned with Strategic Priority 1: improving school infrastructure to expand access to quality, equitable, and inclusive education. The chapter further presents school classifications by registration status, location, per capita grant category, responsible authority, and mode of establishment.

2.1 School - Age Population

Zimbabwe has a school-going (4 to 18 years) population of 6 051 041, of which males and females constitute 49.83 percent and 50.17 percent respectively. Table 2.1 below shows the projected school-going age population by school level, expected age, and sex. There were more females (3 035 875) than males (3 015 166) of school-going age. There were more females than males for all grades save for Grade 3 and Grade 6. The lowest numbers were recorded for upper 6, with 339334 children.

Table 2.1: School Age Population Projections by Single Age and Sex, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Grade	Expected Age	Male	Female	Grand Total
ECD A	4 years	215761	217957	433718
ECD B	5 years	202605	203851	406456
Grade 1	6 years	201814	202908	404722
Grade 2	7 years	201785	204208	405993
Grade 3	8 years	198695	198523	397218
Grade 4	9 years	197488	199683	397171
Grade 5	10 years	203758	205023	408781
Grade 6	11 years	205708	203937	409645
Grade 7	12 years	201183	203146	404329
Form 1	13 years	215965	219346	435311
Form 2	14 years	212557	213744	426301
Form 3	15 years	223548	225345	448893
Form 4	16 years	190766	191761	382527
Lower 6	17 years	174469	176173	350642
Upper 6	18 years	169064	170270	339334
Grand Total		3015166	3035875	6051041

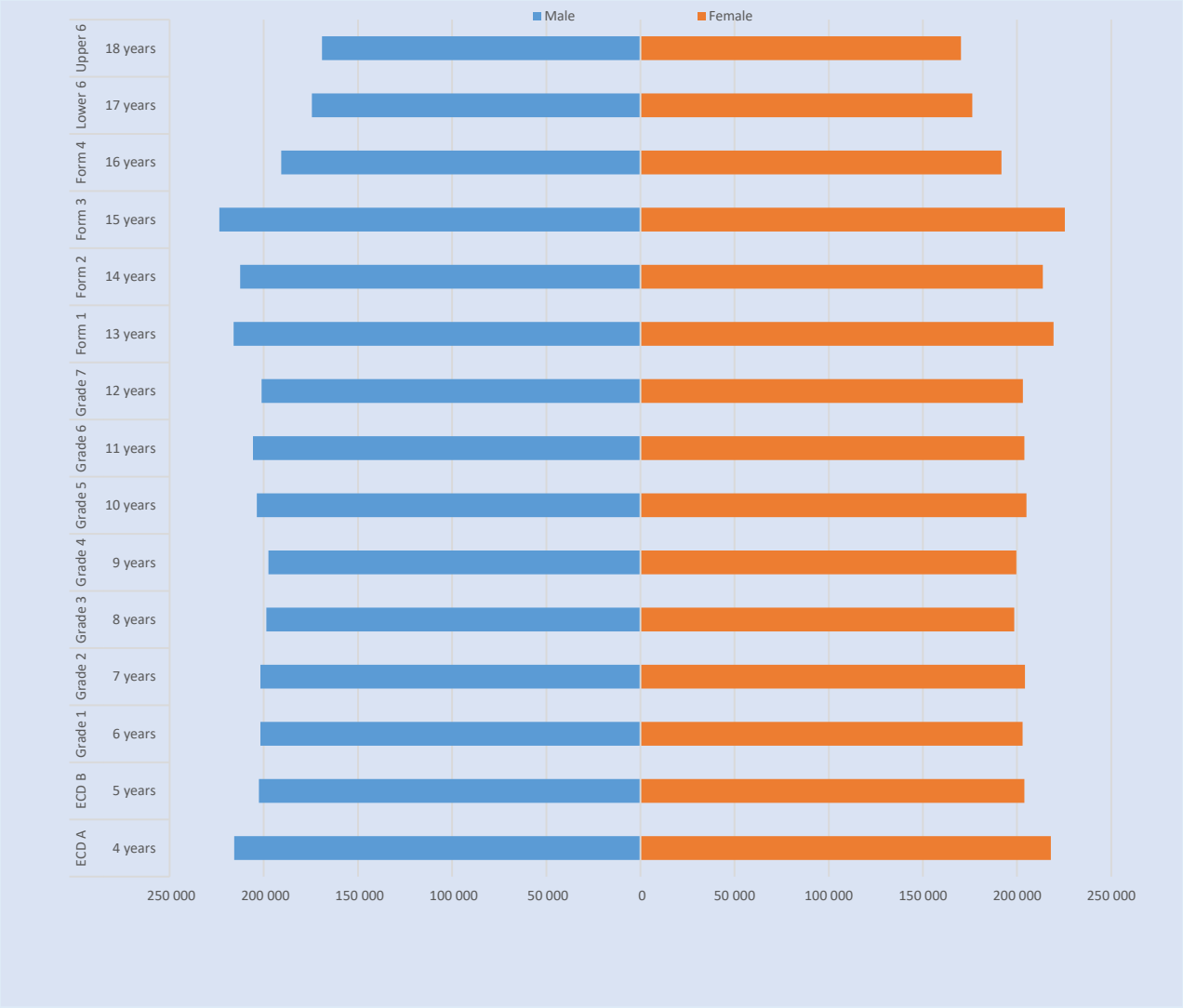


Figure 2.1: Distribution of School Age Population Projections by Single Age and Sex, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

The proportion of school-going age population projections across the provinces for basic education and upper secondary levels are shown in table 2.2 below. The totals for basic education and upper secondary were more in favour of females to males. The basic education population was recorded as the highest in Manicaland (790 948) followed by Harare (724 982) and the lowest being Bulawayo with (186 698). The upper secondary population were also recorded the highest in Manicaland (101 517) and Harare (92 631) while the low numbers were recorded in Matabeleland South (35 992) and Bulawayo (27 615). Overall, the population between 4-18 years had the highest number in Manicaland (892 465) while the lowest were 214 313 in Bulawayo. The total number of basic education population was 5 361 065 while the upper secondary level stood at 689 976.

Table 2.2: School Age Population Projections by Level of Education (Basic Education and Upper secondary), Sex and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Basic Education (4-16 years)			Upper Secondary (17-18 years)			4-18 years		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bulawayo	91 222	95 476	186 698	12 822	14 793	27 615	104 044	110 269	214 313
Harare	357 495	367 487	724 982	43 566	49 065	92 631	401 061	416 552	817 613
Manicaland	394 185	396 763	790 948	51 498	50 019	101 517	445 683	446 782	892 465
Mashonaland Central	253 669	252 098	505 767	31 014	29 193	60 207	284 683	281 291	565 974
Mashonaland East	315 338	316 206	631 544	39 090	39 194	78 284	354 428	355 400	709 828
Mashonaland West	334 581	336 206	670 787	41 076	40 603	81 679	375 657	376 809	752 466
Masvingo	313 830	315 191	629 021	42 578	42 782	85 360	356 408	357 973	714 381
Matabeleland North	151 135	150 257	301 392	20 973	20 529	41 502	172 108	170 786	342 894
Matabeleland South	132 834	131 740	264 574	18 095	17 897	35 992	150 929	149 637	300 566
Midlands	327 344	328 008	655 352	42 821	42 368	85 189	370 165	370 376	740 541
Total	2 671 633	2 689 432	5 361 065	343 533	346 443	689 976	3 015 166	3 035 875	6 051 041

Figure 2.2 below shows the graphs for the distribution of pupil population in ECDA-form 4 (4-16 years) and upper secondary (17-18 years) by province and sex. The depiction shows that there is not much difference between the population by sex in most of the provinces. The graph also shows that in most provinces females were more than theirmale counterparts.

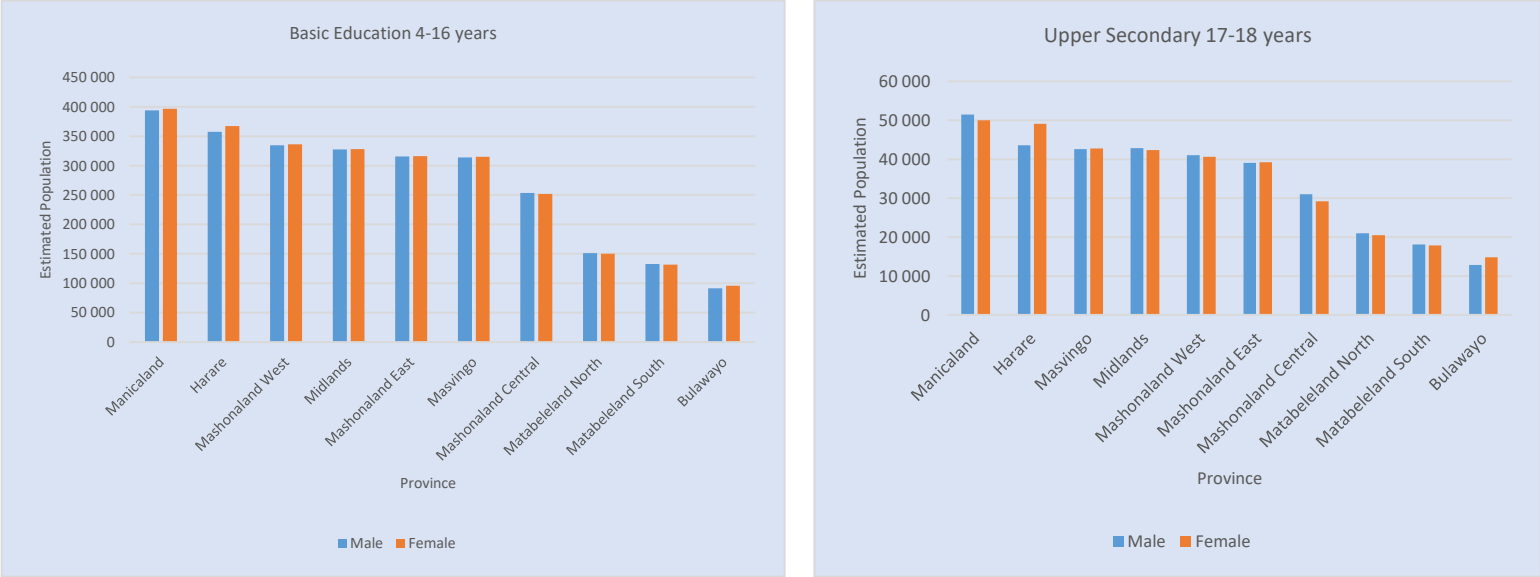


Figure 2.2: Distribution of School Age Population Projections by Level of Education (Basic Education and Upper secondary), Sex and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

The proportion of the school-going age population across the four levels (ECD, primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary) of education varies by province and sex. The proportions for ECD level are in favour of females across the provinces, save for Matabeleland South. Bulawayo had the lowest number of ECD school-going age population

(27 035) while Harare had the highest (121 183). The population in the primary level of education at the official age was highest in Manicaland (415 322), followed by Harare (385 683) and lowest in Bulawayo (96 715). The population eligible for lower secondary level of education ranged from 62 948 in Bulawayo to 257 183 in Manicaland. The population in the upper secondary level of education at the official age was highest in Manicaland (101 517) and lowest in Bulawayo (27 615).

Table 2.3: School Age Population Projections by Level of Education, Sex and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	ECD			Primary			Lower Secondary			Upper Secondary		
	Population age group (4 - 5)			Population age group (6 - 12)			Population age group (13 - 16)			Population age group (17 - 18)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bulawayo	13 505	13 530	27 035	47 619	49 096	96 715	30 098	32 850	62 948	12 822	14 793	27 615
Harare	60 493	60 690	121 183	191 242	194 441	385 683	105 760	112 356	218 116	43 566	49 065	92 631
Manicaland	58 610	59 833	118 443	206 622	208 700	415 322	128 953	128 230	257 183	51 498	50 019	101 517
Mashonaland Central	42 407	42 544	84 951	134 806	134 363	269 169	76 456	75 191	151 647	31 014	29 193	60 207
Mashonaland East	49 838	50 586	100 424	168 174	168 191	336 365	97 326	97 429	194 755	39 090	39 194	78 284
Mashonaland West	56 823	56 884	113 707	176 769	178 509	355 278	100 989	100 813	201 802	41 076	40 603	81 679
Masvingo	43 901	44 171	88 072	164 918	165 250	330 168	105 011	105 770	210 781	42 578	42 782	85 360
Matabeleland North	21 157	21 354	42 511	78 948	78 673	157 621	51 030	50 230	101 260	20 973	20 529	41 502
Matabeleland South	19 533	19 509	39 042	69 542	68 547	138 089	43 759	43 684	87 443	18 095	17 897	35 992
Midlands	52 099	52 707	104 806	171 791	171 658	343 449	103 454	103 643	207 097	42 821	42 368	85 189
Grand Total	418 366	421 808	840 174	1 410 431	1 417 428	2 827 859	842 836	850 196	1 693 032	343 533	346 443	689 976

Table 2.4 below shows the proportional distribution of grades across the provinces. Bulawayo had the lowest proportion of the ECD school-going population (3.22 percent) while Harare had the highest with (14.42 percent). The proportion of the population in the primary level of education at the official age was highest in Manicaland (14.69 percent) and lowest in Bulawayo (3.42 percent). The proportions of persons eligible for lower secondary level of education ranged between 3.72 percent (Bulawayo) to 15.19 percent (Manicaland). The proportion of the population in the upper secondary level was highest in Manicaland (14.71 percent), with the lowest being recorded in Bulawayo (4.00 percent).

Table 2.4: School Age Population Projections by Level of Education, Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	ECD			Primary			Lower Secondary			Upper Secondary		
	Population age group (4-5)			Population age group (6 - 12)			Population age group (13 - 16)			Population age group (17 - 18)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bulawayo	3.23	3.21	3.22	3.38	3.46	3.42	3.57	3.86	3.72	3.73	4.27	4.00
Harare	14.46	14.39	14.42	13.56	13.72	13.64	12.55	13.22	12.88	12.68	14.16	13.43
Manicaland	14.01	14.18	14.10	14.65	14.72	14.69	15.30	15.08	15.19	14.99	14.44	14.71
Mashonaland Central	10.14	10.09	10.11	9.56	9.48	9.52	9.07	8.84	8.96	9.03	8.43	8.73
Mashonaland East	11.91	11.99	11.95	11.92	11.87	11.89	11.55	11.46	11.50	11.38	11.31	11.35
Mashonaland West	13.58	13.49	13.53	12.53	12.59	12.56	11.98	11.86	11.92	11.96	11.72	11.84
Masvingo	10.49	10.47	10.48	11.69	11.66	11.68	12.46	12.44	12.45	12.39	12.35	12.37
Matabeleland North	5.06	5.06	5.06	5.60	5.55	5.57	6.05	5.91	5.98	6.11	5.93	6.01
Matabeleland South	4.67	4.63	4.65	4.93	4.84	4.88	5.19	5.14	5.16	5.27	5.17	5.22
Midlands	12.45	12.50	12.47	12.18	12.11	12.15	12.27	12.19	12.23	12.46	12.23	12.35
Grand Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

The numbers in the 4-7 years age group ranged from 53 462 (Bulawayo Province) to 234 296 (Manicaland Province). The same trend was realised for the ages 8-12 years, with 70 288 in Bulawayo and 299 469 in Manicaland Province. There were 257 183 in Manicaland and 62 948 in Bulawayo for lower secondary age-group of 13-16 years. For upper secondary (17-18 years), the highest numbers were in Manicaland (101 517) while the lowest were in Bulawayo (27 615).

Table 2.5: School Age Population Projections by Level of Education, Sex and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Infant			Junior			Lower Secondary			Upper Secondary		
	Population age group (4 - 7)			Population age group (8 - 12)			Population age group (13 - 16)			Population age group (17 - 18)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bulawayo	26 610	26 852	53 462	34 514	35 774	70 288	30 098	32 850	62 948	12 822	14 793	27 615
Harare	115 411	116 465	231 876	136 324	138 666	274 990	105 760	112 356	218 116	43 566	49 065	92 631
Manicaland	116 108	118 188	234 296	149 124	150 345	299 469	128 953	128 230	257 183	51 498	50 019	101 517
Mashonaland Central	82 097	81 999	164 096	95 116	94 908	190 024	76 456	75 191	151 647	31 014	29 193	60 207
Mashonaland East	97 966	99 252	197 218	120 046	119 525	239 571	97 326	97 429	194 755	39 090	39 194	78 284
Mashonaland West	108 874	109 508	218 382	124 718	125 885	250 603	100 989	100 813	201 802	41 076	40 603	81 679
Masvingo	89 459	89 882	179 341	119 360	119 539	238 899	105 011	105 770	210 781	42 578	42 782	85 360
Matabeleland North	43 336	43 951	87 287	56 769	56 076	112 845	51 030	50 230	101 260	20 973	20 529	41 502
Matabeleland South	39 537	39 265	78 802	49 538	48 791	98 329	43 759	43 684	87 443	18 095	17 897	35 992
Midlands	102 567	103 562	206 129	121 323	120 803	242 126	103 454	103 643	207 097	42 821	42 368	85 189
Grand Total	821 965	828 924	1 650 889	1 006 832	1 010 312	2 017 144	842 836	850 196	1 693 032	343 533	346 443	689 976

Manicaland Province had the highest proportions of eligible pupils across the levels of education while Bulawayo Province had the lowest proportions of the school-age-going

population (eligible at official age) across all levels of education. Table 2.6 below shows the distribution.

Table 2.6: School Age Population Projections by Level of Education, Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Infant			Junior			Lower Secondary			Upper Secondary		
	Population age group (4 - 7)			Population age group (8 - 12)			Population age group (13 - 16)			Population age group (17 - 18)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bulawayo	3.24	3.24	3.24	3.43	3.54	3.48	3.57	3.86	3.72	3.73	4.27	4.00
Harare	14.04	14.05	14.05	13.54	13.73	13.63	12.55	13.22	12.88	12.68	14.16	13.43
Manicaland	14.13	14.26	14.19	14.81	14.88	14.85	15.30	15.08	15.19	14.99	14.44	14.71
Mashonaland Central	9.99	9.89	9.94	9.45	9.39	9.42	9.07	8.84	8.96	9.03	8.43	8.73
Mashonaland East	11.92	11.97	11.95	11.92	11.83	11.88	11.55	11.46	11.50	11.38	11.31	11.35
Mashonaland West	13.25	13.21	13.23	12.39	12.46	12.42	11.98	11.86	11.92	11.96	11.72	11.84
Masvingo	10.88	10.84	10.86	11.86	11.83	11.84	12.46	12.44	12.45	12.39	12.35	12.37
Matabeleland North	5.27	5.30	5.29	5.64	5.55	5.59	6.05	5.91	5.98	6.11	5.93	6.01
Matabeleland South	4.81	4.74	4.77	4.92	4.83	4.87	5.19	5.14	5.16	5.27	5.17	5.22
Midlands	12.48	12.49	12.49	12.05	11.96	12.00	12.27	12.19	12.23	12.46	12.23	12.35
Grand Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

2.2 Schools

The number of schools across all levels i.e. Early Childhood Development (ECD), Primary, and Secondary showed a consistent upward trend between 2021 and 2025. This growth reflects continued expansion of education infrastructure over the last five-year period.

Table 2.7: Schools by Level of Education and Year, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

Years	ECD		Primary		Secondary	
	No	% increase	No	% increase	No	% increase
2021	7 057	4.38	7 081	4.16	3 066	2.89
2022	7 304	3.50	7 386	4.31	3 131	2.12
2023	7 469	2.26	7 514	1.73	3 174	1.37
2024	7 969	6.69	8 014	6.65	3 357	5.77
2025	8 206	2.97	8 308	3.67	3 485	3.81

For ECD, the number of schools offering ECD increased from 7,057 in 2021 to 8,206 in 2025. The growth was modest between 2021 and 2023, with percentage increases declining from 4.38% to 2.26%, before a notable surge in 2024 (6.69%), indicating accelerated registration of ECD facilities. The growth then stabilized in 2025 at 2.97%. A similar pattern was observed at Primary school level, where schools increased from 7,081 in 2021 to 8,308 in 2025. The percentage growth remained relatively steady between 2021 and 2023, followed by a significant rise in 2024 (6.65%), the highest increase during the period. The growth rate moderated to 3.67% in 2025, suggesting consolidation after rapid expansion. At Secondary level, the number of schools rose from 3,066 in 2021 to 3,485 in 2025. Although growth rates

were generally lower than ECD and Primary in the earlier years, a sharp increase occurred in 2024 (5.77%), followed by sustained growth of 3.81% in 2025.

This indicates deliberate efforts to expand access to secondary education, possibly in response to increased transition from primary level. The year 2025 reflects continued but more moderate growth, pointing to sustained development of the education system.

Figure 2.3 shows that ECD and Primary schools consistently recorded higher numbers than Secondary schools, reflecting broader coverage at lower levels of education. Between 2021 and 2023, growth across all three levels was gradual, with steady increases year-on-year. However, a noticeable acceleration occurred in 2024, where the number of schools rose sharply for ECD and Primary, and more visibly for Secondary schools compared to previous years.

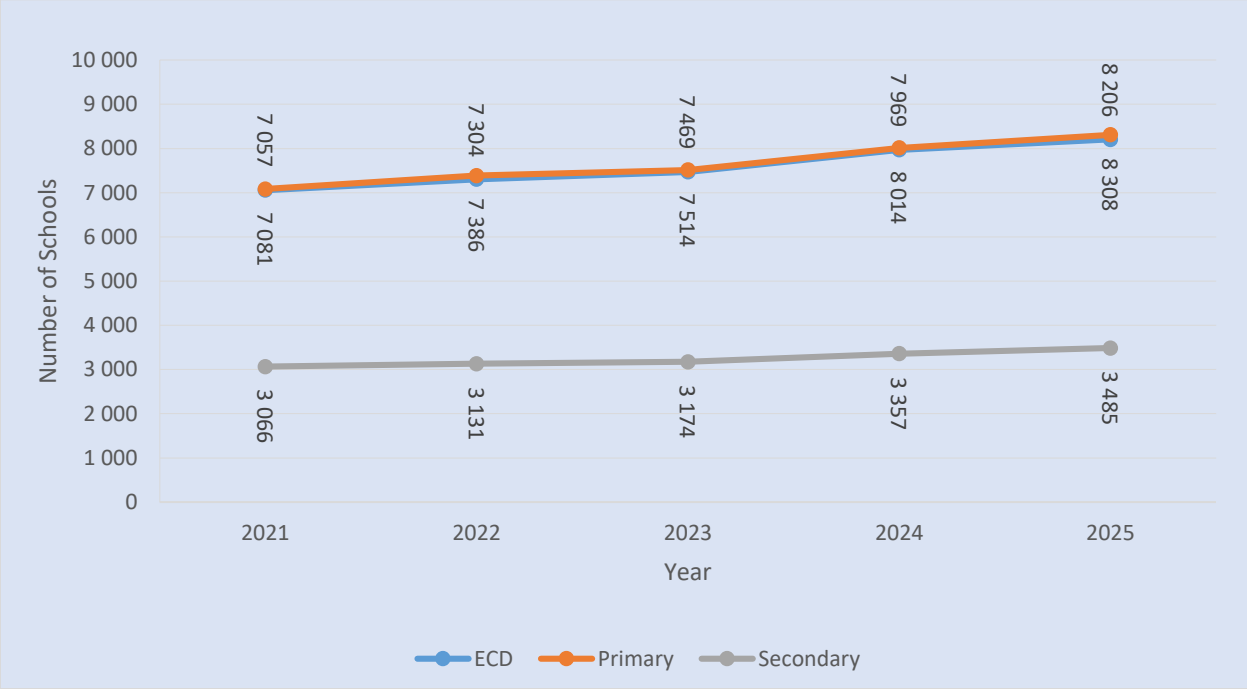


Figure 2.3: Distribution of Schools by Level of Education and Year, Number, Zimbabwe 2021-2025

Table 2.8 presents the provincial distribution of Primary and Secondary schools in Zimbabwe, with a total of 11,793 schools, comprising 8,308 Primary (70.45%) and 3,485 Secondary (29.55%) schools nationwide. The distribution reflects notable provincial variations in both absolute numbers and proportional shares. Manicaland recorded the highest number of schools overall (1,775; 15.05%), accounting for 15.43% of all Primary and 14.15% of Secondary schools. This was followed by Midlands (1,467; 12.44%) and Mashonaland West (1,449; 12.29%), both of which show balanced representation across Primary and Secondary school levels.

In contrast, Bulawayo Province had the lowest number of schools (559; 4.74%), followed by Matabeleland South (772; 6.55%) and Matabeleland North (883; 7.49%).

Table 2.8: Schools by Level of Education and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Number of Schools			% Distribution		
	Primary	Secondary	Total	Primary	Secondary	Total
Bulawayo	427	132	559	5.14	3.79	4.74
Harare	665	358	1 023	8.00	10.27	8.67
Manicaland	1 282	493	1 775	15.43	14.15	15.05
Mashonaland Central	790	320	1 110	9.51	9.18	9.41
Mashonaland East	902	481	1 383	10.86	13.80	11.73
Mashonaland West	983	466	1 449	11.83	13.37	12.29
Masvingo	977	395	1 372	11.76	11.33	11.63
Matabeleland North	659	224	883	7.93	6.43	7.49
Matabeleland South	576	196	772	6.93	5.62	6.55
Midlands	1 047	420	1 467	12.60	12.05	12.44
Grand Total	8 308	3 485	11 793	100.00	100.00	100.00

Manicaland accounts for the largest share of schools at both levels, with 15.43% of Primary and 14.15% of Secondary schools, underscoring its extensive education network. Midlands and Mashonaland West also contribute substantially, each accounting for more than 11.83% of schools at both levels. Bulawayo recorded the smallest share of schools nationally, with 5.14% of Primary and 3.79% of Secondary schools, followed by Matabeleland South and Matabeleland North.

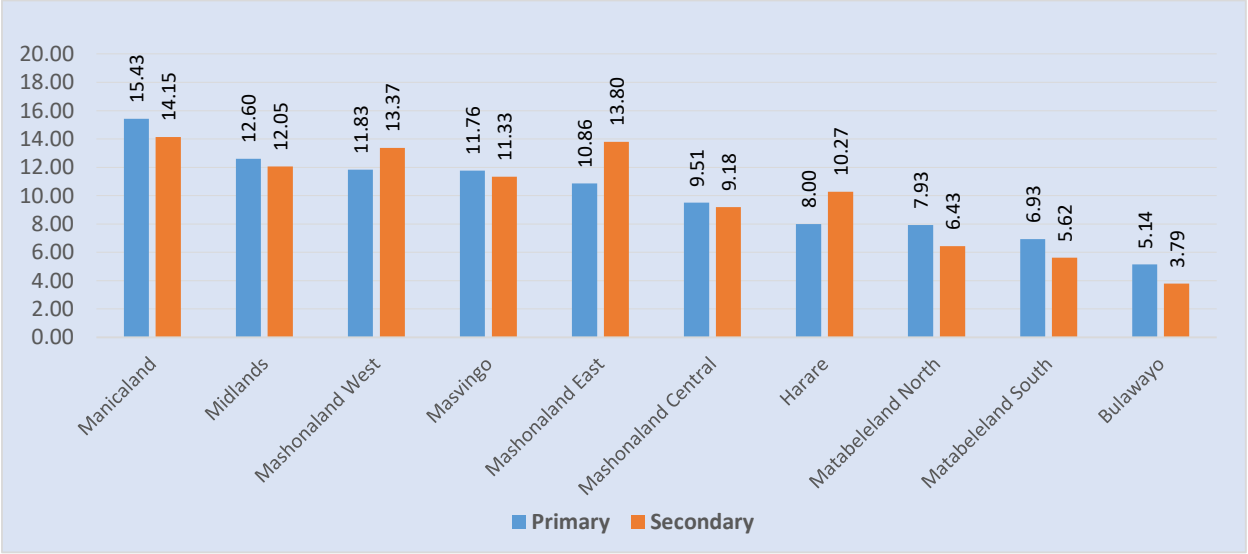


Figure 2.4: Schools by level of Education and Province, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

Manicaland recorded the highest share of both schools and school-age population, at approximately 15%, suggesting a relatively balanced provision of education facilities. Mashonaland West, Mashonaland East, Masvingo, and Midlands also show close alignment between the proportion of schools and the share of school-age population, reflecting proportional infrastructure availability in these provinces. In contrast, Bulawayo shows a slightly higher proportion of schools relative to its school-age population, which may reflect lower population growth or historical infrastructure concentration. The Matabeleland North and South provinces display lower shares of both schools and school-age population, with

the gap being more pronounced for population, suggesting relatively lower demand. This also highlights the need for careful planning to ensure equitable access, especially in sparsely populated and remote areas.

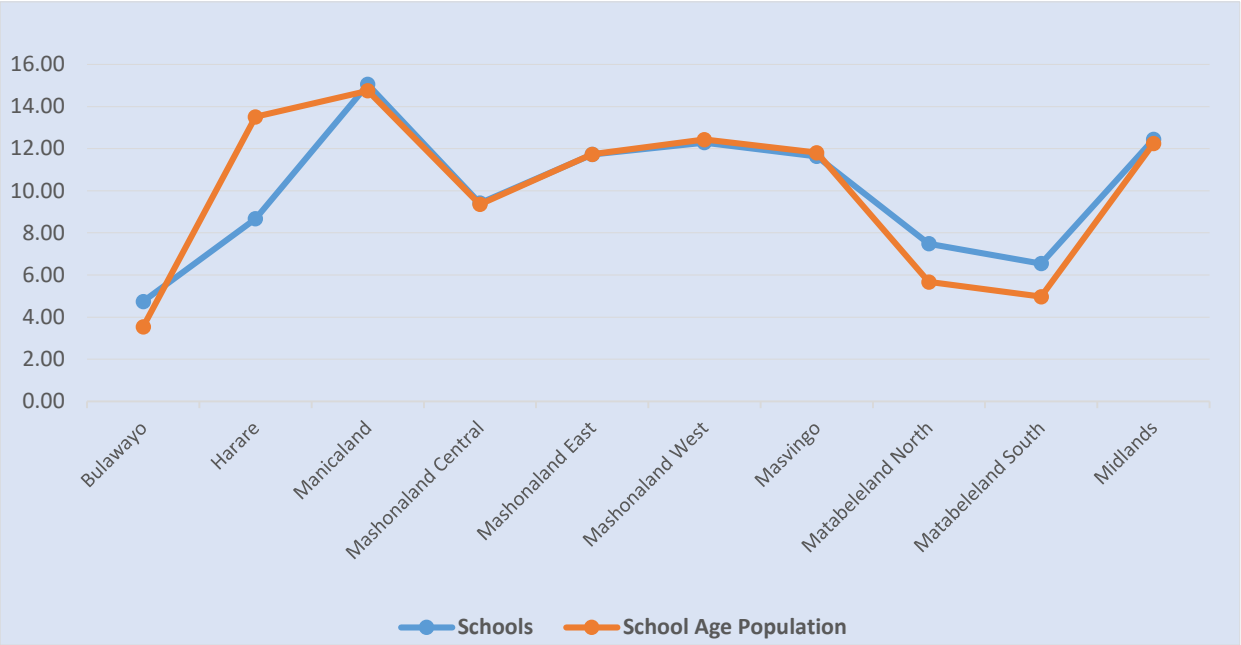


Figure 2.5: School-Age Population Projections and Schools by Province, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

At Primary level, most schools fall under the ECD–Grade 7 category (6,717 schools), indicating that most primary schools offer a full cycle from ECD through to Grade 7. Smaller proportions are accounted for by early childhood-focused institutions i.e ECD-only schools (1,020) and ECD A–Grade 2 schools (469), particularly in urban and peri-urban areas. Provinces with the highest number of Primary schools are Manicaland (1,282), Midlands (1,047), Mashonaland West (983), and Masvingo (977), consistent with their large geographical size and predominantly rural settlement patterns.

At Secondary level, Zimbabwe has 2,190 "O" Level schools and 1,295 "A" Level schools, showing that a substantial proportion of secondary institutions do not offer advanced level education. Manicaland (493), Mashonaland East (481) and Midlands (420), recorded the highest numbers of Secondary schools. Harare stands out with a relatively high concentration of "A" Level schools (232) compared to other provinces, reflecting the greater availability of post-secondary pathways in the capital city.

Table 2.9: Schools by Level of Education and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Primary						Secondary			Grand Total
	ECD only	ECD A -Grade 2	ECD -Grade 7	Grade 1-7	Grade 3- 7	Total	"O" Level	"A" Level	Total	
Bulawayo	217	41	158	9	2	427	29	103	132	559
Harare	123	110	408	22	2	665	126	232	358	1 023
Manicaland	257	68	947	8	2	1 282	307	186	493	1 775
Mashonaland Central	81	73	629	7		790	243	77	320	1 110
Mashonaland East	20	43	824	10	5	902	360	121	481	1 383
Mashonaland West	61	53	860	5	4	983	329	137	466	1 449
Masvingo	59	27	885	5	1	977	225	170	395	1 372
Matabeleland North	29	7	619	3	1	659	176	48	224	883
Matabeleland South	22	11	537	4	2	576	121	75	196	772
Midlands	151	36	850	9	1	1 047	274	146	420	1 467
Grand Total	1020	469	6717	82	20	8308	2190	1295	3485	11 793

At Primary level, the data shows that ECD–Grade 7 schools dominate nationally, with Manicaland (14.10%), Masvingo (13.18%), Mashonaland West (12.80%), and Midlands (12.65%) recording the largest shares of full-cycle primary schools. ECD-only schools were concentrated mainly in Manicaland (25.20%), Bulawayo (21.27%), Midlands (14.80%), and Harare (12.06%). ECD A–Grade 2 schools are particularly prominent in Harare (23.45%) and Mashonaland Central (15.57%), indicating partial primary configurations common in urban and transitional settings. At Secondary level, "O" Level schools are mostly concentrated in Mashonaland East (16.44%), Mashonaland West (15.02%), and Manicaland (14.02%), while "A" Level schools are more heavily concentrated in Harare (17.92%), Manicaland (14.36%), and Masvingo (13.13%). This highlights persistent provincial disparities in access to advanced secondary education, with urban provinces having relatively greater A-Level provision than rural ones. Table 2.10 shows the distribution.

Table 2.10: Schools by Level of Education and Province, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Primary						Secondary			Grand Total
	ECD only	ECD A -Grade 2	ECD -Grade 7	Grade 1-7	Grade 3- 7	Total	"O" Level	"A" Level	Total	
Bulawayo	21.27	8.74	2.35	10.98	10.00	5.14	1.32	7.95	3.79	4.74
Harare	12.06	23.45	6.07	26.83	10.00	8.00	5.75	17.92	10.27	8.67
Manicaland	25.20	14.50	14.10	9.76	10.00	15.43	14.02	14.36	14.15	15.05
Mashonaland Central	7.94	15.57	9.36	8.54	0.00	9.51	11.10	5.95	9.18	9.41
Mashonaland East	1.96	9.17	12.27	12.20	25.00	10.86	16.44	9.34	13.80	11.73
Mashonaland West	5.98	11.30	12.80	6.10	20.00	11.83	15.02	10.58	13.37	12.29
Masvingo	5.78	5.76	13.18	6.10	5.00	11.76	10.27	13.13	11.33	11.63
Matabeleland North	2.84	1.49	9.22	3.66	5.00	7.93	8.04	3.71	6.43	7.49
Matabeleland South	2.16	2.35	7.99	4.88	10.00	6.93	5.53	5.79	5.62	6.55
Midlands	14.80	7.68	12.65	10.98	5.00	12.60	12.51	11.27	12.05	12.44
Grand Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Overall, Manicaland accounts for the largest share of schools nationally (15.05%), followed by Midlands (12.44%) and Mashonaland West (12.29%), while Bulawayo (4.74%) has the smallest share due to its fully urban nature. The distribution underscores the need for targeted planning to balance school types across provinces, particularly to expand A-Level and full-cycle primary provision in provinces with limited coverage.

2.3 Classification of Schools

2.3.1 Registration Status

Registered primary schools constitute the largest share, accounting for 6,045 schools, which represents 72.76% of all primary schools. This shows substantial compliance with national education standards and registration requirements. The Satellite schools' number of 894 represents 10.76% of the total. These schools typically operate as extensions of registered schools, often established to improve access in underserved or newly resettled areas. Unregistered primary schools total 1,369, accounting for 16.48% of all primary schools.

Registered secondary schools account for 2,557 schools, representing 73.37% of all secondary schools. Satellite secondary schools total 697, making up 20.00% of the total. This relatively high proportion highlights the continued expansion of secondary education, particularly in rural and peri-urban areas where demand has outpaced the establishment of fully registered institutions. Unregistered secondary schools (231) accounted for 6.63% of all secondary schools. This is a comparatively small share indicating that unregistered provision at secondary level is more limited than at primary level.

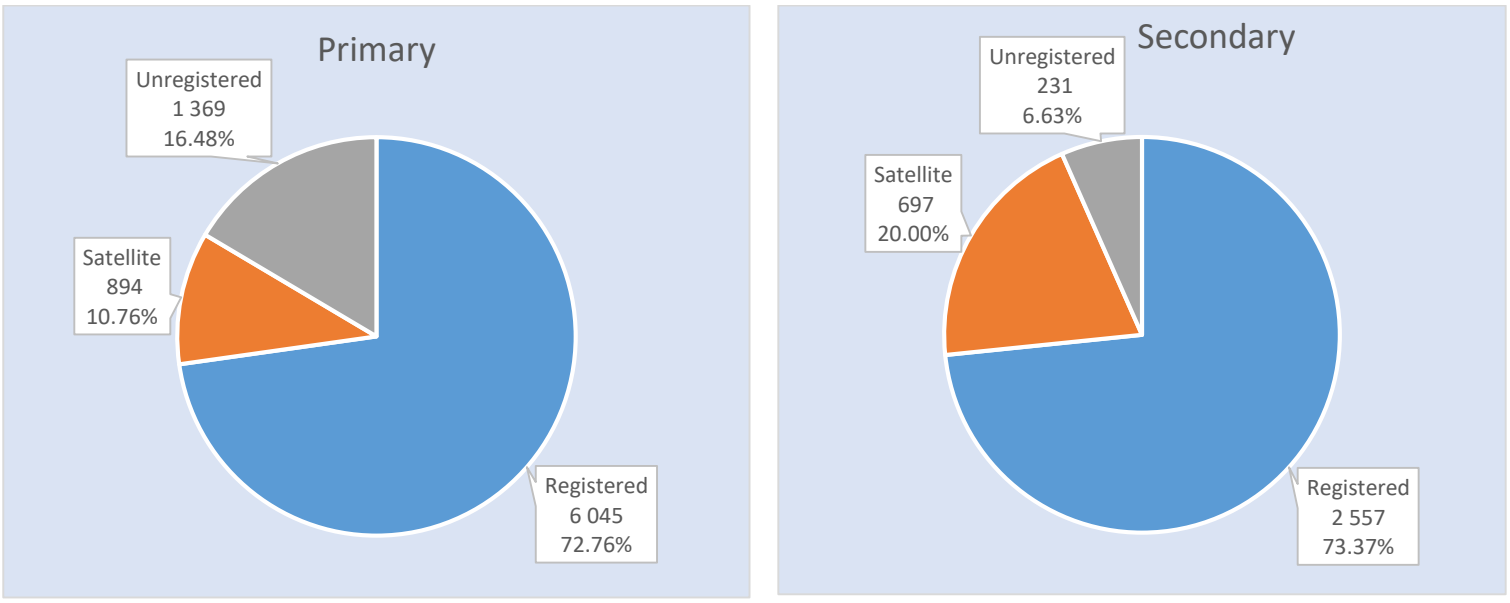


Figure 2.6 : Schools by Level of Education and Registration Status, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

In total, 11,793 schools were recorded nationwide, comprising 8,308 primary schools (70.4%) and 3,485 secondary schools (29.6%). Of the primary schools, 6,045 were registered, 894 were satellite, and 1,369 were unregistered. At secondary level, 2,557 schools were registered, 697 were satellite, and 231 were unregistered. Nationally, a total of 6,045 primary schools were registered, compared to 1,369 unregistered ones. At secondary level, 2,557 schools were registered, while 231 remain unregistered.

At primary level, Manicaland recorded the highest number of registered schools (867), followed by Masvingo (814) and Midlands (774). Mashonaland East (740) and Mashonaland West (623) also had substantial numbers of registered primary schools. Unregistered primary schools were most prevalent in Manicaland (349), Mashonaland Central (226), Mashonaland West (160), and Midlands (155). These provinces together account for a significant proportion of unregistered primary institutions nationwide. In contrast, Bulawayo (171) and Harare (137), despite being highly urbanized, also report notable numbers of unregistered primary schools, largely associated with population growth in peri-urban areas where education provision expanded faster than formal registration.

At secondary level, Manicaland Province had the highest number of registered secondary schools (343), followed closely by Harare (340), Mashonaland East (338), and Masvingo (334). This indicates a relatively balanced distribution of registered secondary institutions across both urban and rural provinces. Unregistered secondary schools were comparatively few across all provinces, highlighting improved regulatory oversight at this level. Mashonaland Central (39) and Mashonaland East (42) record the highest numbers of unregistered secondary schools, followed by Mashonaland West (37), Manicaland (33) and Bulawayo (31). Matabeleland North (2), Matabeleland South (6) and Masvingo (10) report the lowest figures, suggesting near-universal registration of secondary schools in these provinces.

Table 2.11: Schools by Level of Education, Registration Status and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Primary				Secondary				Grand Total
	Number								
	Registered	Satellite	Unregistered	Total	Registered	Satellite	Unregistered	Total	
Bulawayo	252	4	171	427	99	2	31	132	559
Harare	524	4	137	665	340	4	14	358	1 023
Manicaland	867	66	349	1 282	343	117	33	493	1 775
Mashonaland Central	459	105	226	790	200	81	39	320	1 110
Mashonaland East	740	85	77	902	338	101	42	481	1 383
Mashonaland West	623	200	160	983	278	151	37	466	1 449
Masvingo	814	114	49	977	334	51	10	395	1 372
Matabeleland North	497	135	27	659	146	76	2	224	883
Matabeleland South	495	63	18	576	158	32	6	196	772
Midlands	774	118	155	1 047	321	82	17	420	1 467
Grand Total	6 045	894	1 369	8 308	2 557	697	231	3 485	11 793

In term of percentages, registered primary schools were heavily concentrated in Manicaland (14.34%), Masvingo (13.47%), and Midlands (12.80%), reflecting the dominance of these provinces in the provision of formal primary education. Mashonaland East (12.24%) and Mashonaland West (10.31%) also make substantial contributions. Urban provinces contribute smaller shares, with Harare accounting for 8.67% and Bulawayo for 4.17% of registered primary schools. *Satellite primary schools* were disproportionately concentrated in Mashonaland West (22.37%), followed by Matabeleland North (15.10%), Midlands (13.20%), Masvingo (12.75%), and Mashonaland Central (11.74%). Unregistered primary schools were most prevalent in Manicaland (25.49%), indicating that over a quarter of all unregistered primary schools nationally were in this province. Significant shares were also observed in Mashonaland Central (16.51%), Mashonaland West (11.69%) and Midlands (11.32%). Bulawayo (12.49%) and Harare (10.01%) together account for over one-fifth of unregistered primary schools, which is indicative of the pressures in urban and peri-urban areas. Table 2.12 shows the distribution.

Registered secondary schools were more evenly distributed across provinces. Manicaland (13.41%), Mashonaland East (13.22%), Masvingo (13.06%), Midlands (12.55%), and Harare (13.30%) each contribute roughly to similar shares, indicating balanced development of formal secondary education facilities nationwide. *Satellite secondary schools* were concentrated primarily in Mashonaland West (21.66%), Manicaland (16.79%), and Mashonaland East (14.49%), together accounting for more than half of all satellite secondary schools. This suggests targeted expansion of secondary education access in provinces with high primary school outputs and growing demand for post-primary education.

Table 2.12: Schools by Level of Education, Registration Status and Province, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Primary				Secondary				Grand Total
	Percentage								
	Registered	Satellite	Unregistered	Total	Registered	Satellite	Unregistered	Total	
Bulawayo	4.17	0.45	12.49	5.14	3.87	0.29	13.42	1.12	4.74
Harare	8.67	0.45	10.01	8.00	13.30	0.57	6.06	3.04	8.67
Manicaland	14.34	7.38	25.49	15.43	13.41	16.79	14.29	4.18	15.05
Mashonaland Central	7.59	11.74	16.51	9.51	7.82	11.62	16.88	2.71	9.41
Mashonaland East	12.24	9.51	5.62	10.86	13.22	14.49	18.18	4.08	11.73
Mashonaland West	10.31	22.37	11.69	11.83	10.87	21.66	16.02	3.95	12.29
Masvingo	13.47	12.75	3.58	11.76	13.06	7.32	4.33	3.35	11.63
Matabeleland North	8.22	15.10	1.97	7.93	5.71	10.90	0.87	1.90	7.49
Matabeleland South	8.19	7.05	1.31	6.93	6.18	4.59	2.60	1.66	6.55
Midlands	12.80	13.20	11.32	12.60	12.55	11.76	7.36	3.56	12.44
Grand Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	29.55	100.00

2.3.2 Location

In Bulawayo, almost all primary schools (99.06%) are in urban areas, with only 0.94% in rural settings. Similarly, Harare records 99.40% urban primary schools and a negligible 0.60% rural share. This pattern is consistent with the metropolitan nature of these provinces, which have limited rural catchment areas. Masvingo records the highest rural share, with 90.89% of primary schools located in rural areas and only 9.11% in urban areas. Matabeleland North (88.62% rural) and Matabeleland South (86.11% rural) also exhibit very high rural concentrations. Mashonaland East (84.70% rural) and Mashonaland Central (81.52% rural) further reflect the rural-oriented distribution of primary education infrastructure. Manicaland has 72.54% of primary schools in rural areas, while Mashonaland West records 73.14% rural, indicating a relatively higher urban share compared to other rural provinces. Midlands shows the lowest rural proportion among non-metropolitan provinces, with 71.92% rural and 28.08% urban, reflecting its mixed rural–urban settlement pattern and the presence of several urban growth centres. Figure 2.7 shows the distribution.

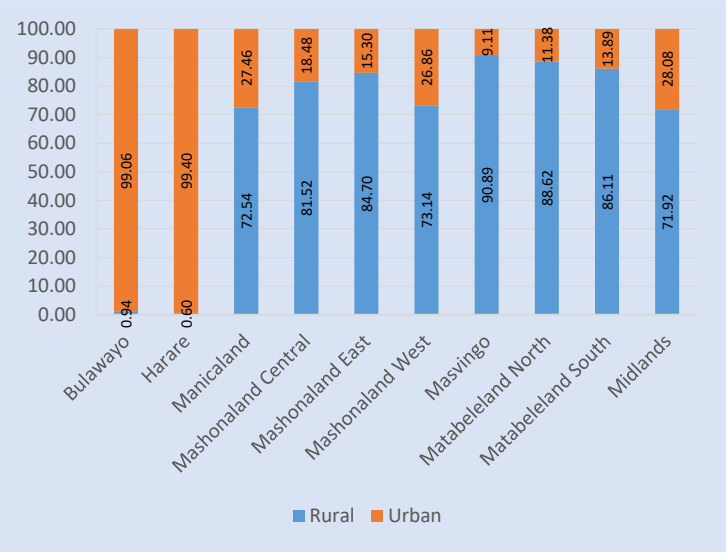


Figure 2.7: Primary Schools by Location, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

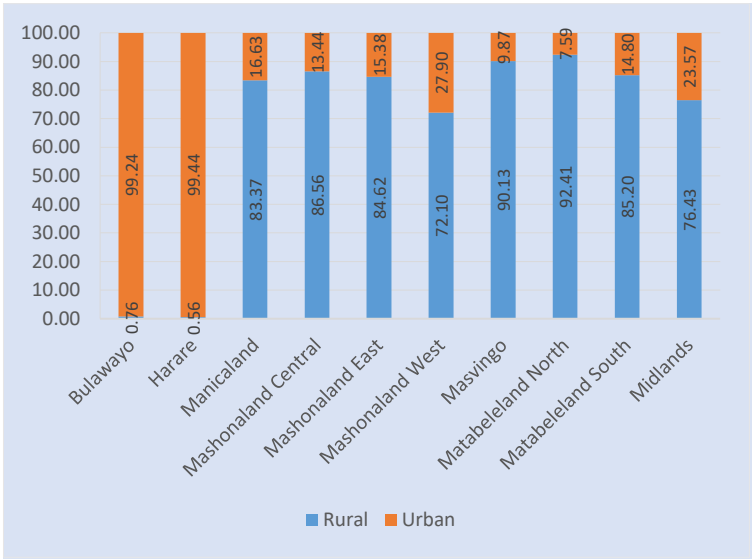


Figure 2.8: Secondary Schools by Location, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

Bulawayo and Harare were overwhelmingly urban in their distribution of secondary schools. In Bulawayo, 99.24% of secondary schools were in urban areas, with only 0.76% in rural locations. Likewise, Harare recorded 99.44% urban secondary schools and 0.56% rural. This reflects the metropolitan nature of these provinces and the concentration of secondary education facilities within urban settings. Matabeleland North has the highest rural concentration, with 92.41% of secondary schools situated in rural areas and 7.59% in urban areas. Masvingo follows closely with 90.13% rural and 9.87% urban. Mashonaland Central records 86.56% rural, while Matabeleland South has 85.20% rural secondary schools. Mashonaland East and Manicaland show similar patterns, with 84.62% and 83.37% of secondary schools located in rural areas, respectively. The Midlands province has the lowest

rural share among non-metropolitan provinces, with 76.43% rural and 23.57% urban, reflecting its more diversified settlement and economic structure. Mashonaland West records 72.10% rural and 27.90% urban, indicating a relatively higher urban presence compared to other rural provinces.

Table 2.13: Schools by Level of Education, Location (Rural and Urban) and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Primary				Secondary				Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	Total	% Rural	Rural	Urban	Total	% Rural	
Bulawayo	4	423	427	0.94	1	131	132	0.76	559
Harare	4	661	665	0.60	2	356	358	0.56	1 023
Manicaland	930	352	1 282	72.54	411	82	493	83.37	1 775
Mashonaland Central	644	146	790	81.52	277	43	320	86.56	1 110
Mashonaland East	764	138	902	84.70	407	74	481	84.62	1 383
Mashonaland West	719	264	983	73.14	336	130	466	72.10	1 449
Masvingo	888	89	977	90.89	356	39	395	90.13	1 372
Matabeleland North	584	75	659	88.62	207	17	224	92.41	883
Matabeleland South	496	80	576	86.11	167	29	196	85.20	772
Midlands	753	294	1 047	71.92	321	99	420	76.43	1 467
Grand Total	5 786	2 522	8 308	651	2 485	1 000	3 485	71.31	11 793

2.3.3 Per Capita Grant Classification

Grant type classification is determined by the per capita grant allocated to schools by the government. There are three categories based on grant type, namely:

i) P1 and S1 schools,
ii) P2 and S2 schools
iii) iii) P3 and S3 schools.

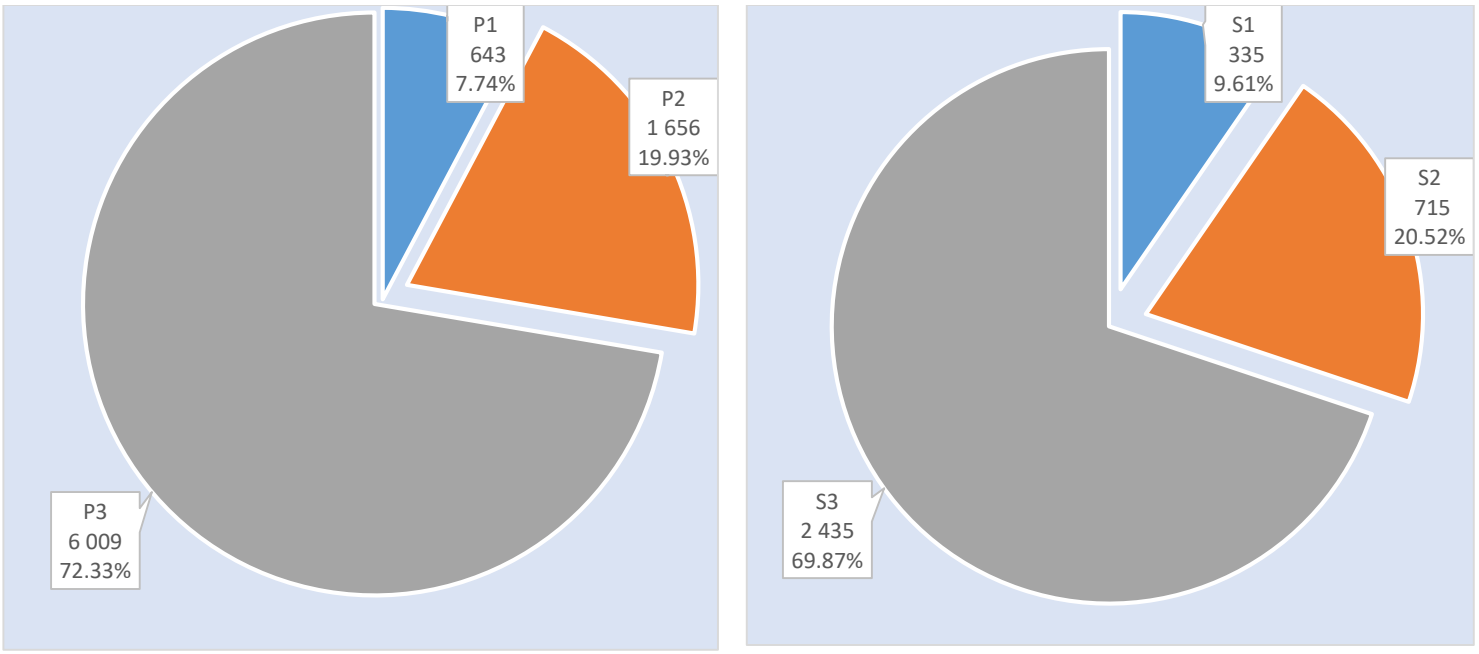


Figure 2.9: Schools by Level of Education and Per Capita Grant Classification, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

At primary level, Manicaland (1,282), Midlands (1,047), Mashonaland West (983), Masvingo (977), and Mashonaland East (902) receive the per-capita grants from central government. In these provinces, P3 schools overwhelmingly predominate, accounting for the bulk of primary schools. For example, Manicaland alone has 943 P3 primary schools, while Masvingo and Mashonaland East record 892 and 789 P3 schools, respectively. Urban provinces show a different pattern. Harare and Bulawayo have comparatively higher numbers of P1 and P2 schools, reflecting their urban and peri-urban character. Harare recorded 448 P2 and 175 P1 primary schools, while Bulawayo had 281 P2 and 107 P1 schools. In contrast, their P3 counts are relatively low. Table below shows the schools by Level of Education and Capitation Grant Classification by province.

At secondary level, Manicaland (493), Mashonaland East (481), Mashonaland West (466), and Midlands (420) recorded the highest totals. Just as with primary schools, S3 schools dominate in all provinces, particularly in rural provinces. Manicaland has 396 S3 secondary schools, Mashonaland East 396, and Mashonaland West 338. In Harare and Bulawayo, secondary schools are more concentrated in S2 and S1 categories. Harare records 239 S2 and 92 S1 secondary schools, while Bulawayo has 72 S2 and 43 S1, reflecting a stronger urban-based secondary school structure.

Table 2.14: Schools by Level of Education, Capitation Grant Classification and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Primary				Secondary				
	Number								
	P1	P2	P3	Total	S1	S2	S3	Total	Grand Total
Bulawayo	107	281	39	427	43	72	17	132	559
Harare	175	448	42	665	92	239	27	358	1 023
Manicaland	67	272	943	1 282	37	60	396	493	1 775
Mashonaland Central	19	94	677	790	7	56	257	320	1 110
Mashonaland East	31	82	789	902	32	53	396	481	1 383
Mashonaland West	90	156	737	983	37	91	338	466	1 449
Masvingo	26	59	892	977	27	31	337	395	1 372
Matabeleland North	15	42	602	659	6	16	202	224	883
Matabeleland South	24	39	513	576	14	28	154	196	772
Midlands	89	183	775	1 047	40	69	311	420	1 467
Grand Total	643	1 656	6 009	8 308	335	715	2 435	3 485	11 793

In Bulawayo, P2 schools account for 65.81% and P1 for 25.06%, with only 9.13% classified as P3. Similarly, Harare recorded 67.37% P2, 26.32% P1, and just 6.32% P3 primary schools. In contrast, rural provinces were overwhelmingly dominated by P3 schools. Masvingo (91.30%), Matabeleland North (91.35%), Matabeleland South (89.06%), Mashonaland East (87.47%), and Mashonaland Central (85.70%) all recorded more than 85% of their primary schools in the P3 category.

In Bulawayo, S2 schools constitute 54.55% and S1 schools 32.58%, while S3 schools account for only 12.88%. Harare recorded 66.76% S2, 25.70% S1, and 7.54% S3 secondary schools. Rural provinces were dominated by S3 schools, particularly Matabeleland North (90.18%), Masvingo (85.32%), Mashonaland East (82.33%), Mashonaland Central (80.31%), and Manicaland (80.32%) as depicted in table 2.15.

Table 2.15: Schools by Level of Education, Capitation Grant Classification and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Primary				Secondary			
	Percentage							
	P1	P2	P3	T	S1	S2	S3	T
Bulawayo	25.06	65.81	9.13	100.00	32.58	54.55	12.88	100.00
Harare	26.32	67.37	6.32	100.00	25.70	66.76	7.54	100.00
Manicaland	5.23	21.22	73.56	100.00	7.51	12.17	80.32	100.00
Mashonaland Central	2.41	11.90	85.70	100.00	2.19	17.50	80.31	100.00
Mashonaland East	3.44	9.09	87.47	100.00	6.65	11.02	82.33	100.00
Mashonaland West	9.16	15.87	74.97	100.00	7.94	19.53	72.53	100.00
Masvingo	2.66	6.04	91.30	100.00	6.84	7.85	85.32	100.00
Matabeleland North	2.28	6.37	91.35	100.00	2.68	7.14	90.18	100.00
Matabeleland South	4.17	6.77	89.06	100.00	7.14	14.29	78.57	100.00
Midlands	8.50	17.48	74.02	100.00	9.52	16.43	74.05	100.00
Grand Total	7.74	19.93	72.33	100.00	9.61	20.52	69.87	100.00

2.3.4 Government and Non-Government

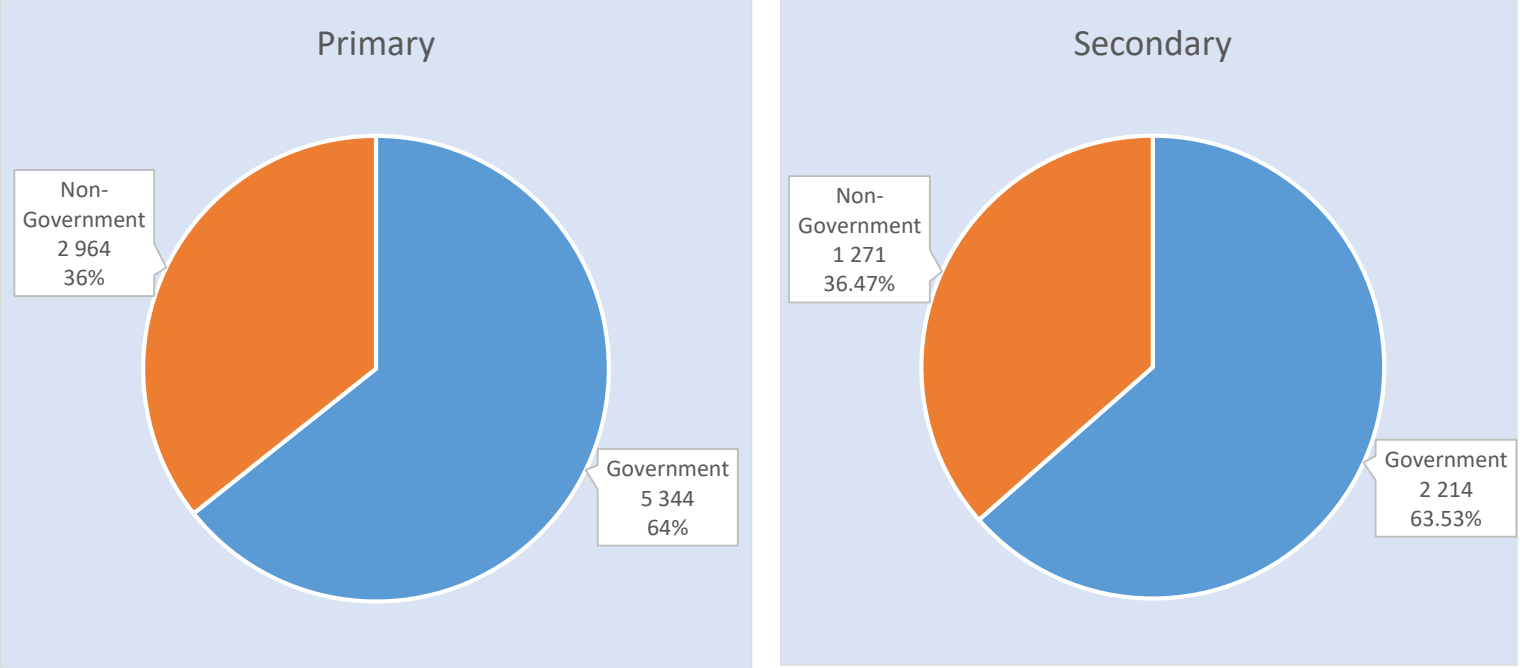


Figure 2.10: Schools by Level of Education and Whether Run by Government or Non-Government, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

The Government accounts for the largest share of schools at both primary and secondary school levels. District Councils are the principal responsible authority, managing 57.44% of primary schools and 54.61% of secondary schools. This underscores the central role of local government structures in delivering education services, particularly in rural areas. Other government authorities contribute comparatively smaller proportions. Government schools account for 3.67% of primary and 6.20% of secondary schools, while City Councils manage 1.95% of primary and 0.63% of secondary schools. Town Boards represent a minimal share, accounting for 0.45% of primary and 0.57% of secondary schools. Schools under other Government Line Ministries are also limited, comprising 0.82% of primary and 1.52% of secondary schools as shown in figure 2.11.

Non-government authorities collectively manage a substantial portion of schools, particularly at secondary level. Church/Mission schools are the largest non-government Responsible Authority, accounting for 6.87% of primary schools and 11.48% of secondary schools, highlighting their significant role in secondary school education provision. Private individuals, another major contributor, manages 21.81% of primary schools and 17.27% of secondary schools, indicating strong private sector participation, especially at primary level. Private Companies account for 3.67% of primary and 4.42% of secondary schools, while Trusts manage 1.64% of primary and 2.32% of secondary schools. Other non-government authorities contribute marginally. Farms account for 0.87% of primary and 0.20% of secondary schools, while mines represent 0.48% of primary and 0.11% of secondary schools.

Other authorities which have not been specified also account for small shares, comprising 0.34% of primary and 0.66% of secondary schools.

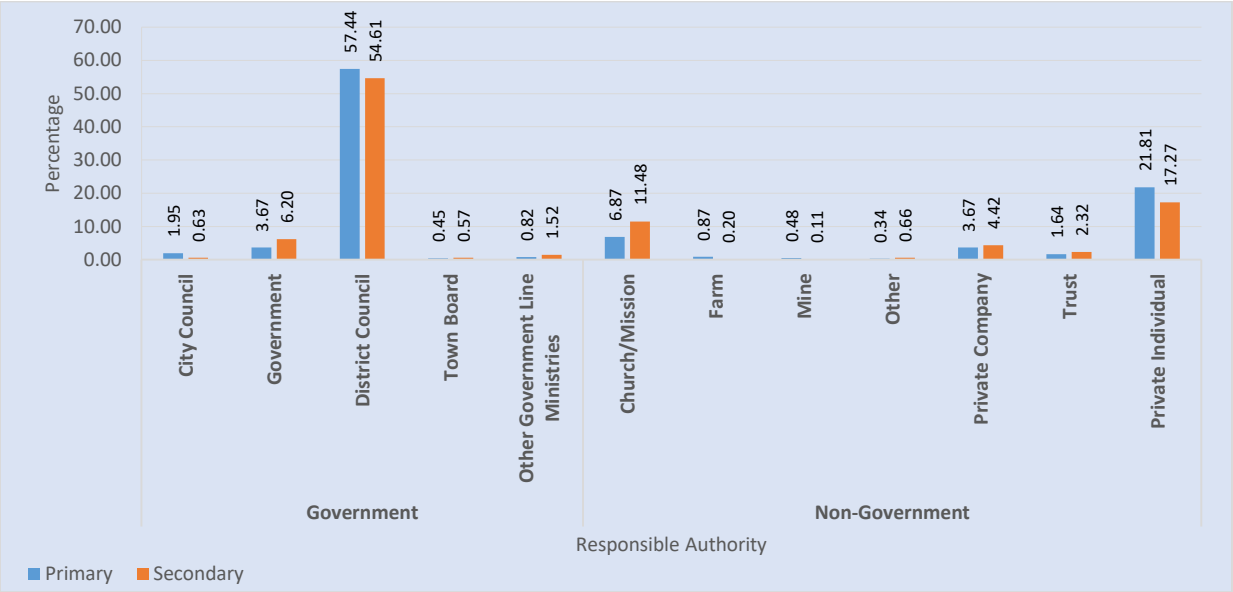


Figure 2.11: Government and Non-Government Schools by Responsible Authority, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

Nationally, Zimbabwe has a total of 8,308 primary schools. Of these, 5,344 schools (64.32%) are managed by government authorities, while 2,964 schools (35.68%) fall under non-government authorities. This confirms that government remains the dominant provider of primary education, though non-government actors play a substantial complementary role. Among government providers, District Councils are by far the largest responsible authority, accounting for 4,772 schools, followed by City Councils (162) and Other Government Line Ministries (68). Within the non-government sector, Private Individuals (1,812) and Church/Mission authorities (571) constitute the largest providers of education.

In the metropolitan provinces, non-government primary schools dominate. Bulawayo has 131 government schools compared to 296 non-government schools, with government schools accounting for only 30.68% of the total. A significant proportion of schools are run by private individuals, reflecting the urban and private-sector-driven education landscape. Harare has a similar pattern, with 175 government schools against 490 non-government schools, resulting in a government share of 26.32%, the lowest nationally.

Mashonaland East recorded 649 government schools, accounting for 71.95% of all primary schools. Mashonaland West follows closely with 70.50% government-managed schools. Mashonaland Central has 60.89% government schools, indicating a more balanced but still government-led structure. In these provinces, District Councils are the primary education providers, reflecting extensive rural coverage and decentralized education administration. Manicaland has 723 government schools, representing 56.40% of its total. While government schools dominate, non-government providers—particularly church/mission

and private individuals—play a very significant role. Midlands has 709 government schools, accounting for 67.72%, with a significant contribution from non-government authorities, especially private individuals and church institutions.

High levels of government dominance are observed in Masvingo with 779 government schools, representing 79.73% of all primary schools and Matabeleland North and Matabeleland South record 81.49% and 81.08% government shares respectively, which is the highest nationally. These provinces rely heavily on District Council-managed schools.

Table 2.16: Primary Schools by Type, Responsible Authority and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Government						Non-Government								Grand Total	% Government
	Government	Other Government Line	District Council	City Council	Town Board	Total	Church/Mission	Farm	Mine	Private Company	Trust	Private Individual	Other	Total		
Bulawayo	62	5	10	54		131	44	0	0	38	23	191		296	427	30.68
Harare	113	8	6	41	7	175	27	7	0	71	45	338	2	490	665	26.32
Manicaland	17	8	685	9	4	723	121	18	1	44	13	358	4	559	1 282	56.40
Mashonaland Central	8	3	463	6	1	481	34	11	6	13	2	240	3	309	790	60.89
Mashonaland East	13	7	617	4	8	649	41	12	1	27	11	156	5	253	902	71.95
Mashonaland West	32	16	616	19	10	693	40	5	6	22	19	197	1	290	983	70.50
Masvingo	10	5	755	8	1	779	74	7	4	26	7	80		198	977	79.73
Matabeleland North	10	6	518	2	1	537	63	1	7	12	7	25	7	122	659	81.49
Matabeleland South	9	7	442	6	3	467	42	4	1	18	3	41		109	576	81.08
Midlands	31	3	660	13	2	709	85	7	14	34	6	186	6	338	1 047	67.72
Grand Total	305	68	4 772	162	37	5 344	571	72	40	305	136	1 812	28	2 964	8 308	64.32

District Councils are the major responsible authority with Masvingo (96.92%), Mashonaland Central (96.26%), Matabeleland North (96.46%), Mashonaland East (95.07%), and Matabeleland South (94.65%) accounting for nearly all government primary schools. Manicaland (94.74%), Midlands (93.09%), and Mashonaland West (88.89%) also show strong District Council dominance. In contrast, metropolitan provinces display a more diversified government structure. Bulawayo has a large share of government schools managed by City Councils (41.22%), alongside Central Government (47.33%). Harare has 64.57% of government schools under Central Government, with City Councils accounting for 23.43% and Town Boards 4.00%, reflecting the urban governance structure.

The composition of non-government schools varies significantly across provinces. Private individuals dominate in most provinces, particularly in Mashonaland Central (77.67%), Mashonaland West (67.93%), Harare (68.98%), Bulawayo (64.53%) and Manicaland (64.04%). Church/Mission schools play a particularly prominent role in Matabeleland North (51.64%), Matabeleland South (38.53%), and Masvingo (37.37%), indicating the historical and ongoing contribution of faith-based organizations in these regions. Private companies

contribute notable shares in Matabeleland South (16.51%), Harare (14.49%), Masvingo (13.13%), and Bulawayo (12.84%). Farms and mines account for relatively small proportions nationally but are more visible in provinces such as Matabeleland North and Mashonaland Central, reflecting localized employer-supported education provision. Trusts contribute modestly across provinces, with higher shares in Harare (9.18%), Bulawayo (7.77%) and Mashonaland West (6.55%).

Table 2.17: Primary Schools by Type, Responsible Authority and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Government						Non-Government							
	Government	Other Government Line Ministries	District Council	City Council	Town Board	Total	Church/Mission	Farm	Mine	Private Company	Trust	Private Individual	Other	Total
Bulawayo	47.33	3.82	7.63	41.22	0.00	100.00	14.86	0.00	0.00	12.84	7.77	64.53	0.00	100.00
Harare	64.57	4.57	3.43	23.43	4.00	100.00	5.51	1.43	0.00	14.49	9.18	68.98	0.41	100.00
Manicaland	2.35	1.11	94.74	1.24	0.55	100.00	21.65	3.22	0.18	7.87	2.33	64.04	0.72	100.00
Mashonaland Central	1.66	0.62	96.26	1.25	0.21	100.00	11.00	3.56	1.94	4.21	0.65	77.67	0.97	100.00
Mashonaland East	2.00	1.08	95.07	0.62	1.23	100.00	16.21	4.74	0.40	10.67	4.35	61.66	1.98	100.00
Mashonaland West	4.62	2.31	88.89	2.74	1.44	100.00	13.79	1.72	2.07	7.59	6.55	67.93	0.34	100.00
Masvingo	1.28	0.64	96.92	1.03	0.13	100.00	37.37	3.54	2.02	13.13	3.54	40.40	0.00	100.00
Matabeleland North	1.86	1.12	96.46	0.37	0.19	100.00	51.64	0.82	5.74	9.84	5.74	20.49	5.74	100.00
Matabeleland South	1.93	1.50	94.65	1.28	0.64	100.00	38.53	3.67	0.92	16.51	2.75	37.61	0.00	100.00
Midlands	4.37	0.42	93.09	1.83	0.28	100.00	25.15	2.07	4.14	10.06	1.78	55.03	1.78	100.00
Grand Total	5.71	1.27	89.30	3.03	0.69	100.00	19.26	2.43	1.35	10.29	4.59	61.13	0.94	100.00

In the metropolitan provinces, non-government secondary schools dominate. Bulawayo recorded 38 government secondary schools compared to 94 non-government schools, with government schools accounting for only 28.79% of the total. A large proportion of schools are run by private individuals and private companies, showing a strong private-sector presence in the provision of urban education. Harare has an even lower government share, with 21.79% of secondary schools being managed by government authorities. Of the 358 secondary schools in the province, 280 were non-government, driven largely by private individuals and church/mission providers. Mashonaland Central has 227 government secondary schools, representing 70.94% of the total. Mashonaland West follows closely with 70.60% government-managed schools. Mashonaland East has 66.32% government schools in its records. Manicaland has 313 government secondary schools, accounting for 63.49% of the provincial total. Midlands records 291 government secondary schools, representing 69.29% of all secondary schools, with meaningful participation from private individuals and church organizations. High levels of government dominance were observed in Masvingo (73.42%) government-managed secondary schools, Matabeleland South with 73.98%, while Matabeleland North records the highest government share nationally at 82.14%.

Across provinces, Private individuals constitute the largest non-government provider of secondary education, particularly in Harare, Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West, and Mashonaland Central. Church/Mission authorities also play a significant role, especially in Masvingo, Manicaland, Midlands, and Matabeleland provinces, continuing their historical contribution to secondary education provision.

Table 2.18: Secondary Schools by Type, Responsible Authority and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Government						Non-Government								Grand Total	% Government
	Government	Other Government Line Ministries	District Council	City Council	Town Board	Total	Church/Mission	Farm	Mine	Private Company	Trust	Private Individual	Other	Total		
Bulawayo	31	3	3	1		38	18			23	10	41	2	94	132	28.79
Harare	60	11	2	1	4	78	23			49	28	171	9	280	358	21.79
Manicaland	18	7	285	2	1	313	89	1		21	7	57	5	180	493	63.49
Mashonaland Central	11	6	208	1	1	227	25	2	1	8	2	54	1	93	320	70.94
Mashonaland East	14	2	293	5	5	319	41	2		12	10	95	2	162	481	66.32
Mashonaland West	17	9	293	6	4	329	31	1		11	7	85	2	137	466	70.60
Masvingo	15	4	270	1		290	61			14	3	27		105	395	73.42
Matabeleland North	11	3	166	1	3	184	33			2	1	3	1	40	224	82.14
Matabeleland South	11	5	126	2	1	145	24	1	1	5	4	15	1	51	196	73.98
Midlands	28	3	257	2	1	291	55		2	9	9	54		129	420	69.29
Grand Total	216	53	1903	22	20	2214	400	7	4	154	81	602	23	1271	3485	63.53

District Councils dominate government secondary school provision, particularly in rural provinces. Provinces such as Masvingo (93.10%), Mashonaland East (91.85%), Mashonaland Central (91.63%), Manicaland (91.05%), and Matabeleland North (90.22%) have over 90% of government secondary schools administered by District Councils. Mashonaland West (89.06%) and Midlands (88.32%) also show strong District Council dominance. In Bulawayo, Central Government (81.58%) plays a dominant role, followed by District Councils (7.89%) and Other Government Line Ministries (7.89%). Harare similarly shows a strong central government presence, with 76.92% of government secondary schools administered by Central Government, alongside smaller contributions from District Councils and Town Boards.

The structure of non-government secondary schools varies considerably across provinces. Church/Mission authorities dominate non-government secondary provision in Matabeleland North (82.50%), Masvingo (58.10%), Manicaland (49.44%), and Matabeleland South (47.06%), reflecting the long-standing role of faith-based organizations in secondary education provision. Private individuals are the largest providers in Harare (61.07%), Mashonaland East (58.64%), Mashonaland Central (58.06%), and Mashonaland West (62.04%). Private Companies contribute notably to provision of secondary school education in Bulawayo (24.47%), Masvingo (13.33%), and Manicaland (11.67%), indicating stronger

private-sector participation in these provinces. Trusts play a moderate role across provinces, with higher shares in Bulawayo (10.64%), Harare (10.00%), Matabeleland South (7.84%), and Midlands (6.98%). Table 2.19 shows the distribution.

Table 2.19: Secondary Schools by Type, Responsible Authority and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Government						Non-Government							
	Government	Other Government Line Ministries	District Council	City Council	Town Board	Total	Church/Mission	Farm	Mine	Private Company	Trust	Private Individual	Other	Total
Bulawayo	81.58	7.89	7.89	2.63	0.00	100.00	19.15	0.00	0.00	24.47	10.64	43.62	2.13	100.00
Harare	76.92	14.10	2.56	1.28	5.13	100.00	8.21	0.00	0.00	17.50	10.00	61.07	3.21	100.00
Manicaland	5.75	2.24	91.05	0.64	0.32	100.00	49.44	0.56	0.00	11.67	3.89	31.67	2.78	100.00
Mashonaland Central	4.85	2.64	91.63	0.44	0.44	100.00	26.88	2.15	1.08	8.60	2.15	58.06	1.08	100.00
Mashonaland East	4.39	0.63	91.85	1.57	1.57	100.00	25.31	1.23	0.00	7.41	6.17	58.64	1.23	100.00
Mashonaland West	5.17	2.74	89.06	1.82	1.22	100.00	22.63	0.73	0.00	8.03	5.11	62.04	1.46	100.00
Masvingo	5.17	1.38	93.10	0.34	0.00	100.00	58.10	0.00	0.00	13.33	2.86	25.71	0.00	100.00
Matabeleland North	5.98	1.63	90.22	0.54	1.63	100.00	82.50	0.00	0.00	5.00	2.50	7.50	2.50	100.00
Matabeleland South	7.59	3.45	86.90	1.38	0.69	100.00	47.06	1.96	1.96	9.80	7.84	29.41	1.96	100.00
Midlands	9.62	1.03	88.32	0.69	0.34	100.00	42.64	0.00	1.55	6.98	6.98	41.86	0.00	100.00
Grand Total	9.76	2.39	85.95	0.99	0.90	100.00	31.47	0.55	0.31	12.12	6.37	47.36	1.81	100.00

2.3.5 Mode of Operation

In the 8,308 primary schools in Zimbabwe in 2025, (97.7%) are day schools, while 174 schools (2.1%) operate as day-and-boarding institutions, and only 15 (0.2%) are full boarding. At secondary level, 3,058 schools (87.7%) are day schools, 358 schools (10.3%) day-and-boarding, and 69 schools (2.0%) are operating as full boarding schools. Compared to primary schools, secondary schools show a higher prevalence of boarding facilities. Across all provinces, day schools dominate primary education provision. Manicaland (1,243), Midlands (1,026), Mashonaland West (950), Masvingo (962), and Mashonaland East (879) record the highest numbers of primary day schools. Day-and-boarding primary schools are relatively few, with Manicaland having (37) and Mashonaland West (29) with the highest numbers. Full boarding primary schools are extremely rare, with a paltry 15 nationwide. Matabeleland North and Matabeleland South have no boarding primary schools, while other provinces record only one to four institutions.

At secondary level, while day schools remain the majority, boarding facilities were more common than at the primary school level. Manicaland (435), Mashonaland East (422), Mashonaland West (416), and Midlands (371) have the highest numbers of day secondary schools. Day-and-boarding secondary schools were most prevalent in Mashonaland East (42), Mashonaland West (41), Matabeleland North (46), and Midlands (44). Full boarding secondary schools were limited but more widespread than at primary level, with Mashonaland East (17), Harare (12), and Mashonaland West (9) recording the highest numbers.

Table 2.20: Schools by Level of Education, Level of Operation and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Primary				Secondary			
	Number							
	Boarding School	Day and Boarding	Day School	Total	Boarding School	Day and Boarding	Day School	Total
Bulawayo	1	6	420	427	2	15	115	132
Harare	2	23	640	665	12	36	310	358
Manicaland	2	37	1 243	1 282	6	52	435	493
Mashonaland Central	1	13	776	790	3	19	298	320
Mashonaland East	1	22	879	902	17	42	422	481
Mashonaland West	4	29	950	983	9	41	416	466
Masvingo	3	12	962	977	6	32	357	395
Matabeleland North	0	3	656	659	6	46	172	224
Matabeleland South	0	9	567	576	3	31	162	196
Midlands	1	20	1 026	1 047	5	44	371	420
Grand Total	15	174	8 119	8 308	69	358	3 058	3 485

At primary level, 97.73% of schools are day schools, 2.09% are day-and-boarding, and only 0.18% are full boarding. This indicates that primary education in Zimbabwe is almost entirely community-based, with very limited reliance on boarding facilities. At secondary level, although day schools remain dominant, boarding facilities are more common. 87.75% of secondary schools are day schools, 10.27% are day-and-boarding, and 1.98% operate as full boarding schools.

Table 2.21: Schools by Level of Education, Level of Operation and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Primary				Secondary			
	Percent							
	Boarding School	Day and Boarding	Day School	Total	Boarding School	Day and Boarding	Day School	Total
Bulawayo	0.23	1.41	98.36	100.00	1.52	11.36	87.12	100.00
Harare	0.30	3.46	96.24	100.00	3.35	10.06	86.59	100.00
Manicaland	0.16	2.89	96.96	100.00	1.22	10.55	88.24	100.00
Mashonaland Central	0.13	1.65	98.23	100.00	0.94	5.94	93.13	100.00
Mashonaland East	0.11	2.44	97.45	100.00	3.53	8.73	87.73	100.00
Mashonaland West	0.41	2.95	96.64	100.00	1.93	8.80	89.27	100.00
Masvingo	0.31	1.23	98.46	100.00	1.52	8.10	90.38	100.00
Matabeleland North	0.00	0.46	99.54	100.00	2.68	20.54	76.79	100.00
Matabeleland South	0.00	1.56	98.44	100.00	1.53	15.82	82.65	100.00
Midlands	0.10	1.91	97.99	100.00	1.19	10.48	88.33	100.00
Grand Total	0.18	2.09	97.73	100.00	1.98	10.27	87.75	100.00

Across all provinces, day schools account for over 96% of primary schools. Matabeleland North (99.54%) and Matabeleland South (98.44%) record the highest proportions of primary day schools. Mashonaland Central (98.23%), Masvingo (98.46%), and Bulawayo (98.36%) also show near-total reliance on day schooling. Day-and-boarding primary schools

remain marginal, peaking in Harare (3.46%), Mashonaland West (2.95%), and Manicaland (2.89%). Wholly boarding primary schools are negligible nationwide.

There is a greater distribution variation across provinces. Matabeleland North (20.54%) and Matabeleland South (15.82%) have the highest proportions of day-and-boarding secondary schools, reflecting the need to accommodate pupils travelling long distances in sparsely populated areas. Bulawayo (11.36%), Harare (10.06%), Midlands (10.48%), and Manicaland (10.55%) also show notable shares of day-and-boarding schools. Boarding secondary schools remain limited but are most prominent in Mashonaland East (3.53%), Harare (3.35%), and Matabeleland North (2.68%). Mashonaland Central (93.13%) and Masvingo (90.38%) record the highest proportions of day secondary schools, indicating lower reliance on boarding facilities.

2.4 Conclusion

Registered schools constituted an overwhelming majority at both primary and secondary levels, accounting for approximately 73% of primary schools and 73% of secondary schools. This pattern reflects stronger regulatory compliance at secondary level relative to primary level. Provinces with large geographic coverage and dispersed populations such as Manicaland, Midlands, Mashonaland Central, and Mashonaland West consistently show higher numbers of unregistered primary schools. Urban provinces (Harare and Bulawayo) display a different pattern, with relatively high numbers of registered secondary schools but still notable levels of unregistered primary schools, underscoring the pressure placed on urban education systems by population migration and settlement growth. The data underlines the need for continued support towards registration and upgrading of primary schools, particularly in provinces with high numbers of unregistered institutions, while maintaining the strong regulatory framework evident at secondary level.

The minimal presence of P1 and S1 schools in rural provinces highlights limited lower-category infrastructure outside urban areas. These structural differences have important implications in terms of resource allocation, infrastructure upgrading, quality assurance, and planning, particularly in efforts to transition schools from lower to higher categories. The percentage distribution of schools by category underscores significant urban–rural disparities in school structure. While urban provinces were characterized by lower-category schools, rural provinces were overwhelmingly dominated by higher-category institutions. Addressing these imbalances will be critical for equitable education planning and the sustainable development of the school system.

Government authorities account for the largest share of schools at both primary and secondary levels. This underscores the central role of local government structures in delivering education services, particularly in rural areas.

Primary education is almost entirely day-based across all provinces, reflecting proximity of pupils to schools and policy emphasis on community-based primary education. Secondary education shows greater diversification, with boarding and day-and-boarding schools

playing a supportive role, particularly in rural provinces where pupils travel longer distances. Rural provinces such as Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West, Manicaland, and Midlands show relatively higher numbers of boarding and day-and-boarding secondary schools.

CHAPTER 3 : Enrolment

3.1 ECD Enrolment

The total ECD enrolment fluctuated over the period under review, increasing from 655,132 pupils in 2021 to a peak of 679,582 in 2023, before declining to 641,295 in 2025. The largest annual increase occurred in 2023, when enrolment rose by 24,603 pupils (3.76%), while the most significant decline was recorded in 2024, with a reduction of 28,829 pupils (–4.24%). A further, though smaller, decline of 9,458 pupils (–1.45%) was observed in 2025.

Male enrolment showed moderate variation across the years. The enrolment figures increased from 328,610 in 2021 to 342,527 in 2023, followed by a decline to 323,488 in 2025. The female enrolment followed a broadly similar pattern, rising from 326,522 in 2021 to 337,055 in 2023, before declining to 317,807 in 2025.

Table 3.1: ECD Enrolment by Sex, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

	Male	Female	Total	% Female	Change	
	Number				%	Number
2021	328 610	326 522	655 132	49.84	0.31	2 002
2022	329 652	325 327	654 979	49.67	-0.02	- 153
2023	342 527	337 055	679 582	49.60	3.76	24 603
2024	328 055	322 698	650 753	49.59	-4.24	-28 829
2025	323 488	317 807	641 295	50.59	-1.45	-9 458

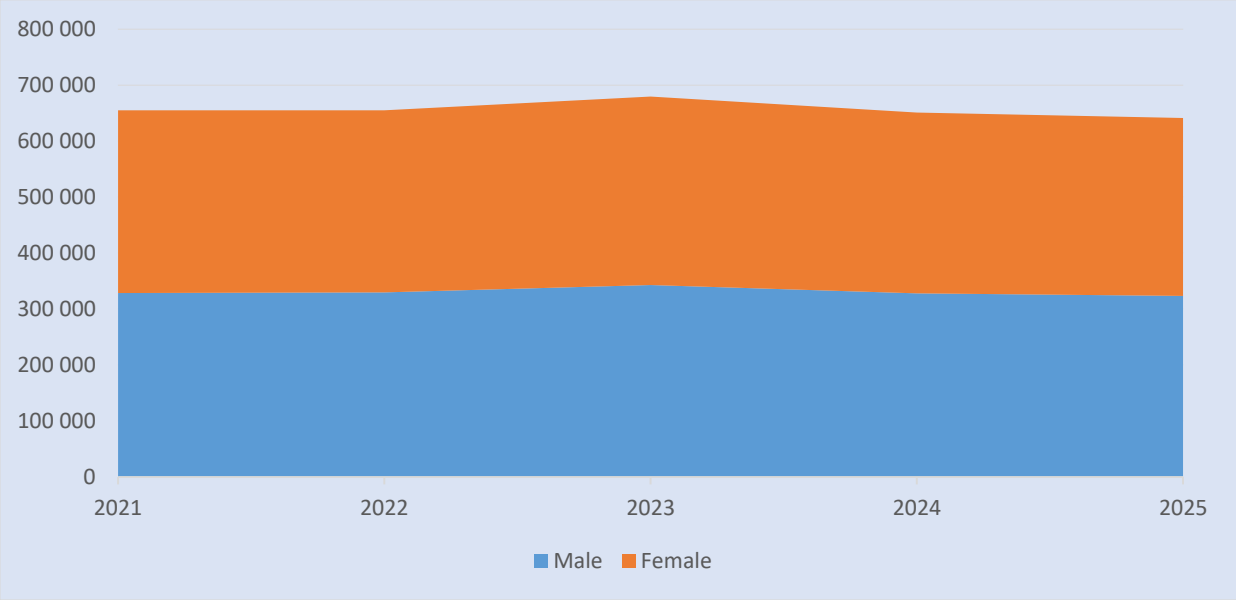


Figure 3.1: ECD Enrolment by Sex, Number, Zimbabwe 2021-2025

The distribution of enrolment by per capita grant was heavily skewed towards P3 schools, with 493,163 pupils (76.90%). P2 schools follow distantly with 110,197 pupils (17.18%), while P1 schools had the smallest share of 37,935 pupils (5.92%).

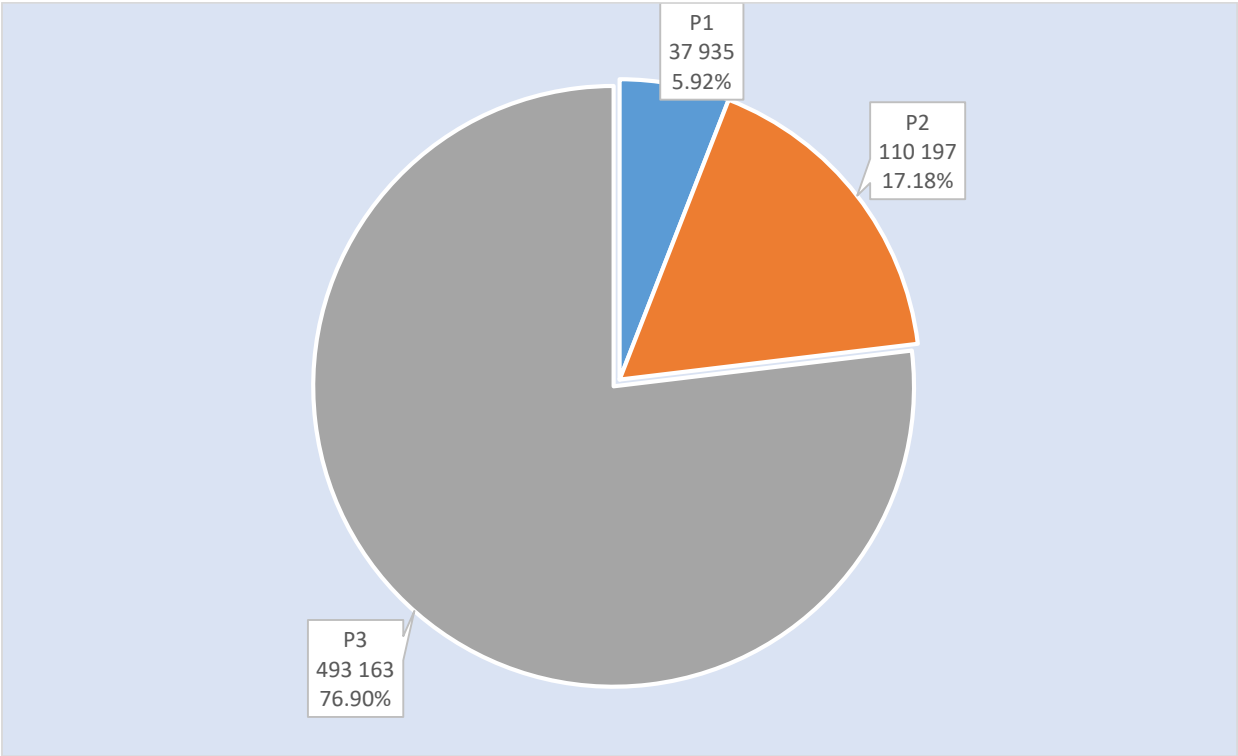


Figure 3.2: ECD Enrolments by School Capitation Grant Classification, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

The current total ECD enrolment stands at 641,295 pupils, comprising 323,488 males and 317,807 females. Female pupils account for 49.56% of total enrolment, indicating near gender parity at the ECD level.

P1 enrolment totals stand at 37,935 pupils, representing 5.92% of all ECD enrolment. Female pupils slightly outnumber their male counterparts, with 19,189 females compared to 18,746 males, resulting in a female share of 50.58%. This suggests a balanced and inclusive participation at the lowest level of education. P2 accounts for 110,197 pupils, or 17.18% of total enrolment. Males slightly exceed females, with 55,681 males and 54,516 females, yielding a female proportion of 49.47%. This indicates continued gender balance as enrolment expands at this level. P3 schools constitute the largest share of ECD enrolment, with 493,163 pupils, accounting for 76.90% of the total. Of these, 249,061 were male and 244,102 were female, translating into a female proportion of 49.50%. The dominance of P3 reflects the concentration of pupils in fully established ECD classes. Table 3.2 shows the distribution.

Across all schools, the proportion of female pupils remains consistently close to 50%, ranging from 49.47% to 50.58%. This stability demonstrates equitable access to ECD services for males and females regardless of grant class.

Table 3.2: ECD Enrolments by School Capitation Grant Classification and Sex, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Grant Class	ECD Enrolment, No.			% Female	% of Total		
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total
P1	18 746	19 189	37 935	50.58	5.79	6.04	5.92
P2	55 681	54 516	110 197	49.47	17.21	17.15	17.18
P3	249 061	244 102	493 163	49.50	76.99	76.81	76.90
Grand Total	323 488	317 807	641 295	49.56	100.00	100.00	100.00

Registered schools account for the overwhelming majority of ECD enrolment, with 543,314 pupils, representing 84.72% of the total. Satellite schools enrol 55,323 ECD pupils, equivalent to 8.63% of total enrolment while unregistered schools account for 42,658 pupils, i.e. 6.65% of total ECD enrolment as shown in Figure 3.3.

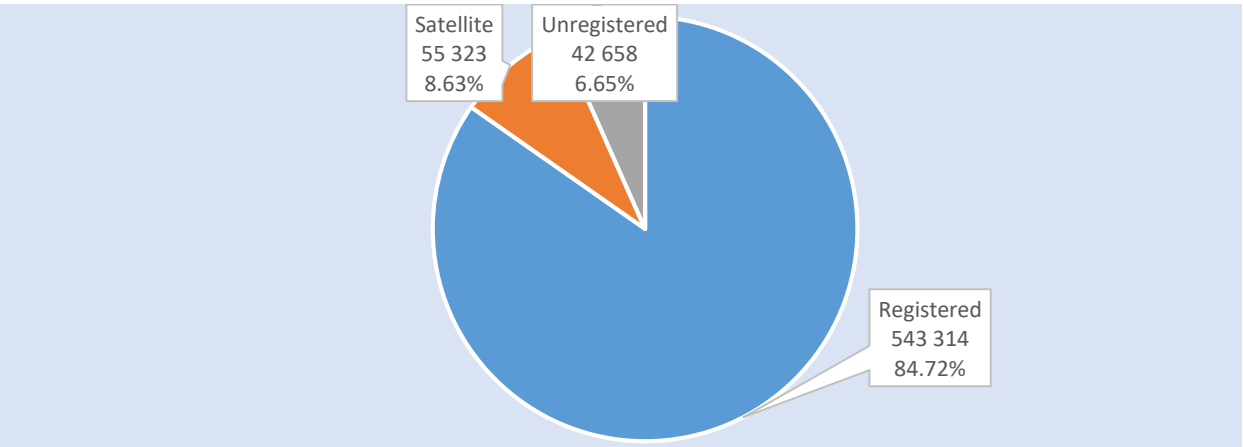


Figure 3.3: ECD Enrolments by School Registration Status, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

The majority of ECD pupils were enrolled in registered schools, with a combined total of 543,314 pupils, representing 84.72% of all ECD enrolment. Registered ECD A centres enrolled 259,071 pupils translating to 83.83% of the total ECD A enrolment. The enrolment female share was 49.55%, showing balanced participation between males and females. Registered ECD B centres enrolled 284,243 pupils, representing 85.55% of total ECD B enrolment. Female pupils accounted for 49.40%, reflecting gender parity.

Satellite ECD A centres enrolled 27,089 pupils (8.77% of ECD A enrolment), with a slightly higher females share of 50.05%. Satellite ECD B centres enrolled 28,234 pupils (8.50% of ECD B enrolment), with females accounting for 49.31% while unregistered centres had 42,658 pupils, accounting for 6.65% of total ECD enrolment. Unregistered ECD A and ECD B centres' enrolment had 50.24% and 50.80% female pupils respectively.

Table 3.3: ECD Enrolments by School Registration Status, ECD Level and Sex, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Registration Status	ECD A, No.			% Female	ECD B, No.			% Female	Grand Total
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total		
Registered	130 712	128 359	259 071	49.55	143 819	140 424	284 243	49.40	543 314
Satellite	13 532	13 557	27 089	50.05	14 311	13 923	28 234	49.31	55 323
Unregistered	11 392	11 504	22 896	50.24	9 722	10 040	19 762	50.80	42 658
Grand Total	155 636	153 420	309 056	49.64	167 852	164 387	332 239	49.48	641 295
Percentage distribution by registration status, ECD level and Sex									
	ECDA, % of Total				ECD B, % of Total			% of total	
Registered	83.99	83.67	83.83		85.68	85.42	85.55	84.72	
Satellite	8.69	8.84	8.77		8.53	8.47	8.50	8.63	
Unregistered	7.32	7.50	7.41		5.79	6.11	5.95	6.65	
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00		100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	

The 5 year age group recorded the highest enrolment, with approximately 70,525 males and 68,781 females. This age group represents the peak year for ECD participation. The 4 year age group followed closely, with 49,923 males and 51,849 females, showing a slightly higher female participation. The 6-year-olds also had substantial enrolment, with 23,136 males and 21,438 females. The numbers however began to decline up the ages as pupils transitioned to primary school as depicted in figure 3.4.

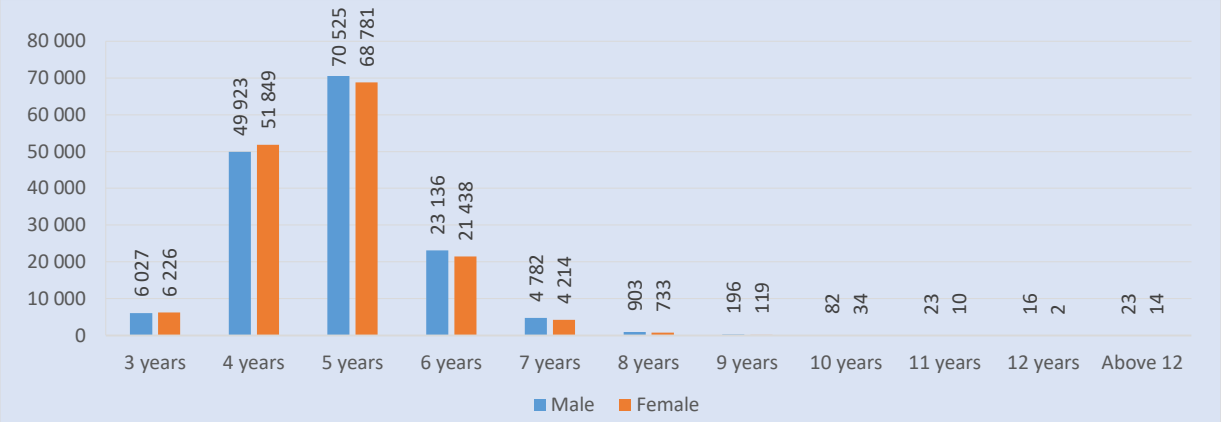


Figure 3.4: ECD A Enrolments by Age, Sex, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

The age group of 6 years recorded the highest enrolment, with 79,458 males and 78,142 females, making it the dominant age for ECD B pupils followed by age of 5 years, with 50,819 males and a slightly higher enrolment (52,049) for females. The age group of 7 years had significant numbers comprising 26,266 males and 23,835 females. The numbers began to decline up the ages as pupils transition to Grade 1. Figure 3.5 and table 3.4 show the distribution.

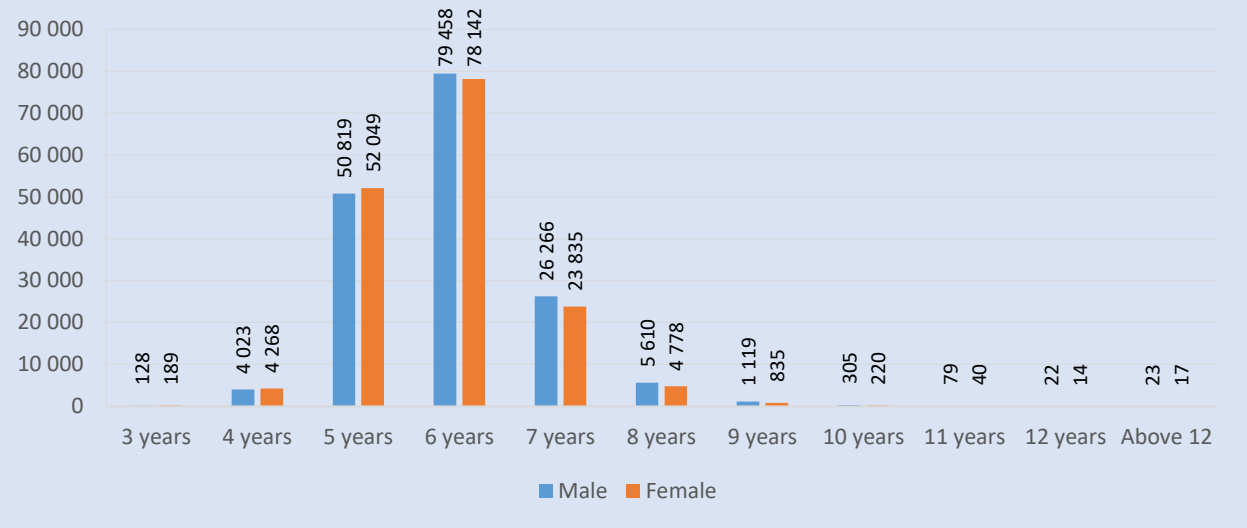


Figure 3.5: ECD B Enrolments by Age, Sex, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

The ECD enrolment statistics for Zimbabwe had a total of 641,295 children enrolled across both ECD A and ECD B, with a nearly equal gender balance i.e. 49.64% female in ECD A and 49.48% female in ECD B. The data highlights that enrolments are heavily concentrated in the early childhood years. At 5 years, enrolment peaked at 242,174 pupils, representing 37.76% of the total, followed closely by 6 years with 202,174 pupils (31.53%). At 4 years, there were 110,063 pupils (17.16%), while 3 years records a smaller figure of 12,570 pupils (1.96%).

After age 7, enrolments declined sharply. At 7 years, there are 59,097 pupils (9.2%), but by 8 years the number dropped to 12,024 (1.9%). Beyond 9 years, enrolment was minimal, with only 2,269 pupils at 9 years (0.35%) and fewer than 1,000 pupils combined across ages 10–12 and above. Gender parity was consistent across most ages, though disparities emerged at older ages, with only 29.31% at 10 years of ECD A pupils being females, while at 12 years, just 11.11% were female.

Table 3.4: ECD Enrolments by Level of Education, Sex and Age, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe 2025

Ages	ECD A, No.			% Female	ECD B, No			% female	Grand Total, No.	% Total
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total			
3 years	6 027	6 226	12 253	50.81	128	189	317	59.62	12 570	1.96
4 years	49 923	51 849	101 772	50.95	4 023	4 268	8 291	51.48	110 063	17.16
5 years	70 525	68 781	139 306	49.37	50 819	52 049	102 868	50.60	242 174	37.76
6 years	23 136	21 438	44 574	48.10	79 458	78 142	157 600	49.58	202 174	31.53
7 years	4 782	4 214	8 996	46.84	26 266	23 835	50 101	47.57	59 097	9.22
8 years	903	733	1 636	44.80	5 610	4 778	10 388	46.00	12 024	1.87
9 years	196	119	315	37.78	1 119	835	1 954	42.73	2 269	0.35
10 years	82	34	116	29.31	305	220	525	41.90	641	0.10
11 years	23	10	33	30.30	79	40	119	33.61	152	0.02
12 years	16	2	18	11.11	22	14	36	38.89	54	0.01
Above 12	23	14	37	37.84	23	17	40	42.50	77	0.01
Grand Total	155 636	153 420	309 056	49.64	167 852	164 387	332 239	49.48	641 295	100.00

Figure 3.6 shows that nearly three quarters of ECD enrolments (74.44%: 477,395) were in rural schools while 25.56% (163 900) were in urban schools.

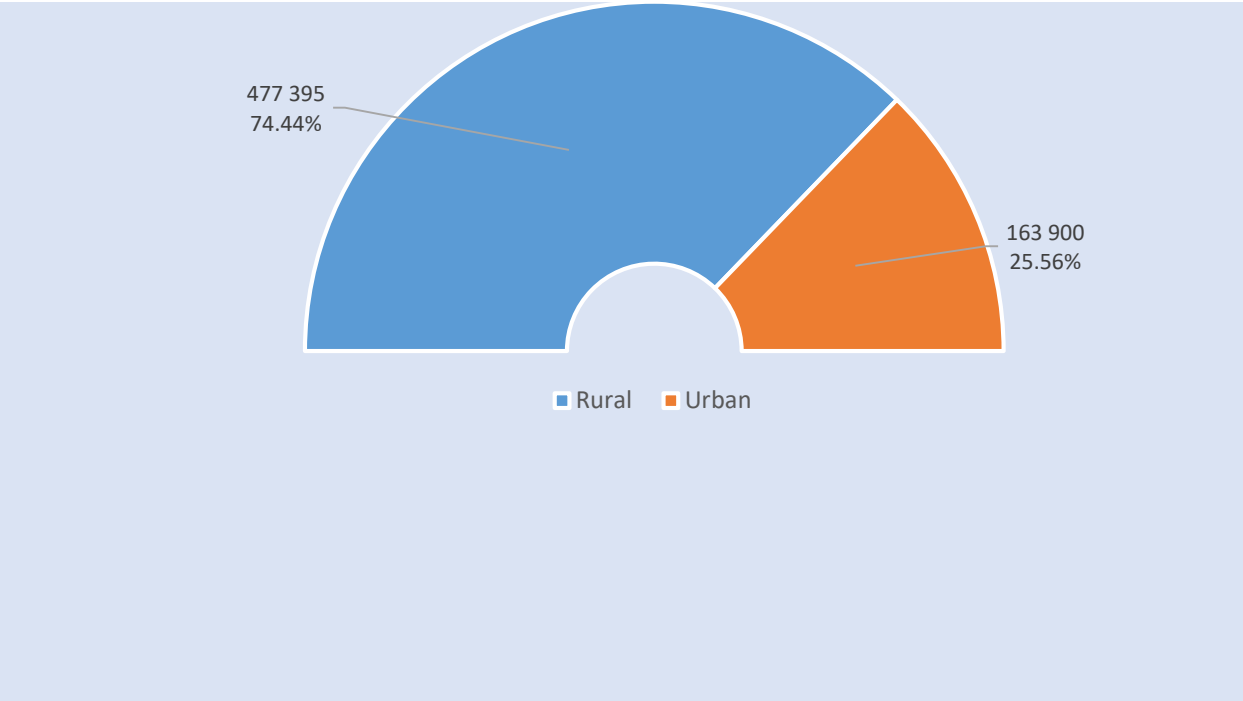


Figure 3.6: ECD Enrolments by Location, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Out of an ECD total enrolment of 641,295 pupils, 74.44% (477,395) were in rural schools and 25.56% (163,900) in the urban, showing a strong rural dominance in early childhood learning. Rural enrolments dominate for both ECD A (75.34%) and ECD B (73.60%) as shown in table 3.5. Gender composition was highly balanced across locations and levels, with females accounting for 49.64% of ECD A and 49.48% of ECD B enrolment nationally. In rural schools, females constituted 49.69% in ECD A and 49.37% in ECD B, while in urban schools the females accounted for 49.50% and 49.79%, respectively. The data in table 3.5 also demonstrates equitable gender participation in ECD programmes.

Table 3.5: ECD Enrolments by Level, Sex and Location, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Location	ECD A, No.			ECD B, No			Grand Total	ECD A	ECD B
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total		%Female	%Female
Rural	117 151	115 703	232 854	123 816	120 725	244 541	477 395	49.69	49.37
Urban	38 485	37 717	76 202	44 036	43 662	87 698	163 900	49.50	49.79
Grand Total	155 636	153 420	309 056	167 852	164 387	332 239	641 295	49.64	49.48
Percentage distribution by location, level and sex									
	ECD A, % of Total			ECD B, % of Total			% of Total		
Rural	75.27	75.42	75.34	73.76	73.44	73.60	74.44		
Urban	24.73	24.58	24.66	26.24	26.56	26.40	25.56		
Grand Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00		

3.2 Primary School Enrolment

Primary school enrolment in Zimbabwe increased from 2,899,259 in 2021 to a peak of 2,953,307 in 2023, before declining to 2,871,839 by 2025, the lowest enrolment figure recorded in the 5-year period. The sharpest decrease occurring between 2024 and 2025 (−67,100 pupils; −2.28%). Male and female enrolment levels remained almost equal throughout the period, with females consistently comprising about half of total enrolment (49.88%–50.02%) and a slight female majority observed only in 2023.

Table 3.6: Primary School Enrolment by Sex, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe 2021-2025

Year	Male	Female	Total, No.	% Female	% Change	Number
	Number					
2021	1 450 416	1 448 843	2 899 259	49.97	1.03	29 524
2022	1 472 762	1 470 608	2 943 370	49.96	1.52	44 111
2023	1 476 094	1 477 213	2 953 307	50.02	0.34	9 937
2024	1 472 878	1 466 061	2 938 939	49.88	-0.49	-14 368
2025	1 439 469	1 432 370	2 871 839	49.88	-2.28	-67 100

Both sexes followed similar trends of growth up to 2023 and declined thereafter with marginal differences in absolute numbers, suggesting system-wide factors rather than gender-specific changes.

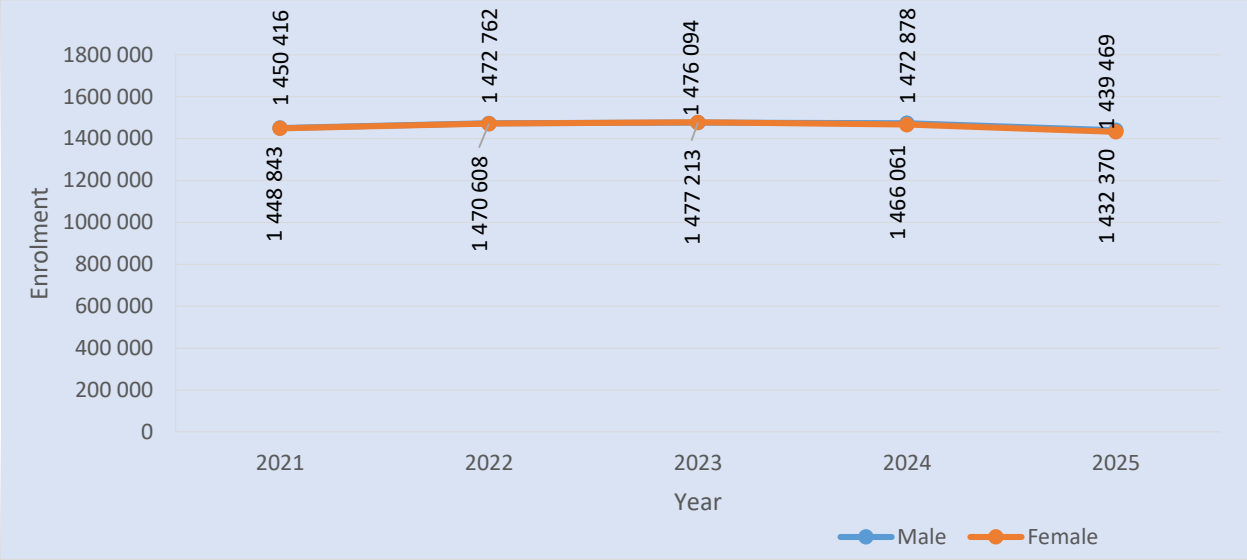


Figure 3.7: Primary School Enrolment by Sex, Zimbabwe, Number, 2021-2025

In 2025, primary school enrolment in Zimbabwe totalled 2,871,839 pupils, with an overall female share of 49.88%, indicating near gender parity. Enrolment was relatively evenly distributed across Grades 1 to 6, each accounting for just over 400,000 pupils, while Grade 7 recorded a slightly lower total of 395,052. Female participation was below parity in the lower grades (Grades 1–3), gradually increasing from Grade 4, and exceeding 50% in Grades 4 through 7, peaking at 50.62% in Grade 7. Skills Orientation enrolment, 10 244, was very

small by comparison and showed a marked male dominance, with females comprising 44.17%.

Table 3.7: Primary School Enrolments by Sex and Grade, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe 2025

Grade	Enrolment, No.			% Female
	Male	Female	Total	
Grade 1	205 442	200 264	405 706	49.36
Grade 2	206 398	201 315	407 713	49.38
Grade 3	206 891	205 116	412 007	49.78
Grade 4	205 631	206 248	411 879	50.07
Grade 5	206 424	206 685	413 109	50.03
Grade 6	207 874	208 255	416 129	50.05
Grade 7	195 090	199 962	395 052	50.62
Skills Orientation	5 719	4 525	10 244	44.17
Grand Total	1 439 469	1 432 370	2 871 839	49.88

Figure 3.8 shows that primary school enrolment in Zimbabwe in 2025 was predominantly rural, with 2,016,870 pupils (70.23%) enrolled in rural schools compared to 854,969 pupils (29.77%) in urban schools.

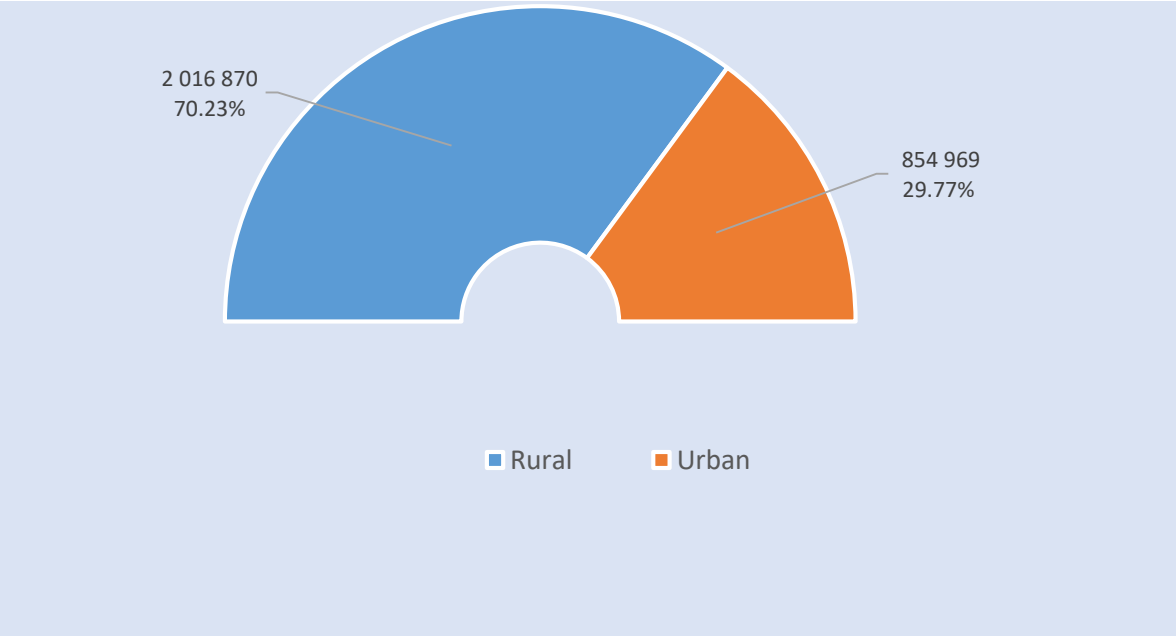


Figure 3.8: Primary School Enrolments by Location, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

For Grades 1 to 6, rural enrolment per grade ranged from about 288, 172 to 293 608 pupils, compared with approximately 112,000 to 127,815 in urban areas, demonstrating the dominant role of rural schools in absorbing primary-level demand. Urban enrolment increased steadily from Grade 1 (112 098) to Grade 6 (127 815), suggesting greater retention or progression in urban areas, while rural enrolment gradually declined in the

upper grades, most noticeably Grade 1 (293 608) to Grade 7 (267 824). Skills Orientation enrolment remained minimal in both settings but was more concentrated in rural areas. Table 3.8 shows the distribution.

In rural schools, females constituted 49.66% of total enrolment, with distribution close to parity in all grades and a slight female majority emerging in Grade 7 (50.42%). In urban schools, gender parity is more pronounced, with females comprising 50.38% of total enrolment and consistently matching or slightly exceeding male enrolment from Grade 3 onwards, peaking at 51.04% in Grade 7. The main exception is Skills Orientation, where males significantly outnumber females in both rural and urban areas.

Table 3.8: Primary School Enrolment by Location, Sex and Grade, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Grade	Rural Enrolment, No.				Urban Enrolment, No				Grand Total	% Total
	Male	Female	Total	% Female	Male	Female	Total	%Female		
Grade 1	149 384	144 224	293 608	49.12	56 058	56 040	112 098	49.99	405 706	14.13
Grade 2	148 879	143 786	292 665	49.13	57 519	57 529	115 048	50.00	407 713	14.20
Grade 3	147 055	144 446	291 501	49.55	59 836	60 670	120 506	50.35	412 007	14.35
Grade 4	144 543	143 629	288 172	49.84	61 088	62 619	123 707	50.62	411 879	14.34
Grade 5	144 426	143 854	288 280	49.90	61 998	62 831	124 829	50.33	413 109	14.38
Grade 6	144 624	143 690	288 314	49.84	63 250	64 565	127 815	50.51	416 129	14.49
Grade 7	132 796	135 028	267 824	50.42	62 294	64 934	127 228	51.04	395 052	13.76
Skills Orientation	3 530	2 976	6 506	45.74	2 189	1 549	3 738	41.44	10 244	0.36
Grand Total	1 015 237	1 001 633	2 016 870	49.66	424 232	430 737	854 969	50.38	2 871 839	100.00

Figure 3.9 shows that primary school enrolment is heavily concentrated in P3, which accounts for 2,098,639 pupils (73.08%) of the total, making it by far the largest category. P2 represents a much smaller share with 605,496 pupils (21.08%), while P1 accounts for the smallest proportion at 167,704 pupils (5.84%).

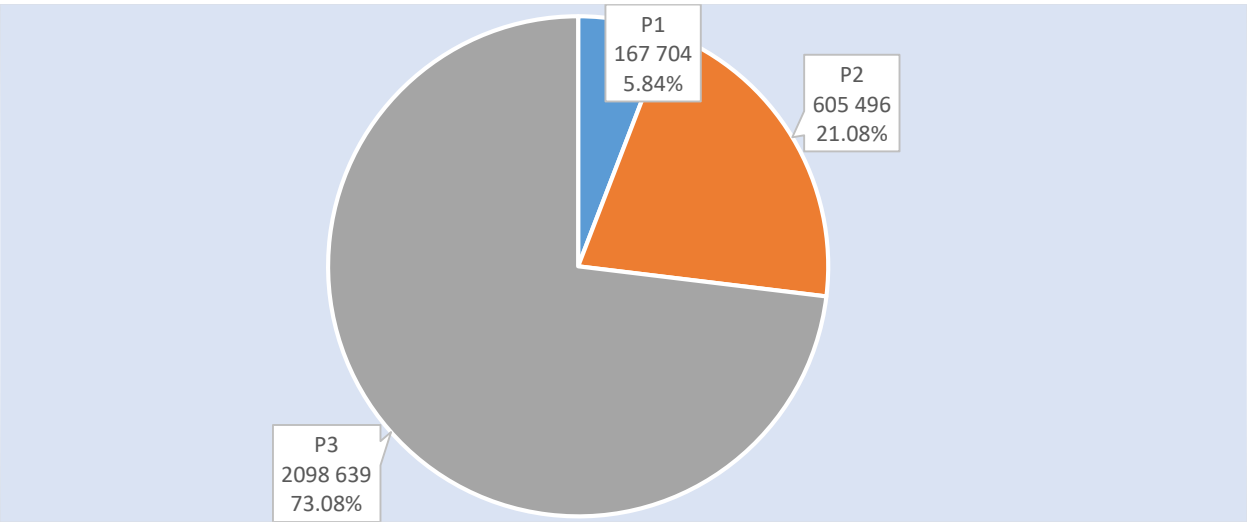


Figure 3.9: Primary School Enrolment by School Capitation Grant Classification, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

The distribution of primary school enrolment by per capita grant classification (P1–P3) in 2025 shows a strong concentration in P3, which accounts for 2,098,639 pupils, or about 73% of total enrolment, across all grades, while P2 comprised 605,496 pupils (21%) and P1 only 167,704 pupils (6%). At the grade level, P1 enrolment is relatively small and stable across Grades 1 to 7, but consistently shows a female majority, with the percentage of females rising from about 50.7% in Grade 1 to 52.5% in Grade 7, indicating stronger female representation in this phase as grades increase. The P2 enrolment increased steadily from Grade 1 (77 273) to Grade 7 (92 361), maintaining near-perfect gender parity, with females making up about 49.74–50.70% across all grades. P3 dominated primary school enrolment numbers in every grade, particularly in the lower and middle grades, and while it was close to parity overall (49.7% female), a slight female advantage (50.44%) appears in Grade 7. Skills Orientation enrolment was minimal in all grant classifications and displayed a clear male dominance, contrasting with the generally balanced gender distribution observed in P1 to P3 schools.

Table 3.9: Primary School Enrolment by School Capitation Grant Classification, Grade and Sex, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Grade	P1, No.			% Female	P2, No.			% Female	P3, No.			% Female	Grand Total
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total		
Grade 1	11 780	12 134	23 914	50.74	38 839	38 434	77 273	49.74	154 823	149 696	304 519	49.16	405 706
Grade 2	11 703	12 086	23 789	50.80	40 235	40 089	80 324	49.91	154 460	149 140	303 600	49.12	407 713
Grade 3	11 654	12 159	23 813	51.06	42 316	42 812	85 128	50.29	152 921	150 145	303 066	49.54	412 007
Grade 4	11 559	12 344	23 903	51.64	43 483	44 008	87 491	50.30	150 589	149 896	300 485	49.88	411 879
Grade 5	11 666	12 351	24 017	51.43	44 402	44 611	89 013	50.12	150 356	149 723	300 079	49.89	413 109
Grade 6	11 843	12 494	24 337	51.34	45 280	45 894	91 174	50.34	150 751	149 867	300 618	49.85	416 129
Grade 7	11 109	12 259	23 368	52.46	45 536	46 825	92 361	50.70	138 445	140 878	279 323	50.44	395 052
Skills Orientation	333	230	563	40.85	1 590	1 142	2 732	41.80	3 796	3 153	6 949	45.37	10 244
Grand Total	81 647	86 057	167 704	51.31	301 681	303 815	605 496	50.18	1 056 141	1 042 498	2 098 639	49.67	2 871 839

Figure 3.10 shows that most primary school pupils in Zimbabwe in 2025 were enrolled in registered schools, with 2,598,311 pupils (90.48%) of total enrolment. Satellite schools enrolled 224,756 pupils (7.83%), representing a relatively small share. Unregistered schools enrolled only 48,772 pupils (1.70%), showing limited enrolment outside the formal regulatory framework.

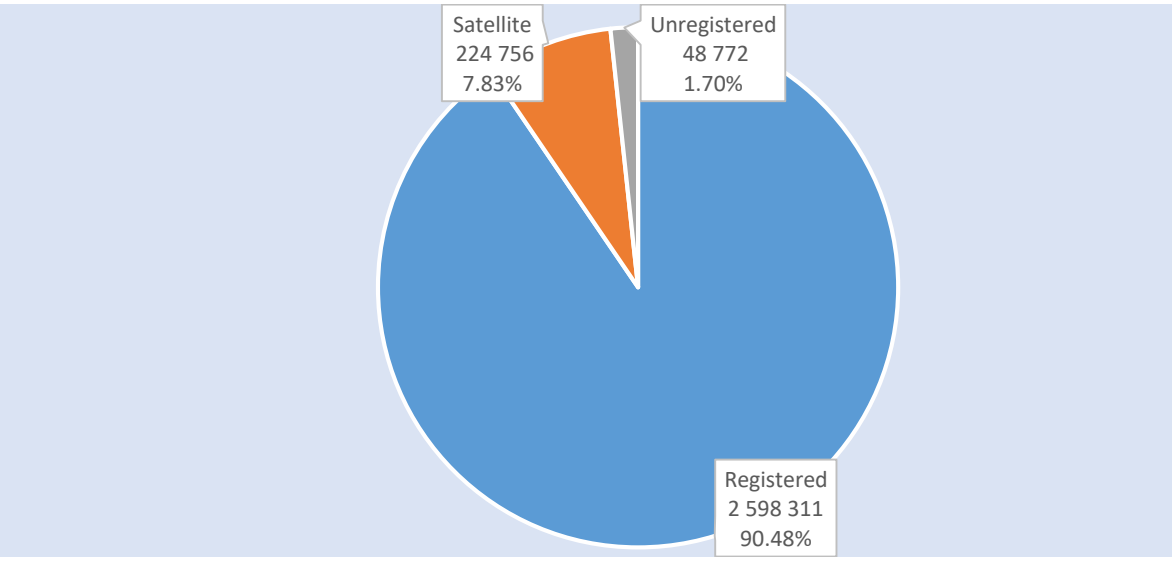


Figure 3.10: Primary School Enrolments by School Registration Status, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Across the Grades 1 to 7, registered schools consistently account for the largest share of enrolment in every grade, with totals ranging from 360,515 pupils in Grade 1 to a peak of 379,812 pupils in Grade 6, before declining to 364,294 pupils in Grade 7. This pattern suggests strong intake and progression through the system, followed by a drop at the primary school terminal grade. Satellite school enrolment showed a declining trend across grades, decreasing from 34,089 pupils in Grade 1 to 26,757 in Grade 7. This shows that satellite schools were more concentrated in lower grades, likely serving as entry points before pupils transitioned to registered schools as they progress. Unregistered school enrolment was small at all levels and declined steadily from 11,102 pupils in Grade 1 to 4,001 in Grade 7, highlighting their limited and diminishing role, particularly in upper primary grades. Table 3.10 shows the distribution.

Gender distribution across all school types showed near-perfect parity with registered schools (49.88%), satellite schools (49.86%), unregistered schools (49.97%) having female enrolment above 49.87%.

Table 3.10: Primary School Enrolment by School Registration Status, Grade and Sex, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

	Registered, No.			%	Satellite, No.			%	Unregistered, No.			%	Grand
Grade	Male	Female	Total	Female	Male	Female	Total	Female	Male	Female	Total	Female	Total
Grade 1	182 556	177 959	360 515	49.36	17 303	16 786	34 089	49.24	5 583	5 519	11 102	49.71	405 706
Grade 2	184 727	179 568	364 295	49.29	16 947	17 015	33 962	50.10	4 724	4 732	9 456	50.04	407 713
Grade 3	186 275	184 555	370 830	49.77	17 083	17 036	34 119	49.93	3 533	3 525	7 058	49.94	412 007
Grade 4	186 344	187 059	373 403	50.10	16 280	16 151	32 431	49.80	3 007	3 038	6 045	50.26	411 879
Grade 5	187 787	188 114	375 901	50.04	15 819	15 780	31 599	49.94	2 818	2 791	5 609	49.76	413 109
Grade 6	189 563	190 249	379 812	50.09	15 761	15 469	31 230	49.53	2 550	2 537	5 087	49.87	416 129
Grade 7	179 909	184 385	364 294	50.61	13 211	13 546	26 757	50.63	1 970	2 031	4 001	50.76	395 052
Skills Orientation	5 226	4 035	9 261	43.57	279	290	569	50.97	214	200	414	48.31	10 244
Grand Total	1 302 387	1 295 924	2 598 311	49.88	112 683	112 073	224 756	49.86	24 399	24 373	48 772	49.97	2 871 839

Table 3.11 and Figure 3.11 present primary school enrolment by grade and age. As shown in the table and the graph, the age-status distribution by grade clearly shows that over-aged pupils formed the majority across all primary grades. In Grade 1, 70.48% of the 405 706 pupils were over-aged, while 27.82% were of normal age and only 1.70% were under-aged. This pattern intensified slightly in the middle grades, with over-aged pupils accounting for 71.53% in Grade 2 and peaking at 71.65% in Grade 3, while normal-aged pupils remained at about 26 to 27% and under-aged pupils below 2.2%. From Grade 4 to Grade 6, over-aged enrolment remained high, ranging from 70.56% in Grade 4 to 69.88% in Grade 6, indicating that about seven out of every ten pupils in these grades were older than the official age. In Grade 7, although the proportion of over-aged pupils declined slightly to 64.86%, it still represents nearly two-thirds of total enrolment, while the share of normal-aged pupils rose to 30.80% and the under-aged pupils increased marginally to 4.34%.

Table 3.11: Primary School Enrolment by Grade and Age, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Ages	Enrolment, No.								
	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Skills Orientation	Grand Total
5 years and below	6 903							438	7 341
6 years	112 859	8 200						449	121 508
7 years	194 891	107 860	8 754					578	312 083
8 years	68 264	190 773	108 066	10 496				662	378 261
9 years	16 825	72 647	181 887	110 776	12 398			1 134	395 667
10 years	4 400	21 156	80 599	177 406	112 869	12 986		1 912	411 328
11 years	1 041	5 145	23 807	80 294	176 159	112 338	17 147	1 605	417 536
12 years	322	1 355	6 683	24 494	80 428	177 509	121 661	1 397	413 849
Above 12	201	577	2 211	8 413	31 255	113 296	256 244	2 069	414 266
Grand Total	405 706	407 713	412 007	411 879	413 109	416 129	395 052	10 244	2871 839

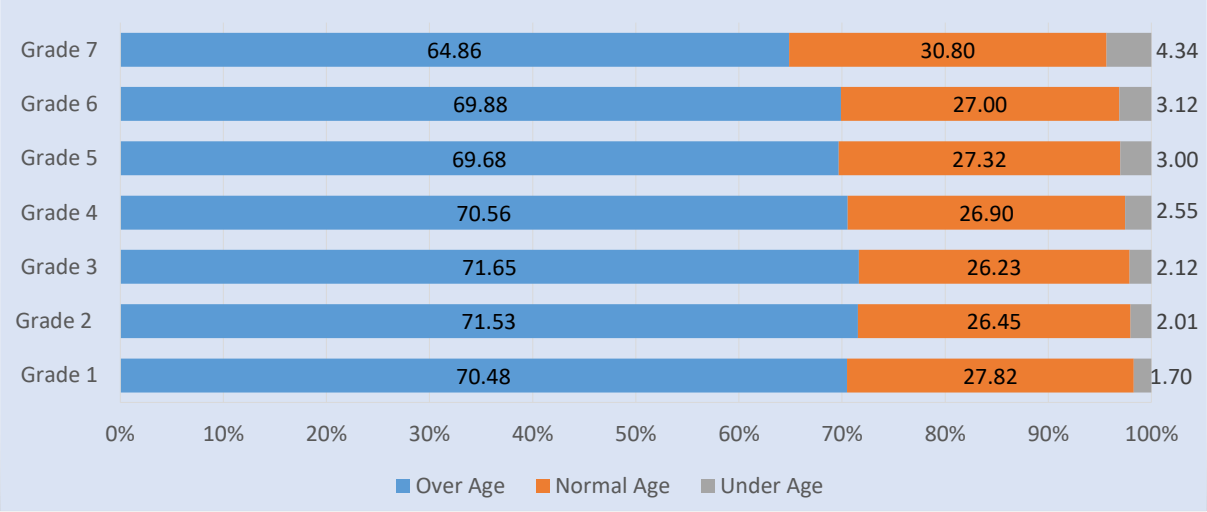


Figure 3.11: Primary School Enrolment by Grade and Age, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

Manicaland recorded the highest enrolment with 438,898 pupils (15.3% of the national total), followed by Midlands (362,341; 12.6%), Mashonaland West (340,579; 11.9%), Harare (328,095; 11.4%) and Mashonaland East (318,547; 11.1%). Together, these five provinces account for more than 62% of total primary school enrolment. At the lower end, Bulawayo (118,772; 4.1%), Matabeleland South (155,174; 5.4%), and Matabeleland North (167,329; 5.8%) recorded the smallest enrolments, consistent with their smaller populations.

The enrolment patterns across the provinces by grade were relatively stable from Grades 1 to 6, with a decline in Grade 7 evident in all provinces. Urban provinces such as Harare and Bulawayo showed gradual increases from Grade 1 through Grade 7, suggesting stronger pupil retention, while several predominantly rural provinces, notably Manicaland, Masvingo, and Midlands, experienced declines in Grade 7 enrolment compared with lower grades. Skills Orientation enrolment was very small in all provinces, ranging from 205 pupils in Mashonaland East to 1,661 in Masvingo, and collectively accounting for less than 0.4% of the national enrolment.

Table 3.12: Primary School Enrolments by Grade and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Enrolment, No								
	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Skills Orientation	Grand Total
Bulawayo	15 781	15 651	16 444	16 902	17 675	17 934	17 695	690	118 772
Harare	41 087	43 336	46 554	47 722	48 196	49 565	50 623	1 012	328 095
Manicaland	63 081	63 739	63 252	62 768	63 540	62 964	58 621	933	438 898
Mashonaland Central	39 855	39 507	40 063	40 703	38 269	38 993	35 053	1 508	273 951
Mashonaland East	44 131	45 298	45 812	45 569	46 375	46 594	44 563	205	318 547
Mashonaland West	46 518	47 611	49 344	48 822	48 674	50 227	47 756	1 627	340 579
Masvingo	54 528	53 816	52 798	52 887	51 891	51 669	48 903	1 661	368 153
Matabeleland North	24 856	24 462	24 324	23 110	23 638	23 584	21 981	1 374	167 329
Matabeleland South	22 891	22 530	21 840	21 758	22 175	22 414	21 041	525	155 174
Midlands	52 978	51 763	51 576	51 638	52 676	52 185	48 816	709	362 341
Grand Total	405 706	407 713	412 007	411 879	413 109	416 129	395 052	10 244	2 871 839

3.3 Secondary school enrolment

Between the years 2021 and 2025, the total enrolment of Forms 1 to 4 increased for both sexes. Male enrolment rose from 495,262 in 2021 to 525,764 in 2025, an increase of 30,502 pupils translating to (6.2%). During the period, female enrolment increased from 505,982 to 554,338, a gain of 48,356 pupils (9.6%). Growth was relatively modest between 2022 and 2023, but accelerated from 2023 to 2025, particularly among females. Fig 3.12 shows the trend. Throughout the five-year period, female enrolment consistently exceeded male enrolment, with the gap widening from 10,720 pupils in 2021 to 28,574 pupils in 2025, indicating a stronger female participation and retention at lower secondary education level.

The trend in Fig 3.13 shows the enrolment in upper secondary between 2021 and 2025. The Form 5 and Form 6 enrolment trends from 2021 to 2025 showed an initial decline followed

by a gradual recovery, with female enrolment consistently being higher than male enrolment throughout the period. In 2021, enrolment stood at 42,679 males and 43,709 females, before falling sharply in 2022 to 37,140 males and 38,555 females, and reaching a low point in 2023 with 35,459 males and 37,548 females. From 2023 onwards, enrolment rebounded, rising to 35,626 males and 38,272 females in 2024, and further to 37,090 males and 40,823 females in 2025. By 2025, female enrolment exceeded male enrolment by 3,733 pupils, compared to a gap of 1,030 pupils in 2021, indicating a widening gender gap in favour of females at upper secondary level.

Overall, between 2021 and 2025, male enrolment for forms 1 to 6 increased by 13,163 pupils (2.4%), while female enrolment rose more strongly by 57,220 pupils (10.6%). The gender gap widened significantly over time.

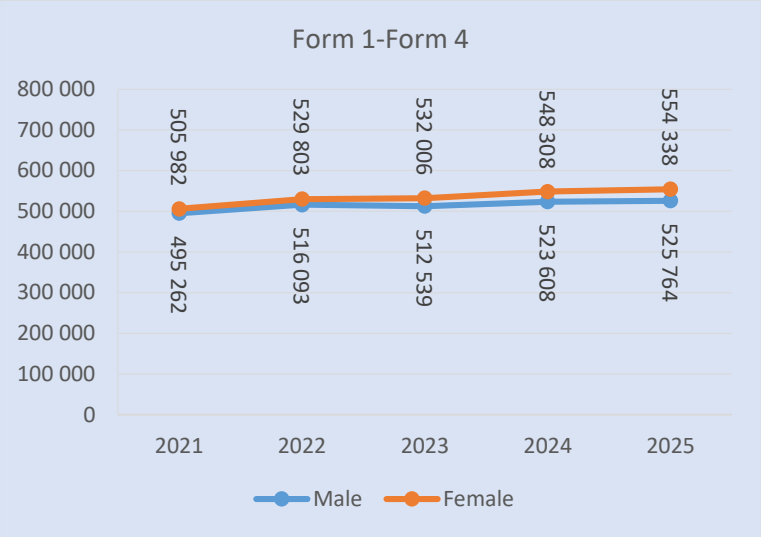


Figure 3.12: Enrolment in Lower Secondary Level, Number, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

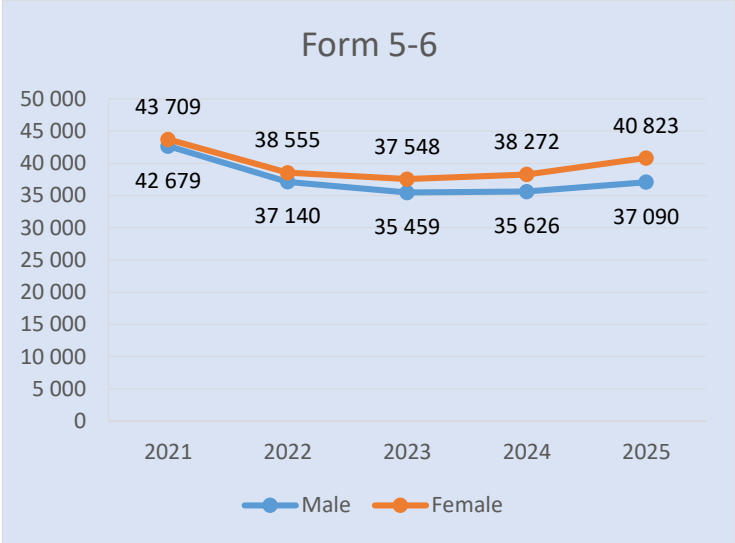


Figure 3.13: Enrolment in Upper Secondary Level, Number, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

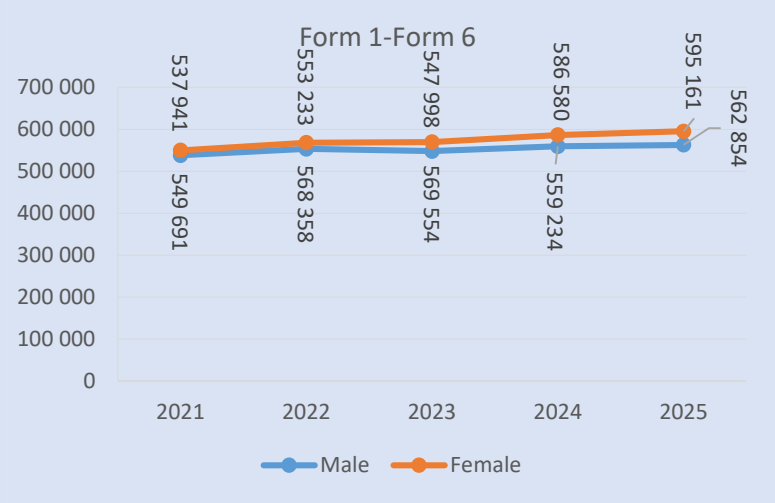


Figure 3.14: Enrolment in Lower and Upper Secondary Schools, Number, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

Between the years 2021 and 2025, secondary school enrolment in Form 1 to Form 6 increased from 1,087,632 to 1,158,015 pupils, representing a net growth of 70,383 pupils (6.5%), alongside a steady rise in female participation from 50.54% to 51.39%. The Form 1 to Form 4 enrolment grew from 1,001,244 in 2021 to 1,080,102 in 2025 (+78,858 pupils; 7.9%), following a decline in 2021 (–3.34%), a strong rebound in 2022 (+4.46%), marginal stability in 2023 (–0.13%), and continued growth in 2024 (+2.62%) and 2025 (+0.76%). The female enrolment proportion rose from 50.54% to 51.32%. In contrast, Form 5–Form 6 enrolment fell from 86,388 in 2021 to 73,007 in 2023 due to consecutive declines (–14.75% in 2021 and –12.38% in 2022), before recovering to 77,913 in 2025 (+5.43%), while female

representation increased consistently from 50.60% to 52.40%. This indicated an improved female retention at upper secondary level despite overall lower enrolment volumes.

Table 3.13: Secondary School Enrolment by Level and Sex and Change, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

Year	Male	Female	Total	% Female	% Change	No.
	Form 1 - Form 4					
2021	495 262	505 982	1 001 244	50.54	-3.34	- 34 605
2022	516 093	529 803	1 045 896	50.66	4.46	44 652
2023	512 539	532 006	1 044 545	50.93	-0.13	-1351
2024	523 608	548 308	1 071 916	51.15	2.62	27371
2025	525 764	554 338	1 080 102	51.32	0.76	8186
Form 5 - Form 6						
2021	42 679	43 709	86 388	50.60	-14.75	- 0 17
2022	37 140	38 555	75 695	50.93	-12.38	- 10 693
2023	35 459	37 548	73 007	51.43	-3.55	- 2 688
2024	35 626	38 272	73 898	51.79	1.22	0 891
2025	37 090	40 823	77 913	52.40	5.43	4 015
Form 1- Form 6						
2021	537 941	549 691	1 087 632	50.54	-4.36	- 49 546
2022	553 233	568 358	1 121 591	50.67	3.12	33 959
2023	547 998	569 554	1 117 552	50.96	-0.36	- 4 039
2024	559 234	586 580	1 145 814	51.19	2.53	28 262
2025	562 854	595 161	1 158 015	51.39	1.06	12 201

The total secondary school enrolment stands at 1,158,015 pupils, comprising 562,854 males and 595,161 females. Female pupils account for 51.39% of total enrolment, indicating that females slightly outnumber males at secondary level. Table 3.14 shows the distribution.

In secondary school enrolment, Form 1 had the highest figures of 298,653 pupils, of whom 51.98% are female, reflecting strong female participation at entry into secondary school. Form 4 enrolment declined to 229,966 pupils, and the gender gap narrowed further, with females accounting for 50.20%. This suggests increased attrition for both sexes as pupils approach the end of lower secondary schooling. Overall, enrolment gradually decreased from Form 1 to Form 4, reflecting cumulative dropouts, repetition, or transition factors.

Lower 6 enrolment stood at 40,500 pupils, with females constituting 52.70%, the highest female share across all forms. Upper 6 enrolment was at 37,413 pupils, with 52.06% female, indicating strong female retention at advanced secondary level. Although enrolment numbers were much lower than in lower secondary, the higher female proportions suggest improved progression and retention of females into upper secondary education.

Table 3.14: Secondary School Enrolments by Sex and Form, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe 2025

Form	Enrolments, No			%Female
	Male	Female	Total	
Form 1	143 411	155 242	298 653	51.98
Form 2	137 525	148 121	285 646	51.85
Form 3	129 373	134 710	264 083	51.01
Form 4	114 524	115 442	229 966	50.20
Lower 6	19 156	21 344	40 500	52.70
Upper 6	17 934	19 479	37 413	52.06
Skills Orientation	931	823	1 754	46.92
Grand Total	562 854	595 161	1 158 015	51.39

Figure 3.15 shows a clear rural dominance in enrolment, with 753,851 pupils (65%) enrolled in rural schools compared to 404,164 pupils (35%) in urban areas. The rural share underscores the importance of rural schools in providing access to education for the majority of school going children.

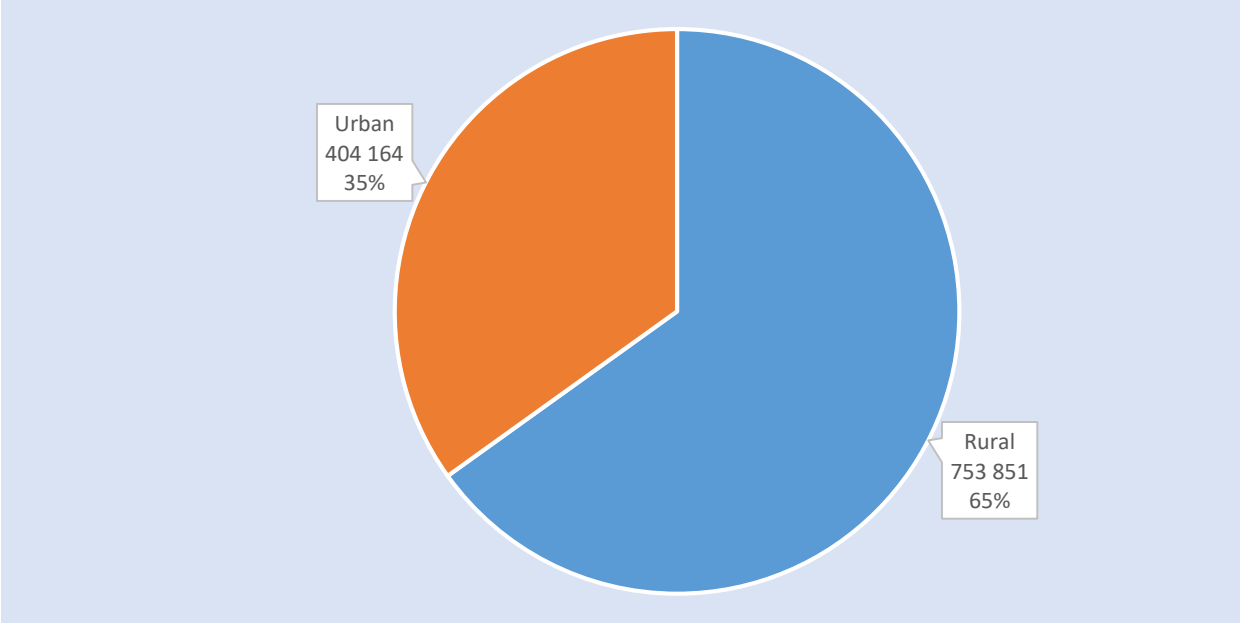


Figure 3.15: Secondary School Enrolments (Form 1- 6) by Location, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

The distribution of secondary school enrolment by form and stream (S1 to S3) shows a clear decline in enrolment as pupils progress to higher levels. Total enrolment was highest in Form 1 (298,653 pupils) and steadily decreased through Form 4 (229,966), with much smaller cohorts in Lower 6 (40,500) and Upper 6 (37,413) reflecting normal attrition and transition points within the secondary education cycle. Across all the forms, S3 consistently enrolled the largest share of pupils, with 696,865 pupils (60.2%) of the total 1,158,015, followed by S2 with 323,237 pupils (27.9%), and S1 with 137,913 pupils (11.9%).

Gender parity shows a systematic female advantage in most forms. Overall, females account for 50.83% of total secondary enrolment, with higher female shares in lower forms i.e.

51.79% in Form 1, 51.53% in Form 2, and 50.15% in Form 3. Female participation was strongest in S1 and S2, where females consistently made up over 52% of enrolment across Forms 1 to 3. In Form 4, female representation declined slightly in S3 (49.45%), showing some gender difference towards the end of the lower secondary cycle. At advanced level, females maintained an advantage in Lower 6 (overall 52.6% in S2 and 50.9% in S3) and Upper 6 (52.7% in S1 and S2).

The main exception to this parity pattern is Skills Orientation, where enrolment was very small (1,754 pupils) and gender distribution uneven, particularly in S3, where females accounted for only 40.52%.

Table 3.15: Secondary School Enrolment by Location, Sex and Form, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Form	S1, No.			% Female	S2, No.			% Female	S3, No.			% Female	Grand Total
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total		
Form 1	14 777	16 306	31 083	52.46	36 154	39 608	75 762	52.28	92 480	99 328	191 808	51.79	298 653
Form 2	14 204	15 710	29 914	52.52	35 987	39 574	75 561	52.37	87 334	92 837	180 171	51.53	285 646
Form 3	13 350	15 023	28 373	52.95	34 793	37 974	72 767	52.19	81 230	81 713	162 943	50.15	264 083
Form 4	12 827	13 352	26 179	51.00	31 850	33 750	65 600	51.45	69 847	68 340	138 187	49.45	229 966
Lower 6	5 359	5 941	11 300	52.58	7 692	9 075	16 767	54.12	6 105	6 328	12 433	50.90	40 500
Upper 6	4 966	5 549	10 515	52.77	7 651	8 541	16 192	52.75	5 317	5 389	10 706	50.34	37 413
Skills Orientation	282	267	549	48.63	282	306	588	52.04	367	250	617	40.52	1 754
Grand Total	65 765	72 148	137 913	52.31	154 409	168 828	323 237	52.23	342 680	354 185	696 865	50.83	1 158 015

Figure 3.16 shows that secondary school enrolment was heavily concentrated in S3, which accounted for 696,865 pupils, representing 60.18% of the total secondary enrolment (1,158,015). S2 followed with 323,237 pupils (27.91%), while S1 had the smallest share at 137,913 pupils (11.91%).

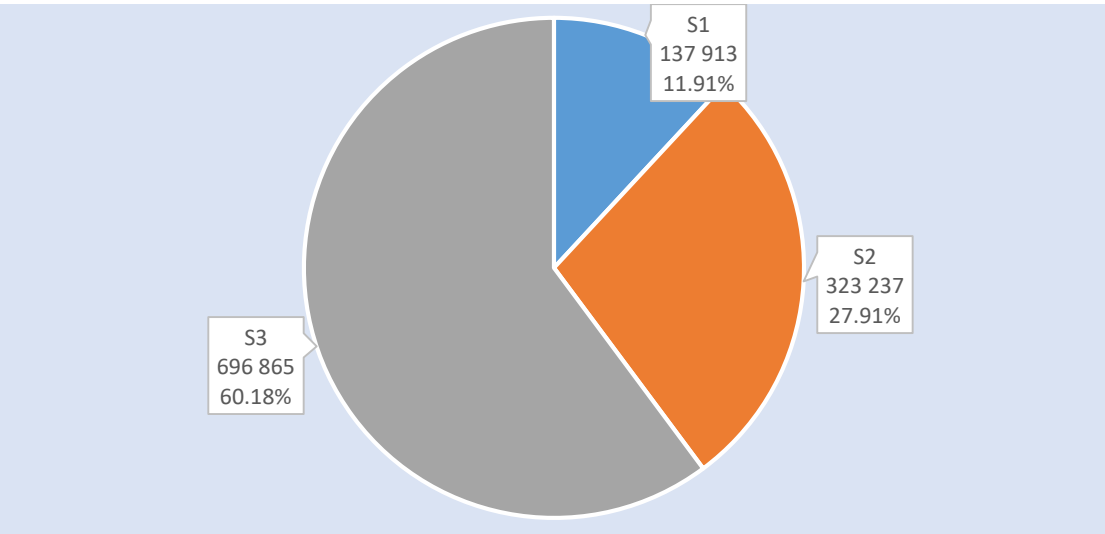


Figure 3.16: Secondary School Enrolment by School Grant Classification, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Secondary school enrolment in 2025 was concentrated in the lower forms and in S3, with clear patterns by form and sustained gender parity. Total enrolment declined steadily from Form 1 (298,653 pupils) to Form 4 (229,966), before dropping sharply at advanced level to 40,500 in Lower 6 and 37,413 in Upper 6, a reflection of normal transition and completion dynamics. Across all forms, S3 schools consistently accounted for the largest share of enrolment, totalling 696,865 pupils (60.8% of all secondary enrolment), followed by S2 with 323,237 pupils (27.9%) and S1 with 137,913 pupils (11.9%).

The female pupils made up 50.83% of total secondary enrolment. In Forms 1 and 2, female pupils made up 51.8% and 51.5%, respectively, with higher female shares in S1 and S2 (52.31% and 52.23% respectively). In Form 3, gender balance narrowed in S3, females represent 50.15%, while in Form 4, female participation declined further to 49.45%. Female enrolments had higher numbers in Lower 6, particularly in S2 (54.12% female), and remained slightly above parity in Upper 6 across all school classifications. The data in table 3.16 shows that in skills orientation, gender imbalances were clear, especially in S3 schools, with females comprising only 40.52%.

Table 3.16: Secondary School Enrolments by School Grant Classification, Sex and Form, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Form	S1, No.			%Female	S2, No.			% Female	S3, No.			% Female	Grand Total
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total		
Form 1	14 777	16 306	31 083	52.46	36 154	39 608	75 762	52.28	92 480	99 328	191 808	51.79	298 653
Form 2	14 204	15 710	29 914	52.52	35 987	39 574	75 561	52.37	87 334	92 837	180 171	51.53	285 646
Form 3	13 350	15 023	28 373	52.95	34 793	37 974	72 767	52.19	81 230	81 713	162 943	50.15	264 083
Form 4	12 827	13 352	26 179	51.00	31 850	33 750	65 600	51.45	69 847	68 340	138 187	49.45	229 966
Lower 6	5 359	5 941	11 300	52.58	7 692	9 075	16 767	54.12	6 105	6 328	12 433	50.90	40 500
Upper 6	4 966	5 549	10 515	52.77	7 651	8 541	16 192	52.75	5 317	5 389	10 706	50.34	37 413
Skills Orientation	282	267	549	48.63	282	306	588	52.04	367	250	617	40.52	1 754
Grand Total	65 765	72 148	137 913	52.31	154 409	168 828	323 237	52.23	342 680	354 185	696 865	50.83	1 158 015

The figure shows that secondary school enrolments were concentrated more in registered schools, which enrolled 1,021,142 pupils, representing 88% of total secondary enrolment. Satellite schools had 114,620 pupils (10%), while unregistered schools enrolled only 22,253 pupils (2%).

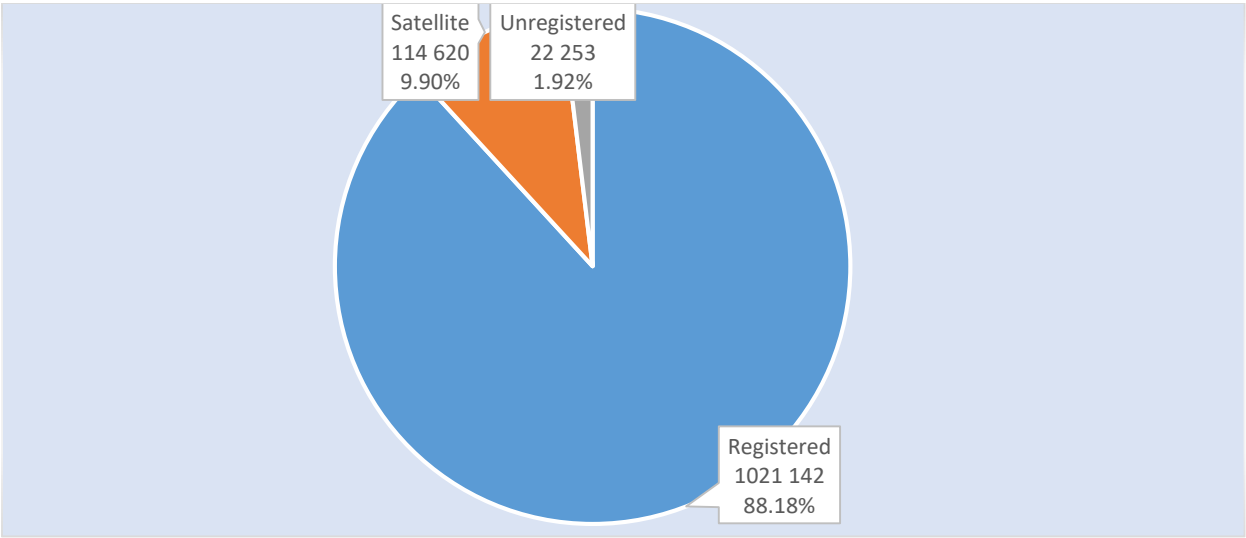


Figure 3.17:Secondary School Enrolments by School Registration Status, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

The overall secondary school enrolments totalled 1,158,015 pupils, the majority of whom were in registered schools (1,021,142 pupils, 88%), followed by satellite schools (114,620 pupils, 10%) and unregistered schools (22,253 pupils, 2%) as shown in Table 3.17. The Registered schools dominated across all forms and were almost the sole providers of upper secondary education, enrolling 98.7% of Lower 6 and 99.0% of Upper 6 pupils. Satellite secondary schools mainly supported lower secondary education access, particularly in Forms 1 and 2 where they accounted for about 11 to 12% of enrolment, while unregistered schools consistently enrolled less than 4% of pupils at each level. There was gender parity across the registration categories. Female pupils accounted for 51.43% in registered schools, 50.95% in satellite schools, and 52.11% in unregistered schools. Across Forms 1 to 6, female participation generally ranged between 50% and 53%, indicating balanced access for males and females.

Table 3.17: Secondary School Enrolments by School Registration Status, Sex and Form, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Grade	Registered, No.			% Female	Satellite, No.			% Female	Unregistered, No			% Female	Grand Total
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total		
Form 1	122 966	133 019	255 985	51.96	17 063	18 421	35 484	51.91	3 382	3 802	7 184	52.92	298 653
Form 2	119 576	128 903	248 479	51.88	15 293	16 359	31 652	51.68	2 656	2 859	5 515	51.84	285 646
Form 3	113 566	118 940	232 506	51.16	13 503	13 252	26 755	49.53	2 304	2 518	4 822	52.22	264 083
Form 4	102 298	103 107	205 405	50.20	10 340	10 363	20 703	50.06	1 886	1 972	3 858	51.11	229 966
Lower 6	18 886	21 086	39 972	52.75	19	5	24	20.83	251	253	504	50.20	40 500
Upper 6	17 761	19 293	37 054	52.07					173	186	359	51.81	37 413
Skills Orientation	925	816	1 741	46.87	0	2	2	100.00	6	5	11	45.45	1 754
Grand Total	495 978	525 164	1021 142	51.43	56 218	58 402	114 620	50.95	10 658	11 595	22 253	52.11	1 158 015

Table 3.18 and Figure 3.18 present secondary school enrolment by form and age. As shown in the table and the graph, most of the pupils in form 1 to Lower 6 were overaged. The majority of Form 1 pupils were 14-year-olds (125 660 pupils), the majority of Form 2 pupils were 15-year-olds (117 132 pupils), the majority of Form 3 pupils were 16-year-olds (100 777 pupils), the majority of Form 4 pupils were 17-year-olds (88 203 pupils), the majority of Lower 6 pupils were 17-year-olds (18 471 pupils), the majority of Upper 6 pupils were 18-year-olds (18 359 pupils), and the majority of Skills Orientation pupils were above 18 years old (180 pupils).

The proportion of overaged pupils ranged from 37.12% in Upper 6 to 63.84% among Form 1 pupils. The proportion of normal-aged pupils ranged from 32.57% among Form 1 pupils to 49.07% among Upper 6 pupils. The proportion of under-aged pupils ranged from 3.59% among form 1 pupils and 13.81% among Form 6 ones.

Table 3.18: Secondary School Enrolments by Form and Age, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Ages	Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4	Lower 6	Upper 6	Skills Orientation	Grand Total
Below 13	10 712						191	10 903
13 years	97 270	11 752					121	109 143
14 years	125 660	101 330	11 261				262	238 513
15 years	51 297	117 132	91 455	11 273			299	271 456
16 years	11 340	42 738	100 777	76 546	3 172		306	234 879
17 years	1 919	10 554	43 989	88 203	18 471	5 165	239	168 540
18 years	296	1 757	12 591	38 045	13 643	18 359	156	84 847
above 18	159	383	4 010	15 899	5 214	13 889	180	39 734
Grand Total	298 653	285 646	264 083	229 966	40 500	37 413	1 754	1 158 015

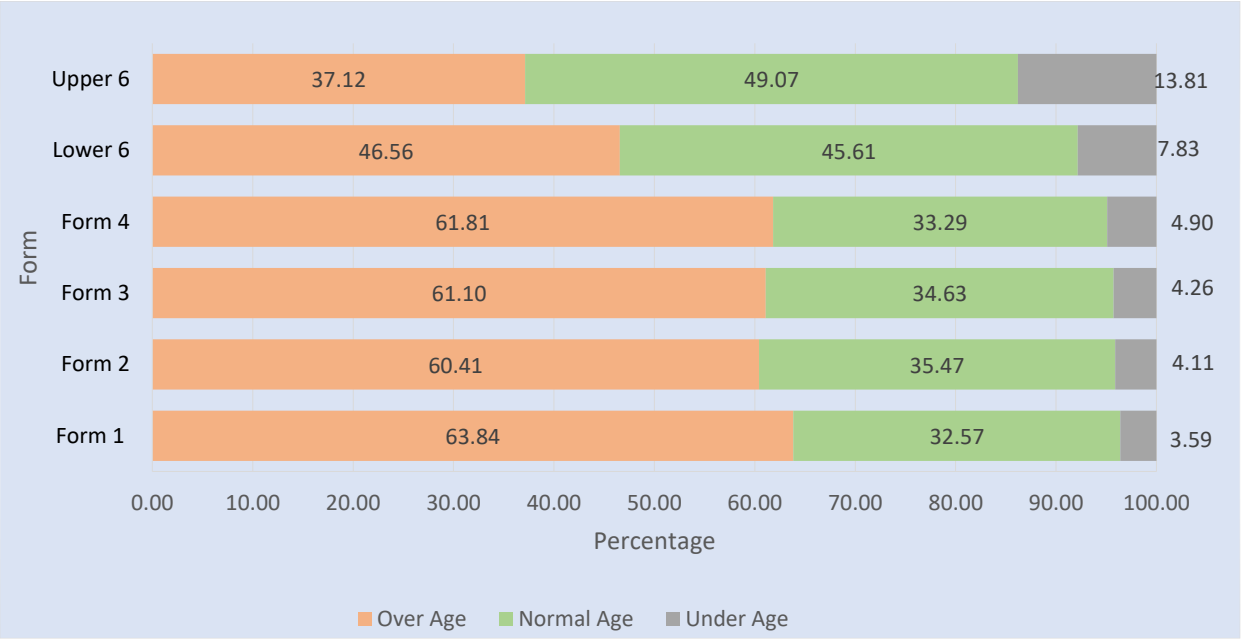


Figure 3.18: Secondary School Enrolments by Form and Age, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Manicaland (175,976) recorded the highest enrolment, followed by Masvingo (156,562), Midlands (147,605) and Harare (144,225). Together, these four provinces accounted for over 54% of total secondary enrolment. The lowest enrolments were in Bulawayo (60,193), Matabeleland North (61,280) and Matabeleland South (63,768). Enrolment numbers decreased steadily from Form 1 (298,653 pupils) to Form 4 (229,966 pupils) across all the provinces before dropping sharply when transitioning to upper secondary level, with only 40,500 pupils in Lower 6 and 37,413 in Upper 6.

The provinces such as Harare, Manicaland, Masvingo, Mashonaland Eastand Midlands maintained a relatively stronger participation at A-Level, jointly enrolling over 70% of all Lower 6 and Upper 6 pupils. Skills Orientation programmes remained marginal, enrolling just 1,754 pupils nationally, with Harare alone accounting for more than half (992 pupils). Table 3.19 shows the distribution.

Table 3.19: Secondary School Enrolment by Form and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Enrolment, No							
	Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4	Lower 6	Upper 6	Skills Orientation	Grand Total
Bulawayo	13 570	13 861	13 779	12 717	3 109	3 106	51	60 193
Harare	33 037	33 293	31 649	29 196	8 275	7 783	992	144 225
Manicaland	45 796	43 615	39 520	35 200	6 032	5 672	141	175 976
Mashonaland Central	24 579	23 015	20 190	17 307	2 145	2 084	0	89 320
Mashonaland East	33 956	33 367	29 591	25 992	4 546	4 150	55	131 657
Mashonaland West	34 722	32 131	29 310	24 688	3 299	3 002	277	127 429
Masvingo	40 393	38 173	36 272	31 558	5 330	4 825	11	156 562
Matabeleland North	16 582	15 122	14 846	12 082	1 444	1 191	13	61 280
Matabeleland South	16 977	15 663	14 659	12 522	2 148	1 799	0	63 768
Midlands	39 041	37 406	34 267	28 704	4 172	3 801	214	147 605
Grand Total	298 653	285 646	264 083	229 966	40 500	37 413	1 754	1 158 015

The total enrolment in ECD, primary and secondary education in Zimbabwe in 2025 was 4,671,149 pupils, comprising 2,325,811 males (49.8%) and 2,345,338 females (50.2%), achieving gender parity nationally. At ECD level, the total enrolment was 641,295 pupils, with ECD A enrolling 309,056 and ECD B 332,239, and a slight male advantage in both levels. Primary education (Grades 1–7) accounted for the largest share, with 2,861,595 pupils (61.3% of total enrolment). Enrolment was relatively stable across grades, peaking at Grade 6 (416,129), before declining to 395,052 in Grade 7, showing reduction in numbers toward the end of primary school education.

The secondary school level total enrolment was 1,158,015 pupils (25.0% of the total), with numbers declining progressively from Form 1 (298,653) to Form 4 (229,966), and dropping sharply at upper secondary, with 40,500 in Lower 6 and 37,413 in Upper 6. Females consistently outnumbered males throughout secondary education, particularly at A-Level, where females made up 52.7% in Lower 6 and 52.1% in Upper 6. The data in table 3.20 and figure 3.19 shows the distribution. Skills Orientation programmes enrolled 11,998 pupils, with male enrolment having a majority share (55.4%).

Table 3.20 : Total Enrolment ECD, Primary and Secondary by Sex and Grade, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Grade	Enrolment, No.		
	Male	Female	Grand Total
ECD A	155 636	153 420	309 056
ECD B	167 852	164 387	332 239
Grade 1	205 442	200 264	405 706
Grade 2	206 398	201 315	407 713
Grade 3	206 891	205 116	412 007
Grade 4	205 631	206 248	411 879
Grade 5	206 424	206 685	413 109
Grade 6	207 874	208 255	416 129
Grade 7	195 090	199 962	395 052
Form 1	143 411	155 242	298 653
Form 2	137 525	148 121	285 646
Form 3	129 373	134 710	264 083
Form 4	114 524	115 442	229 966
Lower 6	19 156	21 344	40 500
Upper 6	17 934	19 479	37 413
Skills Orientation	6 650	5 348	11 998
Grand Total	2 325 811	2 345 338	4 671 149

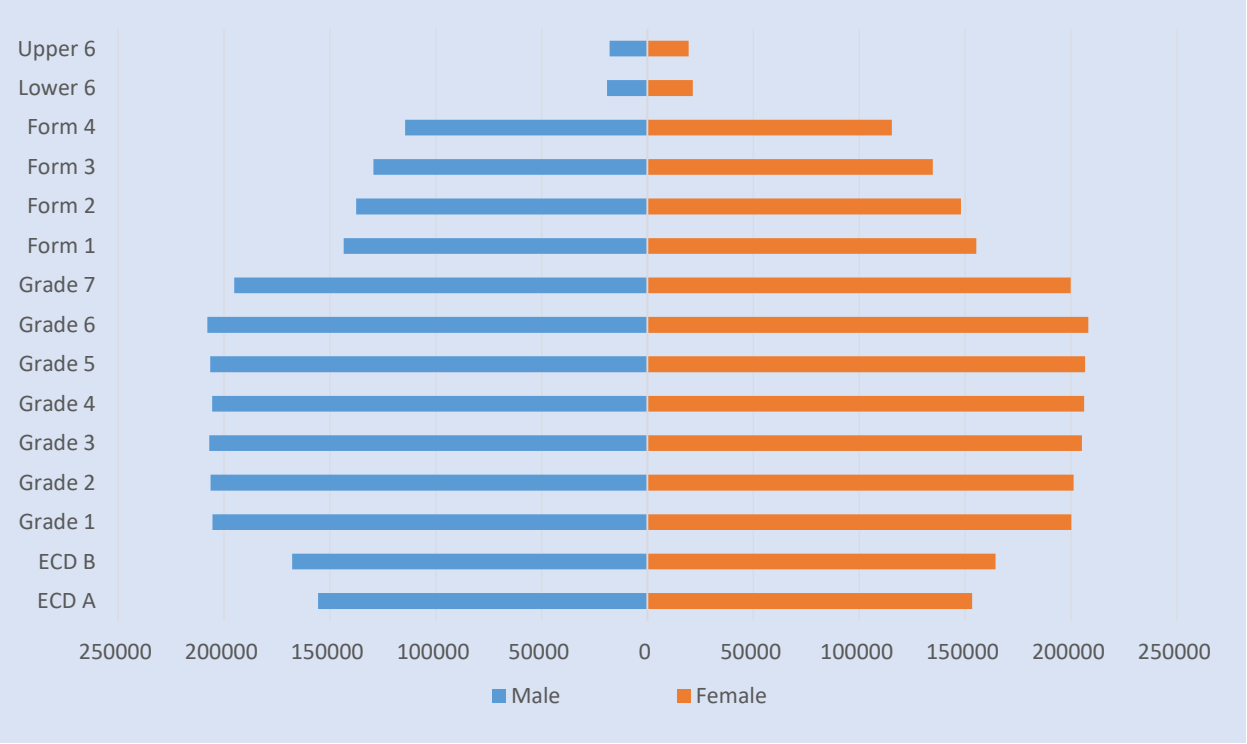


Figure 3.19: Distribution of Enrolment by Grade/Form, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

3.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, Zimbabwe's enrolment landscape in 2025 reflected a broad-based system with 4,671,149 pupils across ECD, primary and secondary, achieving national gender parity (50.2% female). ECD enrolment fluctuated, peaking at 679,582 (2023) before settling at 641,295 (2025) with near parity (49.6% female) and strong rural concentration (74.4%). Provision is anchored in P3 schools (76.9%) and registered centres (84.7%), with participation peaking at ages 5–6 (e.g., 157,600 six-year-olds in ECD B). Primary enrolment also crested in 2023 (2,953,307) then declined to 2,871,839 (2025; –2.28% from 2024), remained 49.9% female, and was predominantly rural (70.2%), P3-based (73.1%), and registered (90.5%). A critical systemic concern is over-age enrolment (70%) in Grades 1–4, and 64.9% in Grade 7 signalling issues in age-appropriate entry, repetition, and progression.

At secondary level, total enrolment grew from 1,087,632 (2021) to 1,158,015 (2025), with an increased female share (51.39%). Lower secondary rose to 1,080,102 while upper secondary, though recovering, remained small at 77,913. Secondary schooling is concentrated in S3 schools (60.2%), registered institutions (88%), and rural areas (65%). Cohort attrition is evident i.e. Form 1: 298,653 down to Form 4: 229,966. There were sharp drops at A-Level (Lower 6: 40,500; Upper 6: 37,413). Nevertheless, female retention strengthens at A-Level (52.7% in Lower 6; 52.1% in Upper 6).

The education system demonstrates wide coverage, strong female participation, and rural dominance, but also persistent over-age progression and upper-secondary drop-off, pointing to the need for interventions in on-time entry, promotion policies, and transition support, especially at the *Grade 7 to Form 1* and *Form 4 to Lower 6* junctures.

CHAPTER 4 : Access to Education

This chapter analysed enrolment patterns of pupils entering the first grades of primary and secondary education for the first time. In Zimbabwe, the official entry points into the education system are Grade 1 for primary education and Form 1 for secondary education. The effectiveness of the system in enrolling pupils at the appropriate age and ensuring smooth progression through schooling is closely linked to the age at first entry. The official entry ages are 6 years for Grade 1 and 13 years for Form 1. In addition, the chapter presents key indicators of access to education, specifically the Apparent Intake Rate (AIR) and the Net Intake Rate (NIR) for both Grade 1 and Form 1.

4.1 New Entrants into Grade 1

Table 4.1 shows that new entrants into Grade 1 declined steadily from 430,378 in 2021 to 401,883 in 2025, representing an overall decrease of 6.6 percent. Both male and female enrolments followed a similar downward trend, with male enrolment falling from 217,314 to 203,246 and female enrolment from 213,064 to 198,637. Females consistently accounted for about half of the total of new entrants, with the proportion remaining stable at around 49.3–49.6 percent throughout the period, indicating sustained gender parity at entry level. The largest absolute declines were recorded between 2023 and 2025, suggesting increased constraints to early primary school entry in recent years.

Table 4.1: New Entrants into Grade 1 Trend by Sex, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe 2021-2025

Year	Male	Female	Total	%Female	Change	
	Number				%	Number
2021	217 314	213 064	430 378	49.51	-7.08	-32 801
2022	213 836	210 720	424 556	49.63	-1.35	-5 822
2023	212 654	208 693	421 347	49.53	-0.76	-3 209
2024	208 646	202 788	411 434	49.29	-2.35	-9 913
2025	203 246	198 637	401 883	49.43	-2.32	-9 551

Figure 4.1 illustrates the parallel decline in male and female Grade 1 entrants between 2021 and 2025. The close alignment of the male and female curves highlights minimal gender disparity in access to Grade 1, while the overall downward trend reflects a contraction in new enrolments over the five-year period.

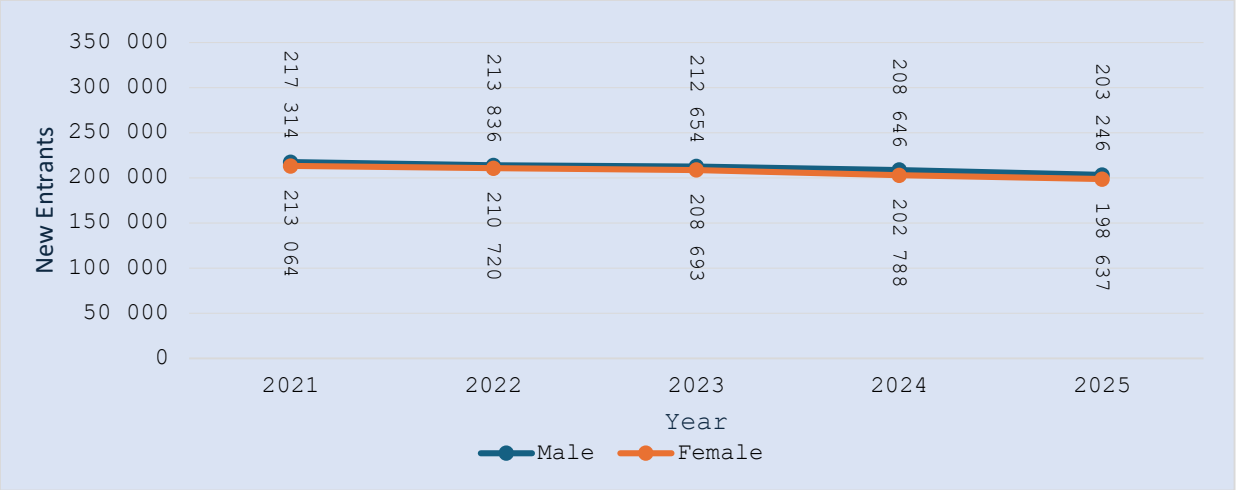


Figure 4.1: New Entrants into Grade 1 by Sex, Number, Zimbabwe 2021-2025

Table 4.2 indicates that most Grade 1 new entrants in 2025 were aged 6 and 7 years, accounting for 28.3 percent and 48.1 percent of total enrolment, respectively. Pupils below age 6 constituted only 2.3 percent, while over-aged ones from aged 8 years and above accounted for 21.4 percent, reflecting substantial delayed school entry. Gender parity was strongest among children aged 7, with GPIs close to 1.0, but female participation declined progressively among older age groups, with GPIs falling below parity from age 8 onwards.

Table 4.2: New Entrants into Grade 1 by Sex, Age, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Age	New Entrants, No.			% Female	% of Total			GPI
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
Below 5	492	518	1 010	51.29	0.24	0.26	0.25	1.08
5 years	3 941	4 342	8 283	52.42	1.94	2.19	2.06	1.13
6 years	54 802	58 880	113 682	51.79	26.96	29.64	28.29	1.10
7 years	97 144	95 968	193 112	49.70	47.80	48.31	48.05	1.01
8 years	34 923	30 180	65 103	46.36	17.18	15.19	16.20	0.88
9 years	8 750	6 662	15 412	43.23	4.31	3.35	3.83	0.78
10 years	2 320	1 598	3 918	40.79	1.14	0.80	0.97	0.70
11 years	581	329	910	36.15	0.29	0.17	0.23	0.58
12 years	192	104	296	35.14	0.09	0.05	0.07	0.55
Above 12	101	56	157	35.67	0.05	0.03	0.04	0.57
Grand Total	203 246	198 637	401 883	49.43	100.00	100.00	100.00	

Figure 4.2 shows that both male males and female females were concentrated in the 6- and 7-year age groups at entry into Grade 1. The figure further illustrates a widening gender gap among older entrants, with males increasingly outnumbering females at ages 8 years and above.

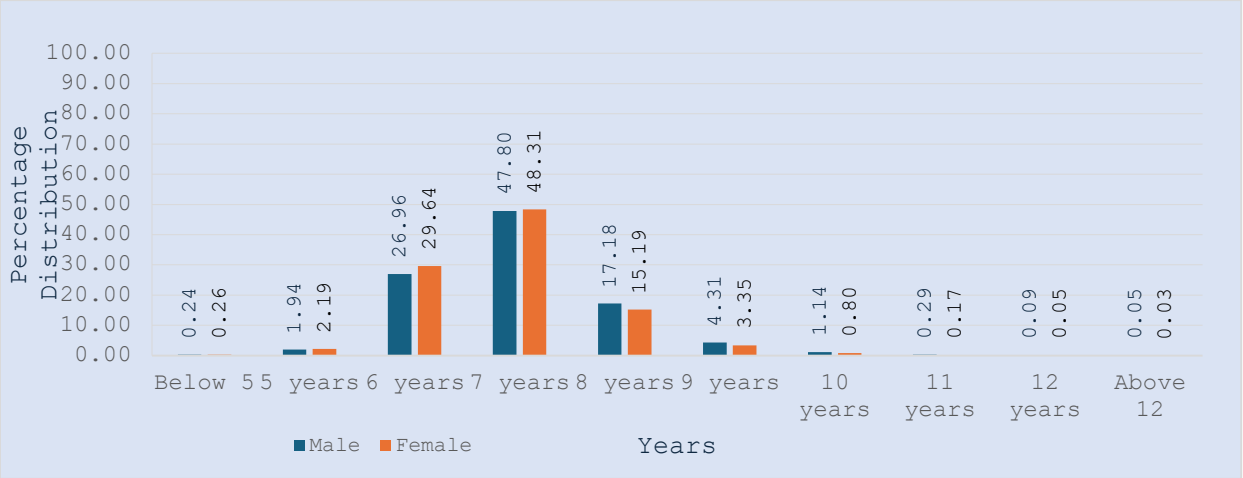


Figure 4.2: New Entrants into Grade 1 by Age and Sex, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

Table 4.3 shows that 72.3 percent of all Grade 1 new entrants were enrolled in rural schools. Rural enrolment increased with age, exceeding 85 percent among pupils aged 8 years and above, indicating that delayed entry is predominantly a rural phenomenon. Urban enrolment was relatively higher among younger entrants, particularly those aged 5 and 6 years, suggesting earlier school entry in urban areas.

Table 4.3: New Entrants into Grade 1 by Location, Sex and Age, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Age	Rural New Entrants, No.			% of Total Rural	Urban New Entrants, No.			% of Total Urban	Grand Total	% Rural
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total			
Below 5	283	305	588	0.20	209	213	422	0.38	1 010	58.22
5 years	2 425	2 556	4 981	1.71	1 516	1 786	3 302	2.97	8 283	60.14
6 years	34 036	36 873	70 909	24.40	20 766	22 007	42 773	38.44	113 682	62.37
7 years	70 409	69 598	140 007	48.18	26 735	26 370	53 105	47.72	193 112	72.50
8 years	29 844	25 860	55 704	19.17	5 079	4 320	9 399	8.45	65 103	85.56
9 years	7 800	5 901	13 701	4.71	950	761	1 711	1.54	15 412	88.90
10 years	2 125	1 406	3 531	1.22	195	192	387	0.35	3 918	90.12
11 years	511	308	819	0.28	70	21	91	0.08	910	90.00
12 years	163	93	256	0.09	29	11	40	0.04	296	86.49
Above 12	69	41	110	0.04	32	15	47	0.04	157	70.06
Grand Total	147 665	142 941	290 606	100.00	55 581	55 696	111 277	100.00	401 883	72.31

Figure 4.3 highlights the dominance of rural enrolment in Grade 1, with nearly three-quarters of new entrants attending rural schools. The figure underscores the significant rural–urban imbalance in access to early primary education.

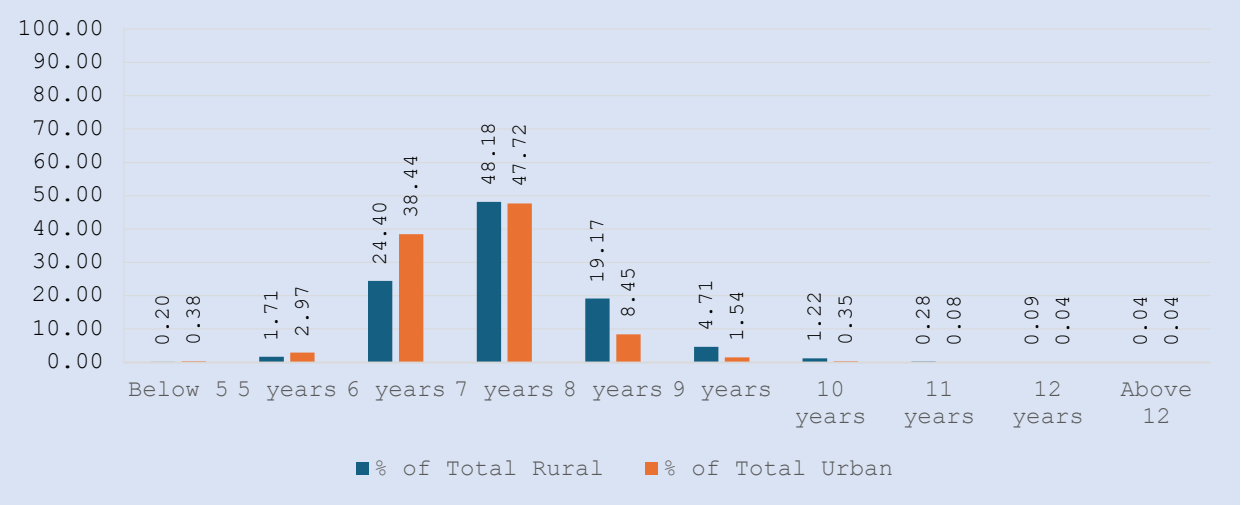


Figure 4.3: New Entrants into Grade 1 by Location, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

4.2 New Entrants into Form 1

Table 4.4 shows that Form 1 enrolment increased from 276,136 in 2021 to a peak of 299,238 in 2024 before declining slightly to 296,945 in 2025. Females consistently outnumbered males across all years, accounting for approximately 52 percent of new entrants. The decline observed in 2025 suggests emerging challenges in transition from primary to secondary education.

Table 4.4: New Entrants into Form 1 Trend by Sex and Change, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe 2021-2025

Year	Male	Female	Total	% Change	
	Number			%	Number
2021	134 301	141 835	276 136	-0.71	-1 979
2022	138 493	146 906	285 399	3.35	9 263
2023	139 994	151 424	291 418	2.11	6 019
2024	143 173	156 065	299 238	2.68	7 820
2025	142 584	154 361	296 945	-0.77	-2 293

Figure 4.4 illustrates a general upward trend in Form 1 enrolment between 2021 and 2024 for both sexes, followed by a modest decline in 2025. Female enrolment remained consistently higher than male enrolment throughout the period.

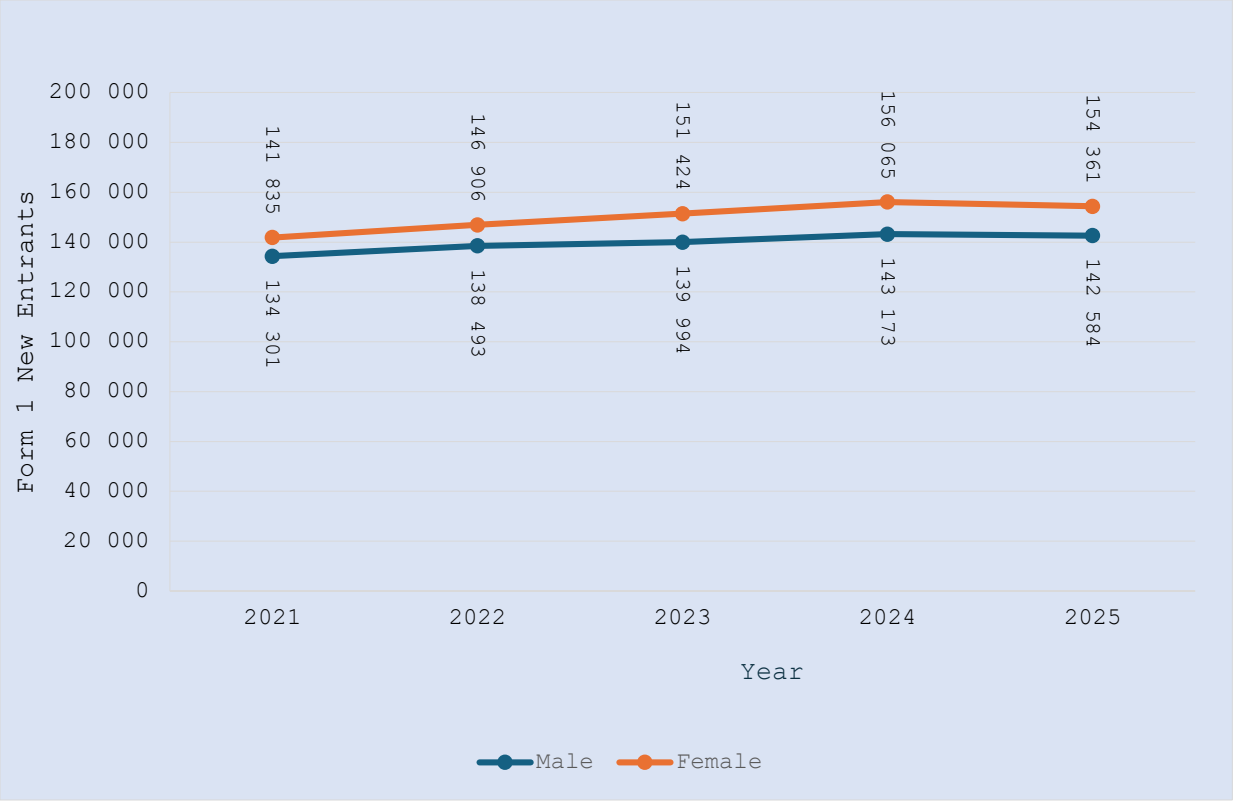


Figure 4.4: New Entrants into Form 1 by Sex, Number, Zimbabwe 2021-2025

Table 4.5 shows that most Form 1 entrants in 2025 were aged 13 and 14 years, together accounting for 73.8 percent of enrolment. Females dominated enrolment at younger ages, with GPIs above 1.0 for ages below 14 years. Male participation increased among pupils aged 15 years and above, reflecting higher female dropout or delayed progression at older ages.

Table 4.5: New Entrants into Form 1 by Sex, Age and GPI, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Age	New Entrants, No.			% Female	% of Total			GPI
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
Below 13	6 417	8 499	14 916	56.98	4.50	5.51	5.02	1.22
13 years	42 291	54 399	96 690	56.26	29.66	35.24	32.56	1.19
14 years	58 801	63 682	122 483	51.99	41.24	41.26	41.25	1.00
15 years	26 910	22 785	49 695	45.85	18.87	14.76	16.74	0.78
16 years	6 626	4 336	10 962	39.55	4.65	2.81	3.69	0.60
17 years	1 302	577	1 879	30.71	0.91	0.37	0.63	0.41
18 years	237	82	319	25.71	0.17	0.05	0.11	0.32
above 18	0	1	1	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	#DIV/0!
Grand Total	142 584	154 361	296 945	51.98	100.00	100.00	100.00	1.00

Figure 4.5 demonstrates that female participation was higher at the official entry ages, while male participation higher among over-aged entrants, indicating gendered patterns of progression and retention.

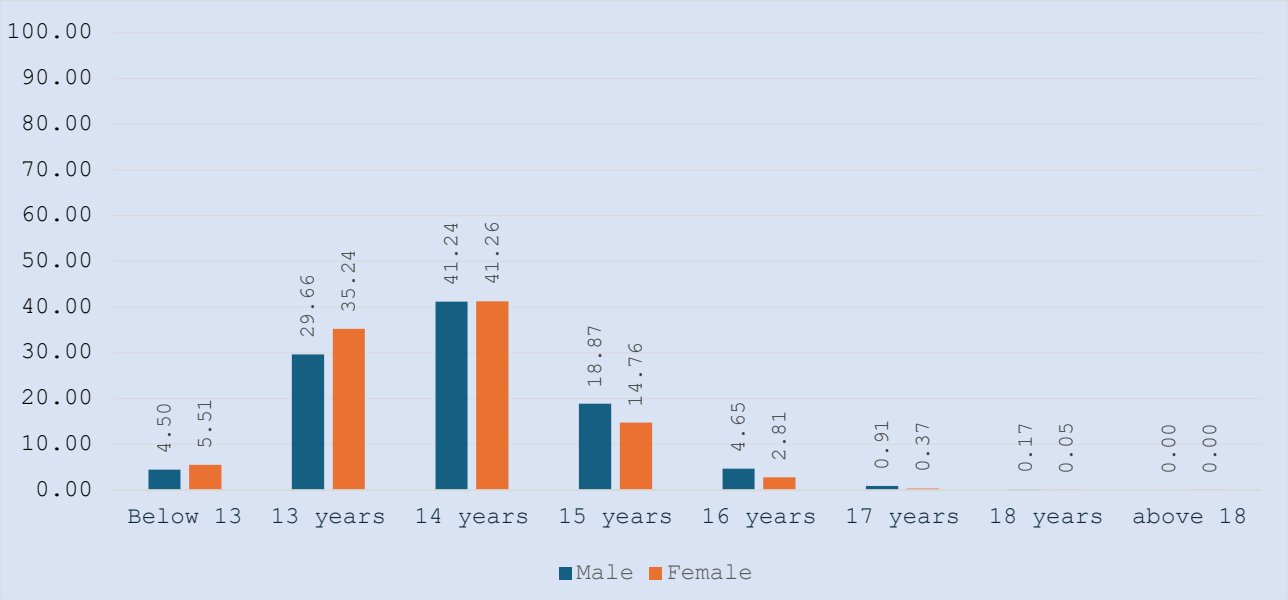


Figure 4.5: New Entrants into Form 1 by Age and Sex, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

Table 4.6 shows that the distribution of Form 1 new entrants by age, sex and location in 2025. There was a strong rural dominance, with 203,416 pupils (68.5 percent) enrolled in rural schools compared to 93,529 (31.5 percent) in urban areas, giving a total of 296,945 new entrants. Most entrants were aged 13–14 years, who together accounted for 219,173 pupils (73.8 percent). Among these, 13-year-olds numbered 96,690 (32.6 percent), while 14-year-olds were the largest group at 122,483 (41.2 percent). Rural areas enrolled a higher proportion across all ages, particularly among older pupils, with rural shares rising from 56.0 percent below age 13 to over 85 percent among pupils aged 17 years and above, indicating that delayed entry was predominantly a rural phenomenon. Males were more represented among older age groups, especially from 15 years upwards, while females were more concentrated in the official entry ages of 13 and 14 years, suggesting better age-appropriate transition among females.

Over-aged entrants (aged 15 years and above) constituted 62,121 pupils (20.9 percent) of all Form 1 new entrants, of whom 83.7 percent were enrolled in rural schools. Pupils aged 15 years alone accounted for 49,695 (16.7 percent) of total entrants, with nearly 80 percent coming from rural areas. Very late entry (aged 17 years and above) was relatively small at 2,464 pupils (0.8 percent) but remained overwhelmingly rural. Urban enrolment was most concentrated at the official ages, with 41.0 percent of urban entrants aged 13 years and 39.0 percent aged 14 years, compared to much lower shares at older ages. Overall, the pattern highlighted persistent rural–urban inequalities in age-appropriate transition to secondary

education, with rural pupils more likely to enter Form 1 at older ages and females consistently transitioning earlier than males.

Table 4.6: New Entrants into Form 1 by Location, Sex and Age, Number and Percentage, 2025

Year	Rural New Entrants				Urban New Entrants, No.			% Total Urban	Grand Total	% Rural
	Male	Female	Total	Rural	Male	Female	Total	Urban		
Below 13	3 488	4 869	8 357	4.11	2 929	3 630	6 559	7.01	14 916	56.03
13 years	24 923	33 423	58 346	28.68	17 368	20 976	38 344	41.00	96 690	60.34
14 years	40 989	45 060	86 049	42.30	17 812	18 622	36 434	38.95	122 483	70.25
15 years	21 462	18 200	39 662	19.50	5 448	4 585	10 033	10.73	49 695	79.81
16 years	5 567	3 566	9 133	4.49	1 059	770	1 829	1.96	10 962	83.32
17 years	1 133	470	1 603	0.79	169	107	276	0.30	1 879	85.31
18 years	197	68	265	0.13	40	14	54	0.06	319	83.07
above 18	0	1	1	0.00	0	0	0	0.00	1	100.00
Grand Total	97 759	105 657	203 416	100.00	44 825	48 704	93 529	100.00	296 945	68.50

4.3 Apparent and Net Intake Rate

Table 4.7 shows that the Apparent Intake Rate (AIR) for primary education remained high throughout the period (2021-2025), peaking at 105.46 percent in 2023 before declining to 98.8 percent in 2025. Net Intake Rates (NIR) were much lower, ranging between 22.9 and 29.3 percent, indicating that a relatively small proportion of children entered Grade 1 at the official age. Females consistently recorded higher NIRs than males, with GPIs above 1.0.

Table 4.7: Apparent and Net Intake Rates Trends for Primary School by Sex and GPI, Percentage, 2021-2025

Year	Apparent Intake Rate (AIR), %			GPI	Net Intake Rate (NIR), %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
2021	94.94	91.85	93.38	0.97	22.17	23.54	22.86	1.06
2022	104.08	102.17	103.12	0.98	28.34	30.244	29.29	1.07
2023	106.94	103.99	105.46	0.97	25.56	27.18	26.37	1.06
2024	104.53	101.81	103.17	0.97	27.08	29.14	28.11	1.08
2025	100.50	97.11	98.80	0.97	27.10	28.79	27.95	1.06

Figure 4.6 below illustrates fluctuations in the primary school AIR over time, with rates exceeding 100 percent in most years, reflecting the presence of over- and under-aged pupils. Figure 4.7 shows persistently low NIR values across the period, highlighting delayed entry into Grade 1 despite high apparent access.

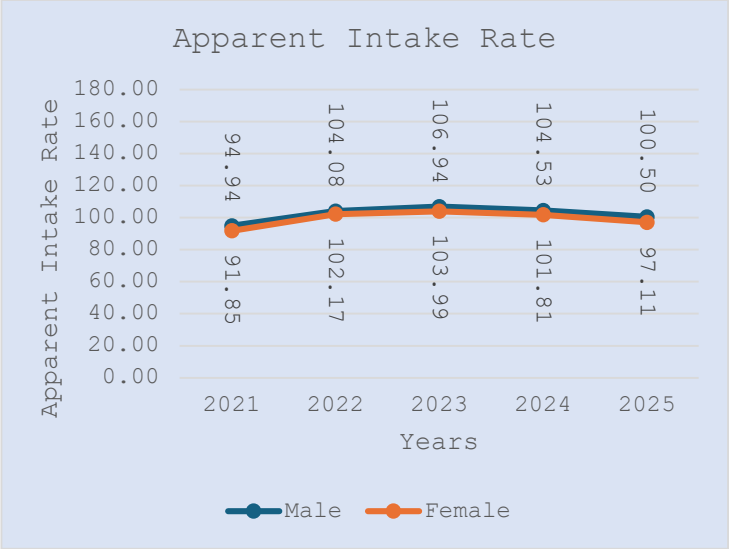


Figure 4.6: Primary School (Grade1) Apparent Intake Rate, Percentage, Zimbabwe 2021-2025

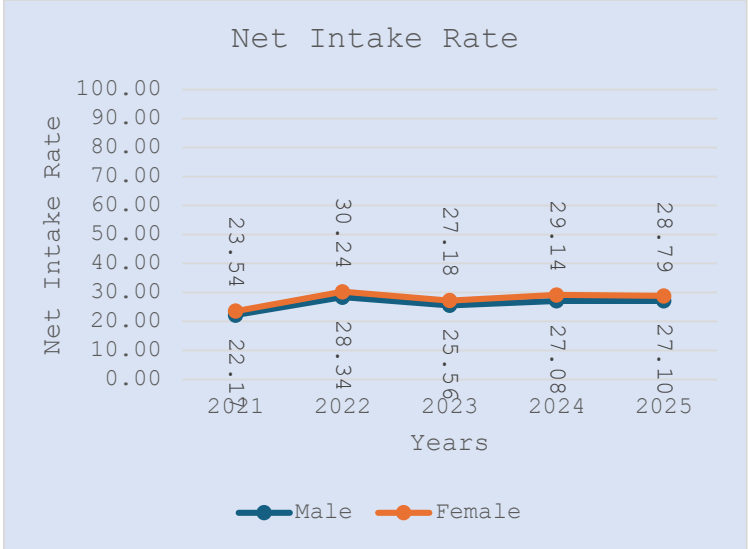


Figure 4.7: Primary School (Grade1) Net Intake Rate, Percentage, Zimbabwe 2021-2025

Table 4.8 shows marked provincial variation in primary school Apparent Intake Rates in 2025. Nationally, the AIR stood at 98.80 percent, with males recording a slightly higher rate than females, resulting in a Gender Parity Index of 0.97. AIRs exceeded 100 percent in several provinces, notably Bulawayo, Manicaland, Masvingo, Matabeleland South, Matabeleland North and Midlands, indicating substantial levels of over- and under-aged entry into Grade 1. In contrast, Harare recorded a markedly lower AIR, well below the national average, suggesting lower apparent access relative to the population of official entry-age children. Across all provinces, male AIRs were consistently higher than female AIRs, reflecting a male advantage in access to primary school entry.

Table 4.8: Primary School Apparent Intake Rate by Sex and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	New Entrants into Grade 1, No.			Population Aged 6, No.			Apparent Intake Rate, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	7 860	7 891	15 751	6 624	6 762	13 386	118.66	116.70	117.67	0.98
Harare	20 211	20 457	40 668	27 566	28 104	55 670	73.32	72.79	73.05	0.99
Manicaland	31 969	30 774	62 743	28 860	29 383	58 243	110.77	104.73	107.73	0.95
Mashonaland Central	19 900	19 440	39 340	19 776	19 715	39 491	100.63	98.61	99.62	0.98
Mashonaland East	22 143	21 574	43 717	24 053	24 348	48 401	92.06	88.61	90.32	0.96
Mashonaland West	23 285	22 884	46 169	25 887	26 251	52 138	89.95	87.17	88.55	0.97
Masvingo	27 356	26 340	53 696	23 074	23 222	46 296	118.56	113.43	115.98	0.96
Matabeleland North	12 593	12 096	24 689	11 200	11 416	22 616	112.44	105.96	109.17	0.94
Matabeleland South	11 645	11 179	22 824	10 054	9 964	20 018	115.82	112.19	114.02	0.97
Midlands	26 284	26 002	52 286	25 145	25 373	50 518	104.53	102.48	103.50	0.98
Grand Total	203 246	198 637	401 883	202 239	204 538	406 777	100.50	97.11	98.80	0.97

The Net Intake Rate (NIR) into Grade 1 at age 6 showed marked provincial and gender variation, with a national NIR of 27.95 percent in 2025, derived from 113,682 new entrants (54,802 males and 58,880 females) against a population of 406,777 children aged six years.

Bulawayo provinces recorded substantially higher intake rates, posting the highest NIR at 60.85 percent (59.47 percent for males and 62.20 percent for females), followed by Matabeleland North at 38.82 percent and Matabeleland South at 36.73 percent. In contrast, the lowest NIRs were observed in Mashonaland East (19.97 percent), Mashonaland Central (21.26 percent), Mashonaland West (20.85 percent) and Manicaland (20.91 percent), indicating limited age-appropriate entry despite relatively large eligible populations. Female NIRs exceeded male NIRs in all provinces, resulting in Gender Parity Index (GPI) values consistently above parity, ranging from 1.03 in Harare and Matabeleland South to a high of 1.14 in Mashonaland Central, with a national GPI of 1.06. This pattern indicated a systematic female advantage in age-appropriate Grade 1 entry across all provinces, even in areas where overall intake levels remained low. Table 4.9 shows the distribution.

Table 4.9: Primary School Net Intake Rates by Sex and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	New Entrants into Grade 1 aged 6 years, No.			Population Aged 6 years, No.			Net Intake Rate, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	3 939	4 206	8 145	6 624	6 762	13 386	59.47	62.20	60.85	1.05
Harare	8 102	8 476	16 578	27 566	28 104	55 670	29.39	30.16	29.78	1.03
Manicaland	5 904	6 274	12 178	28 860	29 383	58 243	20.46	21.35	20.91	1.04
Mashonaland Central	3 935	4 460	8 395	19 776	19 715	39 491	19.90	22.62	21.26	1.14
Mashonaland East	4 643	5 025	9 668	24 053	24 348	48 401	19.30	20.64	19.97	1.07
Mashonaland West	5 303	5 567	10 870	25 887	26 251	52 138	20.49	21.21	20.85	1.04
Masvingo	7 212	7 863	15 075	23 074	23 222	46 296	31.26	33.86	32.56	1.08
Matabeleland North	4 259	4 520	8 779	11 200	11 416	22 616	38.03	39.59	38.82	1.04
Matabeleland South	3 635	3 718	7 353	10 054	9 964	20 018	36.15	37.31	36.73	1.03
Midlands	7 870	8 771	16 641	25 145	25 373	50 518	31.30	34.57	32.94	1.10
Grand Total	54 802	58 880	113 682	202 239	204 538	406 777	27.10	28.79	27.95	1.06

Table 4.10 indicates that secondary school AIR fluctuated between 66.1 percent and 79.1 percent over the period, while NIR remained low, ranging from 21.0 percent to 24.6 percent. Females consistently recorded higher intake rates than males, particularly for NIR, resulting in GPIs well above parity.

Table 4.10: Apparent and Net Intake Rates Trends for Secondary School by Sex and GPI, Percentage, 2021-2025

	AIR, %			GPI	NIR, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
2021	68.56	71.77	70.17	1.05	18.37	23.62	21.01	1.29
2022	76.90	81.33	79.12	1.06	21.63	27.54	24.59	1.27
2023	71.99	77.78	74.89	1.08	19.09	25.04	22.07	1.31
2024	63.48	68.77	66.13	1.08	19.65	24.88	22.28	1.27
2025	66.85	72.02	69.44	1.08	19.83	25.38	22.61	1.28

Figure 4.8 illustrates fluctuations in secondary school AIR between 2021 and 2025. The increase observed between 2021 and 2022 was followed by a general decline through to 2025, indicating reduced access to Form 1 relative to the population aged 13 years. Figure 4.9 shows that secondary school NIR remained low throughout the period, with only modest

improvements between 2021 and 2025. The consistently higher female NIR highlights stronger age-appropriate entry among females compared to males.

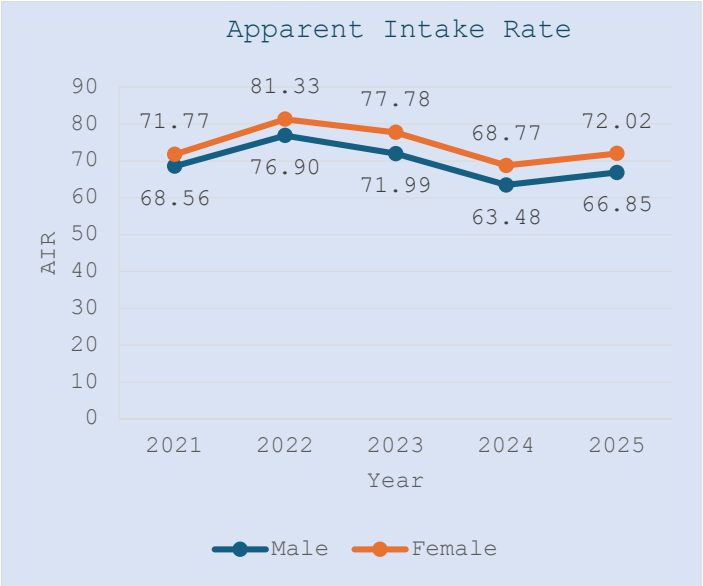


Figure 4.8: Secondary School (Form 1) Apparent Intake Rate, Percentage, Zimbabwe 2021-2025

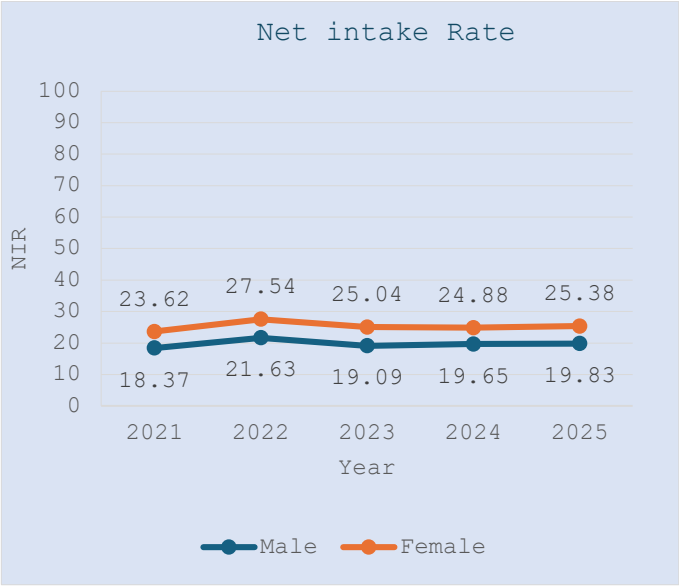


Figure 4.9: Secondary School (Form 1) Net Intake Rate, Percentage, Zimbabwe 2021-2025

Table 4.11 shows wide provincial disparities in secondary school AIR in 2025. Nationally, the AIR stood at 69.4 percent, with females recording a higher rate (72.0 percent) than males (66.9 percent). Harare recorded the lowest AIR at 59.4 percent, while Masvingo (75.7 percent) and Matabeleland South (76.5 percent) recorded some of the highest rates. GPIs exceeded parity in all provinces, indicating consistently higher female participation in Form 1 entry across the country.

Table 4.11: Secondary School Apparent Intake Rate by Sex and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	New Entrants into Form 1, No.			Population Aged 13, No.			AIR, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Males	Females	Total	
Bulawayo	6 213	6 867	13 080	7 579	8 179	15 758	81.98	83.96	83.01	1.02
Harare	15 631	17 117	32 748	26 976	28 201	55 177	57.94	60.70	59.35	1.05
Manicaland	22 308	23 256	45 564	32 507	32 317	64 824	68.63	71.96	70.29	1.05
Mashonaland Central	11 659	12 817	24 476	19 393	19 227	38 620	60.12	66.66	63.38	1.11
Mashonaland East	16 767	17 196	33 963	24 658	24 539	49 197	68.00	70.08	69.03	1.03
Mashonaland West	16 951	17 574	34 525	25 546	25 470	51 016	66.35	69.00	67.67	1.04
Masvingo	19 298	21 004	40 302	26 574	26 640	53 214	72.62	78.84	75.74	1.09
Matabeleland North	7 350	9 163	16 513	12 925	12 626	25 551	56.87	72.57	64.63	1.28
Matabeleland South	7 849	9 004	16 853	11 060	10 975	22 035	70.97	82.04	76.48	1.16
Midlands	18 558	20 363	38 921	26 081	26 144	52 225	71.16	77.89	74.53	1.09
Grand Total	142 584	154 361	296 945	213 299	214 318	427 617	66.85	72.02	69.44	1.08

Table 4.12 shows that secondary school NIR remained low across all provinces in 2025, with a national average of 22.6 percent. Provincial NIRs ranged from as low as 17.5 percent in

Manicaland to 40.5 percent in Bulawayo. Females recorded higher NIRs than males in all provinces, resulting in GPIs ranging from 1.03 to 1.50, highlighting significant gender differences in age-appropriate entry into Form 1.

Table 4.12: Secondary School Net Intake Rates by Sex and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	New Entrants into Form 1 Aged 13, No.			Population Aged 13, No.			NIR, %			GPI
	M	F	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	
Bulawayo	2 867	3 521	6 388	7 579	8 179	15 758	37.83	43.05	40.54	1.14
Harare	6 477	7 691	14 168	26 976	28 201	55 177	24.01	27.27	25.68	1.14
Manicaland	5 003	6 346	11 349	32 507	32 317	64 824	15.39	19.64	17.51	1.28
Mashonaland Central	2 971	3 863	6 834	19 393	19 227	38 620	15.32	20.09	17.70	1.31
Mashonaland East	4 609	5 765	10 374	24 658	24 539	49 197	18.69	23.49	21.09	1.26
Mashonaland West	4 607	5 836	10 443	25 546	25 470	51 016	18.03	22.91	20.47	1.27
Masvingo	5 243	7 012	12 255	26 574	26 640	53 214	19.73	26.32	23.03	1.33
Matabeleland North	2 594	3 800	6 394	12 925	12 626	25 551	20.07	30.10	25.02	1.50
Matabeleland South	2 744	3 638	6 382	11 060	10 975	22 035	24.81	33.15	28.96	1.34
Midlands	5 176	6 927	12 103	26 081	26 144	52 225	19.85	26.50	23.17	1.34
Grand Total	42 291	54 399	96 690	213 299	214 318	427 617	19.83	25.38	22.61	1.28

4.4 Conclusion

Chapter 4 demonstrated that access to education at both primary and secondary entry points in Zimbabwe remained constrained by declining enrolment trends, delayed school entry, and persistent spatial inequalities. New entrants into Grade 1 declined by 6.6 percent between 2021 and 2025, falling from 430,378 to 401,883 pupils, despite sustained gender parity with females consistently accounting for about 49–50 percent of enrolment. Although the Apparent Intake Rate (AIR) remained high at 98.8 percent in 2025, the Net Intake Rate (NIR) stood at only 27.95 percent, indicating that fewer than one in three children entered Grade 1 at the official age of six. Delayed entry was particularly pronounced in rural areas, which accounted for 72.3 percent of all Grade 1 new entrants and more than 85 percent of over-aged entrants, highlighting entrenched rural disadvantages in timely school entry.

At secondary level, Form 1 enrolment increased modestly between 2021 and 2024 before declining to 296,945 in 2025, with females consistently outnumbering males and accounting for approximately 52 percent of new entrants. While the secondary AIR stood at 69.4 percent nationally, the NIR remained low at 22.6 percent, confirming that age-appropriate transition into secondary education was limited. Females recorded higher intake rates than males across all provinces, with a national NIR GPI of 1.28, indicating a strong female advantage in timely transition to Form 1. Significant provincial disparities were evident at both levels, with Bulawayo and Matabeleland provinces recording higher intake rates, while Mashonaland provinces and Manicaland lagged behind. Overall, the chapter underscored the need for targeted policy interventions to address delayed entry, improve age-appropriate transition, and reduce persistent rural and provincial inequalities in access to education.

CHAPTER 5 : Participation in the Education System

The chapter explores participation levels in education across various stages, from Early Childhood Development (ECD), Infant School, Junior School, Primary School, and Secondary School. Two important metrics used to assess participation in the education system are the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) and the Net Enrolment Ratio (NER). The GER represents the total number of pupils enrolled at a specific educational level, irrespective of their age, expressed as a percentage of the eligible population for that level in a given academic year. In contrast, the NER focuses on the enrolment of children who are of the official age for that level of education.

The GER is a key indicator of overall participation in education, reflecting the system's ability to enrol pupils from all age groups. A higher GER suggests greater participation, even if it includes pupils who are either younger or older than the officially recognised age group. A GER exceeding 100 percent indicates that there are pupils outside the typical age group enrolled in the system. Meanwhile, the NER assesses how effectively the education system enrols pupils who fall within the official age bracket for a specific educational level.

5.1 ECD (ECD A and ECD B) Participation

Table 5.1 shows trends in Early Childhood Development (ECD) participation as measured by the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) and Gender Parity Index (GPI) in Zimbabwe between 2021 and 2025. The GER increased sharply from 45.27 percent in 2021 to a peak of 84.07 percent in 2023, reflecting a substantial expansion in ECD enrolment over the period, before declining to 78.88 percent in 2025. Throughout the five years, male GERs were consistently slightly higher than female GERs, although gender disparities remained minimal, with the GER GPI stable at 0.98 in all years. The NER followed a similar pattern, rising from 24.68 percent in 2021 to 44.15 percent in 2022, before moderating to 42.70 percent in 2023 and stabilising around 43 percent in 2024 and 2025. In 2025, the NER stood at 43.32 percent, indicating that fewer than half of children of official ECD age were enrolled at the appropriate level. Female NERs were marginally higher than male NERs across all years, resulting in NER GPIs ranging from 1.00 to 1.02, and confirming near-perfect gender parity in access to ECD. Figures 5.1 and 5.2 show the graphical depiction of the gross and net enrolment ratios.

Table 5.1: ECD Gross Enrolment Ratio, Net Enrolment Ratio and GPI, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

Year	Gross Enrolment Rate, %		GER	GPI	Net Enrolment Rate, %		NER	GPI
	Male	Female			Male	Female		
2021	45.69	44.85	45.27	0.98	24.56	24.80	24.68	1.01
2022	82.45	81.16	81.80	0.98	44.02	44.29	44.15	1.01
2023	84.9	83.24	84.07	0.98	42.35	43.06	42.7	1.02
2024	80.88	78.97	79.92	0.98	42.85	42.96	42.91	1.00
2025	79.78	77.98	78.88	0.98	43.23	43.42	43.32	1.00

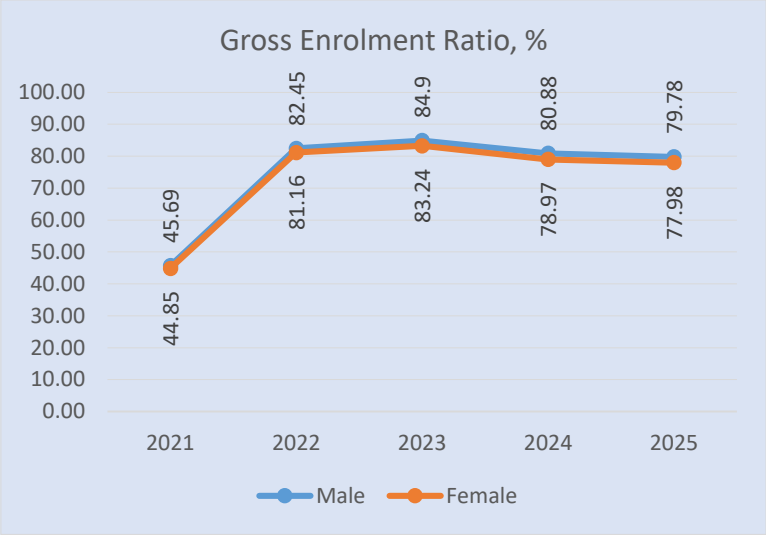


Figure 5.1: ECD Gross Enrolment Ratio, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

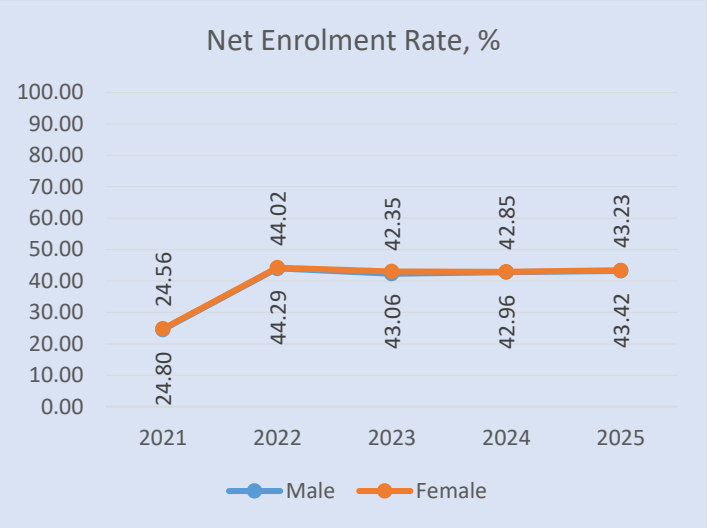


Figure 5.2: ECD Net Enrolment Ratio, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

Table 5.2 presents the projected population of children aged 4–5 years alongside ECD enrolment by province and sex in Zimbabwe in 2025, highlighting substantial spatial differences in access and participation. Nationally, the projected ECD school-age population (4–5 years) totalled 813,041 children, comprising 405,493 males and 407,548 females, indicating near gender balance. The total ECD enrolment across all ages stood at 641,295 pupils (323,488 males and 317,807 females), while enrolment of children within the official ECD age group (4–5 years) reached 352,237 pupils, representing approximately 43.3 percent of the age-eligible population. Provinces with the largest 4–5-year-old populations were Manicaland (114,566), Harare (113,528) and Mashonaland West (106,946), while Matabeleland South (39,506) and Matabeleland North (43,698) recorded the smallest cohorts. In terms of age-appropriate enrolment, Masvingo (49,084) enrolled the highest number of 4–5-year-olds followed closely by Midlands (48,605), and Manicaland (48,119), whereas Bulawayo recorded the lowest (20,617). In several provinces, including Masvingo and Bulawayo, the total ECD enrolment slightly exceeded the projected 4–5 year population, suggesting enrolment of under-age or over-age children. Across all provinces, male and female enrolment numbers were closely matched, confirming minimal gender disparities in both population structure and ECD participation.

Table 5.2: ECD School Age Population Projections and Enrolment by Province and Sex, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Provinces	Population 4-5 years, No.			Total Enrolment, No.			Enrolment 4-5 years, No.		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bulawayo	13 081	13 214	26 295	13 175	13 145	26 320	10 222	10 395	20 617
Harare	56 463	57 065	113 528	24 608	24 211	48 819	15 627	15 595	31 222
Manicaland	56 944	57 622	114 566	48 773	48 138	96 911	23 795	24 324	48 119
Mashonaland Central	40 472	40 125	80 597	33 648	32 917	66 565	16 187	16 503	32 690
Mashonaland East	47 998	48 489	96 487	35 925	34 493	70 418	17 756	17 533	35 289
Mashonaland West	53 330	53 616	106 946	35 311	35 022	70 333	17 837	18 242	36 079
Masvingo	44 618	44 520	89 138	45 175	44 344	89 519	24 457	24 627	49 084
Matabeleland North	21 691	22 007	43 698	21 550	21 475	43 025	12 560	12 894	25 454
Matabeleland South	19 909	19 597	39 506	21 212	21 009	42 221	12 444	12 634	25 078
Midlands	50 987	51 293	102 280	44 111	43 053	87 164	24 405	24 200	48 605
Total	405 493	407 548	813 041	323 488	317 807	641 295	175 290	176 947	352 237

Table 5.3 presents provincial disparities in Early Childhood Development (ECD) participation in Zimbabwe in 2025 using Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) and Gender Parity Index (GPI). Nationally, the ECD GER stood at 78.88 percent, with males at 79.78 percent and females at 77.98 percent, yielding a GPI of 0.98 and indicating near gender parity with a slight male advantage. The national NER was substantially lower at 43.32 percent (43.23 percent for males and 43.42 percent for females), with a GPI of 1.00, confirming equal participation of males and females within the official ECD age group. Provincially, GER exceeded 100 percent in Matabeleland South (106.87%), Masvingo (100.43%) and Bulawayo (100.10%), signalling significant enrolment of over-age and under-age children in these provinces. In contrast, Harare recorded the lowest GER at 43.00 percent, followed by Mashonaland West (65.76%) and Mashonaland East (72.98%), reflecting comparatively limited ECD coverage. NER patterns similarly revealed wide variation, ranging from a low of 27.50 percent in Harare to a high of 63.48 percent in Matabeleland South, with Matabeleland North (58.25%) and Masvingo (55.07%) also demonstrating relatively strong age-appropriate participation. Gender parity was largely maintained across provinces, with GPI values clustering close to 1.00 for both GER and NER, although slight female advantages in NER were observed in provinces such as Mashonaland Central (GPI 1.03) and Matabeleland South (GPI 1.03).

Table 5.3: ECD Gross Enrolment Ratio, Net Enrolment Ratio by Sex, GPI and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	GER, %			GPI	NER, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	100.72	99.48	100.10	0.99	78.14	78.67	78.41	1.01
Harare	43.58	42.43	43.00	0.97	27.68	27.33	27.50	0.99
Manicaland	85.65	83.54	84.59	0.98	41.79	42.21	42.00	1.01
Mashonaland Central	83.14	82.04	82.59	0.99	40.00	41.13	40.56	1.03
Mashonaland East	74.85	71.14	72.98	0.95	36.99	36.16	36.57	0.98
Mashonaland West	66.21	65.32	65.76	0.99	33.45	34.02	33.74	1.02
Masvingo	101.25	99.60	100.43	0.98	54.81	55.32	55.07	1.01
Matabeleland North	99.35	97.58	98.46	0.98	57.90	58.59	58.25	1.01
Matabeleland South	106.54	107.21	106.87	1.01	62.50	64.47	63.48	1.03
Midlands	86.51	83.94	85.22	0.97	47.87	47.18	47.52	0.99
Grand Total	79.78	77.98	78.88	0.98	43.23	43.42	43.32	1.00

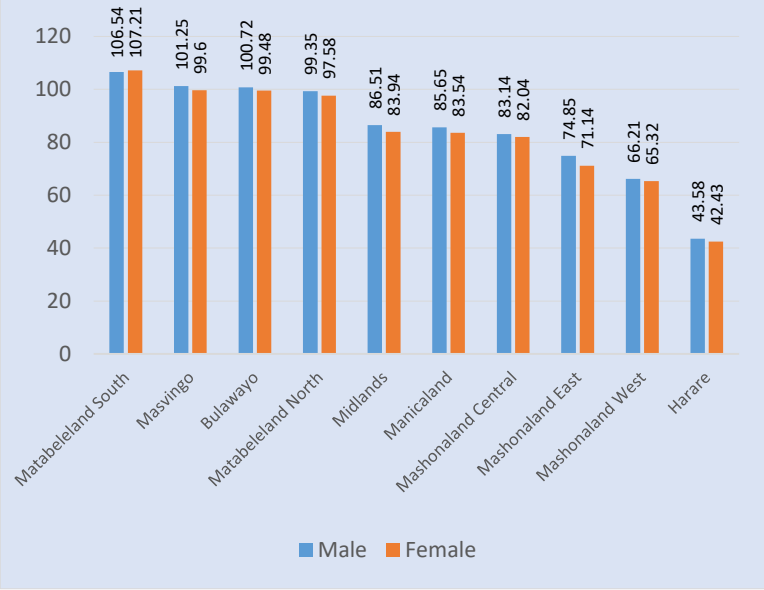


Figure 5.3: ECD Gross Enrolment Ratio by Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

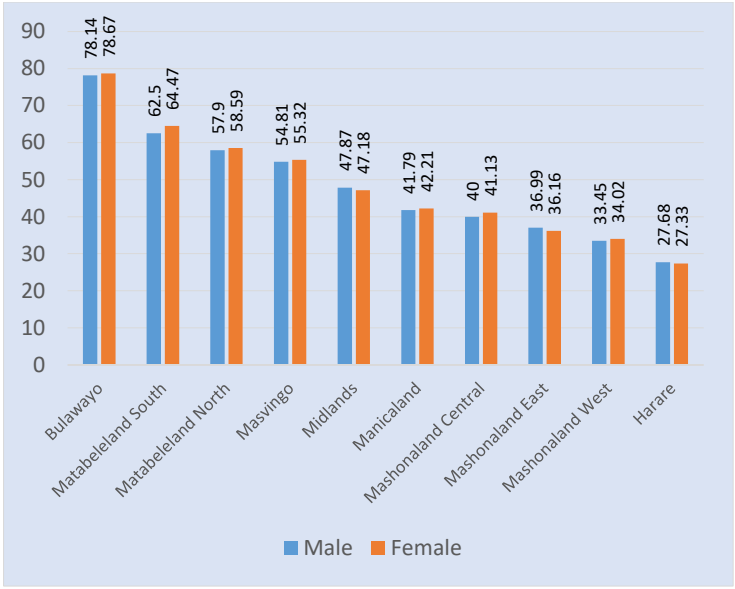


Figure 5.4: ECD Net Enrolment Ratio by Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Nationally, the projected pupil population of 4-year-olds was 407,510 (203,212 males; 204,298 females). Total ECD A enrolment (all ages in ECD A) was 309,056 pupils (155,636 males; 153,420 females), while age-appropriate enrolment of 4-year-olds was 101,772 (49,923 males; 51,849 females), about one quarter of the 4-year-old pupil population, with a slight female advantage in age-appropriate participation.

Across provinces, Harare (57,636) and Manicaland (57,154) had the largest 4-year-old pupil populations, followed by Mashonaland West (54,204) and Midlands (51,295), while Matabeleland South (19,584), Matabeleland North (21,471), and Bulawayo (13,141) had the smallest numbers. Total ECD A enrolment was highest in Manicaland (46,241), Masvingo

(43,101), Midlands (42,586), and lowest in Bulawayo (12,637) and Harare (21,163). For age-appropriate 4-year-old enrolment, the largest numbers were recorded in Midlands (14,528), Manicaland (13,532) and Masvingo (13,165), while Bulawayo (8,199), Matabeleland South (8,298) and Matabeleland North (8,303) recorded the smallest counts. Table 5.4 presents ECD A (4-year-olds) school-age population projections, actual ECD A enrolments and the number of enrolled 4-year-olds.

Table 5.4: ECD A School Age Population Projections and Enrolments by Sex and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Population 4 years, No.			Total Enrolment, No.			Enrolment 4 years, No.		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bulawayo	6 537	6 604	13 141	6 307	6 330	12 637	4 001	4 198	8 199
Harare	28 672	28 964	57 636	10 697	10 466	21 163	4 499	4 544	9 043
Manicaland	28 401	28 753	57 154	23 078	23 163	46 241	6 591	6 941	13 532
Mashonaland Central	20 441	20 304	40 745	16 556	16 134	32 690	4 350	4 509	8 859
Mashonaland East	24 048	24 323	48 371	17 504	16 713	34 217	4 356	4 361	8 717
Mashonaland West	27 045	27 159	54 204	16 980	16 833	33 813	4 395	4 733	9 128
Masvingo	21 974	21 935	43 909	21 674	21 427	43 101	6 425	6 740	13 165
Matabeleland North	10 668	10 803	21 471	10 621	10 825	21 446	3 999	4 304	8 303
Matabeleland South	9 860	9 724	19 584	10 597	10 565	21 162	4 078	4 220	8 298
Midlands	25 566	25 729	51 295	21 622	20 964	42 586	7 229	7 299	14 528
Total	203 212	204 298	407 510	155 636	153 420	309 056	49 923	51 849	101 772

Table 5.5 illustrates provincial patterns in Early Childhood Development A (ECD A) participation in Zimbabwe in 2025 using Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) and Gender Parity Index (GPI). Nationally, the ECD A GER stood at 75.84 percent, with males recording a slightly higher rate (76.59%) than females (75.10%), resulting in a GPI of 0.98 and indicating near gender parity. The national NER was much lower at 24.97 percent, comprising 24.57 percent for males and 25.38 percent for females, with a GPI of 1.03, suggesting a slight female advantage in age-appropriate enrolment. Provincially, GER exceeded 100 percent in Matabeleland South (108.06%) and was close to full coverage in Matabeleland North (99.88%) and Masvingo (98.16%), pointing to the inclusion of over-age and under-age pupils in ECD A. In contrast, Harare recorded the lowest GER at 36.72 percent, followed by Mashonaland West (62.38%) and Mashonaland East (70.74%), reflecting relatively limited participation. NER values displayed even wider disparities, ranging from a low of 15.69 percent in Harare to a high of 62.39% in Bulawayo, 42.37 percent in Matabeleland South, with Matabeleland North (38.67%) and Masvingo (29.98%) also recording comparatively strong age-appropriate enrolment. Gender parity in NER generally favoured females, particularly in Mashonaland West (GPI 1.07), Matabeleland North (1.06) and Masvingo (1.05), while Mashonaland East recorded near parity (GPI 0.99).

Table 5.5: ECD A Gross Enrolment Ratio, Net Enrolment Ratio by Sex, GPIs and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	GER, %			GPI	NER, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	96.48	95.85	96.16	0.99	61.21	63.57	62.39	1.04
Harare	37.31	36.13	36.72	0.97	15.69	15.69	15.69	1.00
Manicaland	81.26	80.56	80.91	0.99	23.21	24.14	23.68	1.04
Mashonaland Central	80.99	79.46	80.23	0.98	21.28	22.21	21.74	1.04
Mashonaland East	72.79	68.71	70.74	0.94	18.11	17.93	18.02	0.99
Mashonaland West	62.78	61.98	62.38	0.99	16.25	17.43	16.84	1.07
Masvingo	98.63	97.68	98.16	0.99	29.24	30.73	29.98	1.05
Matabeleland North	99.56	100.20	99.88	1.01	37.49	39.84	38.67	1.06
Matabeleland South	107.47	108.65	108.06	1.01	41.36	43.40	42.37	1.05
Midlands	84.57	81.48	83.02	0.96	28.28	28.37	28.32	1.00
Grand Total	76.59	75.10	75.84	0.98	24.57	25.38	24.97	1.03

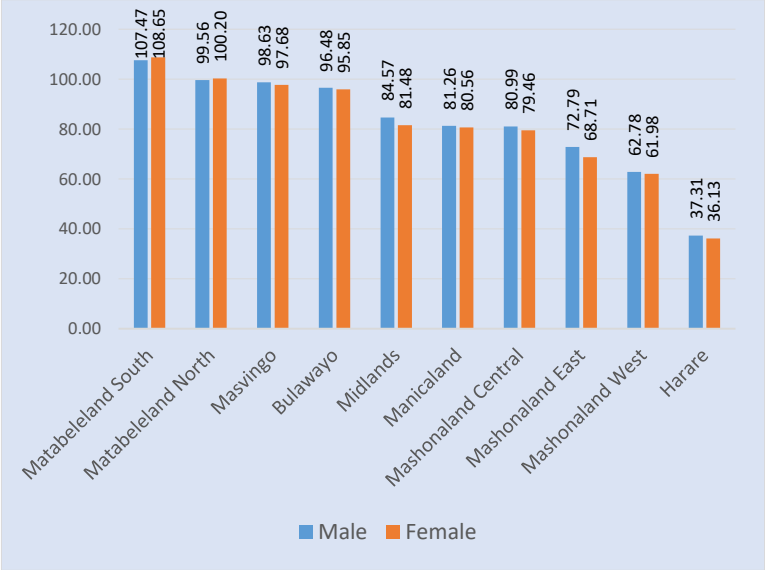


Figure 5.5: ECD A Gross Enrolment Ratio by Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

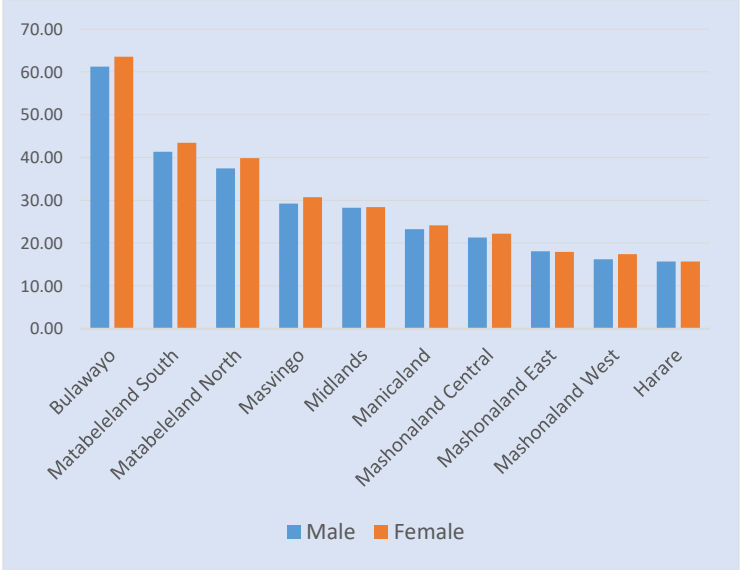


Figure 5.6: ECD A Net Enrolment Ratio by Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Table 5.6 shows that across the provinces, the projected national pupil population of 5-year-olds was 405,531 (202,281 males and 203,250 females). Actual ECD B enrolment across all ages totalled 332,239 pupils, while the number of correctly aged 5-year-olds enrolled was 102,868 (50,819 males and 52,049 females). Provinces such as Harare (55,892), Manicaland (57,412), and Mashonaland West (52,742) had the largest 5-year-old populations, while smaller provinces such as Matabeleland South (19,922) and Matabeleland North (22,227) had lower ECD B population counts.

Table 5.6: ECD B School Age Population Projections and Enrolments by Sex and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Provinces	Population 5 years, No.			Total Enrolment, No.			Enrolment 5 years, No.		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bulawayo	6 544	6 610	13 154	6 868	6 815	13 683	4 355	4 440	8 795
Harare	27 791	28 101	55 892	13 911	13 745	27 656	6 052	6 150	12 202
Manicaland	28 543	28 869	57 412	25 695	24 975	50 670	5 637	5 669	11 306
Mashonaland Central	20 031	19 821	39 852	17 092	16 783	33 875	3 953	4 270	8 223
Mashonaland East	23 950	24 166	48 116	18 421	17 780	36 201	4 392	4 573	8 965
Mashonaland West	26 285	26 457	52 742	18 331	18 189	36 520	4 657	4 772	9 429
Masvingo	22 644	22 585	45 229	23 501	22 917	46 418	7 137	7 164	14 301
Matabeleland North	11 023	11 204	22 227	10 929	10 650	21 579	3 935	3 990	7 925
Matabeleland South	10 049	9 873	19 922	10 615	10 444	21 059	3 669	3 836	7 505
Midlands	25 421	25 564	50 985	22 489	22 089	44 578	7 032	7 185	14 217
Total	202 281	203 250	405 531	167 852	164 387	332 239	50 819	52 049	102 868

Table 5.7 shows that participation in ECD B in Zimbabwe in 2025 remained moderate, with a national Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 81.93 percent. Male enrolment (82.98%) was slightly higher than female enrolment (80.88%), resulting in a GPI of 0.97. The national Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) was much lower at 25.37 percent, comprising 25.12 percent for males and 25.61 percent for females, and a GPI of 1.02, indicating near gender parity in age-appropriate enrolment.

Substantial provincial variation was evident. GER exceeded 100 percent in Matabeleland South (105.71%), Bulawayo (104.02%) and Masvingo (102.63%), while the lowest GER was recorded in Harare (49.48%). Net enrolment ranged from below 20 percent in Mashonaland West (17.88%) and Mashonaland East (18.63%) to over 35 percent in Matabeleland South (37.67%) and Matabeleland North (35.65%). Gender parity was broadly balanced across provinces, with slight female advantages in NER in provinces such as Mashonaland Central (GPI 1.09) and Matabeleland South (1.06).

Table 5.7: ECD B Gross Enrolment Ratio, Net Enrolment Ratio by Sex, GPIs and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	GER, %			GPI	NER, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	104.95	103.10	104.02	0.98	66.55	67.17	66.86	1.01
Harare	50.06	48.91	49.48	0.98	21.78	21.89	21.83	1.00
Manicaland	90.02	86.51	88.26	0.96	19.75	19.64	19.69	0.99
Mashonaland Central	85.33	84.67	85.00	0.99	19.73	21.54	20.63	1.09
Mashonaland East	76.91	73.57	75.24	0.96	18.34	18.92	18.63	1.03
Mashonaland West	69.74	68.75	69.24	0.99	17.72	18.04	17.88	1.02
Masvingo	103.78	101.47	102.63	0.98	31.52	31.72	31.62	1.01
Matabeleland North	99.15	95.06	97.08	0.96	35.70	35.61	35.65	1.00
Matabeleland South	105.63	105.78	105.71	1.00	36.51	38.85	37.67	1.06
Midlands	88.47	86.41	87.43	0.98	27.66	28.11	27.88	1.02
Grand Total	82.98	80.88	81.93	0.97	25.12	25.61	25.37	1.02

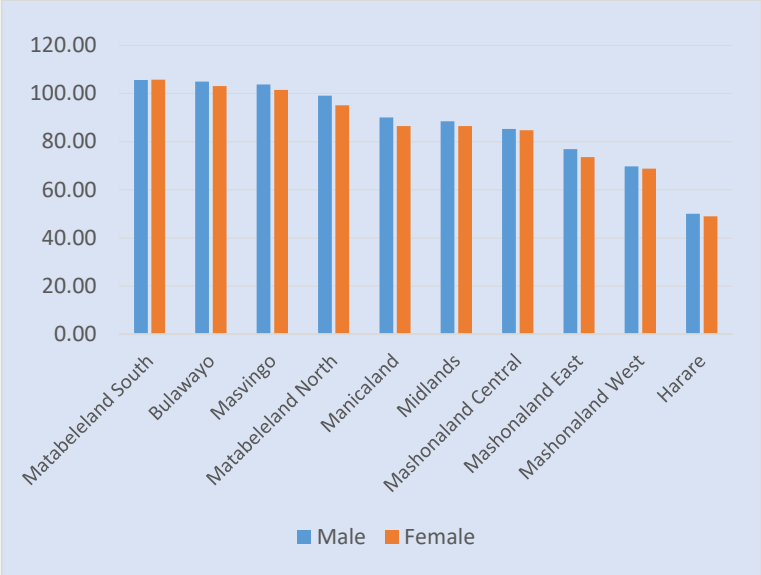


Figure 5.7: ECD B Gross Enrolment Ratio by Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

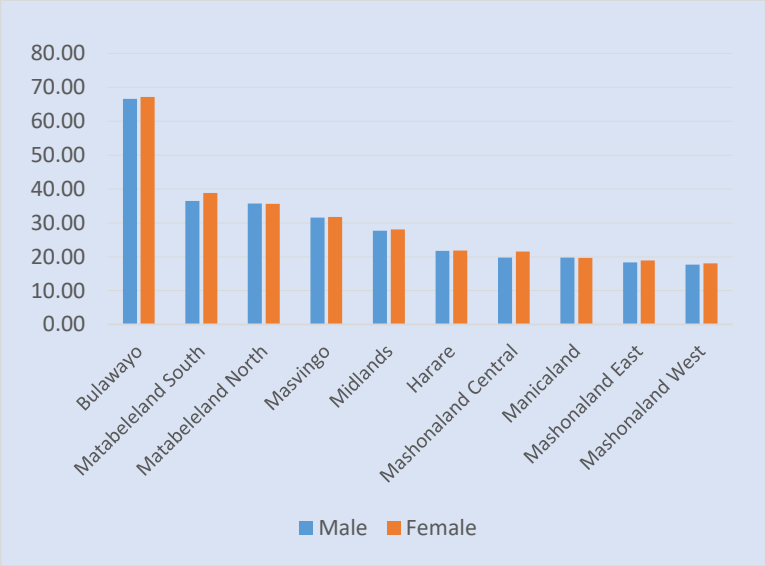


Figure 5.8: ECD B Net Enrolment Ratio by Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Table 5.8 presents provincial comparisons of projected 4 to 7-year-old populations for 2025 alongside actual infant school enrolments and the number of enrolled children who fell within the official 4–7-year-old age bracket. Nationally, the projected infant school-age population stood at 1,617,796 children (806,870 males and 810,926 females). Total enrolment across infant grades was 1,454,714 pupils, while the number of children enrolled at the correct age (4–7 years) was 1,044,221, representing 64.55 percent of the eligible population.

Across the provinces, Harare, Manicaland, and Mashonaland West had the largest 4–7-year populations, while Matabeleland South and Matabeleland North record the smallest. The actual enrolments generally mirrored population sizes, with provinces like Manicaland (223,731 total infant enrolment) and Mashonaland West (164,462) showing high participation.

Table 5.8: Infant School Age Population Projections and Enrolments by Sex and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Provinces	Population 4-7 years, No.			Total Enrolment, No.			Enrolment 4-7 years, No.		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bulawayo	26 333	26 701	53 034	28 953	28 799	57 752	23 583	24 103	47 686
Harare	111 266	112 560	223 826	66 596	66 646	133 242	50 377	51 388	101 765
Manicaland	114 536	115 876	230 412	113 141	110 590	223 731	75 664	76 154	151 818
Mashonaland Central	79 486	78 890	158 376	73 942	71 985	145 927	49 276	49 657	98 933
Mashonaland East	95 837	96 528	192 365	81 291	78 556	159 847	55 461	55 266	110 727
Mashonaland West	104 413	105 142	209 555	82 875	81 587	164 462	56 460	57 464	113 924
Masvingo	90 686	90 654	181 340	100 453	97 410	197 863	70 666	71 163	141 829
Matabeleland North	43 989	44 486	88 475	46 685	45 658	92 343	34 899	35 220	70 119
Matabeleland South	39 782	39 194	78 976	44 504	43 138	87 642	33 211	33 259	66 470
Midlands	100 542	100 895	201 437	96 888	95 017	191 905	70 103	70 847	140 950
Total	806 870	810 926	1 617 796	735 328	719 386	1 454 714	519 700	524 521	1 044 221

Table 5.9 shows that Infant School Net Enrolment Ratios were substantially lower than Gross Enrolment Ratios across all provinces, indicating significant age-grade distortion at this level. Provincial differences were observed, with some provinces recording relatively higher age-appropriate participation. Female NERs exceeded male NERs in most provinces, resulting in GPIs above parity.

Table 5.9: Infant Gross Enrolment Ratio, Net Enrolment Ratio by Sex and GPIs by Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	GER, %			GPI	NER, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	109.95	107.86	108.90	0.98	89.56	90.27	89.92	1.01
Harare	59.85	59.21	59.53	0.99	45.28	45.65	45.47	1.01
Manicaland	98.78	95.44	97.10	0.97	66.06	65.72	65.89	0.99
Mashonaland Central	93.03	91.25	92.14	0.98	61.99	62.94	62.47	1.02
Mashonaland East	84.82	81.38	83.10	0.96	57.87	57.25	57.56	0.99
Mashonaland West	79.37	77.60	78.48	0.98	54.07	54.65	54.36	1.01
Masvingo	110.77	107.45	109.11	0.97	77.92	78.50	78.21	1.01
Matabeleland North	106.13	102.63	104.37	0.97	79.34	79.17	79.25	1.00
Matabeleland South	111.87	110.06	110.97	0.98	83.48	84.86	84.16	1.02
Midlands	96.37	94.17	95.27	0.98	69.73	70.22	69.97	1.01
Grand Total	91.13	88.71	89.92	0.97	64.41	64.68	64.55	1.00

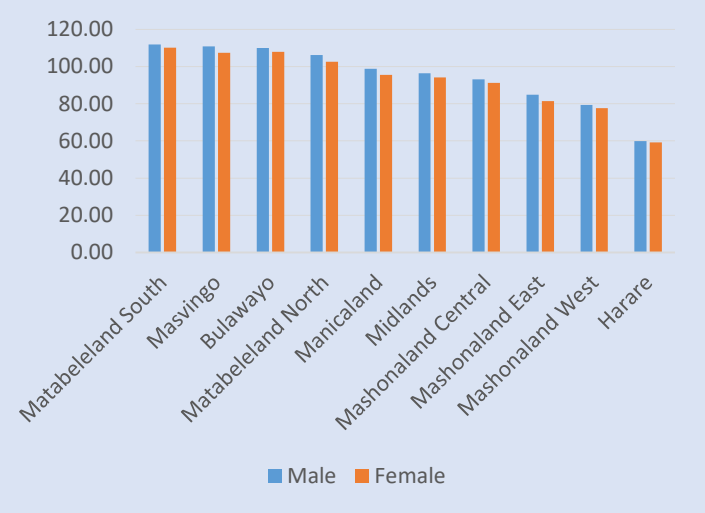


Figure 5.9: Infant Gross Enrolment Ratio by Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

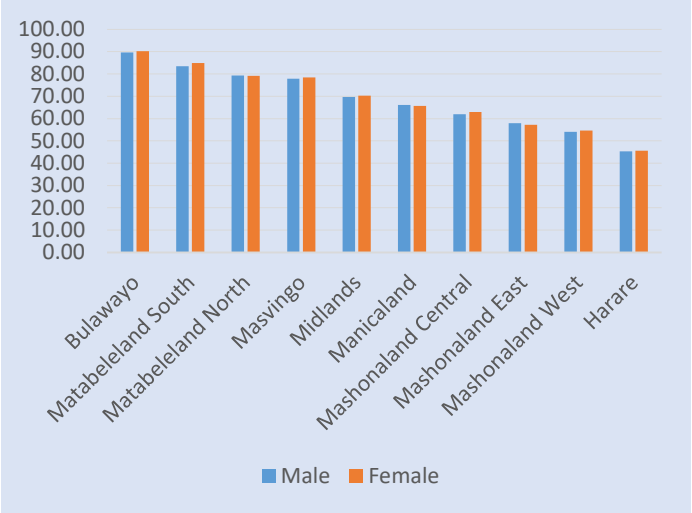


Figure 5.10: Infant Net Enrolment Ratio by Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Table 5.10 presents provincial data on the projected junior school-age population (8–12 years), alongside actual junior school enrolments and the number of pupils within the correct age range who are enrolled. Nationally, the projected population of 8–12-year-olds stood at 2,058,999 (1,026,263 males and 1,032,736 females). Total junior enrolment was 2,048,176 pupils, while the number of correctly aged (8–12 years) pupils enrolled was 1,628,003, reflecting strong age-appropriate participation.

Provincial patterns closely followed population size, with Manicaland (306,626), Harare (279,459) and Mashonaland West (253,297) having the largest junior-age populations, and Matabeleland South (101,284) and Bulawayo (72,964) recording the smallest. In nearly all provinces, total enrolments closely matched or slightly exceeded projected population figures, suggesting broad access to junior education. Age-appropriate enrolment ranged from 74,120 in Bulawayo to 239,443 in Manicaland, indicating strong alignment between projections and actual participation.

Table 5.10: Junior School Age Population Projections and Enrolments by Sex and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Provinces	Population 8-12 years, No.			Total Enrolment, No.			Enrolment 8-12 years, No.		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bulawayo	35 621	37 343	72 964	42 582	44 068	86 650	36 060	38 060	74 120
Harare	137 982	141 477	279 459	120 302	122 358	242 660	102 747	106 589	209 336
Manicaland	152 622	154 004	306 626	155 328	155 817	311 145	117 476	121 967	239 443
Mashonaland Central	96 080	96 120	192 200	96 642	96 439	193 081	71 945	74 825	146 770
Mashonaland East	121 489	121 058	242 547	115 060	113 853	228 913	88 163	90 676	178 839
Mashonaland West	125 992	127 305	253 297	121 973	122 850	244 823	92 267	96 670	188 937
Masvingo	123 385	123 839	247 224	129 135	129 013	258 148	99 610	103 351	202 961
Matabeleland North	58 695	57 891	116 586	58 071	58 566	116 637	47 246	48 863	96 109
Matabeleland South	50 917	50 367	101 284	54 942	54 286	109 228	43 028	43 884	86 912
Midlands	123 480	123 332	246 812	127 875	129 016	256 891	100 053	104 523	204 576
Total	1 026 263	1 032 736	2 058 999	1 021 910	1 026 266	2 048 176	798 595	829 408	1 628 003

Table 5.11 indicates that junior-level participation in Zimbabwe in 2025 was close to universal, with a national Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 99.47 percent. Male and female GERs were almost identical at 99.58 percent and 99.37 percent, respectively, yielding perfect gender parity (GPI = 1.00). The Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) stood at 79.07 percent nationally, with females (80.31%) slightly outperforming males (77.82%), reflected in a GPI of 1.03, suggesting a modest female advantage in age-appropriate enrolment.

Provincial disparities were evident despite overall high participation. GERs exceeded 100 percent in Bulawayo (118.76%), Matabeleland South (107.84%), Masvingo (104.42%) and Midlands (104.08%), while the lowest GER was recorded in Harare (86.83%). Net enrolment was highest in Bulawayo at 101.58 percent followed by Matabeleland South at 85.81 percent, compared to lower levels in Mashonaland East (73.73%) and Harare (74.91%). Gender parity was broadly maintained across provinces, with GPIs clustering around 0.99 and 1.05, though females consistently recorded higher NERs, particularly in Matabeleland North (GPI 1.05) and Midlands (1.05).

Table 5.11: Junior Gross Enrolment Ratio, Net Enrolment Ratio by Sex and GPIs by Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	GER, %			GPI	NER, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	119.54	118.01	118.76	0.99	101.23	101.92	101.58	1.01
Harare	87.19	86.49	86.83	0.99	74.46	75.34	74.91	1.01
Manicaland	101.77	101.18	101.47	0.99	76.97	79.20	78.09	1.03
Mashonaland Central	100.58	100.33	100.46	1.00	74.88	77.85	76.36	1.04
Mashonaland East	94.71	94.05	94.38	0.99	72.57	74.90	73.73	1.03
Mashonaland West	96.81	96.50	96.65	1.00	73.23	75.94	74.59	1.04
Masvingo	104.66	104.18	104.42	1.00	80.73	83.46	82.10	1.03
Matabeleland North	98.94	101.17	100.04	1.02	80.49	84.41	82.44	1.05
Matabeleland South	107.91	107.78	107.84	1.00	84.51	87.13	85.81	1.03
Midlands	103.56	104.61	104.08	1.01	81.03	84.75	82.89	1.05
Grand Total	99.58	99.37	99.47	1.00	77.82	80.31	79.07	1.03

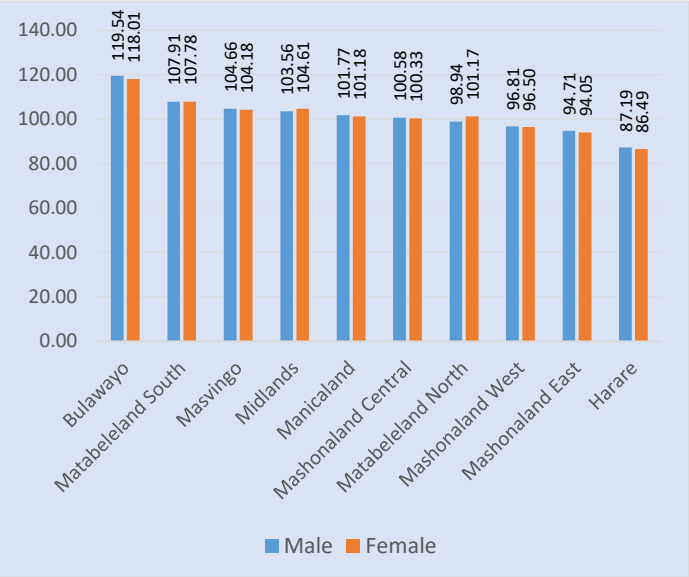


Figure 5.11: Junior Gross Enrolment Ratio by Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

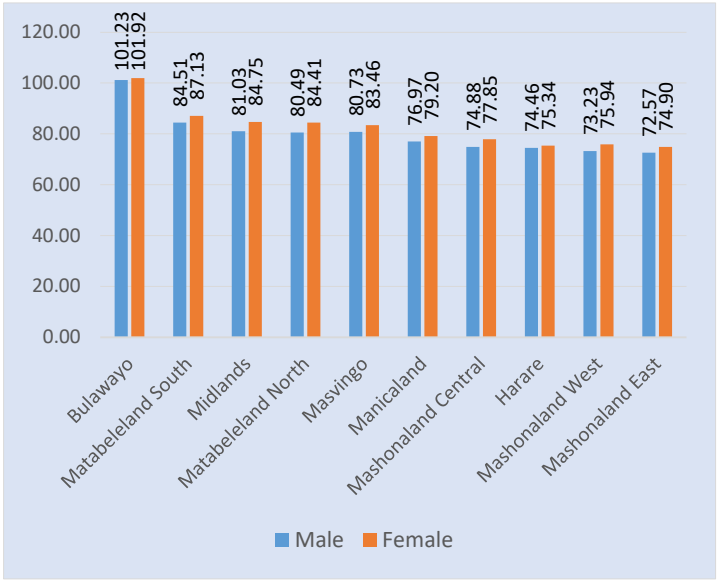


Figure 5.12: Junior Net Enrolment Ratio by Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

5.2 Primary School Participation

Table 5.12 shows that primary school participation in Zimbabwe remained consistently high between 2021 and 2025, with Gross Enrolment Rates (GER) hovering around universal coverage. The total GER increased from 95.82 percent in 2021 to a peak of 101.34 percent in 2024 before marginally declining to 99.92 percent in 2025. Male GERs were consistently slightly higher than female GERs, though gender parity was largely maintained throughout the period, with GPI values at or near unity (0.99–1.00), indicating balanced participation between males and females.

Table 5.12: Primary School Gross Enrolment Rate, Net Enrolment Rate and GPI, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

Year	Gross Enrolment Rate, %			GPI	Net Enrolment Rate, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
2021	96.46	95.20	95.82	0.99	83.22	83.79	83.51	1.01
2022	99.85	99.48	99.67	1.00	87.72	88.94	88.33	1.01
2023	100.01	99.66	99.84	1	85.59	86.9	86.25	1.02
2024	101.75	100.93	101.34	0.99	86.78	87.67	87.23	1.01
2025	100.43	99.42	99.92	0.99	84.81	85.76	85.29	1.01

Net Enrolment Rates (NER) were lower than GERs but remained relatively stable, rising from 83.51 percent in 2021 to 88.33 percent in 2022, before settling at 85.29 percent in 2025. Females consistently recorded higher NERs than males across all years, with female NER increasing from 83.79 percent in 2021 to 85.76 percent in 2025, compared to male NERs

rising from 83.22 percent to 84.81 percent over the same period. This resulted in a sustained female advantage in age-appropriate enrolment, reflected in NER GPIs ranging from 1.01 to 1.02. Figures 5.13 and 5.14 show the distribution.

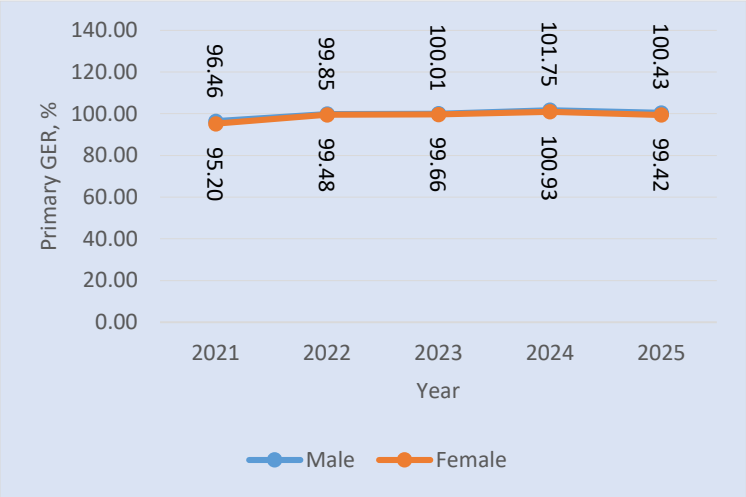


Figure 5.13: Primary School Gross Enrolment Rate, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

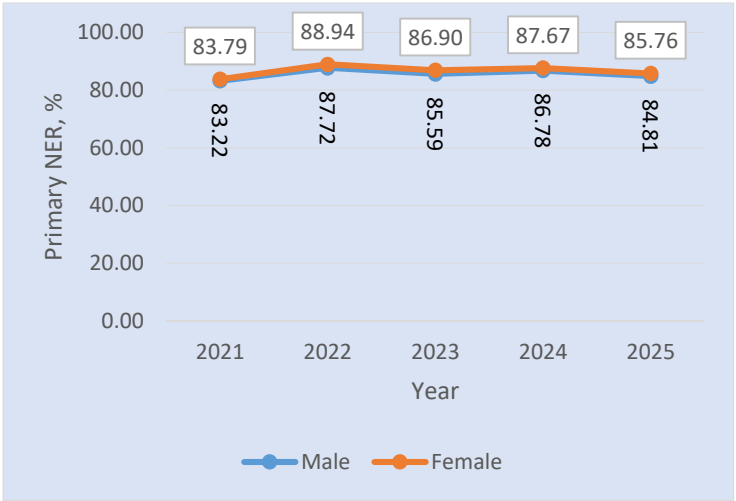


Figure 5.14: Primary School Net Enrolment Ratio, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

Table 5.13 provides a comparison of the projected primary school-age population (6–12 years) for 2025 with actual primary school enrolments and the number of correctly aged pupils enrolled. Nationally, the 6–12-year-old population was projected at 2,863,754 children (1,427,640 males and 1,436,114 females). Total primary school enrolment closely mirrored this population size, standing at 2,861,595 pupils, while the number of enrolled children who fell within the correct age range totalled 2,442,495, indicating strong age-appropriate participation at primary level.

Across provinces, Manicaland, Harare, and Mashonaland West recorded the largest 6–12-year populations, while Matabeleland South and Matabeleland North had the smallest. Total enrolment figures were generally aligned with population projections, for example, Manicaland's enrolment of 437,965 exceeded its population projection of 422,472, indicating high participation. The number of correctly aged pupils enrolled ranged from 105,591 in Bulawayo to 366,365 in Manicaland, showing consistently strong uptake of primary education nationally.

Table 5.13: Primary School Age Population Projections and Enrolments by Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Provinces	Population 6-12 years, No.			Total Enrolment, No.			Enrolment 6-12 years, No.		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bulawayo	48 873	50 830	99 703	58 360	59 722	118 082	51 853	53 738	105 591
Harare	192 785	196 972	389 757	162 290	164 793	327 083	144 979	149 187	294 166
Manicaland	210 214	212 258	422 472	219 696	218 269	437 965	181 866	184 499	366 365
Mashonaland Central	135 094	134 885	269 979	136 936	135 507	272 443	112 179	113 880	226 059
Mashonaland East	169 328	169 097	338 425	160 426	157 916	318 342	133 661	134 774	268 435
Mashonaland West	177 075	178 831	355 906	169 537	169 415	338 952	139 785	143 262	283 047
Masvingo	169 453	169 973	339 426	184 413	182 079	366 492	154 881	156 451	311 332
Matabeleland North	80 993	80 370	161 363	83 206	82 749	165 955	72 446	73 131	145 577
Matabeleland South	70 790	69 964	140 754	78 234	76 415	154 649	66 403	66 171	132 574
Midlands	173 035	172 934	345 969	180 652	180 980	361 632	152 786	156 563	309 349
Total	1 427 640	1 436 114	2 863 754	1 433 750	1 427 845	2 861 595	1 210 839	1 231 656	2 442 495

Table 5.14 shows Primary Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), Net Enrolment Ratio (NER), and the Gender Parity Index (GPI) by province and sex for 2025. Nationally, GER was 99.92 percent suggesting that the system capacity broadly matched cohort size while NER was 85.29%, implying that about 15% of 6–12-year-olds were either out of primary or enrolled at the wrong level/age. Gender balance was strong overall, with GPI for GER at 0.99 (very slight male advantage) and GPI for NER at 1.01 (very slight female advantage).

Provincially, GER exceeded 100 percent in most areas, most notably Bulawayo (118.43 percent), Matabeleland South (109.87 percent), Masvingo (107.97 percent) and Midlands (104.53 percent), indicating over/under-age attendance in primary. The lowest GER was in Harare (83.92 percent). NER peaked in Bulawayo (105.91 percent), a value above 100 that typically reflects population denominator underestimation or cross-boundary enrolment followed by Matabeleland South (94.19 percent), Masvingo (91.72 percent) and Matabeleland North (90.22 percent). Harare recorded the lowest NER (75.47 percent).

Gender parity was sustained across provinces (GER-GPI ~0.98–1.00; NER-GPI ~1.00–1.03), with slight female advantages in NER particularly in Midlands (1.03), Matabeleland North (1.02) and Mashonaland Central (1.02).

Table 5.14: Primary Gross Enrolment Ratio, Net Enrolment Ratio and GPI by Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	GER, %			GPI	NER, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	119.41	117.49	118.43	0.98	106.10	105.72	105.91	1.00
Harare	84.18	83.66	83.92	0.99	75.20	75.74	75.47	1.01
Manicaland	104.51	102.83	103.67	0.98	86.51	86.92	86.72	1.00
Mashonaland Central	101.36	100.46	100.91	0.99	83.04	84.43	83.73	1.02
Mashonaland East	94.74	93.39	94.07	0.99	78.94	79.70	79.32	1.01
Mashonaland West	95.74	94.73	95.24	0.99	78.94	80.11	79.53	1.01
Masvingo	108.83	107.12	107.97	0.98	91.40	92.04	91.72	1.01
Matabeleland North	102.73	102.96	102.85	1.00	89.45	90.99	90.22	1.02
Matabeleland South	110.52	109.22	109.87	0.99	93.80	94.58	94.19	1.01
Midlands	104.40	104.65	104.53	1.00	88.30	90.53	89.42	1.03
Grand Total	100.43	99.42	99.92	0.99	84.81	85.76	85.29	1.01

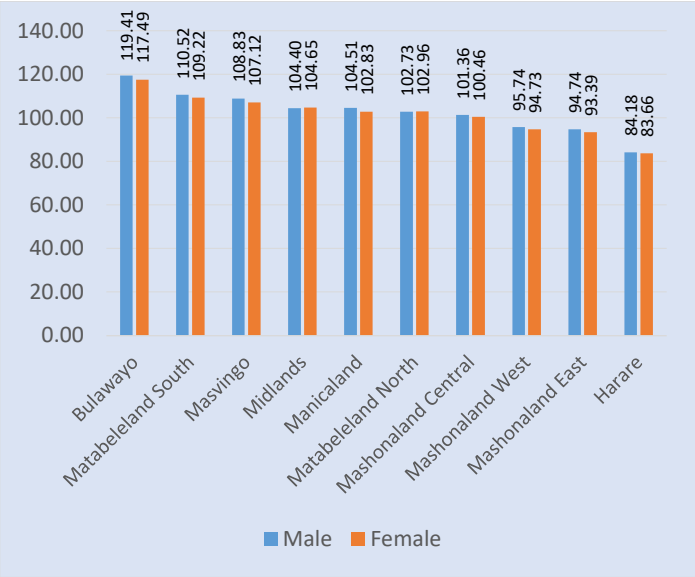


Figure 5.15: Primary Gross Enrolment Ratio by Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

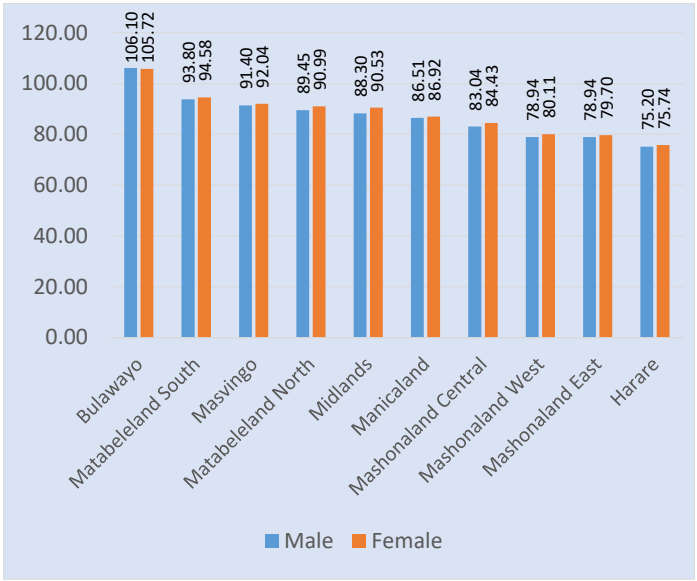


Figure 5.16: Primary Net Enrolment Ratio by Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Table 5.15 shows grade-specific Gross Enrolment Rates (GER) for Grades 1–7 in 2025, disaggregated by sex and paired with the official age population per grade. Nationally, GER was above 100% in Grades 2 to 6, peaking at Grade 3 (103.54%), slightly below 100% in Grade 1 (99.74%), and notably low in Grade 7 (90.57%). This pattern is consistent with late entry (pulling Grade 1 below 100), repetition/over-age accumulation in the middle grades, and attrition or early transitions before Grade 7. The male pupils had higher GER in the lower grades (GPI: 0.96–0.98 in Grades 1–3), parity at Grade 4 (GPI 1.00), and a slight female advantage by Grades 5 and 7 (GPI 1.01), with near parity in Grade 6 (GPI 0.99). These patterns suggest that females catch up and slightly surpass males as cohorts progress, while

system inefficiencies (late entry, repetition) are most visible at the start and end of the primary cycle.

Table 5.15: Grade Specific Gross Enrolment Rate by Grade and Sex, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Grade	Grade-Age Enrolment, No.			Age Population, No			Grade GER, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Grade 1	205 442	200 264	405 706	202 239	204 538	406 777	101.58	97.91	99.74	0.96
Grade 2	206 398	201 315	407 713	199 138	198 840	397 978	103.65	101.24	102.45	0.98
Grade 3	206 891	205 116	412 007	197 920	199 998	397 918	104.53	102.56	103.54	0.98
Grade 4	205 631	206 248	411 879	204 172	205 329	409 501	100.71	100.45	100.58	1.00
Grade 5	206 424	206 685	413 109	206 106	204 227	410 333	100.15	101.20	100.68	1.01
Grade 6	207 874	208 255	416 129	201 591	203 449	405 040	103.12	102.36	102.74	0.99
Grade 7	195 090	199 962	395 052	216 474	219 733	436 207	90.12	91.00	90.57	1.01

Table 5.16 shows Grade-Specific Net Enrolment Rate (NER) for Grades 1–7, disaggregated by sex and matched with each grade's official age population. The table shows that NER values were low across all grades, with national NER ranging between 27 and 28 percent, signaling that most children in primary school were over-aged, a trend consistent with patterns realized in section 3.2.

Across all grades, female pupils consistently had higher NER than their male counterparts, with Grade-level GPI values ranging from 1.07 in Grade 1 to 1.19 in Grades 4 and 5, indicating a strong female advantage in age-appropriate attendance. For example, in Grade Seven, 29.90% of females were correctly aged compared to 25.85% of males. Despite slight improvements in upper grades, overall, NER remained below 30% for both sexes, highlighting persistent challenges around late entry, grade repetition, and age-appropriate progression within the primary school cycle.

Table 5.16: Grade Specific Net Enrolment Rate (NER) by Sex and Grade, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Grade	Grade Enrolment, No.			Grade-Age Population, No.			Grade NER, %			
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	GPI
Grade 1	54 161	58 698	112 859	202 239	204 538	406 777	26.78	28.70	27.74	1.07
Grade 2	50 964	56 896	107 860	199 138	198 840	397 978	25.59	28.61	27.10	1.12
Grade 3	50 091	57 975	108 066	197 920	199 998	397 918	25.31	28.99	27.16	1.15
Grade 4	50 433	60 343	110 776	204 172	205 329	409 501	24.70	29.39	27.05	1.19
Grade 5	51 732	61 137	112 869	206 106	204 227	410 333	25.10	29.94	27.51	1.19
Grade 6	51 830	60 508	112 338	201 591	203 449	405 040	25.71	29.74	27.74	1.16
Grade 7	55 968	65 693	121 661	216 474	219 733	436 207	25.85	29.90	27.89	1.16

5.3 Secondary School Participation

Table 5.17 indicates that secondary school participation in Zimbabwe fluctuated between 2021 and 2025, with higher enrolment consistently observed at lower secondary level (Form 1–4) than at upper secondary level (Form 5–6). The total GER for Form 1–4 increased from 65.74 percent in 2021 to a peak of 75.88 percent in 2022, before declining steadily to 66.62 percent in 2025. Throughout the period, females recorded higher GERs than males at this level, with female GER rising from 66.30 percent in 2021 to 68.20 percent in 2025, compared to male GER increasing from 65.18 percent to 65.02 percent. This resulted in persistent female advantage, reflected in GPIs ranging from 1.02 to 1.05. At upper secondary level (Form 5–6), GERs remained low but relatively stable, ranging from 12.22 percent in 2021 to 11.86 percent in 2025. Female participation consistently exceeded that of males, with female GERs increasing from 12.38 percent in 2021 to 12.45 percent in 2025, while male GERs ranged between 10.77 percent and 12.07 percent. Consequently, gender disparities widened at this level, as reflected by increasing GPIs from 1.03 in 2021 to 1.10 in 2025. Overall secondary participation (Form 1–6) followed a similar trend to lower secondary, rising from a total GER of 48.77 percent in 2021 to 56.06 percent in 2022, before declining to 50.80 percent in 2025, with females consistently outperforming males and GPIs increasing from 1.02 to 1.05 over the period.

Table 5.17: Secondary School Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) by Level and Sex, Percentage, Zimbabwe 2021-2025

Year	Form 1 to 4 GER, %			GPI	Form 5 to 6 GER, %			GPI	Form 1 to 6 GER, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
2021	65.18	66.3	65.74	1.02	12.05	12.38	12.22	1.03	48.29	49.24	48.77	1.02
2022	74.55	77.23	75.88	1.04	12.07	12.27	12.17	1.02	55.31	56.81	56.06	1.03
2023	72	74.97	73.48	1.04	10.77	11.49	11.13	1.07	52.63	54.95	53.78	1.04
2024	67.85	70.81	69.33	1.04	10.89	11.87	11.38	1.09	50.88	53.48	52.18	1.05
2025	65.02	68.20	66.62	1.05	11.27	12.45	11.86	1.10	49.45	52.15	50.80	1.05

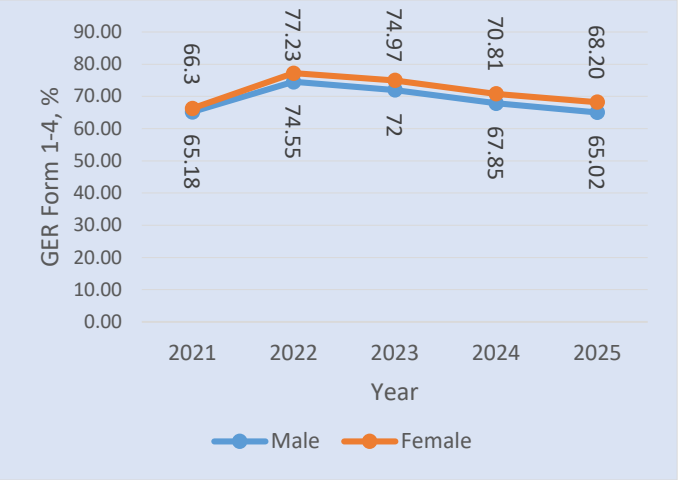


Figure 5.17: Secondary School (Form 1-4) GER, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

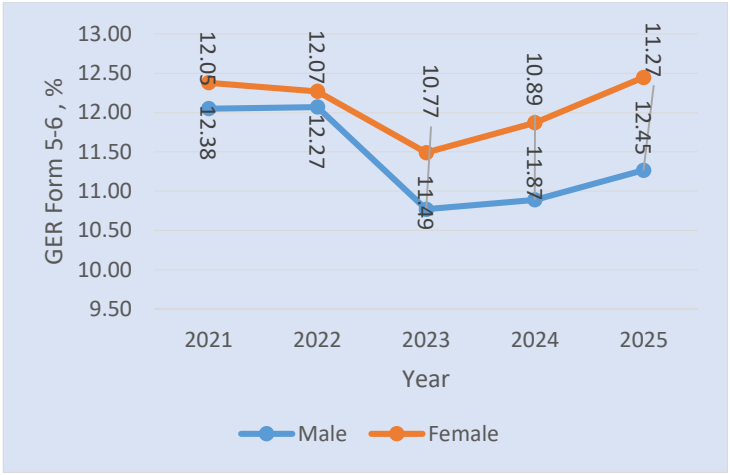


Figure 5.18: Secondary School (Form 5-6) GER, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

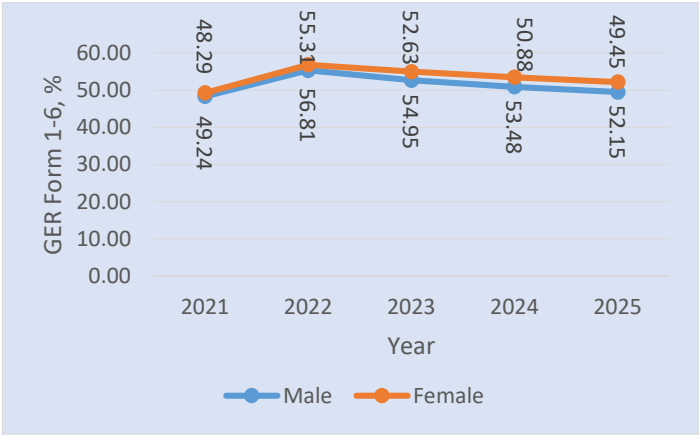


Figure 5.19: Secondary School (Form 1-6) GER, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

Table 5.18 reports the Secondary Net Enrolment Rate (NER) by level (Forms 1–4, 5–6, and overall, 1–6) by sex for 2021–2025. Across all the years, females consistently outperformed males by approximately 5–6 percentage points, with GPI ranging between 1.09–1.11, indicating a sustained female advantage in age-appropriate participation.

Upper secondary (Forms 5–6) NER remained very low throughout ranging from 8.20% (2021) to 8.47% (2025), with a dip in 2023 (7.92%) and partial recovery thereafter. Female advantage widened over time (GPI rising from 1.12 to 1.20), reaching 9.24% for female pupils against 7.70% for males in 2025. Overall secondary (Forms 1–6) NER rose to 53.55% in 2022 then fell to 48.60% in 2025, with females higher than males each year (e.g., 50.16% vs 47.02% in 2025, GPI 1.07). These trends indicate moderate age-appropriate participation at lower secondary, very limited age-appropriate participation at upper secondary, and a consistent female advantage across the cycle.

Table 5.18: Secondary School Net Enrolment Rate by Level and Sex, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

Year	Form 1 to 4 NER, %			GPI	Form 5 to 6, NER%			GPI	Form 1 to 6, NER%			GPI
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
2021	48.32	52.78	50.56	1.09	7.73	8.68	8.2	1.12	45.49	47.07	46.28	1.03
2022	55.44	61.24	58.33	1.1	8.31	9.14	8.73	1.1	52.51	54.6	53.55	1.04
2023	53.61	59.71	56.66	1.11	7.37	8.46	7.92	1.15	50.00	52.85	51.42	1.06
2024	51.18	56.86	54.03	1.11	7.65	8.9	8.27	1.16	48.39	51.44	49.91	1.06
2025	49.65	55.33	52.50	1.11	7.70	9.24	8.47	1.20	47.02	50.16	48.60	1.07

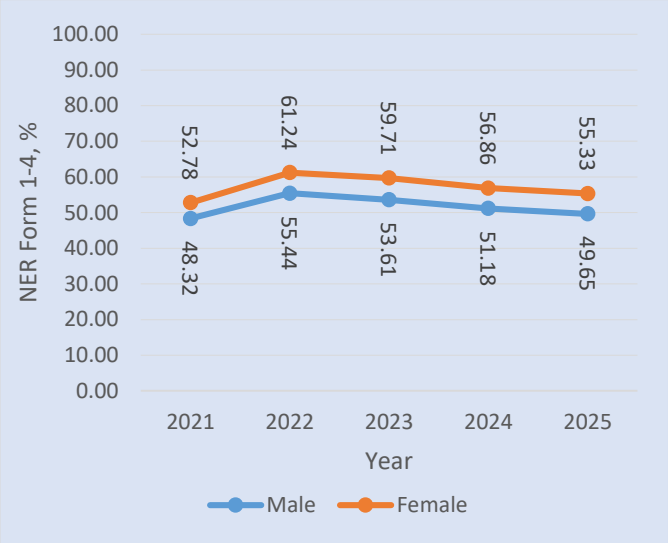


Figure 5.20: Secondary School (Form 1-4) NER, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

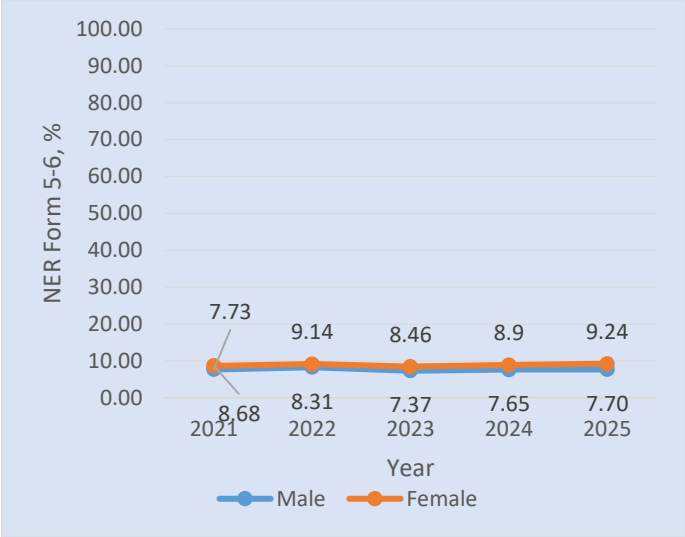


Figure 5.21: Secondary School (Form 5-6) NER, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

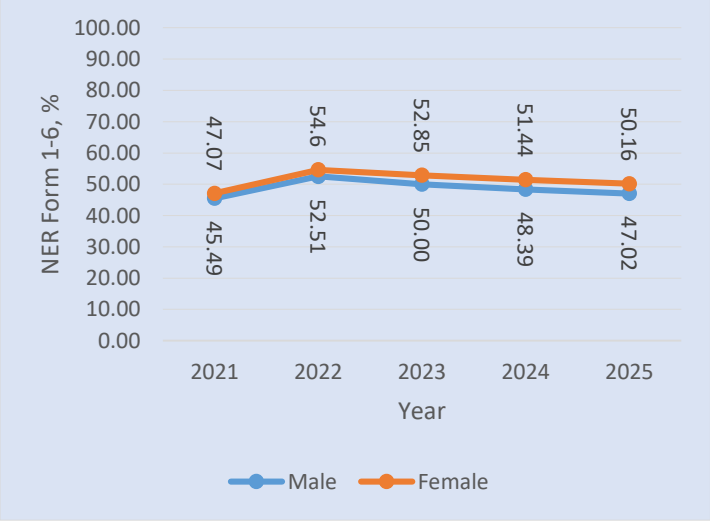


Figure 5.22: Secondary School (Form 1-6) NER, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

Table 5.19 showed that the projected secondary school-age population (13–16 years) was 1,618,741, comprising 807,143 males and 811,598 females. The total enrolment in Forms 1–

4 stood at 1,078,348 pupils, with females (553,515) slightly outnumbering males (524,833), indicating higher female participation at lower secondary level. Of those enrolled, 849,831 pupils were within the official age range, representing a substantial proportion of total enrolment, with females (449,053) again exceeding males (400,778). Provinces with the largest Form 1–4 enrolments were Manicaland (164,131), Masvingo (146,396) Midlands (139,418), and Harare (127,175), reflecting their relatively large school-age populations.

Provincial patterns further revealed that Bulawayo, despite having a smaller school-age population of 61,131, recorded relatively high age-appropriate enrolment, with 44,591 pupils aged 13–16 enrolled in Forms 1–4. In contrast, provinces such as Mashonaland Central and Matabeleland North had lower absolute enrolment figures, with 85,091 and 58,632 total enrolments respectively, corresponding to smaller populations. Across all provinces, female enrolment within the official age range consistently exceeded that of males, notably in Harare (55,949 females versus 50,629 males) and Masvingo (59,483 females versus 52,661 males), highlighting persistent gender advantages for females in lower secondary education and suggesting better retention or transition rates for females at this level.

Table 5.19: Secondary (Form 1-4) School-Age Population Projections and Enrolment by Sex, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Population 13-16 years, No.			Total Enrolment form 1-4, No.			Enrolment 13-16 years, No.		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bulawayo	29 112	32 019	61 131	25 350	28 577	53 927	20 695	23 896	44 591
Harare	100 368	107 199	207 567	61 376	65 799	127 175	50 629	55 949	106 578
Manicaland	122 945	121 754	244 699	82 350	81 781	164 131	59 963	64 261	124 224
Mashonaland Central	72 932	71 272	144 204	41 690	43 401	85 091	30 684	34 743	65 427
Mashonaland East	92 341	91 965	184 306	61 603	61 303	122 906	47 076	50 300	97 376
Mashonaland West	96 310	95 551	191 861	60 603	60 248	120 851	45 834	48 847	94 681
Masvingo	101 229	101 375	202 604	71 686	74 710	146 396	52 661	59 483	112 144
Matabeleland North	49 493	48 510	98 003	26 116	32 516	58 632	20 569	26 488	47 057
Matabeleland South	42 573	42 218	84 791	27 581	32 240	59 821	21 964	26 372	48 336
Midlands	99 840	99 735	199 575	66 478	72 940	139 418	50 703	58 714	109 417
Grand Total	807 143	811 598	1 618 741	524 833	553 515	1 078 348	400 778	449 053	849 831

Table 5.20 shows that in 2025, the national Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) for lower secondary education (Forms 1–4) stood at 66.62%, with female pupils recording a higher GER (68.20%) than males (65.02%), resulting in a Gender Parity Index (GPI) of 1.05. Provincially, GERs ranged widely, from a low of 59.83% in Matabeleland North to a high of 88.22% in Bulawayo. Female GERs exceeded male GERs in all provinces, most notably in Matabeleland North (67.03% for females compared to 52.77% for males, GPI 1.27) and Matabeleland South (76.37% versus 64.79%, GPI 1.18). Bulawayo (88.22%), Masvingo (72.26%) and Matabeleland South (70.55%) recorded relatively high overall GERs, while Matabeleland North (59.83%) and Mashonaland Central (59.01%) lagged.

The Net Enrolment Rate (NER) for Forms 1–4 nationally was 52.50%, again favouring females (55.33%) over males (49.65%), with a GPI of 1.11, indicating a notable female advantage in age-appropriate enrolment. Provincial NERs ranged from 48.02% in

Matabeleland North to 72.94% in Bulawayo. Strong female advantages were evident in provinces such as Matabeleland North (female NER 54.60% compared to 41.56% for males, GPI 1.31), Matabeleland South (62.47% versus 51.59%, GPI 1.21), Mashonaland Central (48.75% versus 42.07%, GPI 1.16) and Midlands (58.87% versus 50.78%, GPI 1.16).

Table 5.20: Secondary School (Form 1-4) NER and GER by Province and Sex, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	GER, %			GPI	NER, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	87.08	89.25	88.22	1.02	71.09	74.63	72.94	1.05
Harare	61.15	61.38	61.27	1.00	50.44	52.19	51.35	1.03
Manicaland	66.98	67.17	67.07	1.00	48.77	52.78	50.77	1.08
Mashonaland Central	57.16	60.89	59.01	1.07	42.07	48.75	45.37	1.16
Mashonaland East	66.71	66.66	66.69	1.00	50.98	54.69	52.83	1.07
Mashonaland West	62.92	63.05	62.99	1.00	47.59	51.12	49.35	1.07
Masvingo	70.82	73.70	72.26	1.04	52.02	58.68	55.35	1.13
Matabeleland North	52.77	67.03	59.83	1.27	41.56	54.60	48.02	1.31
Matabeleland South	64.79	76.37	70.55	1.18	51.59	62.47	57.01	1.21
Midlands	66.58	73.13	69.86	1.10	50.78	58.87	54.83	1.16
Grand Total	65.02	68.20	66.62	1.05	49.65	55.33	52.50	1.11

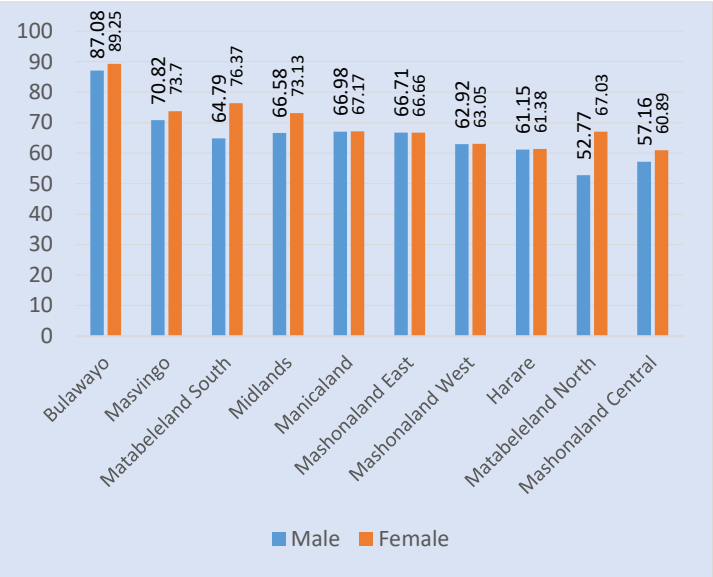


Figure 5.23: Lower Secondary Gross Enrolment Ratio by Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

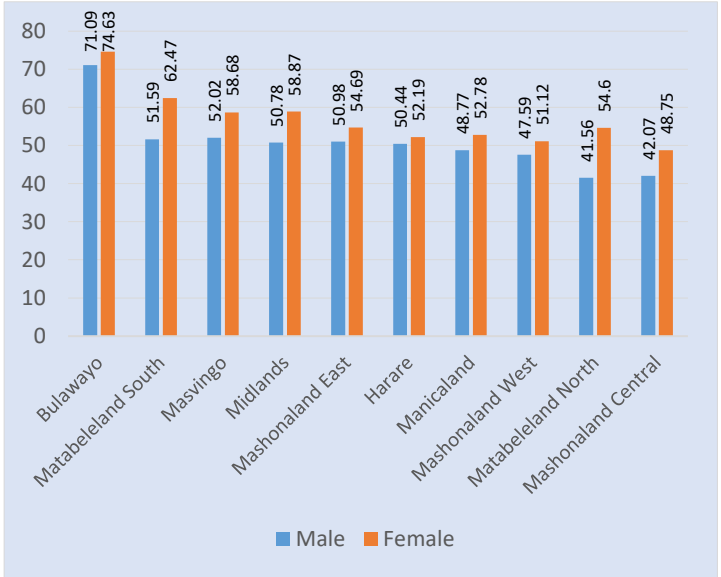


Figure 5.24: Lower Secondary Net Enrolment Ratio by Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Table 5.21 shows a total projected population of 657,202 youths aged 17–18 years, comprising 329,235 males and 327,967 females. Of this population, the total enrolment in upper secondary education (Forms 5–6) stood at 77,913 pupils, with 40,823 females and 37,090 males, indicating higher female participation overall. However, only 55,638 pupils were enrolled at the official age of 17–18 years, representing a relatively small share of the

age cohort. Females accounted for 30,292 age-appropriate pupils, compared to 25,346 males, highlighting a consistent female advantage in age-appropriate enrolment at this level. Provinces with the largest 17–18-year populations were Harare (91,258), Manicaland (94,686) and Midlands (80,638), while Matabeleland South (34,434), Matabeleland North (38,916) and Bulawayo (27,738) had the smallest cohorts.

Provincial patterns further revealed marked disparities in both enrolment levels and appropriate age participation. Harare recorded the highest total Form 5–6 enrolments (16,058 pupils), followed by Manicaland (11,704) and Masvingo (10,155), whereas Matabeleland North (2,635) and Mashonaland Central (4,229) had the lowest enrolments. In terms of enrolment of pupils aged 17–18 years, Harare again led with 12,305 pupils, followed by Manicaland (8,083) and Masvingo (7,133). Across all provinces, female enrolment at the correct age exceeded that of males, most notably in Bulawayo (2,687 females versus 1,865 males), Matabeleland South (1,717 females compared to 1,100 males) and Matabeleland North (1,096 females compared to 735 males).

Table 5.21: Secondary School (Form 5-6) Age Population Projections and Enrolment by Sex, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Population 17-18 years, No.			Total Enrolment form 5-6, No.			Enrolment 17-18 years, No.		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bulawayo	12 675	15 063	27 738	2 661	3 554	6 215	1 865	2 687	4 552
Harare	42 169	49 089	91 258	7 529	8 529	16 058	5 576	6 729	12 305
Manicaland	48 641	46 045	94 686	5 839	5 865	11 704	3 880	4 203	8 083
Mashonaland Central	29 846	27 350	57 196	2 089	2 140	4 229	1 330	1 502	2 832
Mashonaland East	37 329	36 623	73 952	4 303	4 393	8 696	2 816	3 107	5 923
Mashonaland West	39 449	38 341	77 790	3 119	3 182	6 301	1 996	2 311	4 307
Masvingo	40 729	39 865	80 594	5 052	5 103	10 155	3 365	3 768	7 133
Matabeleland North	19 960	18 956	38 916	1 134	1 501	2 635	735	1 096	1 831
Matabeleland South	17 580	16 854	34 434	1 624	2 323	3 947	1 100	1 717	2 817
Midlands	40 857	39 781	80 638	3 740	4 233	7 973	2 683	3 172	5 855
Grand Total	329 235	327 967	657 202	37 090	40 823	77 913	25 346	30 292	55 638

Table 5.22 below shows that in 2025, participation in upper secondary education (Forms 5–6) remained relatively low, with a national Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 11.86% and a Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) of 8.47%. Female pupils consistently recorded higher participation than their male counterparts, as reflected by a GER of 12.45% for females compared to 11.27% for males (GPI = 1.10) and an even wider gap at the net level, where the female NER (9.24%) exceeded the male NER (7.70%), yielding a GPI of 1.20. These figures demonstrate a clear female advantage in both overall and age-appropriate participation at the upper secondary level.

At provincial level, substantial disparities were evident. Bulawayo recorded the highest participation, with a GER of 22.41% and an NER of 16.41%, followed by Harare (GER 17.60%, NER 13.48%) and Masvingo (GER 12.60%, NER 8.85%). In contrast, Matabeleland North (GER 6.77%, NER 4.71%) and Mashonaland Central (GER 7.39%, NER 4.95%) had the lowest levels of access. Gender disparities were particularly pronounced in Matabeleland South,

where the female GER (13.78%) was substantially higher than the male GER (9.24%), resulting in a GPI of 1.49, while the NER gap was even wider (GPI = 1.63).

Table 5.22: Secondary School (Form 5-6) GER and NER by Sex, Province and GPI, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	GER, %			GPI	NER, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	20.99	23.59	22.41	1.12	14.71	17.84	16.41	1.21
Harare	17.85	17.37	17.60	0.97	13.22	13.71	13.48	1.04
Manicaland	12.00	12.74	12.36	1.06	7.98	9.13	8.54	1.14
Mashonaland Central	7.00	7.82	7.39	1.12	4.46	5.49	4.95	1.23
Mashonaland East	11.53	12.00	11.76	1.04	7.54	8.48	8.01	1.12
Mashonaland West	7.91	8.30	8.10	1.05	5.06	6.03	5.54	1.19
Masvingo	12.40	12.80	12.60	1.03	8.26	9.45	8.85	1.14
Matabeleland North	5.68	7.92	6.77	1.39	3.68	5.78	4.71	1.57
Matabeleland South	9.24	13.78	11.46	1.49	6.26	10.19	8.18	1.63
Midlands	9.15	10.64	9.89	1.16	6.57	7.97	7.26	1.21
Grand Total	11.27	12.45	11.86	1.10	7.70	9.24	8.47	1.20

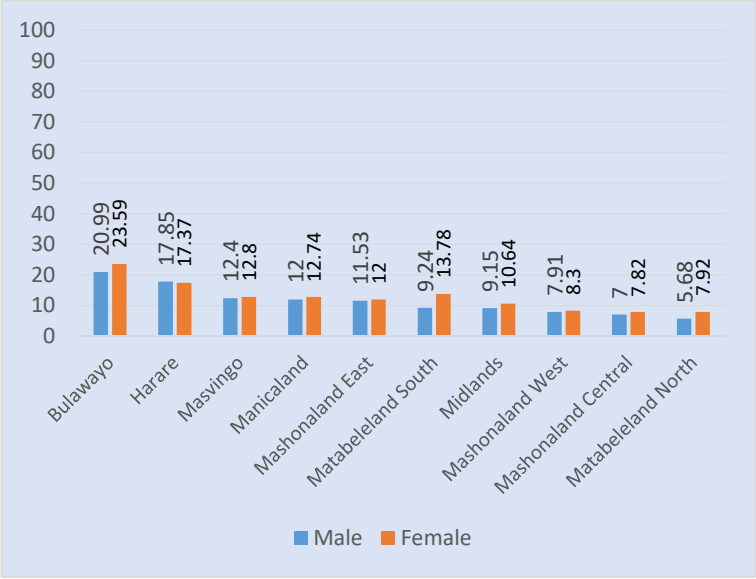


Figure 5.25: Upper Secondary Gross Enrolment Ratio by Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

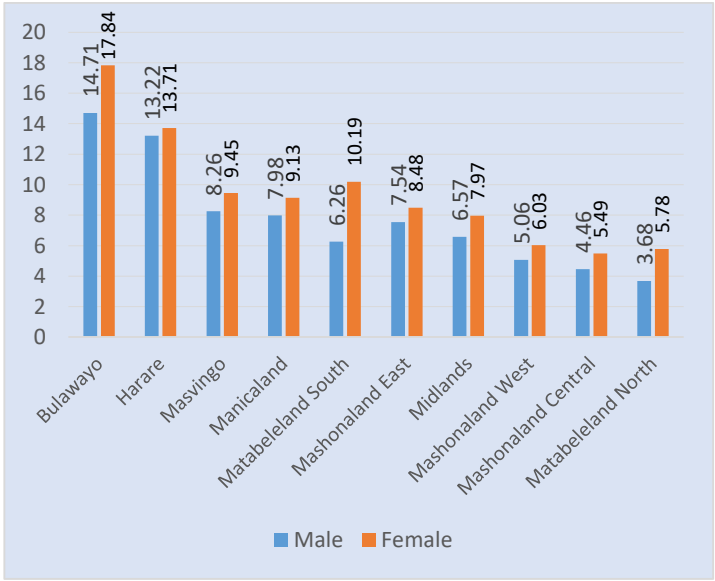


Figure 5.26: Upper Secondary Net Enrolment Ratio by Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

In 2025 Zimbabwe had a projected secondary school–age population (13–18 years) of 2,275,943, comprising 1,136,378 males and 1,139,565 females, reflecting near gender parity. Total enrolment in Forms 1–6 stood at 1,156,261 pupils, with females (594,338) outnumbering males (561,923). Of these, 1,105,995 pupils were enrolled within the official age range of 13–18 years, representing a substantial proportion of the school-age population. Provincially, Manicaland recorded the largest age-group population (339,385) and correspondingly high enrolment (175,835 total Form 1–6 enrolment and 167,581 age-appropriate enrolment), followed closely by Masvingo (283,198 population; 156,551 total

enrolments; 149,210 age-appropriate enrolment) and Midlands (280,213 population; 147,391 total enrolment; 141,318 age-appropriate enrolment). In contrast, Bulawayo and Matabeleland North had smaller populations (88,869 and 136,919, respectively) and lower enrolment totals, although females consistently exceeded males in enrolment across all provinces as shown in table 5.23.

Table 5.23: Secondary School (Form 1-6) Population Projections and Enrolment by Sex and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Population 13-18 years, No.			Total Enrolment form 1-6, No.			Enrolment 13-18 years, No.		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bulawayo	41 787	47 082	88 869	28 011	32 131	60 142	26 710	30 635	57 345
Harare	142 537	156 288	298 825	68 905	74 328	143 233	65 849	71 524	137 373
Manicaland	171 586	167 799	339 385	88 189	87 646	175 835	83 454	84 127	167 581
Mashonaland Central	102 778	98 622	201 400	43 779	45 541	89 320	41 606	44 018	85 624
Mashonaland East	129 670	128 588	258 258	65 906	65 696	131 602	62 829	63 344	126 173
Mashonaland West	135 759	133 892	269 651	63 722	63 430	127 152	60 579	61 221	121 800
Masvingo	141 958	141 240	283 198	76 738	79 813	156 551	72 466	76 744	149 210
Matabeleland North	69 453	67 466	136 919	27 250	34 017	61 267	25 940	32 650	58 590
Matabeleland South	60 153	59 072	119 225	29 205	34 563	63 768	27 911	33 070	60 981
Midlands	140 697	139 516	280 213	70 218	77 173	147 391	66 989	74 329	141 318
Grand Total	1 136 378	1 139 565	2 275 943	561 923	594 338	1 156 261	534 333	571 662	1 105 995

Table 5.24 shows that in 2025 the national secondary school (Forms 1–6) Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) stood at 50.80%, with a higher rate for females (52.15%) than for males (49.45%), yielding a GPI of 1.05 and indicating a consistent female advantage in overall participation. The Net Enrolment Rate (NER) was slightly lower at 48.60% nationally, again favouring females (50.16%) over males (47.02%), with a GPI of 1.07, suggesting that females were more likely than males to be enrolled at the appropriate secondary school age. Provincially, Bulawayo recorded the highest overall GER (67.67%) and NER (64.53%), followed by Masvingo (GER 55.28%, NER 52.69%) and Matabeleland South (GER 53.49%, NER 51.15%), while Matabeleland North had the lowest participation levels (GER 44.75%, NER 42.79%) but exhibited the largest gender disparities, with GPIs of 1.29 for GER and 1.30 for NER. Harare showed comparatively lower and near-gender-balanced participation (GER 47.93%, NER 45.97%, GPIs below or close to parity), whereas Mashonaland Central, Midlands, and Matabeleland South displayed pronounced female advantages, with GER GPIs ranging from 1.08 to 1.21 and NER GPIs from 1.10 to 1.21.

Table 5.24: Secondary School (Form 1-6) GER, NER and GPI by Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	GER, %			GPI	NER, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	67.03	68.24	67.67	1.02	63.92	65.07	64.53	1.02
Harare	48.34	47.56	47.93	0.98	46.20	45.76	45.97	0.99
Manicaland	51.40	52.23	51.81	1.02	48.64	50.14	49.38	1.03
Mashonaland Central	42.60	46.18	44.35	1.08	40.48	44.63	42.51	1.10
Mashonaland East	50.83	51.09	50.96	1.01	48.45	49.26	48.86	1.02
Mashonaland West	46.94	47.37	47.15	1.01	44.62	45.72	45.17	1.02
Masvingo	54.06	56.51	55.28	1.05	51.05	54.34	52.69	1.06
Matabeleland North	39.24	50.42	44.75	1.29	37.35	48.39	42.79	1.30
Matabeleland South	48.55	58.51	53.49	1.21	46.40	55.98	51.15	1.21
Midlands	49.91	55.31	52.60	1.11	47.61	53.28	50.43	1.12
Grand Total	49.45	52.15	50.80	1.05	47.02	50.16	48.60	1.07

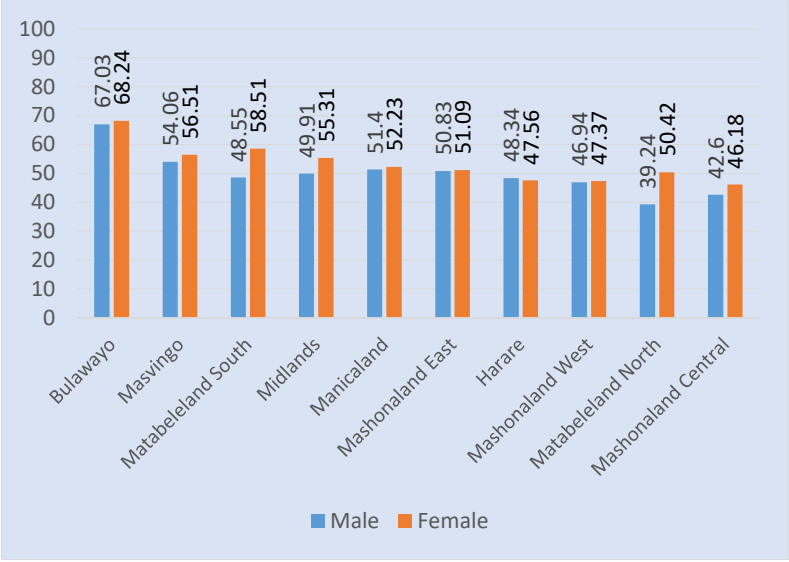


Figure 5.27: Secondary (Form 1-6) Gross Enrolment Ratio by Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

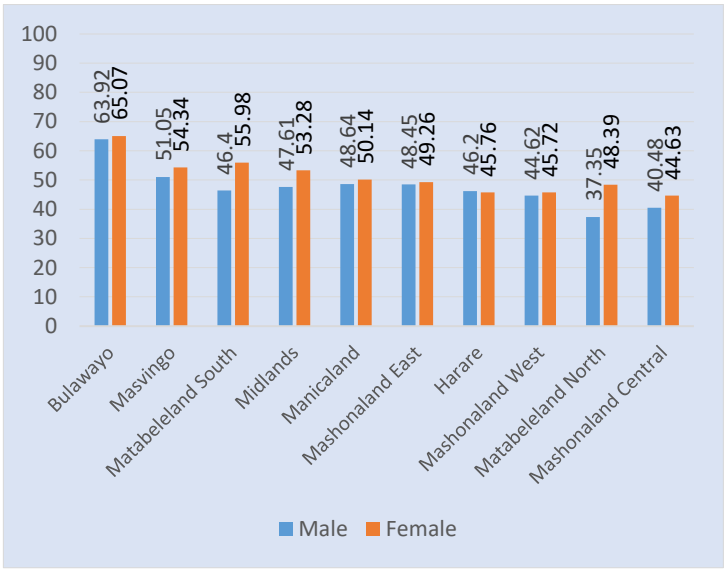


Figure 5.28: Secondary (Form 1-6) Net Enrolment Ratio by Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Table 5.25 indicates marked variation in Form-Specific Gross Enrolment Rates (FSGER) across secondary school levels in 2025, with consistently higher participation in lower secondary compared to upper secondary and a clear female advantage throughout. At Form 1, a total of 287,782 pupils of official form age were enrolled against a population of 427,617, yielding a GER of 67.30%, with females (69.48%) surpassing males (65.10%) and a GPI of 1.07. Enrolment declined slightly at Form 2, where 285,263 pupils were enrolled from an age population of 451,121, resulting in a GER of 63.23% (male 61.05%, female 65.40%, GPI 1.07). Participation rebounded modestly at Form 3, with 260,073 enrolled out of 385,641, translating to a GER of 67.44% and a continued female advantage (female 68.95%, male 65.92%, GPI 1.05), before declining again at Form 4 to a GER of 60.41% based on 214,067

enrolments against 354,362 age-eligible adolescents (female 61.51%, male 59.30%, GPI 1.04). A sharp drop was observed at upper secondary levels, where Form 5 recorded only 35,286 enrolments from an age population of 343,414, corresponding to a GER of 10.28% (male 9.42%, female 11.12%, GPI 1.18), while Form 6 participation was lowest at 7.50%, with 23,524 pupils enrolled out of 313,788, and a pronounced female advantage (female 8.37%, male 6.64%, GPI 1.26).

Table 5.25: Form Specific Gross Enrolment Rate (FSGER), Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Form	Form Age Enrolment, No.			Form Age Population, No.			Form GER, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Form 1	138 864	148 918	287 782	213 299	214 318	427 617	65.10	69.48	67.30	1.07
Form 2	137 245	148 018	285 263	224 794	226 327	451 121	61.05	65.40	63.23	1.07
Form 3	126 907	133 166	260 073	192 504	193 137	385 641	65.92	68.95	67.44	1.05
Form 4	104 690	109 377	214 067	176 546	177 816	354 362	59.30	61.51	60.41	1.04
Form 5	16 147	19 139	35 286	171 347	172 067	343 414	9.42	11.12	10.28	1.18
Form 6	10 480	13 044	23 524	157 888	155 900	313 788	6.64	8.37	7.50	1.26

Table 5.26 indicates that Form Specific Net Enrolment Rates followed a similar declining pattern across forms. NERs were relatively higher in lower forms and dropped sharply in upper forms, particularly at Forms 5 and 6, reflecting limited age-appropriate participation and progression beyond lower secondary education.

Table 5.26: Form Specific Net Enrolment Rate (FSNER), Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Form	Form Age Enrolment, No.			Form Age Population, No.			Form NER, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Form 1	42 467	54 803	97 270	213 299	214 318	427 617	19.91	25.57	22.75	1.28
Form 2	44 699	56 631	101 330	224 794	226 327	451 121	19.88	25.02	22.46	1.26
Form 3	40 186	51 269	91 455	192 504	193 137	385 641	20.88	26.55	23.72	1.27
Form 4	34 371	42 175	76 546	176 546	177 816	354 362	19.47	23.72	21.60	1.22
Form 5	8 241	10 230	18 471	171 347	172 067	343 414	4.81	5.95	5.38	1.24
Form 6	8 236	10 123	18 359	157 888	155 900	313 788	5.22	6.49	5.85	1.24

The secondary school age-specific increased sharply from early adolescence, peaked in mid-secondary ages, and then declined at older ages, with notable gender differentials. At age 13, a total of 109,022 pupils were enrolled against an age population of 427,617, yielding an ASER of 25.50%, with females recording a substantially higher rate (28.76%) than males (22.21%), reflected in a GPI of 1.29. Enrolment rose markedly at age 14, where 238,251 pupils were enrolled from a population of 451,121, resulting in an ASER of 52.81%, in favour of females (56.81%) over males (48.79%; GPI = 1.16). The highest participation occurred at age 15, with 271,157 pupils enrolled out of 385,641, translating to an ASER of 70.31%, while females (73.42%) continued to outpace males (67.20%; GPI = 1.09). Table 5.27 shows the distribution.

The enrolment levels began to decline from the age of 16, going up the ages. At age sixteen, 234,573 pupils were enrolled from an age population of 354,362, giving an ASER of 66.20%,

with near gender parity (65.50% for males and 66.89% for females; GPI = 1.02). Participation dropped further at age 17, where 168,301 pupils were enrolled out of 343,414, resulting in an ASER of 49.01%, and a reversal in gender advantage, as males (50.80%) slightly exceeded females (47.22%; GPI = 0.93). The lowest participation was observed at age 18, with only 84,691 pupils enrolled from 313,788, yielding an ASER of 26.99%, again favoring males (28.64%) over females (25.31%; GPI = 0.88).

Table 5.27: Secondary School Age Specific Enrolment Rate (ASER) by Sex, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Age	Age Enrolment, No.			Age Population, No.			ASER, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
13 years	47 377	61 645	109 022	213 299	214 318	427 617	22.21	28.76	25.50	1.29
14 years	109 685	128 566	238 251	224 794	226 327	451 121	48.79	56.81	52.81	1.16
15 years	129 362	141 795	271 157	192 504	193 137	385 641	67.20	73.42	70.31	1.09
16 years	115 635	118 938	234 573	176 546	177 816	354 362	65.50	66.89	66.20	1.02
17 years	87 049	81 252	168 301	171 347	172 067	343 414	50.80	47.22	49.01	0.93
18 years	45 225	39 466	84 691	157 888	155 900	313 788	28.64	25.31	26.99	0.88

5.4 Conclusion

The data from this chapter shows that Zimbabwe had achieved high levels of participation at Early Childhood Development (ECD), infant, junior and primary education levels by 2025, but continued to face major challenges related to age-appropriate enrolment, provincial inequalities and progression to secondary education. At ECD level, the national Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) reached 78.9 percent in 2025, while the Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) remained considerably lower at 43.3 percent, indicating substantial late entry and over-age enrolment. ECD B participation was notably stronger than ECD A, with a national GER of 81.9 percent compared to 75.8 percent in ECD A. Several provinces recorded GERs exceeding 100 percent in ECD (for example, 106.9 percent in Matabeleland South and 100.4 percent in Masvingo), underscoring significant age-grade distortion. Gender parity was largely achieved at ECD level, with national GPIs close to unity (GER GPI = 0.98; NER GPI = 1.00).

At primary level, access was near universal. The national primary GER stood at 99.9 percent in 2025, while the NER reached 85.3 percent, reflecting improved but still imperfect age-appropriate participation. Junior school participation was particularly strong, with a national GER of 99.5 percent and NER of 79.1 percent. Despite these gains, disparities persisted across provinces, with junior NERs ranging from 74.9 percent in Harare to 85.8 percent in Matabeleland South. Gender patterns consistently favoured females, as reflected in GPIs above 1.00 for primary and junior NERs (national junior NER GPI = 1.03), suggesting better progression and retention among female pupils. Secondary education remained the most constrained segment of the system. At lower secondary level (Forms 1–4), the national GER was 66.6 percent and the NER 52.5 percent, indicating that nearly half of the official school-age population was not enrolled at the appropriate grade. Participation declined sharply at upper secondary level (Forms 5–6), where the GER fell to 11.9 percent and the NER to just 8.5 percent nationally. Provincial disparities were pronounced, with Form 5–6 NERs ranging from 4.7 percent in Matabeleland North to 16.4 percent in Bulawayo. Age-

specific enrolment rates further confirmed steep attrition after age 16, with ASER dropping from 66.2 percent at age 16 to 49.0 percent at age 17 and 27.0 percent at age 18. Across all secondary levels, females consistently recorded higher GERs and NERs, resulting in strong female advantage (national Form 1–6 NER GPI = 1.07; Form 5–6 NER GPI = 1.20).

In conclusion, while Zimbabwe has made substantial progress toward universal access in ECD and primary education, achieving near gender parity across most levels, the system continues to be characterised by late entry, age-grade distortion and severe drop-outs at secondary level, particularly beyond Form 4. Strengthening early entry, improving internal efficiency, and expanding access and retention at upper secondary level remain critical priorities for improving overall educational outcomes.

CHAPTER 6 : Orphans and Vulnerable Children

This chapter examined the demographic characteristics of Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVCs) enrolled in primary and secondary schools in Zimbabwe, with particular emphasis on their access to financial support. While the concept of OVCs is broadly defined, this analysis focused specifically on three categories of orphanhood i.e double orphans, maternal single orphans, and paternal single orphans as well as vulnerable children and selected pupils with impairments.

6.1 Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVC)

Table 6.1 shows that OVC enrolment declined steadily across all education levels between 2021 and 2025, with consistent patterns by sex and level. At ECD level, total OVC enrolment fell from 120,714 in 2021 to 103,266 in 2025, representing a cumulative decline of 16,438 children (–13.7%), while the proportion of OVC among total ECD enrolment dropped from 18.43% to 16.10%. Both males and females followed similar trends, although female OVC shares remained marginally higher than those of males throughout the period. In primary school education (Grades 1–7), OVC numbers increased sharply between 2021 and 2022 (from 608,419 to 664,811; +9.3%), stabilised in 2023, and then declined substantially to 574,939 in 2025, a net reduction of 77,022 pupils (–11.8%) from 2024 alone. Correspondingly, the share of OVC in primary enrolment fell from a peak of 22.59% in 2022 to 20.0% in 2025, with minimal gender differentials. At secondary school level (Forms 1–6), OVC enrolment decreased from 289,847 in 2021 to 255,029 in 2025 (–10.3%), with the OVC proportion declining from 26.6% to 22.0%, though remaining consistently higher than at ECD and primary school levels. Across all levels and years, female OVC proportions were slightly higher than male proportions, but trends indicate a broad-based reduction in both the number and share of OVC pupils, particularly after 2022, suggesting improving socio-economic conditions or enhanced retention and support mechanisms by central government.

Table 6.1: Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVC) by Sex and Level of Education and Change, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025.

Year	OVC, No.			% OVC			Change					
							%			No.		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
	ECD											
2021	60 977	59 737	120 714	18.56	18.29	18.43	0.35	3.93	2.12	-211	-2 348	-2 559
2022	68 114	67 408	135 522	20.66	20.72	20.69	11.7	12.84	12.27	7 137	7 671	14 808
2023	65 505	64 092	129 597	19.12	19.02	19.07	-3.83	-4.92	-4.37	-2 609	-3 316	-5 925
2024	60 651	59 053	119 704	18.49	18.30	18.39	-7.41	-7.86	-7.63	-4 854	-5 039	-9 893
2025	52 406	50 860	103 266	16.20	16.00	16.10	-13.59	-13.87	-13.73	-8 245	-8 193	-16 438
	Primary School (Grade 1-7)											
2021	304 241	304 178	608 419	20.98	20.99	20.99	-2.41	-1.55	-1.98	-7 327	-4 705	-12 032
2022	332 079	332 732	664 811	22.55	22.63	22.59	9.15	9.39	9.27	27 838	28 554	56 392
2023	332 616	333 814	666 430	22.53	22.6	22.57	0.16	0.33	0.24	537	1 082	1 619
2024	325 891	326 070	651 961	22.13	22.24	22.18	-2.02	-2.32	-2.17	-6 725	-7 744	-14 469
2025	287 743	287 196	574 939	19.99	20.05	20.02	-11.71	-11.92	-11.81	-38 148	-38 874	-77 022
	Secondary School (Form 1-6)											
2021	140 589	149 258	289 847	26.13	27.15	26.65	-10.83	-10.48	-10.65	-15 221	-15 647	-30 868
2022	148 423	158 558	306 981	26.83	27.9	27.37	5.57	6.23	5.91	7 834	9 300	17 134
2023	139 228	151 334	290 562	25.4	26.56	25.99	-6.2	-4.56	-5.35	-9 195	-7 224	-16 419
2024	136 078	148 207	284 285	24.33	25.27	24.81	-2.26	-2.07	-2.16	-3 150	-3 127	-6 277
2025	121 476	133 553	255 029	21.58	22.44	22.02	-10.73	-9.89	-10.29	-14 602	-14 654	-29 256

Figure 6.1 illustrates a sustained downward trend in ECD OVC enrolment over the five-year period. After increasing from 120,714 in 2021 to a peak of 135,522 in 2022, the number of ECD OVCs declined consistently to 103,266 by 2025. The decline accelerated after 2023, with year-on-year reductions exceeding 7% in both 2024 and 2025. Male and female trends closely mirrored each other throughout the period, indicating no major gender divergence in ECD OVC dynamics. Figure 6.2 shows that primary school OVC enrolment followed a similar pattern of initial growth followed by sustained decline. Total OVC numbers increased from 608,419 in 2021 to 664,811 in 2022, before stabilising in 2023 and then falling sharply to 574,939 in 2025. This represents an overall reduction of 11.8% between 2022 and 2025. Male and female figures remained almost identical throughout the period, reflecting near-perfect gender parity among primary school OVCs.

Figure 6.3 highlights a persistent decline in secondary school OVC enrolment after 2022. Numbers increased slightly from 289,847 in 2021 to 306,981 in 2022 but thereafter declined each subsequent year to 255,029 in 2025. The overall decrease of more than 30,000 pupils (–10.3%) was driven mainly by reductions in male OVC enrolment, although females continued to represent a higher share of OVCs at secondary level throughout the period.

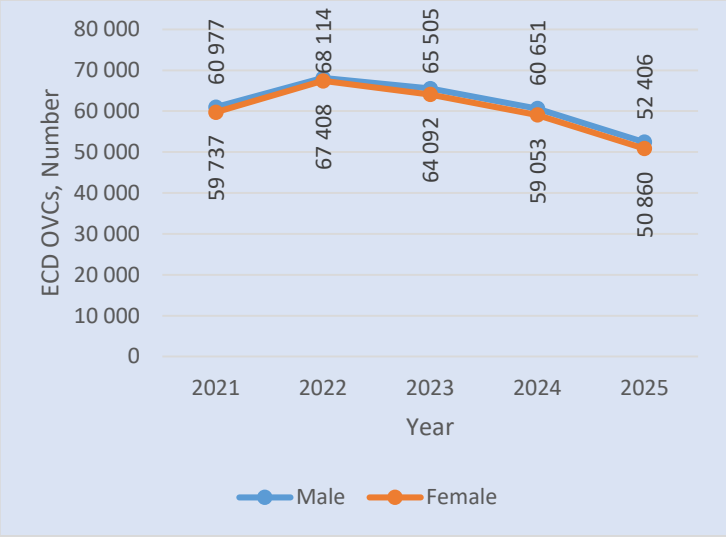


Figure 6.1: ECD Orphans and Vulnerable Children, Number, Zimbabwe 2021-2025

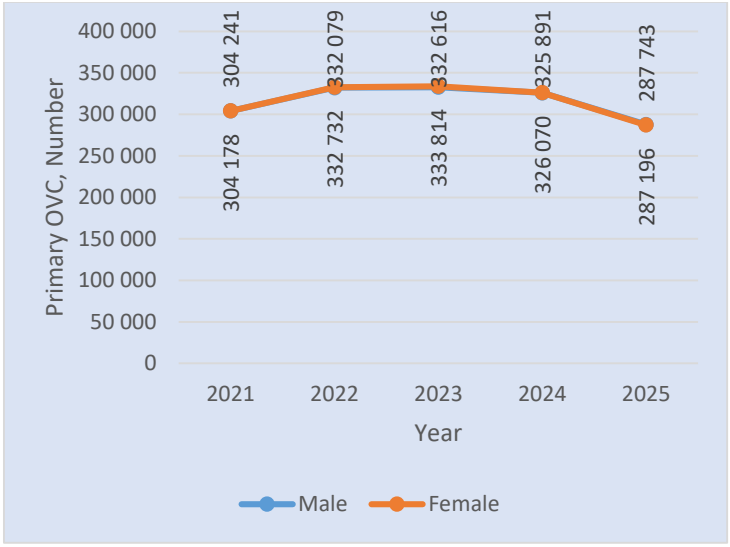


Figure 6.2: Primary School (Grade 1-7) Orphans and Vulnerable Children, Number, Zimbabwe 2021-2025

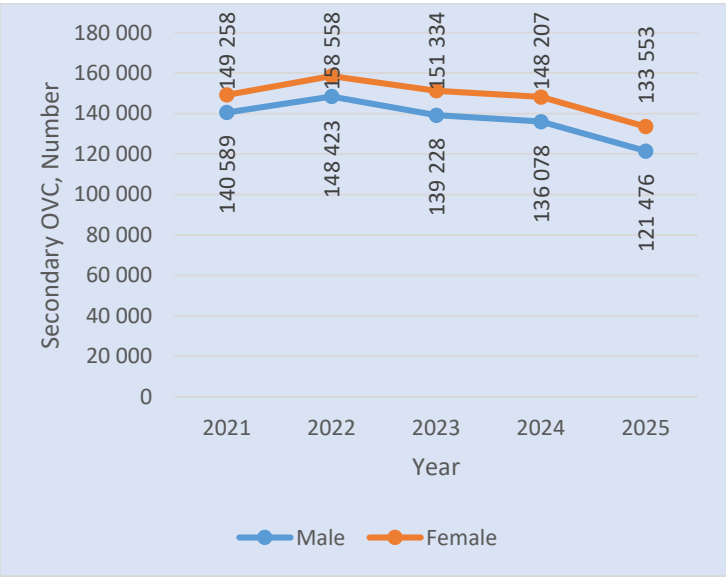


Figure 6.3: Secondary School (Form 1-6) Orphans and Vulnerable Children, Number, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

Table 6.2 shows substantial provincial variation in ECD OVC prevalence in 2025. Midlands recorded the highest proportion of ECD pupils who were OVCs at 18.29%, followed closely by Masvingo (17.69%) and Manicaland (17.74%), while Harare had the lowest prevalence at 6.16%. In absolute terms, Manicaland recorded the highest number of ECD OVCs (18,295), accounting for nearly one-fifth of the national total. Gender parity was high across all provinces, with GPIs ranging narrowly between 0.97 and 1.02, indicating minimal sex disparities in ECD OVC enrolment.

Table 6.2: ECD Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVC) by Sex and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Total ECD OVC, No.			% Pupils OVC			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	1 115	1 126	2 241	8.55	8.49	8.52	0.99
Harare	1 579	1 602	3 181	6.11	6.22	6.16	1.02
Manicaland	9 257	9 038	18 295	17.83	17.66	17.74	0.99
Mashonaland Central	4 897	4 824	9 721	14.60	14.81	14.70	1.01
Mashonaland East	5 557	5 238	10 795	15.44	15.00	15.23	0.97
Mashonaland West	6 379	6 152	12 531	17.69	17.34	17.51	0.98
Masvingo	8 340	8 069	16 409	17.84	17.54	17.69	0.98
Matabeleland North	3 843	3 697	7 540	17.75	17.41	17.58	0.98
Matabeleland South	3 641	3 566	7 207	17.15	17.48	17.31	1.02
Midlands	7 798	7 548	15 346	18.55	18.02	18.29	0.97
Grand Total	52 406	50 860	103 266	15.97	15.76	15.87	0.99

Figure 6.4 visually reinforces strong provincial disparities in ECD OVC prevalence. Provinces in the eastern and southern regions—particularly Midlands, Masvingo, and Manicaland—show notably higher percentages of ECD OVCs compared to urban provinces such as Harare and Bulawayo. The clustering of higher OVC prevalence in predominantly rural provinces highlights the continued vulnerability of young children in less urbanised areas.

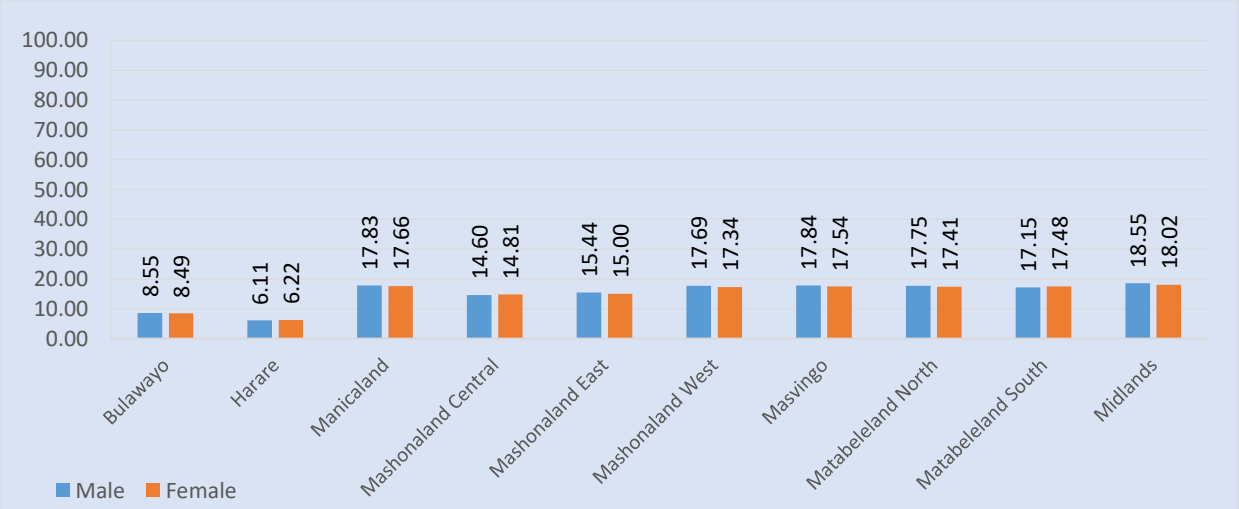


Figure 6.4: ECD Orphaned and Vulnerable Children by Province, Percentage OVC, Zimbabwe, 2025

Table 6.3 indicates that nearly one in five primary school pupils nationally was classified as OVC in 2025 (19.46%). Provincial prevalence ranged from a low of 9.17% in Harare to a high of 24.24% in Matabeleland South. Manicaland recorded the largest absolute number of primary OVCs (97,807), followed by Masvingo (82,862) and Midlands (76,728). Gender parity was virtually perfect across provinces, with GPIs clustering around 1.00, confirming that male and female pupils were equally affected at primary level.

Table 6.3: Primary School Orphaned and Vulnerable (OVC) by Sex and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Total Primary School OVCs, No.			% Pupils OVC			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	9 156	9 136	18 292	15.36	14.95	15.15	0.97
Harare	15 644	15 628	31 272	9.25	9.08	9.17	0.98
Manicaland	48 788	49 019	97 807	21.45	21.75	21.60	1.01
Mashonaland Central	28 027	28 697	56 724	20.04	20.76	20.40	1.04
Mashonaland East	30 097	29 888	59 985	18.63	18.74	18.68	1.01
Mashonaland West	37 594	37 899	75 493	21.39	21.72	21.56	1.02
Masvingo	41 695	41 167	82 862	22.08	22.05	22.07	1.00
Matabeleland North	19 179	18 954	38 133	22.71	22.61	22.66	1.00
Matabeleland South	19 101	18 542	37 643	24.41	24.06	24.24	0.99
Midlands	38 462	38 266	76 728	20.45	20.38	20.42	1.00
Grand Total	287 743	287 196	574 939	19.54	19.59	19.56	1.00

Figure 6.5 highlights pronounced regional inequalities in primary school OVC prevalence. Southern and western provinces such as Matabeleland South, Matabeleland North, Masvingo and Mashonaland West recorded the highest proportions of OVCs, while Harare and Bulawayo remained clear outliers with substantially lower percentages. This spatial pattern mirrors broader rural–urban disparities in child vulnerability.

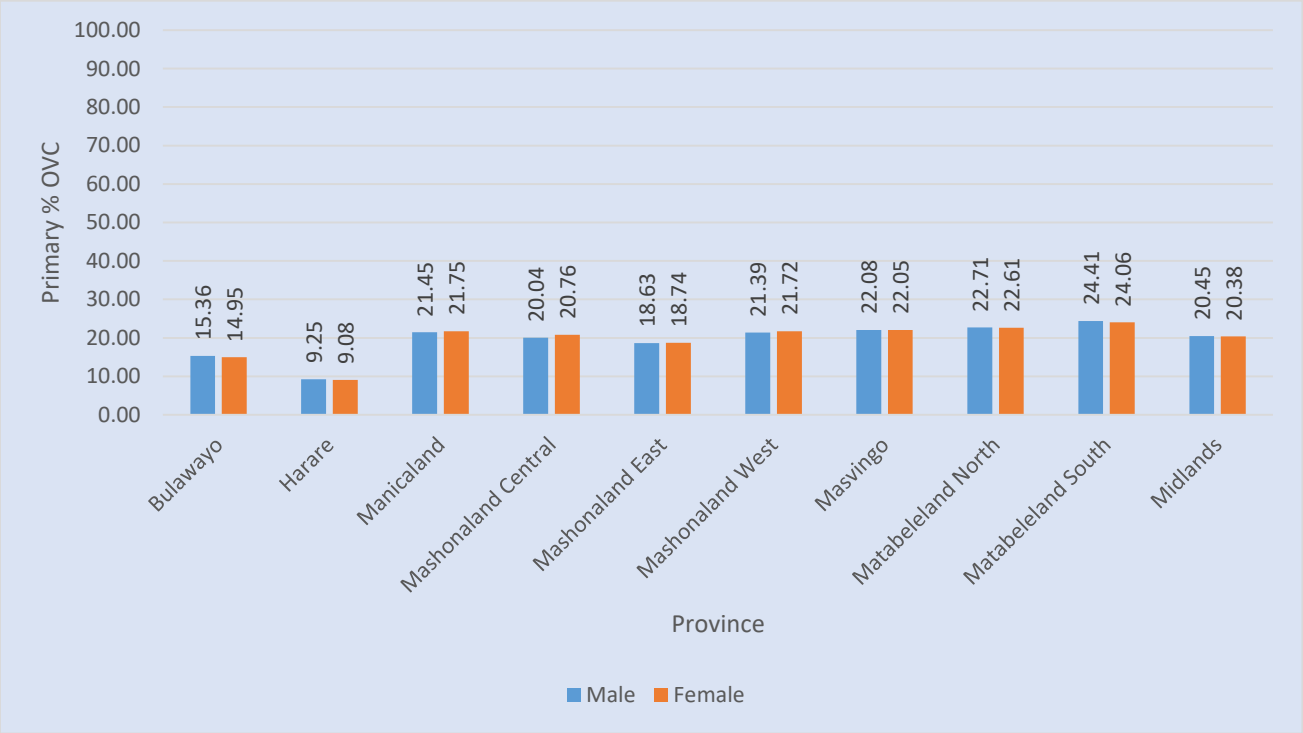


Figure 6.5: Primary School Orphaned and Vulnerable Children by Province, Percentage OVC, Zimbabwe, 2025

Table 6.4 shows that OVC prevalence was highest at secondary level, with a national average of 22.26% in 2025. Provincial variation was wide, ranging from 12.22% in Harare to 27.21% in Matabeleland South. Manicaland recorded the highest number of secondary OVCs (43,528), followed by Masvingo (35,836) and Midlands (34,241). Females consistently exhibited higher OVC prevalence than males across all provinces, reflected in GPIs above 1.00 in every case, signalling heightened vulnerability among adolescent females.

Table 6.4: Secondary School Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVC) by Sex and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Total Secondary School OVCs, No.			% Pupils OVC			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	5 802	6 874	12 676	20.91	21.40	21.17	1.02
Harare	8 616	9 205	17 821	12.19	12.24	12.22	1.00
Manicaland	21 519	22 009	43 528	24.27	25.12	24.69	1.03
Mashonaland Central	10 194	11 122	21 316	23.16	24.93	24.05	1.08
Mashonaland East	13 746	14 087	27 833	21.17	22.05	21.61	1.04
Mashonaland West	14 469	15 447	29 916	23.07	24.74	23.90	1.07
Masvingo	17 198	18 638	35 836	22.23	23.37	22.80	1.05
Matabeleland North	6 701	8 686	15 387	25.12	26.11	25.67	1.04
Matabeleland South	7 383	9 092	16 475	26.52	27.80	27.21	1.05
Midlands	15 848	18 393	34 241	23.11	24.54	23.85	1.06
Grand Total	121 476	133 553	255 029	21.72	22.77	22.26	1.05

Figure 6.6 shows that secondary school OVC prevalence is highest in Matabeleland North, Matabeleland South, Manicaland, and Mashonaland Central, all exceeding 24%. Urban provinces again show lower vulnerability, underscoring persistent structural and socio-economic disadvantages faced by pupils in rural and semi-rural areas at secondary school level.

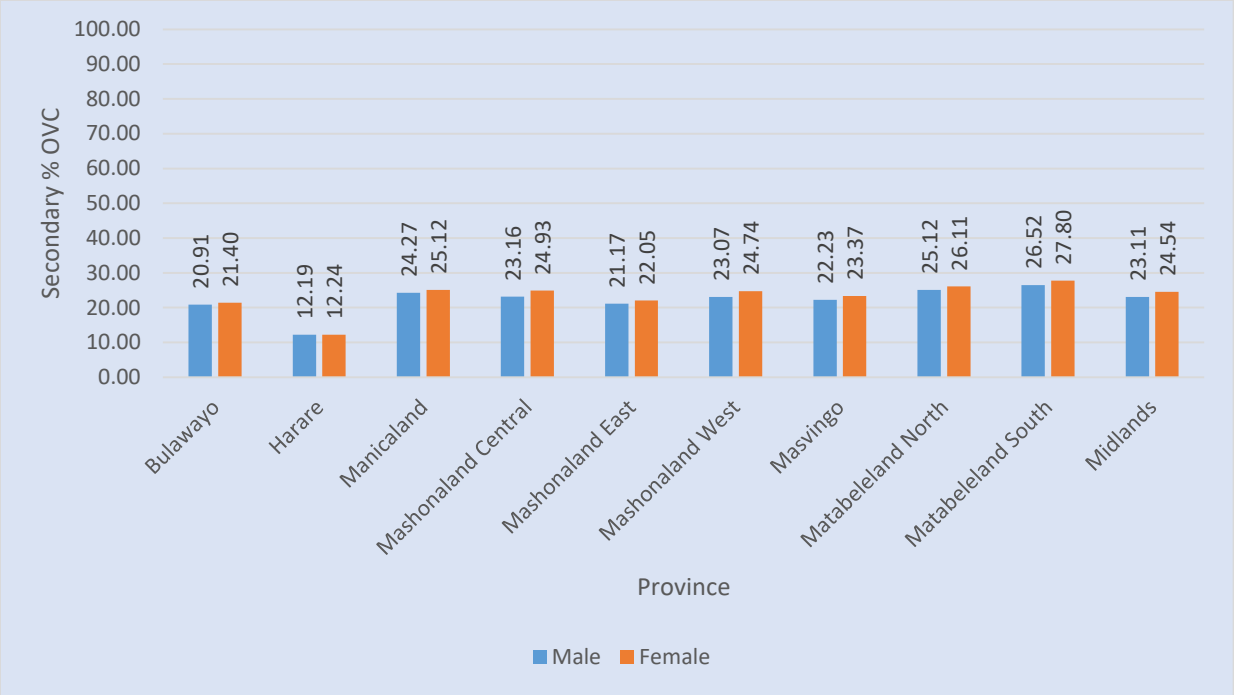


Figure 6.6: Secondary School Orphaned and Vulnerable Children by Province, Percentage OVC, Zimbabwe, 2025

6.2 OVC by Type

Table 6.5 shows that in 2025, vulnerable but non-orphaned children constituted the largest category of ECD OVC nationally, accounting for 61,544 pupils, followed by single paternal orphans (16,758) and single maternal orphans (16,414), while double orphans accounted for the smallest group (8,554). In absolute terms, the highest numbers of ECD OVC were recorded in Manicaland (18,295), Masvingo (15,487), Midlands (14,936) and Mashonaland Central (11,842), reflecting both population size and higher socio-economic vulnerability. Across provinces, vulnerable non-orphans consistently dominated the OVC profile, particularly in Matabeleland North and South, where they accounted for more than two-thirds of all ECD OVC cases. Gender differences were minimal across all vulnerability types, with male and female numbers remaining broadly similar in every province, indicating high gender parity in ECD vulnerability patterns.

Table 6.5: ECD OVC by Type, Sex and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Double Orphans			Single Orphans (maternal)			Single Orphans (paternal)			Vulnerable but not Orphaned			Grand Total
	No.			No.			No.			No.			
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	80	64	144	171	166	337	156	164	320	708	732	1 440	2 241
Harare	178	187	365	313	344	657	359	355	714	729	716	1 445	3 181
Manicaland	853	867	1 720	1 604	1 584	3 188	1 588	1 556	3 144	5 212	5 031	10 243	18 295
Mashonaland Central	362	354	716	713	760	1 473	821	775	1 596	3 001	2 935	5 936	9 721
Mashonaland East	425	409	834	877	789	1 666	920	877	1 797	3 335	3 163	6 498	10 795
Mashonaland West	556	522	1 078	1 009	985	1 994	1 009	930	1 939	3 805	3 715	7 520	12 531
Masvingo	740	676	1 416	1 319	1 271	2 590	1 430	1 364	2 794	4 851	4 758	9 609	16 409
Matabeleland North	184	189	373	486	477	963	509	460	969	2 664	2 571	5 235	7 540
Matabeleland South	196	195	391	381	386	767	475	448	923	2 589	2 537	5 126	7 207
Midlands	744	723	1 467	1 412	1 418	2 830	1 262	1 295	2 557	4 380	4 112	8 492	15 346
Grand Total	4 318	4 186	8 504	8 285	8 180	16 465	8 529	8 224	16 753	31 274	30 270	61 544	103 266

Figure 6.7 shows that at ECD level, the largest share of orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) across all provinces was made up of vulnerable but not orphaned children, far exceeding all other categories. Manicaland recorded the highest numbers, with 10,243 vulnerable but not orphaned children, alongside 3,144 single paternal orphans, 3,188 single maternal orphans, and 1,720 double orphans, indicating a substantial concentration of early childhood vulnerability in the province. Masvingo followed, reporting 9,609 vulnerable but not orphaned pupils, 2,794 single paternal orphans, 2,590 single maternal orphans, and 1,416 double orphans, while Midlands also exhibited high counts with 8,492 vulnerable but not orphaned children, 2,557 single paternal orphans, 2,830 single maternal orphans, and 1,467 double orphans. By contrast, Bulawayo consistently recorded the lowest ECD OVC numbers, with 1,440 vulnerable but not orphaned pupils, 320 single paternal orphans, 337 single maternal orphans, and only 144 double orphans. Across all provinces, single orphans, particularly paternal orphans, generally outnumbered maternal ones, while double orphans constituted the smallest group at ECD level.

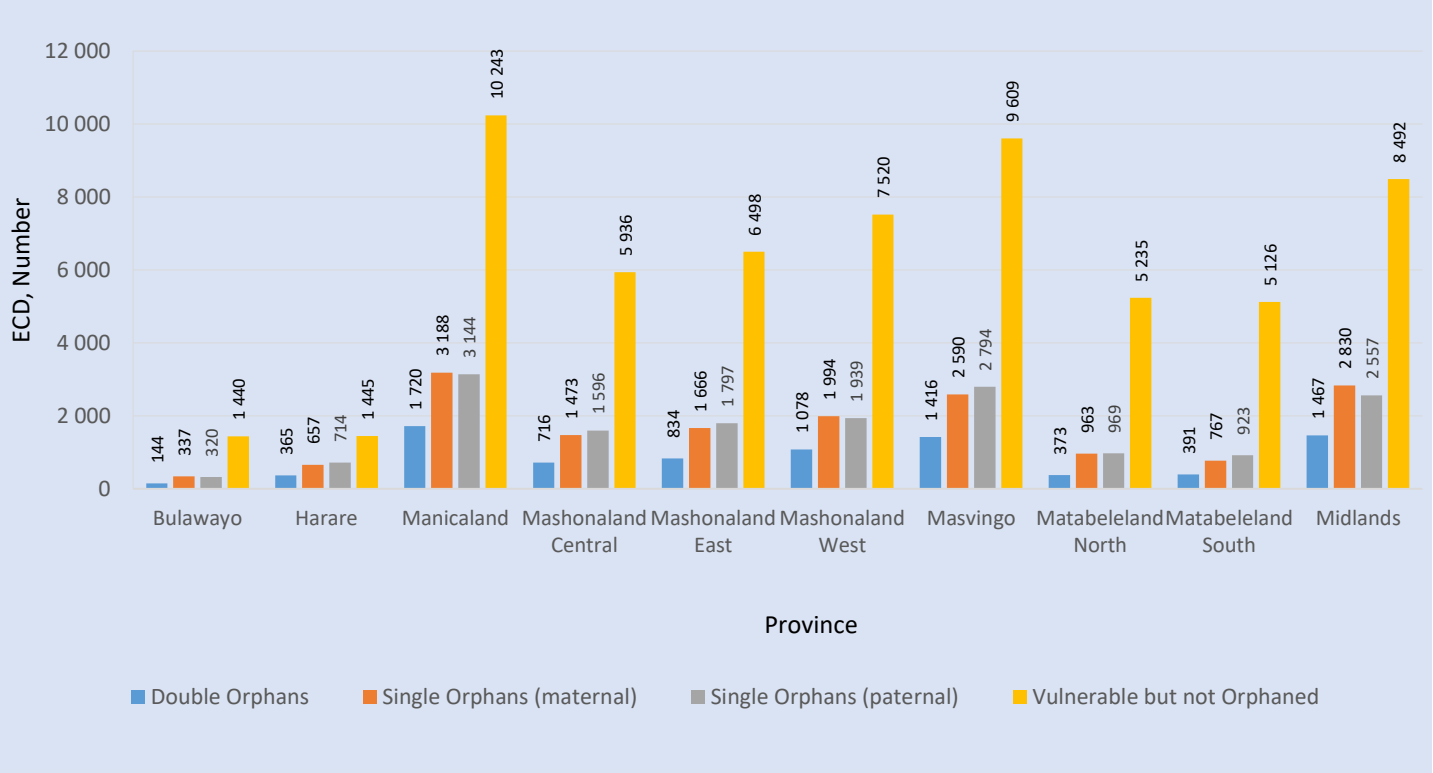


Figure 6.7: ECD OVCs by Type and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe 2025

Table 6.6 presents the percentage composition of ECD OVC by vulnerability type, confirming that vulnerability without orphanhood is the dominant driver of ECD risk nationally. Vulnerable but non-orphaned children accounted for 59.6% of all ECD OVC, while single paternal orphans contributed 16.2%, single maternal orphans 15.9%, and double orphans only 8.2%. Provincial variation is evident, with Matabeleland South (71.1%) and Matabeleland North (69.4%) recording the highest shares of vulnerable non-orphans, compared to Harare (45.4%) and Midlands (55.3%), where orphanhood constituted a relatively larger share of vulnerability. Double orphan proportions were consistently low across all provinces but were slightly higher in Harare (11.47%) and Midlands (9.56%), suggesting compounded household vulnerability in these areas.

Table 6.6: ECD OVCs by Type and Province, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Double Orphans	Single Orphans (maternal)	Single Orphans (paternal)	Vulnerable but not Orphaned	Total, %	Total No.
Bulawayo	6.43	15.04	14.28	64.26	100.00	2 241
Harare	11.47	20.65	22.45	45.43	100.00	3 181
Manicaland	9.40	17.43	17.19	55.99	100.00	18 295
Mashonaland Central	7.37	15.15	16.42	61.06	100.00	9 721
Mashonaland East	7.73	15.43	16.65	60.19	100.00	10 795
Mashonaland West	8.60	15.91	15.47	60.01	100.00	12 531
Masvingo	8.63	15.78	17.03	58.56	100.00	16 409
Matabeleland North	4.95	12.77	12.85	69.43	100.00	7 540
Matabeleland South	5.43	10.64	12.81	71.13	100.00	7 207
Midlands	9.56	18.44	16.66	55.34	100.00	15 346
Grand Total	8.24	15.94	16.22	59.60	100.00	103 266

Table 6.7 shows that in 2025, primary school OVC enrolment was dominated by vulnerable but non-orphaned children, who accounted for approximately 298,457 pupils nationwide, followed by single paternal orphans (about 131,061) and single maternal orphans (around 96,676), while double orphans formed the smallest group (about 45,745). In absolute terms, the highest numbers of primary OVCs were recorded in Manicaland (over 97,000), Masvingo (about 82,000), Midlands (around 76,000) and Mashonaland West (approximately 75,000), reflecting both large enrolment bases and elevated vulnerability. Across all provinces and OVC categories, male and female numbers were broadly balanced, with no pronounced sex disparities, confirming high gender parity in primary-level vulnerability. Vulnerable non-orphans were particularly dominant in Matabeleland North, Matabeleland South, and Mashonaland Central, where they constituted well over half of all primary OVCs, underscoring the strong link between poverty-related vulnerability and primary school participation.

Table 6.7: Primary School OVC by Type, Sex and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Double Orphans			Single Orphans (maternal)			Single Orphans (paternal)			Vulnerable but not Orphaned			Grand Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	585	616	1 201	1 296	1 469	2 765	2 093	2 128	4 221	5 182	4 923	10 105	18 292
Harare	1 500	1 527	3 027	3 457	3 451	6 908	4 162	4 227	8 389	6 525	6 423	12 948	31 272
Manicaland	4 644	4 821	9 465	8 625	8 467	17 092	11 213	11 528	22 741	24 306	24 203	48 509	97 807
Mashonaland Central	2 323	2 293	4 616	4 719	5 037	9 756	6 389	6 694	13 083	14 596	14 673	29 269	56 724
Mashonaland East	2 648	2 532	5 180	5 349	5 346	10 695	7 658	7 778	15 436	14 442	14 232	28 674	59 985
Mashonaland West	3 042	3 230	6 272	6 067	6 117	12 184	8 020	8 345	16 365	20 465	20 207	40 672	75 493
Masvingo	3 862	3 718	7 580	6 906	7 059	13 965	9 799	9 953	19 752	21 128	20 437	41 565	82 862
Matabeleland North	1 113	1 107	2 220	2 639	2 760	5 399	3 477	3 645	7 122	11 950	11 442	23 392	38 133
Matabeleland South	1 142	1 171	2 313	2 419	2 400	4 819	3 517	3 609	7 126	12 023	11 362	23 385	37 643
Midlands	3 455	3 416	6 871	6 506	6 587	13 093	8 330	8 496	16 826	20 171	19 767	39 938	76 728
Grand Total	24 314	24 431	48 745	47 983	48 693	96 676	64 658	66 403	131 061	150 788	147 669	298 457	574 939

Figure 6.8 illustrates substantial provincial variation in the distribution of orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) enrolled in primary schools in Zimbabwe in 2025, with vulnerable but not orphaned pupils constituting the largest category across all provinces. Manicaland recorded the highest numbers in every OVC category, including 48,509 vulnerable but not orphaned pupils, 22,741 single paternal orphans, 17,092 single maternal orphans, and 9,465 double orphans, underscoring the province's high vulnerability burden. Similarly, Masvingo and Mashonaland West show large OVC populations, with Masvingo recording 41,565 vulnerable but not orphaned pupils and Mashonaland West 40,672, alongside substantial numbers of single orphans. In contrast, Bulawayo consistently reported the lowest numbers, with 10,105 vulnerable but not orphaned pupils, 4,221 single paternal orphans, 2,765 single maternal orphans, and only 1,201 double orphans.

Across all provinces, single orphans, particularly paternal orphans, outnumber maternal orphans and double orphans, indicating that loss of one parent—especially the father—is the most common orphanhood profile at primary level. Double orphans remain the smallest group but are still significant in absolute terms in provinces such as Manicaland (9,465), Masvingo (7,580) and Mashonaland West (6,272). Overall, the figure highlights that while orphanhood remains an important dimension of vulnerability, most of the primary school OVCs fall into the "vulnerable but not orphaned" category, pointing to widespread socio-economic challenges affecting pupils beyond parental loss, with pronounced geographic disparities across provinces.

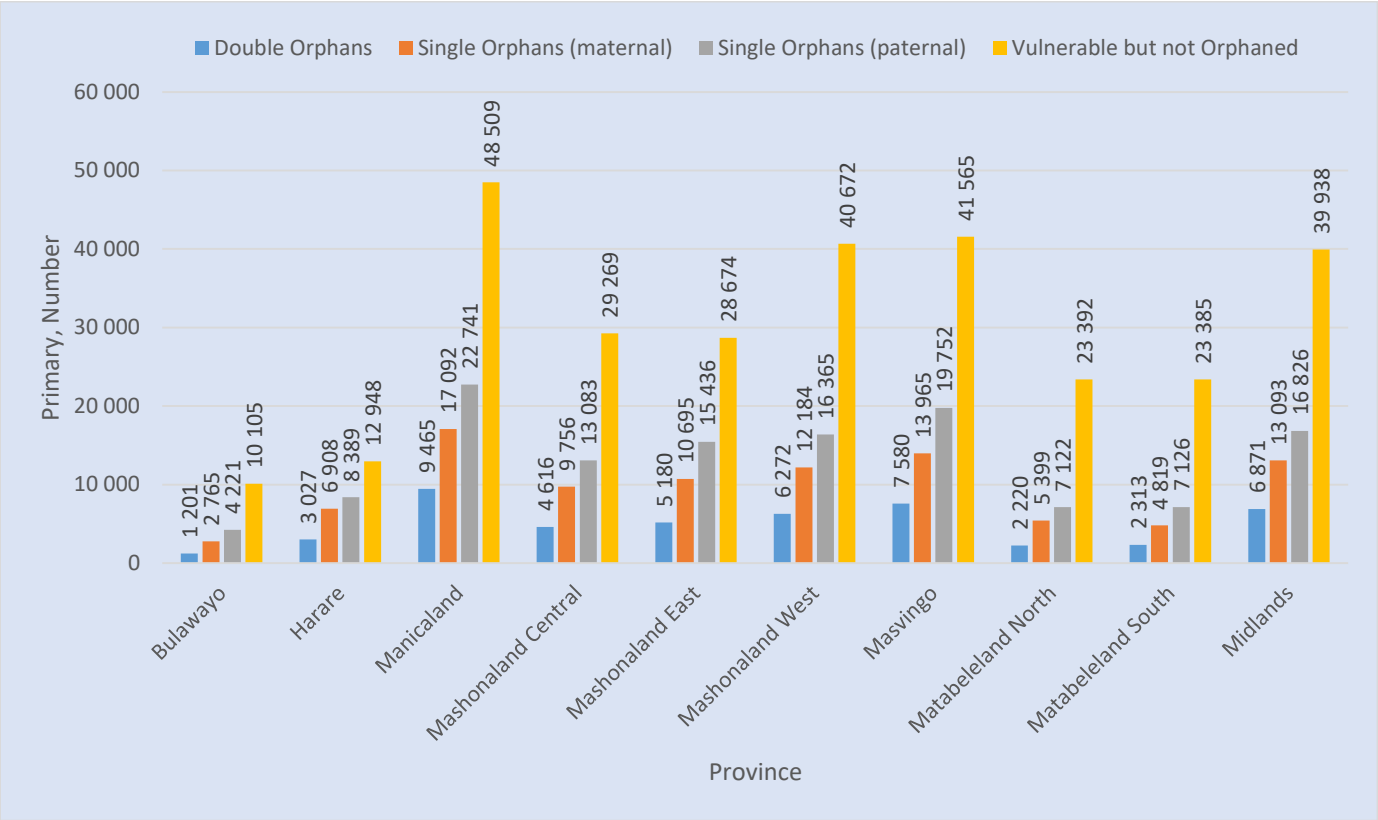


Figure 6.8: Primary School OVCs by Type and Province, Number, Zimbabwe 2025

Table 6.8 presents the percentage distribution of primary school OVC by vulnerability type, highlighting that vulnerable but non-orphaned children constituted 51.9% of all primary OVC nationally, followed by single paternal orphans (22.8%), single maternal orphans (16.8%), and double orphans (8.5%). Provincial patterns reveal that the share of vulnerable non-orphans exceeded 60% in Matabeleland North and Matabeleland South, while Harare and Bulawayo recorded relatively lower shares of vulnerable children but higher proportions of single orphans, reflecting different urban vulnerability dynamics. Double orphans consistently accounted for less than 10% of primary OVCs in all provinces, though their share was marginally higher in Masvingo, Harare and Manicaland, indicating compounded household vulnerability in these areas.

Table 6.8: Primary School OVCs by Type and Province, Percentage Distribution and Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Double Orphans	Single Orphans (maternal)	Single Orphans (paternal)	Vulnerable but not Orphaned	Total, %	Total No.
Bulawayo	6.57	15.12	23.08	55.24	100.00	18 292
Harare	9.68	22.09	26.83	41.40	100.00	31 272
Manicaland	9.68	17.48	23.25	49.60	100.00	97 807
Mashonaland Central	8.14	17.20	23.06	51.60	100.00	56 724
Mashonaland East	8.64	17.83	25.73	47.80	100.00	59 985
Mashonaland West	8.31	16.14	21.68	53.88	100.00	75 493
Masvingo	9.15	16.85	23.84	50.16	100.00	82 862
Matabeleland North	5.82	14.16	18.68	61.34	100.00	38 133
Matabeleland South	6.14	12.80	18.93	62.12	100.00	37 643
Midlands	8.96	17.06	21.93	52.05	100.00	76 728
Grand Total	8.48	16.82	22.80	51.91	100.00	574 939

Table 6.9 shows that in 2025, secondary school OVC enrolment totalled approximately 255,029 pupils nationwide, with vulnerability profiles more evenly distributed across categories compared to ECD and primary school levels. Vulnerable but non-orphaned pupils accounted for about 90,713 pupils, representing the largest group, followed by single paternal orphans (about 71,948) and single maternal orphans (around 58,659), while double orphans numbered approximately 33,709. Provinces with the highest absolute numbers of secondary school OVCs were Manicaland (over 43,528), Masvingo (about 35,836) and Midlands (around 34,241), together accounting for nearly 45% of all secondary OVCs nationally. Female OVC enrolment marginally exceeded male enrolment ones in most provinces and across most vulnerability types, indicating slightly higher female retention at secondary school level despite vulnerability, particularly in rural-dominant provinces.

Table 6.9: Secondary School OVC by Type, Sex and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Double Orphans			Single Orphans (maternal)			Single Orphans (paternal)			Vulnerable but not Orphaned			Grand Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	802	931	1 733	1 415	1 673	3 088	1 731	2 067	3 798	1 854	2 203	4 057	12 676
Harare	1 298	1 347	2 645	2 281	2 470	4 751	2 458	2 778	5 236	2 579	2 610	5 189	17 821
Manicaland	3 017	3 084	6 101	4 769	4 870	9 639	5 592	5 931	11 523	8 141	8 124	16 265	43 528
Mashonaland Central	1 243	1 311	2 554	2 188	2 482	4 670	2 983	3 136	6 119	3 780	4 193	7 973	21 316
Mashonaland East	1 926	1 936	3 862	3 334	3 405	6 739	4 086	4 277	8 363	4 400	4 469	8 869	27 833
Mashonaland West	1 959	1 970	3 929	3 153	3 411	6 564	3 844	4 155	7 999	5 513	5 911	11 424	29 916
Masvingo	2 361	2 353	4 714	3 999	4 365	8 364	5 116	5 513	10 629	5 722	6 407	12 129	35 836
Matabeleland North	744	865	1 609	1 395	1 836	3 231	1 697	2 481	4 178	2 865	3 504	6 369	15 387
Matabeleland South	1 071	1 172	2 243	1 665	2 026	3 691	2 023	2 712	4 735	2 624	3 182	5 806	16 475
Midlands	2 127	2 192	4 319	3 635	4 287	7 922	4 274	5 094	9 368	5 812	6 820	12 632	34 241
Grand Total	16 548	17 161	33 709	27 834	30 825	58 659	33 804	38 144	71 948	43 290	47 423	90 713	255 029

Figure 6.9 shows marked provincial variation in the distribution of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) enrolled in secondary schools in 2025, with vulnerable but not orphaned pupils forming the largest category across all provinces. Manicaland recorded the highest numbers across all OVC categories, with approximately 16,000 vulnerable but not orphaned pupils, about 11,500 single paternal orphans, around 9,600 single maternal orphans, and roughly 6,000 double orphans, making it the province with the greatest overall OVC burden. Midlands and Masvingo also show relatively high concentrations, each recording over 12,000 vulnerable but not orphaned pupils, alongside sizeable numbers of single orphans and double orphans. In contrast, Bulawayo consistently reports the lowest numbers across all categories, with vulnerable but not orphaned pupils at around 4,000 and double orphans below 2,000.

Across all provinces, single orphans (both maternal and paternal) substantially outnumber double orphans, indicating that loss of one parent remains the more common vulnerability profile in secondary schooling. Paternal orphans generally exceed maternal orphans in most provinces, particularly in Manicaland, Mashonaland East, Midlands and Masvingo, where paternal orphanhood reaches around 8,000–11,000 pupils. Double orphans were comparatively fewer but remain significant in absolute terms in high-population provinces such as Manicaland, Midlands, and Masvingo, each recording over 4,000 pupils.

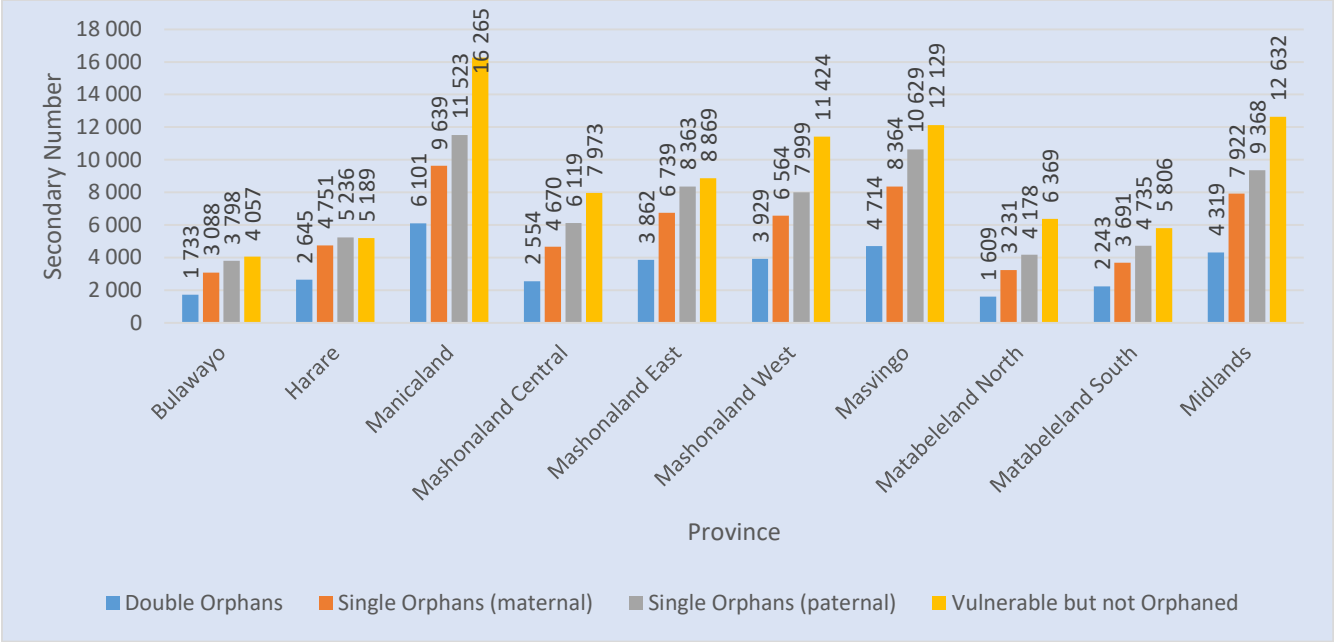


Figure 6.9: Secondary School OVCs by Type and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Table 6.10 presents the percentage distribution of secondary school OVC by vulnerability type, confirming a shift in the composition of vulnerability at higher education levels. Nationally, vulnerable but non-orphaned pupils accounted for 35.6% of secondary OVC, while single paternal orphans constituted 28.2%, single maternal orphans 23.0%, and double orphans 13.2%, the highest double-orphan share observed across all education levels. Provincial variation is pronounced with Matabeleland North recording the highest proportions of vulnerable non-orphans (exceeding 40%), while Harare and Bulawayo showed comparatively higher shares of single orphans, reflecting urban-specific vulnerability patterns. The proportion of double orphans exceeded 14% in Harare and Manicaland, highlighting cumulative vulnerability among older pupils.

Table 6.10: Secondary School OVCs by Type and Province, Percentage Distribution and Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Double Orphans	Single Orphans (maternal)	Single Orphans (paternal)	Vulnerable but not Orphaned	Total, %	Total No.
Bulawayo	13.67	24.36	29.96	32.01	100.00	12 676
Harare	14.84	26.66	29.38	29.12	100.00	17 821
Manicaland	14.02	22.14	26.47	37.37	100.00	43 528
Mashonaland Central	11.98	21.91	28.71	37.40	100.00	21 316
Mashonaland East	13.88	24.21	30.05	31.87	100.00	27 833
Mashonaland West	13.13	21.94	26.74	38.19	100.00	29 916
Masvingo	13.15	23.34	29.66	33.85	100.00	35 836
Matabeleland North	10.46	21.00	27.15	41.39	100.00	15 387
Matabeleland South	13.61	22.40	28.74	35.24	100.00	16 475
Midlands	12.61	23.14	27.36	36.89	100.00	34 241
Grand Total	13.22	23.00	28.21	35.57	100.00	255 029

6.3 Beam and Other forms of Assistance

Table 6.11 shows that in 2025, a total of 61,540 ECD pupils received funding assistance nationwide, representing 9.6% of total ECD enrolment. Provincial coverage varied widely, with the highest proportions recorded in Mashonaland West (13.34%), Matabeleland North (11.93%), and Matabeleland South (10.93%), while Harare (4.17%) and Bulawayo (7.18%) recorded the lowest shares, reflecting stronger household support in urban areas. In absolute terms, Manicaland (10,162), Mashonaland West (9.341) and Masvingo (9,341) had the largest numbers of assisted ECD pupils. Females marginally outnumbered males among beneficiaries in most provinces, although sex differences were small, indicating near gender parity in access to ECD funding support.

Table 6.11: ECD School Pupils with Funding Assistance by Type, Sex and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe 2025

Province	Total on BEAM, No.			Bursaries from Donors or Foundations			Bursaries from NGOs			Grant in Aid of Tuition			Other			% pupils on BEAM
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	893	996	1 889	15	8	23	1	11	12	49	62	111	53	30	83	7.18
Harare	1 105	930	2 035	50	52	102	3	3	6	106	112	218	12	25	37	4.17
Manicaland	4 916	5 246	10 162	28	32	60	11	13	24	35	40	75	18	12	30	10.49
Mashonaland Central	2 139	2 114	4 253	58	25	83	1	1	2	32	27	59	13	13	26	6.39
Mashonaland East	3 486	3 344	6 830	53	39	92	0	3	3	4	8	12	23	42	65	9.70
Mashonaland West	4 691	4 690	9 381	11	12	23	0	0	0	13	28	41	30	37	67	13.34
Masvingo	4 539	4 802	9 341	13	9	22	0	0	0	18	11	29	17	17	34	10.43
Matabeleland North	2 514	2 617	5 131	7	3	10	3	1	4	36	49	85	5	5	10	11.93
Matabeleland South	2 375	2 241	4 616	11	6	17	2	4	6	16	10	26	8	7	15	10.93
Midlands	3 939	3 963	7 902	18	8	26	0	1	1	9	10	19	12	24	36	9.07
Grand Total	30 597	30 943	61 540	264	194	458	21	37	58	318	357	675	191	212	403	9.60

Figure 6.10 indicates that pupils with some functional difficulties in 2025 are predominantly supported through BEAM, which covered a total of 61,540 pupils, comprising 30,943 females and 30,597 males, reflecting near gender parity (50.3% female). Other forms of support were comparatively limited. Bursaries from donors or foundations assisted 458 pupils, with a male majority (264 males compared to 194 females, or 57.6% male). Bursaries from NGOs supported only 58 pupils, of whom 37 were female and 21 were male, indicating a female share of about 63.8%. Grants-in-aid of tuition reached 675 pupils, again slightly favouring females (357 females versus 318 males, or 52.9% female). The "Other" funding sources category supported 403 pupils, with females (212) marginally exceeding males (191).

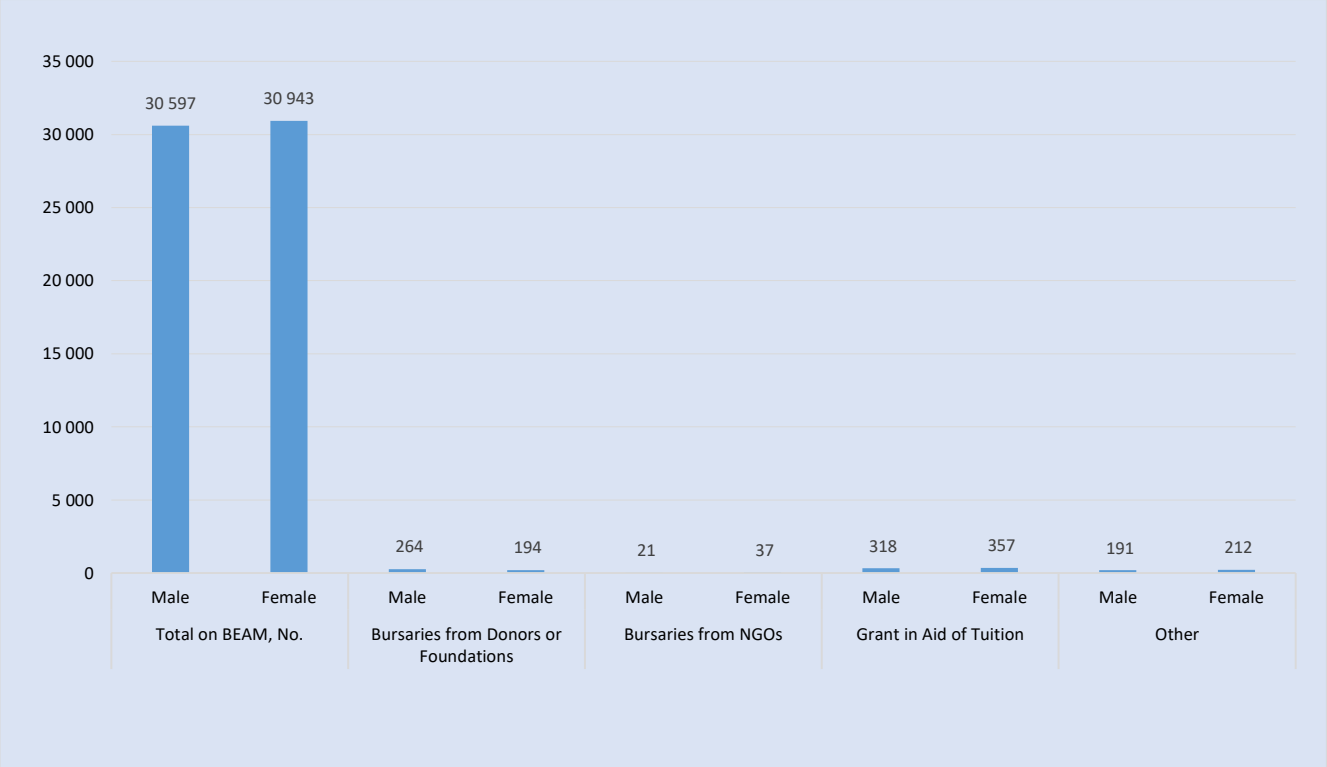


Figure 6.10: ECD School Pupils with Funding Assistance by Type, Sex and Province, Number, Zimbabwe 2025

Table 6.12 indicates that 691,068 primary school pupils received funding assistance in 2025, accounting for 24.06% of total primary enrolment nationally, making primary education the level with the widest coverage of assistance. Provincial proportions ranged from 14.06% in Harare to over 28% in Manicaland (28.18%) and Matabeleland South (27.50%), underscoring significant regional disparities. In absolute numbers, the highest counts of assisted pupils were recorded in Manicaland (123,684), Masvingo (100,900) and Midlands (81,220). Across all provinces, female pupils slightly outnumbered males among beneficiaries, mirroring overall enrolment patterns and suggesting equitable targeting of assistance. The table confirms that primary education remains the central focus of funding support, reflecting both enrolment size and vulnerability concentration at this level.

Table 6.12: Primary School Pupils with Funding Assistance by Type, Sex and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe 2025

Province	Total on BEAM, No.			Bursaries from Donors or Foundations			Bursaries from NGOs			Grant in Aid of Tuition			Other			% pupils on BEAM
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	12 147	12 037	24 184	222	343	565	191	302	493	912	940	1 852	335	369	704	20.36
Harare	22 953	23 164	46 117	311	348	659	196	196	392	1 533	1 506	3 039	119	158	277	14.06
Manicaland	58 892	64 792	123 684	541	642	1 183	201	276	477	481	507	988	346	404	750	28.18
Mashonaland Central	30 219	31 236	61 455	301	338	639	25	112	137	232	242	474	248	441	689	22.43
Mashonaland East	38 768	38 312	77 080	336	416	752	53	54	107	147	137	284	314	382	696	24.20
Mashonaland West	44 575	47 008	91 583	454	512	966	109	275	384	396	437	833	258	307	565	26.89
Masvingo	49 822	51 078	100 900	331	437	768	67	90	157	281	313	594	333	415	748	27.41
Matabeleland North	20 722	21 454	42 176	436	590	1 026	100	170	270	363	362	725	233	309	542	25.21
Matabeleland South	21 602	21 067	42 669	271	725	996	93	703	796	93	133	226	101	460	561	27.50
Midlands	40 273	40 947	81 220	233	441	674	48	178	226	108	90	198	240	288	528	22.42
Grand Total	339 973	351 095	691 068	3 436	4 792	8 228	1 083	2 356	3 439	4 546	4 667	9 213	2 527	3 533	6 060	24.06

Figure 6.11 shows that BEAM was the predominant source of funding assistance for primary school pupils in 2025, supporting a total of 691,068 pupils, of whom 351,095 were female and 339,973 were male, indicating a slight female majority (50.8% female). Other funding mechanisms played a much smaller role by comparison. Bursaries from donors or foundations supported 8,228 pupils, with females (4,792) outnumbering males (3,436), accounting for about 58.2% female beneficiaries. Bursaries from NGOs reached 3,439 pupils, of whom 2,356 were female and 1,083 were male, showing a pronounced female bias (68.5% female). Grants-in-aid of tuition assisted 9,213 pupils, with near gender parity but a slight female advantage (4,667 females versus 4,546 males). The "Other" funding sources category covered 6,060 pupils, again skewed toward females (3,533 females compared to 2,527 males, or 58.3% female).

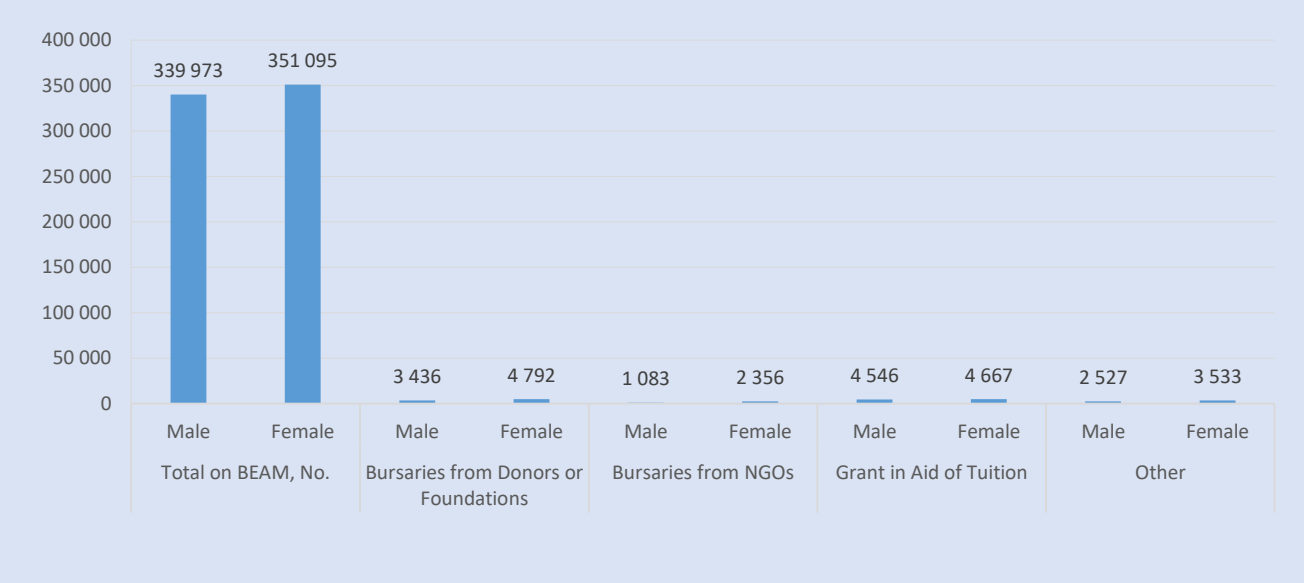


Figure 6.11: Primary School Pupils with Funding Assistance by Type, Sex and Province, Number, Zimbabwe 2025

Table 6.13 shows that 341,133 secondary school pupils received funding assistance in 2025, representing 29.46% of the total secondary school enrolment, the highest proportional coverage across all education levels. Provincial variation is pronounced, with Masvingo recording the highest coverage (56.20%), followed by Mashonaland West (31.80%) and Manicaland (29.62%), while Harare (14.05%) and Bulawayo (17.71%) had the lowest shares. In absolute terms, Masvingo (87,989) and Manicaland (52,116) recorded the largest numbers of supported secondary pupils. Females consistently constituted a slightly higher proportion of beneficiaries than males across most provinces, reflecting stronger female retention and targeted equity interventions at secondary level.

Table 6.13: Secondary School Pupils with Funding Assistance by Type, Sex and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe 2025

Province	Total on BEAM, No.			Bursaries from Donors or Foundations			Bursaries from NGOs			Grant in Aid of Tuition			Other			% pupils on BEAM
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	5 165	5 495	10 660	390	709	1 099	48	581	629	39	49	88	142	155	297	17.71
Harare	9 851	10 417	20 268	431	497	928	299	303	602	278	476	754	357	339	696	14.05
Manicaland	26 452	25 664	52 116	773	1 800	2 573	242	1 341	1 583	349	351	700	427	752	1 179	29.62
Mashonaland Central	13 253	12 583	25 836	268	1 570	1 838	115	1 288	1 403	147	175	322	61	205	266	28.93
Mashonaland East	16 443	14 350	30 793	531	1 771	2 302	96	903	999	431	104	535	306	453	759	23.39
Mashonaland West	21 415	19 102	40 517	357	1 346	1 703	143	1 412	1 555	186	305	491	103	206	309	31.80
Masvingo	48 314	39 675	87 989	611	1 443	2 054	241	935	1 176	151	133	284	164	350	514	56.20
Matabeleland North	7 530	9 295	16 825	367	1 059	1 426	239	2 090	2 329	39	49	88	170	313	483	27.46
Matabeleland South	8 119	8 426	16 545	200	1 337	1 537	74	1 755	1 829	82	166	248	39	152	191	25.95
Midlands	19 657	19 927	39 584	270	1 977	2 247	199	2 584	2 783	613	588	1 201	206	832	1 038	26.82
Grand Total	176 199	164 934	341 133	4 198	13 509	17 707	1 696	13 192	14 888	2 315	2 396	4 711	1 975	3 757	5 732	29.46

Figure 6.12 shows that BEAM is by far the dominant source of funding assistance for secondary school pupils in 2025, supporting a total of 341,133 pupils, comprising 176,199 males and 164,934 females, indicating a slight male predominance (about 51.7% male and 48.3% female). This is followed at a much lower scale by bursaries from donors or foundations, which benefited 17,707 pupils in total, with a clear female advantage (13,509 females compared to 4,198 males), meaning females accounted for approximately 76% of beneficiaries under this category. Bursaries from NGOs supported 14,888 pupils, again with more females (13,192) than males (1,696), reflecting a strong gender skew towards female pupils (about 88.6% female). Grants-in-aid of tuition reached 4,711 pupils, evenly distributed by sex, with 2,396 females and 2,315 males, indicating near gender parity. The "Other" funding sources category assisted 5,732 pupils, with females (3,757) exceeding males (1,975), accounting for roughly 65.6% female beneficiaries.

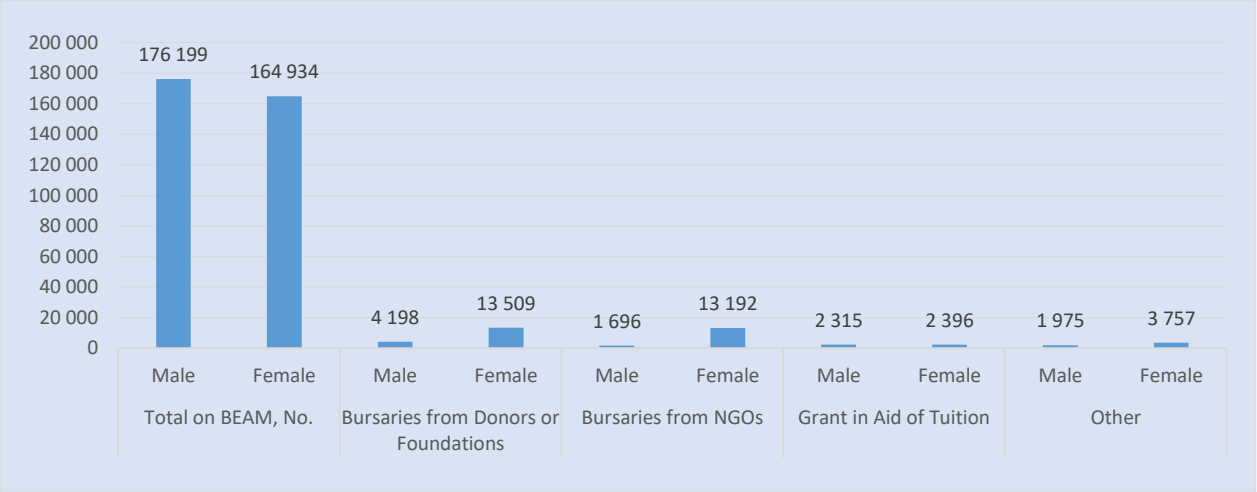


Figure 6.12: Secondary School Pupils with Funding Assistance by Type, Sex and Province, Number, Zimbabwe 2025

6.4 Pupils with Functioning Difficulties

In 2025, a total of 73,606 pupils across all education levels were identified as having at least one functional difficulty, with primary education accounting for the majority (52,817 pupils; 71.8%), followed by secondary education (11,018; 14.97%) and ECD (9,771; 13.27%). Across all levels, male pupils slightly outnumbered female ones, particularly at ECD and primary levels, while sex differences narrowed at secondary level.

Table 6.14: Functional Difficulties, Primary and Secondary Schools by Type and Sex, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	ECD			Primary			Secondary			Grand Total
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	
Bulawayo	193	152	345	1 629	1 376	3 005	405	409	814	4 164
Harare	303	230	533	2 395	2 012	4 407	694	577	1 271	6 211
Manicaland	909	802	1 711	3 336	2 884	6 220	521	481	1 002	8 933
Mashonaland Central	454	391	845	3 228	2 720	5 948	556	569	1 125	7 918
Mashonaland East	609	521	1 130	3 679	3 054	6 733	582	529	1 111	8 974
Mashonaland West	435	349	784	2 483	1 991	4 474	528	523	1 051	6 309
Masvingo	1 145	1 009	2 154	5 460	4 578	10 038	1 067	1 036	2 103	14 295
Matabeleland North	394	274	668	1 929	1 611	3 540	490	607	1 097	5 305
Matabeleland South	292	196	488	1 504	1 091	2 595	260	315	575	3 658
Midlands	604	509	1 113	3 217	2 640	5 857	401	468	869	7 839
Grand Total	5 338	4 433	9 771	28 860	23 957	52 817	5 504	5 514	11 018	73 606

Table 6.15 shows that disabilities are far more prevalent among pupils in primary education (including ECD) than in secondary school education, both in absolute numbers and across all impairment categories. Overall, the largest concentration of pupils with disabilities is observed in cognitive-related impairments, particularly difficulty in remembering or concentrating, which accounts for 38,083 pupils nationally (32,818 in primary and 5,265 in secondary), representing the single largest impairment group. Of these, pupils with some

difficulty in remembering dominate, totalling 26,239 pupils, while 9,484 experience a lot of difficulty and 2,360 are reported as unable to remember at all. Visual impairments are also significant, with 6,482 pupils experiencing difficulty in seeing, including 5,388 with some difficulty, 702 with a lot of difficulty, and 392 who cannot see at all. In nearly all impairment categories, males slightly outnumber females at primary level, whereas sex differences narrow considerably at secondary level.

Physical and sensory impairments also show notable patterns. Hearing impairments affect 4,399 pupils, with some difficulty hearing accounting for 2,242 pupils, while 1,577 pupils cannot hear at all, indicating a relatively high severity burden within this category. Mobility-related impairments affect 4,263 pupils, including 625 pupils who cannot walk at all, again concentrated mainly at primary school level. Difficulties with self-care and communication together affect over 15,900 pupils, with primary school pupils accounting for more than 85 percent of cases in both categories. Pupils with albinism, though fewer in number, total 709 nationally, with 529 (74.6%) enrolled in primary education, reflecting early identification and enrolment at lower levels. Across all impairment types, the data consistently show that primary school education absorbs the majority of pupils with disabilities, while transition to secondary education declines sharply, particularly for pupils with severe or multiple impairments—highlighting persistent challenges in progression, accessibility, and retention for pupils with disabilities within the education system.

Table 6.15: Functional Difficulties, Primary and Secondary Schools by Type and Sex, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Category	Impairment	Primary (Including ECD)			Secondary			Grand Total
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses	Some Difficulty Seeing	2 084	1 921	4 005	582	801	1 383	5 388
	A lot of Difficulty Seeing	278	243	521	91	90	181	702
	Cannot See At All	132	123	255	77	60	137	392
Difficulty in hearing, even if using a hearing aid(s)	Some Difficulty Hearing	910	860	1 770	228	244	472	2 242
	A lot of Difficulty Hearing	244	198	442	63	75	138	580
	Cannot Hear at All	632	582	1 214	197	166	363	1 577
Difficulty in walking or climbing stairs	Some Difficulty Walking	1 203	887	2 090	241	257	498	2 588
	A lot of Difficulty Walking	514	393	907	75	68	143	1 050
	Cannot Walk at All	306	228	534	50	41	91	625
Difficulty in remembering or concentrating	Some Difficulty Remembering	12 737	10 384	23 121	1 595	1 523	3 118	26 239
	A lot of Difficulty Remembering	4 261	3 423	7 684	965	835	1 800	9 484
	Cannot Remember at All	1 125	888	2 013	184	163	347	2 360
Difficulty with self-care	Some Difficulty with Self Care	3 369	2 811	6 180	260	214	474	6 654
	A lot of Difficulty with Self Care	811	574	1 385	67	56	123	1 508
	Cannot take Care of Self at All	352	231	583	18	14	32	615
Difficulty communicating	Some Difficulty with Communicating	2 473	1 953	4 426	208	194	402	4 828
	A lot of Difficulty with Communicating	802	576	1 378	105	82	187	1 565
	Cannot Communicate at All	353	258	611	80	64	144	755
Albinism		277	252	529	81	99	180	709

Figure 6.13 indicates that pupils with some functional difficulties are overwhelmingly concentrated in primary school education (including ECD), with comparatively smaller numbers enrolled at secondary school level across all impairment types. The most prevalent difficulty is remembering or concentrating, affecting 26,239 pupils nationally, of whom 23,121 (88.1%) are in primary schools and 3,118 (11.9%) in secondary schools. This is followed by difficulty with self-care, recorded among 6,654 pupils, with 6,180 (92.9%) in primary education and only 474 (7.1%) in secondary schools. Difficulty in seeing (even with glasses) affects 5,388 pupils, including 4,005 (74.3%) at primary school level and 1,383 (25.7%) at secondary school level, showing relatively higher continuation to secondary compared to other impairment types. Difficulty in communicating accounts for 4,828 pupils, of whom 4,426 (91.7%) are in primary and 402 (8.3%) in secondary schools, while difficulty in walking or climbing stairs affects 2,588 pupils, with 2,090 (80.8%) in primary and 498 (19.2%) in secondary school education. Difficulty in hearing is reported among 2,242 pupils, including 1,770 (79.0%) in primary schools and 472 (21.0%) in secondary schools.

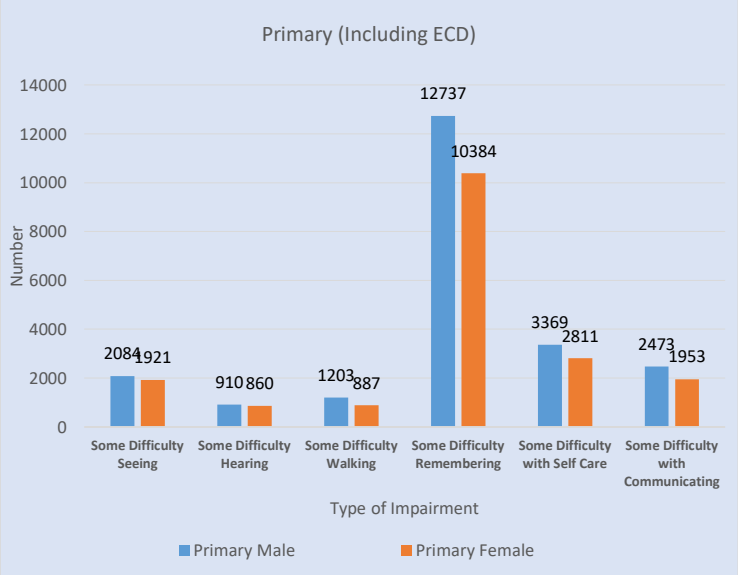


Figure 6.13: Distribution of Some Functional Difficulties, Primary and Secondary Schools by Type, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Figure 6.14 shows that pupils experiencing a lot of functional difficulties are predominantly enrolled in primary education (including ECD), with markedly fewer pupils represented at secondary level across all impairment types. The largest concentration is observed in difficulty in remembering or concentrating, affecting 9,484 pupils nationally, of whom 7,684 (81.0%) are in primary schools and 1,800 (19.0%) in secondary schools. This is followed by difficulty with self-care, which affects 1,508 pupils, including 1,385 (91.9%) in primary education and only 123 (8.1%) in secondary schools, indicating substantial attrition as severity increases. Difficulty in communicating accounts for 1,565 pupils, with 1,378 (88.0%) at primary level and 187 (12.0%) at secondary level, while difficulty in walking or climbing stairs affects 1,050 pupils, of whom 907 (86.4%) are in primary and 143 (13.6%)

in secondary school education. Severe hearing difficulties (a lot of difficulty hearing) were reported among 580 pupils, with 442 (76.2%) in primary and 138 (23.8%) in secondary schools, while visual impairment (a lot of difficulty seeing) affects 702 pupils, including 521 (74.2%) at primary level and 181 (25.8%) at secondary level.

Figure 6.14: Distribution of A Lot of Functional Difficulties, Primary and Secondary Schools by Type, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Figure 6.15 highlights that pupils reported as unable to function at all across different impairment types are overwhelmingly concentrated in primary education (including ECD), with substantially fewer cases at secondary level for every disability category. The largest number of severe functional limitations is observed in difficulty in remembering or concentrating, with a total of 2,360 pupils nationally, of whom 2,013 (85.3%) are in primary school education and only 347 (14.7%) in secondary school education. Severe hearing impairment (cannot hear at all) follows, affecting 1,577 pupils, including 1,214 (77.0%) in primary schools and 363 (23.0%) in secondary schools. Mobility impairments (cannot walk at all) account for 625 pupils, with 534 (85.4%) at primary level and 91 (14.6%) at secondary level, while communication difficulties (cannot communicate at all) affects 755 pupils, of whom 611 (80.9%) are in primary and 144 (19.1%) in secondary education. Severe visual impairment (cannot see at all) is reported among 392 pupils, with 255 (65.1%) enrolled in primary and 137 (34.9%) in secondary schools, making it the impairment with the relatively highest secondary-level share. Across all categories, the figure demonstrates a steep decline in the number of pupils with the most severe functional difficulties as education level increases, underscoring significant barriers to progression and retention into secondary schooling for pupils with profound disabilities.

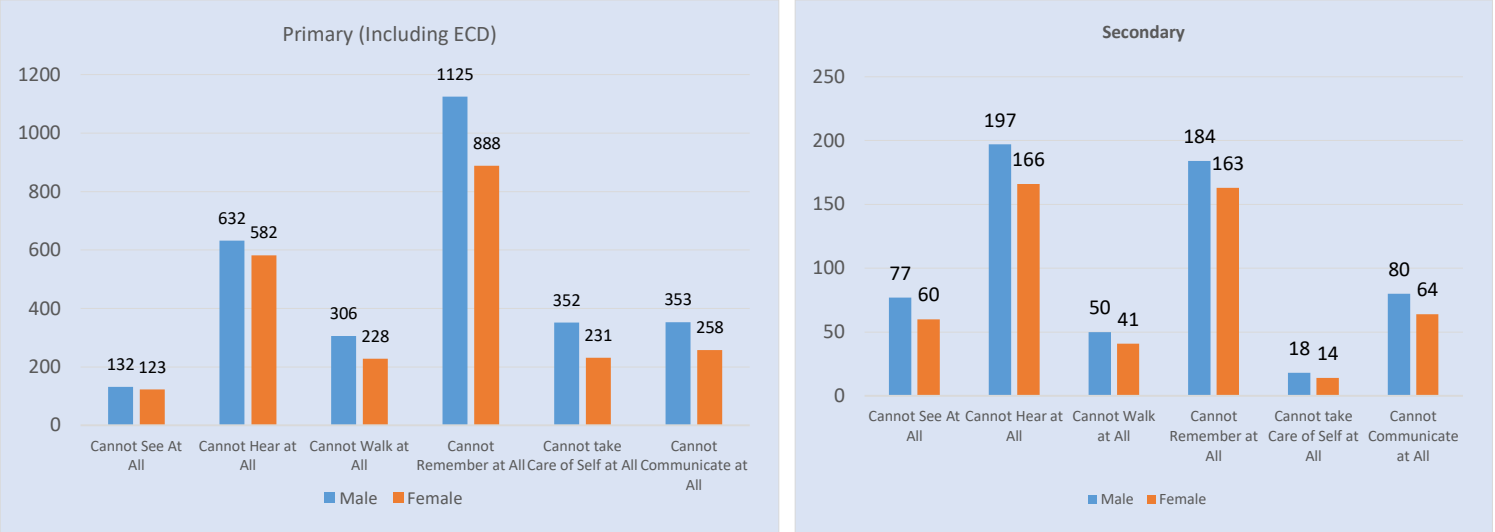


Figure 6.15: Distribution of Cannot at All on Functional Difficulties, Primary and Secondary Schools by Type, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

6.5 Conclusion

The findings presented in Chapter 6 show that the overall number and proportion of Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs) enrolled in Zimbabwe's education system declined between 2021 and 2025 across Early Childhood Development (ECD), primary, and secondary education. After peaking in 2022, OVC enrolment decreased consistently, particularly from 2023 onwards, indicating gradual improvements in socio-economic conditions, pupil retention, or the effectiveness of social protection and education support intervention mechanisms. Despite this downward trend, secondary school education continued to record the highest prevalence of OVCs, suggesting that vulnerability intensified as pupils progressed through the education system. Sex differentials in OVC enrolment remained minimal at ECD and primary levels, reflecting near gender parity. However, at secondary school level, females consistently constituted a higher share of OVCs than males, highlighting increased vulnerability among adolescent females and the persistence of gender-specific risks during the transition to and progression through secondary school education. Significant provincial disparities were evident throughout the analysis. Manicaland, Masvingo, Midlands, Mashonaland West and Mashonaland Central consistently recorded high numbers and proportions of OVCs, while Harare and Bulawayo had the lowest. These spatial patterns mirrored broader rural–urban socio-economic inequalities and underscored the concentration of child vulnerability in predominantly rural provinces.

Analysis by vulnerability type revealed that vulnerable but non-orphaned children formed the largest OVC category across all education levels, particularly at ECD and primary levels, where they accounted for more than half of all OVCs nationally. This finding demonstrated that poverty and household deprivation, rather than orphanhood alone, were the primary drivers of educational vulnerability. Single orphans, especially paternal orphans, represented the second largest group, while double orphans remained the smallest category but became more prominent at secondary level, reflecting accumulated and long-term vulnerability among older pupils. The review of funding assistance showed that the Basic

Education Assistance Module (BEAM) remained the dominant source of educational support at all levels, with coverage highest at secondary education, followed by primary education. Nevertheless, large provincial disparities persisted, with rural provinces benefiting from significantly higher coverage than urban ones. Other funding mechanisms—such as donor bursaries, NGO support and grants-in-aid—played a complementary but limited role. Female pupils generally constituted a slightly higher share of beneficiaries, indicating modest gender-responsive targeting within assistance programmes.

The chapter further highlighted that pupils with functional difficulties were overwhelmingly concentrated in primary school education, including ECD, with markedly lower participation at secondary school level. Cognitive difficulties, particularly challenges related to remembering or concentrating, were the most prevalent impairment type nationally. Across all disability categories, the number of pupils declined sharply at higher education levels, especially among those with severe functional difficulties, pointing to persistent barriers to access, progression and retention for pupils with disabilities.

In summary, while notable progress was recorded in reducing OVC enrolment and prevalence, vulnerability within the education system remained widespread and unevenly distributed. The dominance of poverty-related vulnerability, persistent provincial and rural–urban disparities, heightened risks at secondary level—especially for females—and the limited progression of pupils with disabilities underscored the continued need for targeted, inclusive and level-specific interventions to ensure equitable educational access and retention for all vulnerable pupils.

CHAPTER 7 : Teaching Staff

7.1 Teacher Trends

Figure 7.1 shows a consistent increase in the number of trained teachers across all education levels between 2021 and 2025. At ECD level, trained teachers rose from 13,198 in 2021 to 17,493 in 2025, reflecting sustained professionalism. Primary school education maintained very high training coverage throughout the period, increasing from 78,267 trained teachers in 2021 to 89,471 in 2025. Secondary school education similarly recorded growth, with trained teachers increasing from 43,698 in 2021 to 49,507 in 2025, indicating overall strengthening of teacher capacity across the system.

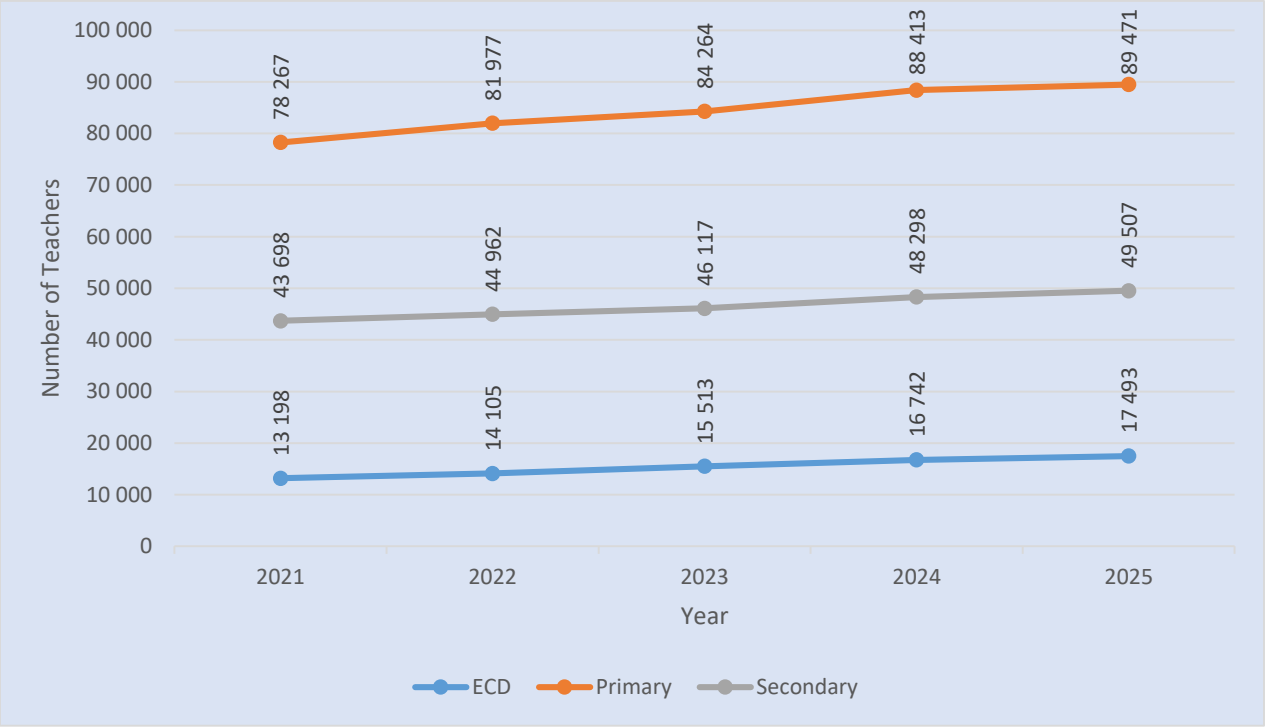


Figure 7.1: Trained Teachers by Level of Education, Number, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

Table 7.1 indicates that the proportion of trained teachers increased steadily across all levels. At ECD, the percentage of trained rose from 73.58% in 2021 to 81.75% in 2025, alongside improvements in the pupil–teacher ratio from 50 to 37 pupils per teacher. Primary school education remained highly professionalised, with over 97% of teachers trained throughout the period and PTR improving from 37 to 32. Secondary school education recorded an increase in trained teachers from 89.66% to 91.42%, while PTR declined from 25 to 23, reflecting gradual workload improvements.

Table 7.1: Teachers by Level, Training, Pupil to Teacher Ratio Trends, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

Year	Teachers			PTR	
	Total Teachers	Trained Teachers	% Trained	All	Trained
ECD					
2021	17937	13198	73.58	37	50
2022	18395	14105	76.68	36	46
2023	19658	15513	78.91	35	44
2024	20 997	16 742	79. 74	31	39
2025	21397	17493	81.75	30	37
Primary					
2021	80175	78267	97.62	36	37
2022	83734	81977	97.9	35	36
2023	86043	84264	97.93	34	35
2024	90 330	88 413	97. 88	33	33
2025	91456	89 471	97.83	31	32
Secondary					
2021	48740	43698	89.66	22	25
2022	49362	44962	91.09	23	25
2023	50438	46117	91.43	22	24
2024	53 055	48 298	91. 03	22	24
2025	54 154	49 507	91.42	21	23

7.2 ECD Teachers

In 2025, a total of 17,493 ECD teachers (81.75%) were trained nationally, while 3,904 (18.25%) were untrained. Provincial variation was evident, with Matabeleland South (90.27%), Mashonaland East (89.70%) and Masvingo (89.30%) recording the highest proportions of trained teachers. Manicaland had the lowest training coverage at 70.79%, indicating some spatial disparities in ECD teacher qualifications.

Table 7.2: ECD Trained and Untrained Teachers by Province, Number and Percentage Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Trained				Untrained			
	M	F	T	% Trained	M	F	T	% Untrained
Bulawayo	117	933	1 050	74.20	37	328	365	25.80
Harare	195	1 569	1 764	83.21	29	327	356	16.79
Manicaland	545	1 857	2 402	70.79	88	903	991	29.21
Mashonaland Central	325	1 252	1 577	77.57	58	398	456	22.43
Mashonaland East	351	1 635	1 986	89.70	17	211	228	10.30
Mashonaland West	336	1 532	1 868	81.64	50	370	420	18.36
Masvingo	595	1 775	2 370	89.30	36	248	284	10.70
Matabeleland North	240	766	1 006	80.67	28	213	241	19.33
Matabeleland South	198	906	1 104	90.27	15	104	119	9.73
Midlands	469	1 897	2 366	84.20	55	389	444	15.80
Grand Total	3 371	14 122	17 493	81.75	413	3 491	3 904	18.25

The figure 7.2 illustrates wide provincial differences in ECD teacher training status, confirming that most provinces exceeded 80% trained teachers, while Manicaland and Mashonaland Central showed comparatively higher proportions of untrained teachers.

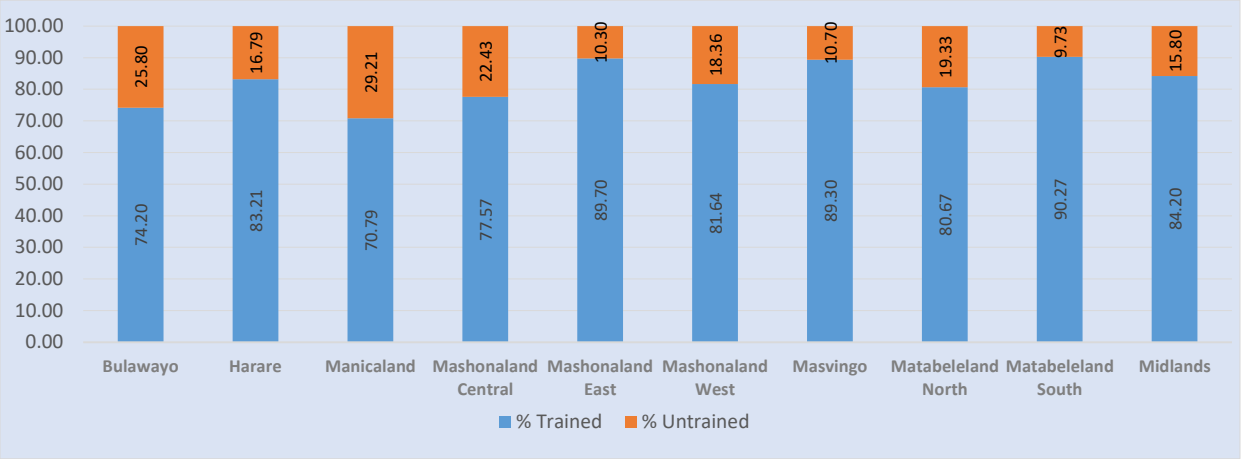


Figure 7.2: Distribution of ECD Trained and Untrained Teachers by Province, Percentage Zimbabwe, 2025

Table 7.3 shows that rural areas accounted for the majority of ECD teachers, with 13,820 teachers compared to 7,577 in urban areas. Training coverage was higher in rural areas (86.66%) than in urban areas (72.81%). Female teachers dominated both locations, accounting for 80.18% of all ECD teachers nationally.

Table 7.3: ECD Teachers by Training, Sex and Location, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Location	Trained Teachers, No.			Untrained Teachers, No.			Grand Total, No.			% Trained Teachers		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Rural	2 705	9 271	11 976	232	1 612	1 844	2 937	10 883	13 820	92.10	85.19	86.66
Urban	666	4 851	5 517	181	1 879	2 060	847	6 730	7 577	78.63	72.08	72.81
Grand Total	3 371	14 122	17 493	413	3 491	3 904	3 784	17 613	21 397	89.09	80.18	81.75

Table 7.4 and fig 7.3 indicate that most ECD teachers held a diploma or certificate in education (63.79%), followed by graduate teachers with teaching qualifications (17.97%). Females constituted 82.32% of all ECD teachers, with particularly high female representation among para-professionals (91.21%).

Table 7.4: ECD Teachers by Qualification Status and Sex, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Highest qualification	ECD Teachers, No.			% Total	%Female
	Male	Female	Total		
Graduate with teaching qualification	782	3 062	3 844	17.97	79.66
Diploma or Certificate in Education	2 589	11 060	13 649	63.79	81.03
Graduate without teaching qualification	57	204	261	1.22	78.16
ECD Para Professional	284	2 948	3 232	15.10	91.21
Other (Unqualified)	72	339	411	1.92	82.48
Grand Total	3 784	17 613	21 397	100.00	82.32

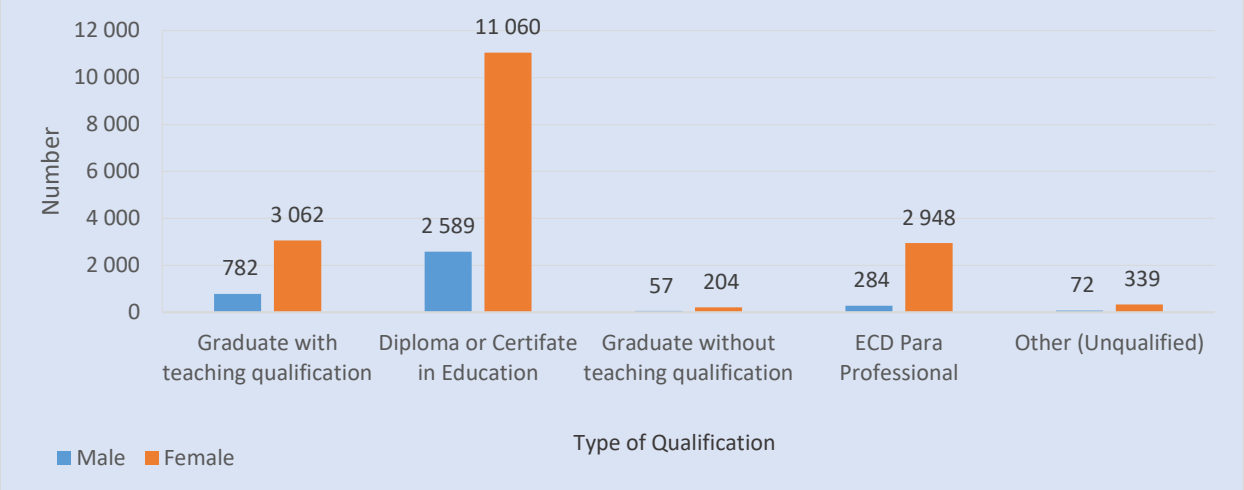


Figure 7.3: ECD Teachers by Qualification and Sex, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

The table shows that the ECD teaching workforce was predominantly female and largely composed of teachers with formal education qualifications. Out of a total of 21,397 personnel, females accounted for 17,613 (82.3%) while males constituted 3,784 (17.7%). Teachers holding a Diploma or Certificate in Education formed the largest group, numbering 13,649 (63.8% of all staff), with the majority being permanent PSC employees (11,800). Graduates with a teaching qualification were the second largest category at 3,844 (18.0%), again mainly permanent, while graduates without a teaching qualification were relatively few at 261 (1.2%). ECD Para Professionals accounted for 3,232 (15.1%) of personnel, most of whom fell under the "Other" employment category (2,996), indicating heavy reliance on non-PSC staffing for this category of pupils. Unqualified teachers were minimal, totaling a paltry 411 (1.9%). Overall, the staffing profile highlighted strong female dominance across all qualification levels and a system anchored mainly on diploma-qualified teachers, supplemented by para-professionals particularly outside the permanent PSC establishment.

Table 7.5: ECD Teachers by Type of Employment, Sex and Qualification Status, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Highest qualification	Permanent PSC, No.			Contract PSC, No.			Other, No.			Grand Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Graduate with teaching qualification	706	2 642	3 348	1	26	27	75	394	469	3 844
Diploma or Certificate in Education	2 349	9 451	11 800	13	101	114	227	1 508	1 735	13 649
Graduate without teaching qualification	34	128	162	2	8	10	21	68	89	261
ECD Para Professional	11	117	128	9	99	108	264	2 732	2 996	3 232
Other (Unqualified)	1	9	10	3	13	16	68	317	385	411
Grand Total	3 101	12 347	15 448	28	247	275	655	5 019	5 674	21 397

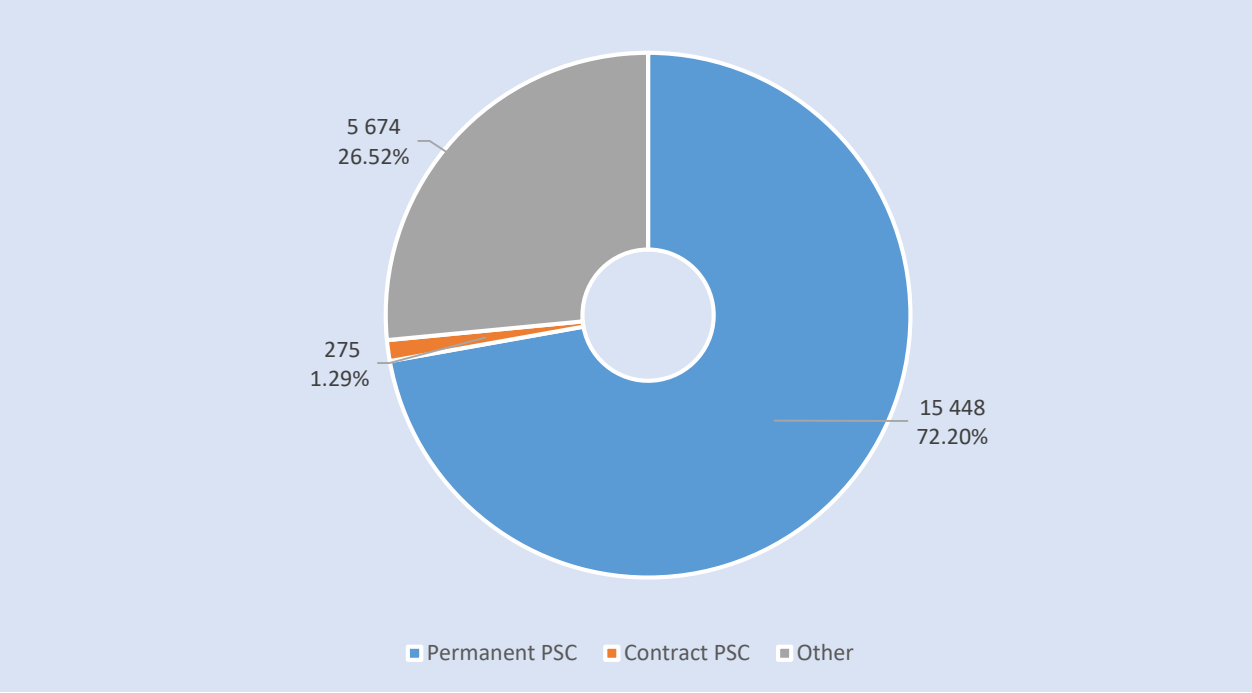


Figure 7.4: ECD Teachers by Type of Employment, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Table 7.6 indicates that nearly one-third of ECD teachers (32.02%) had ten or more years of experience, while 26.69% had less than three years of experience, indicating a relatively young workforce alongside a stable experienced core. Female teachers dominated all experience categories.

Table 7.6: ECD Teachers by Teaching Experience and Sex, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Experience	ECD Teachers, No.			%Total
	Male	Female	Total	
Less than one year	215	1 385	1 600	7.48
1 years	325	2 053	2 378	11.11
2 years	300	1 605	1 905	8.90
3 years	287	1 447	1 734	8.10
4 years	411	1 839	2 250	10.52
5 years	253	1 162	1 415	6.61
6 years	169	950	1 119	5.23
7 years	94	420	514	2.40
8 years	109	625	734	3.43
9 years	80	539	619	2.89
10 years and above	1 494	5 358	6 852	32.02
Not stated	47	230	277	1.29
Grand Total	3 784	17 613	21 397	100.00

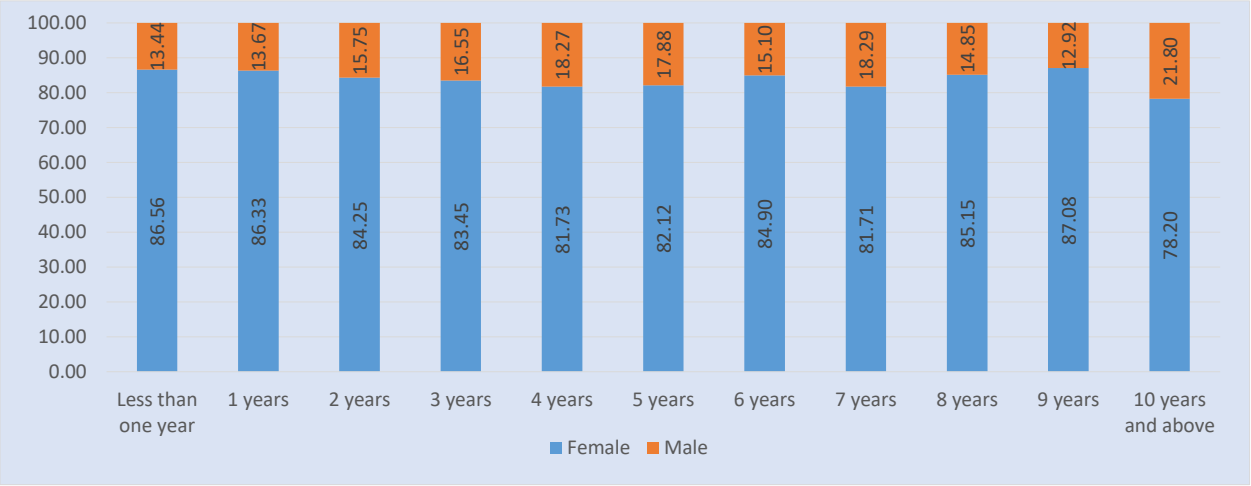


Figure 7.5: ECD Teachers by Teaching Experience and Sex, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

7.3 ECD Pupil -Teacher Ratios

Table 7.7 reveals that rural ECD schools recorded higher PTRs (40) compared to urban ones (30), reflecting higher enrolments relative to staffing in rural areas. The trained-teacher PTR was 35 in rural areas and 22 in urban areas, highlighting persistent rural–urban disparities.

Table 7.7: ECD Teachers and Pupil to Teacher Ratio by Location, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Location	ECD Teachers, No.			PTR	PTTR
	Trained to teach	Total Teachers	Pupils		
Rural	11 976	13 820	477 395	35	40
Urban	5 517	7 577	163 900	22	30
Grand Total	17 493	21 397	641 295	30	37

The table indicates notable provincial variation in the availability of trained ECD teachers and corresponding pupil–teacher ratios in 2025. Nationally, there were 21,397 ECD teachers serving 641,295 pupils, of whom 17,493 were trained, translating to an overall pupil–teacher ratio (PTR) of 30 pupils per teacher and a higher pupil–trained teacher ratio of 37. Bulawayo recorded the most favourable staffing situation, with 1,415 teachers (1,050 trained) serving 26,320 pupils, resulting in the lowest PTR of 19 and a pupil–trained teacher ratio of 25. Harare also showed relatively better ratios, with a PTR of 23 and a trained-teacher ratio of 28 for 48,819 pupils. In contrast, several provinces experienced heavier teacher workloads, Matabeleland North and Matabeleland South had the highest PTRs at 35 pupils per teacher, while Mashonaland Central (33), Masvingo (34), and Manicaland (29) also exceeded the national average. The highest pupil–trained teacher ratios were observed in Matabeleland North (43), Mashonaland Central (42), and Manicaland (40), indicating comparatively lower access to trained teachers in these provinces.

Table 7.8: ECD Teachers by Training, Pupil to Teacher Ratio and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Trained Teachers, No.	Total Teachers, No.	ECD Pupils, No.	Pupil to Teacher Ratios	Pupil to Trained Teacher Ratios
Bulawayo	1 050	1 415	26 320	19	25
Harare	1 764	2 120	48 819	23	28
Manicaland	2 402	3 393	96 911	29	40
Mashonaland Central	1 577	2 033	66 565	33	42
Mashonaland East	1 986	2 214	70 418	32	35
Mashonaland West	1 868	2 288	70 333	31	38
Masvingo	2 370	2 654	89 519	34	38
Matabeleland North	1 006	1 247	43 025	35	43
Matabeleland South	1 104	1 223	42 221	35	38
Midlands	2 366	2 810	87 164	31	37
Grand Total	17 493	21 397	641 295	30	37

The figure depicts provincial PTRs which ranged from 19 in Bulawayo to 35 in Matabeleland North. Pupil-to-trained-teacher ratios were highest in Manicaland (40) and Mashonaland Central (42), underscoring uneven teacher distribution.

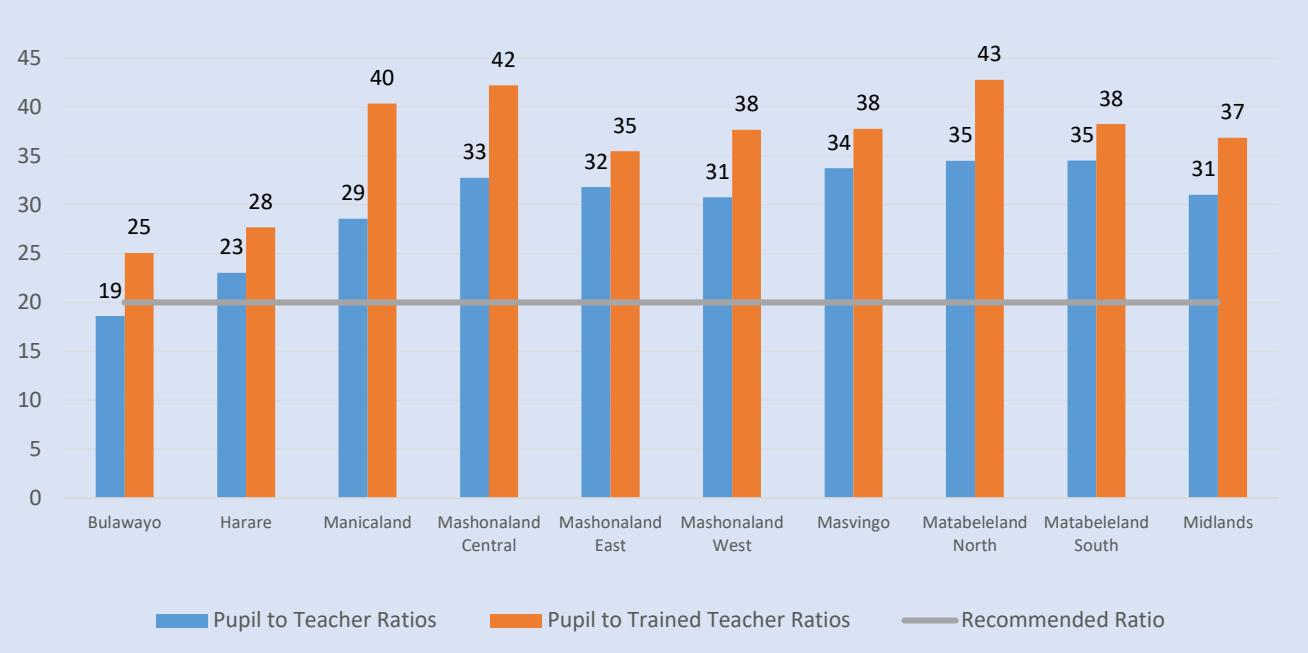


Figure 7.6: ECD Teachers by Pupil to Teacher Ratios and Province, Zimbabwe, 2025

7.4 Primary School Teachers

Table 7.9 reveals that primary school teaching staff were overwhelmingly trained (97.83%), with females comprising 63.42%. Most teachers held diplomas or certificates (75.27%), and over 60.99% had ten or more years of teaching experience. PTRs averaged 31 nationally, with provincial variation ranging from 25 in Bulawayo to 34 in Harare.

Table 7.9: Primary School Teachers by Training Status, Sex and Province, Number and Percentage Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Trained				Untrained			
	Male	Female	Total	% Trained	Male	Female	Total	% Untrained
Bulawayo	829	3744	4573	97.78	34	70	104	2.22
Harare	1970	7323	9293	96.57	91	239	330	3.43
Manicaland	5788	7863	13651	97.99	114	166	280	2.01
Mashonaland Central	3389	4733	8122	97.18	84	152	236	2.82
Mashonaland East	3928	6628	10556	98.13	92	109	201	1.87
Mashonaland West	3778	6398	10176	96.99	122	194	316	3.01
Masvingo	4980	6453	11433	98.86	52	80	132	1.14
Matabeleland North	1896	3273	5169	97.53	50	81	131	2.47
Matabeleland South	1704	3229	4933	98.33	24	60	84	1.67
Midlands	4453	7112	11565	98.54	79	92	171	1.46
Grand Total	32715	56756	89471	97.83	742	1243	1985	2.17

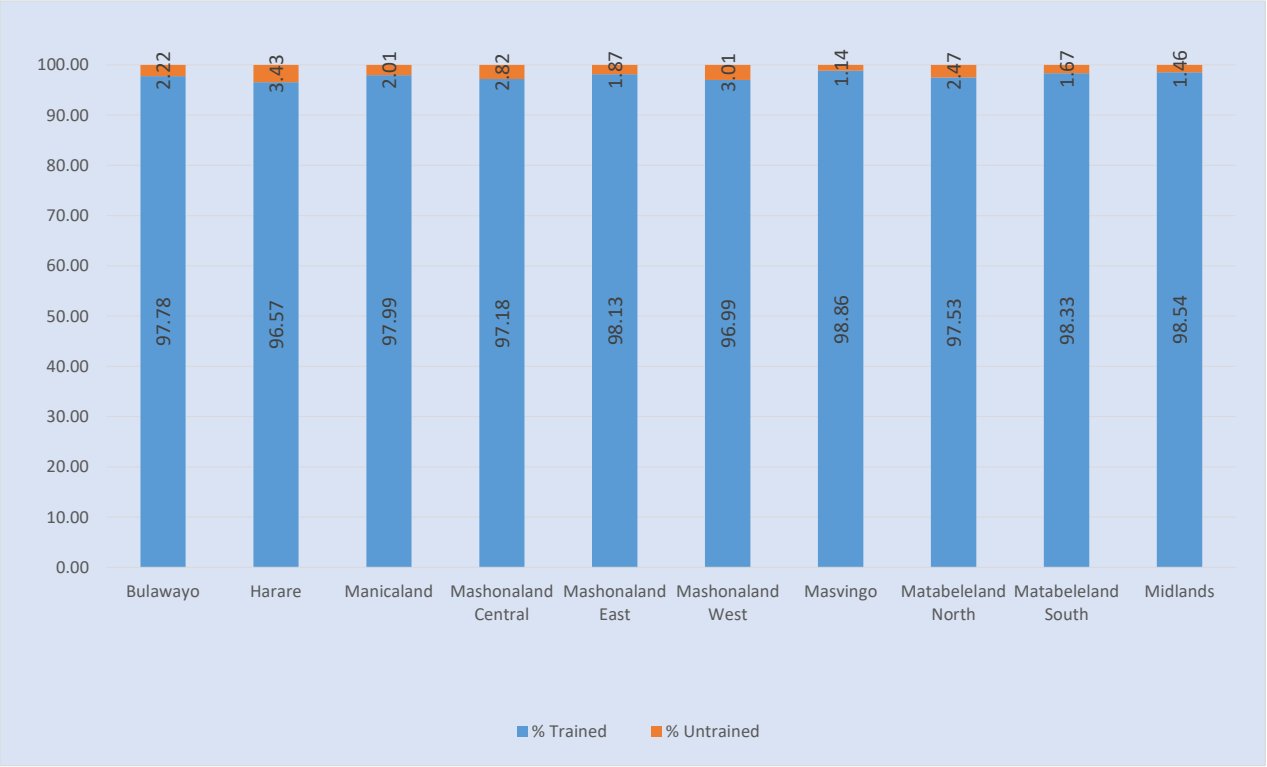


Figure 7.7: Distribution of Primary School Teachers by Training Status and Province, Percentage Zimbabwe, 2025

The primary school teaching staff in Zimbabwe in 2025 were overwhelmingly trained, with limited variation by sex and location. Nationally, there were 91,456 primary school teachers, comprising 89,471 trained teachers (97.83%) and only 1,985 untrained ones (2.17%). Rural areas accounted for most teachers, with 63,156 teachers in total, of whom 62,005 were trained, yielding a very high training coverage of 98.18%. Both rural male and female teachers were almost universally trained, at 98.11% and 98.23%, respectively. Urban areas had a total of 28,300 teachers, including 27,466 trained teachers, corresponding to a slightly lower but still high proportion trained of 97.05%. In urban settings, female teachers recorded a marginally higher training rate (97.23%) compared to their male counterparts (96.48%). Overall, female teachers constituted the majority of the workforce (57,999 or 63.4%) and consistently exhibited slightly higher training proportions than male counterparts. Table 7.10 shows the distribution.

Table 7.10: Primary School Teachers by Training Status, Sex and Location, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Location	Trained, No.			Untrained, No.			Grand Total, No			% Trained		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Rural	26 216	35 789	62 005	505	646	1 151	26 721	36 435	63 156	98.11	98.23	98.18
Urban	6 499	20 967	27 466	237	597	834	6 736	21 564	28 300	96.48	97.23	97.05
Grand Total	32 715	56 756	89 471	742	1 243	1 985	33 457	57 999	91 456	97.78	97.86	97.83

The primary school teaching workforce in Zimbabwe in 2025 was largely qualified, with the majority holding a Diploma or Certificate in Education. This category accounted for 68,838 teachers (75.27%), reflecting its role as the dominant entry qualification into primary teaching. Teachers with a graduate teaching qualification number 20,633 (22.56%), while those without a teaching qualification were very few, together constituting less than 2% of the workforce, which points to strong professional standards at the primary school level.

The data in Table 7.11 also highlight a female-dominated teaching force, with women accounting for 63.42% of all primary school teachers. Female representation is particularly high among ECD paraprofessionals (82.75%) and teachers with diplomas or certificates (64.33%), while it remains above 60% even among graduate-qualified teachers. Overall, the distribution underscores both a high level of professional qualification and a strong gender imbalance in favour of females within Zimbabwe's primary school teaching fraternity.

Table 7.11: Primary School Teachers by Qualification and Sex, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Highest qualification	Primary School Teachers, No.			% Total	% Female
	Male	Female	Total		
Graduate with teaching qualification	8 158	12 475	20 633	22.56	60.46
Diploma or Certifate in Education	24 557	44 281	68 838	75.27	64.33
Graduate without teaching qualification	440	678	1 118	1.22	60.64
ECD Para Professional	59	283	342	0.37	82.75
Other (Unqualified)	243	282	525	0.57	53.71
Grand Total	33 457	57 999	91 456	100.00	63.42

Primary school teachers in were predominantly employed on permanent Public Service Commission (PSC) terms, accounting for 83,330 teachers (91.1%) of the total workforce. The permanent quota is largely made up of teachers with a Diploma or Certificate in Education (63,786) and those with a graduate teaching qualification (18,627), underscoring the stability and professionalisation of primary school staffing. Contract PSC teachers were relatively few (497 teachers, 0.5%) and were mainly concentrated among diploma- and graduate-qualified teachers, while those classified under "Other" employment arrangements numbered 7,629 (8.3%). This latter group includes a substantial share of ECD para-professionals (295) and unqualified teachers (369), suggesting greater reliance on non-permanent and alternative employment arrangements in early childhood and marginal cases. Overall, the table highlights a strongly permanent, qualified primary teaching

workforce, with limited dependence on contract staff and a small residual group outside the PSC establishment.

Table 7.12: Primary School Teachers by Type of Employment, Sex and Qualification Status, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Highest Qualifications	Permanent PSC			Contract PSC			Other			Grand Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Graduate with teaching qualification	7 431	11 196	18 627	46	74	120	681	1 205	1 886	20 633
Diploma or Certificate in Education	22 973	40 813	63 786	93	212	305	1 491	3 256	4 747	68 838
Graduate without teaching qualification	284	469	753	14	19	33	142	190	332	1 118
ECD Para Professional	19	18	37	1	9	10	39	256	295	342
Other (Unqualified)	64	63	127	12	17	29	167	202	369	525
Grand Total	30 771	52 559	83 330	166	331	497	2 520	5 109	7 629	91 456

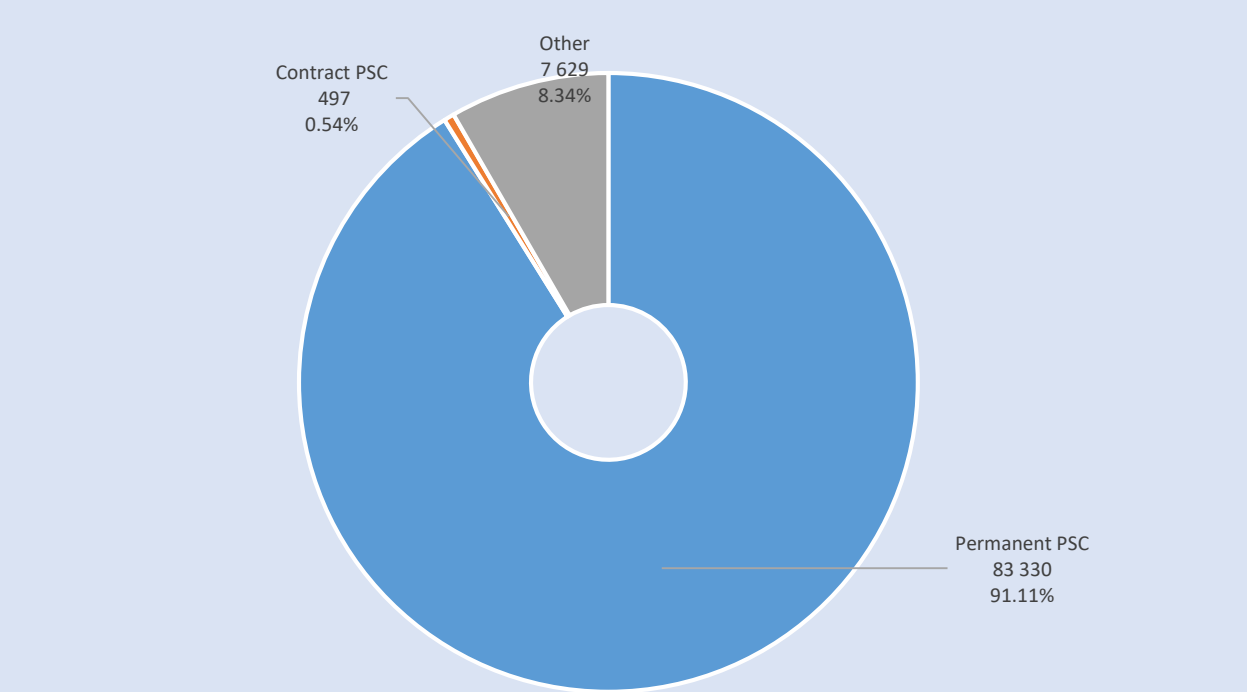


Figure 7.8: Primary School Teachers by Type of Employment, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Zimbabwe's primary school teaching workforce in 2025 was largely experienced, with a strong concentration of teachers who had spent a decade or more in service. Of the 91,456 primary school teachers recorded, 55,781 teachers—representing 60.99% of the total—had 10 years or more of teaching experience, indicating a stable and mature workforce. This highly experienced group was predominantly female, with 32,485 females compared to 23,296 males as depicted in table 7.13.

Teachers with less than five years of teaching experience accounted for a relatively smaller share of the workforce. Specifically, 2,979 teachers (3.26%) had less than one year of experience, while those with one to four years of experience totalled 20,704 teachers,

together constituting about 22.6% of all primary school teachers. Across these early career categories, females consistently outnumbered males, reflecting the feminisation of the teaching profession from entry level onwards as shown in Fig 7.9. Mid-career teachers with five to nine years of teaching experience numbered 10,903, accounting for 11.9% of the workforce, again with a higher proportion of females in each experience band. Only a small fraction of teachers (1.19%) did not state their years of experience.

Table 7.13: Primary School Teachers by Teaching Experience and Sex, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Experience	Primary School Teachers, No.			%Total
	Male	Female	Total	
Less than one year	838	2 141	2 979	3.26
1 years	1 653	4 658	6 311	6.90
2 years	1 530	3 682	5 212	5.70
3 years	1 338	3 108	4 446	4.86
4 years	1 388	3 347	4 735	5.18
5 years	785	1 956	2 741	3.00
6 years	918	2 278	3 196	3.49
7 years	543	1 324	1 867	2.04
8 years	465	1 368	1 833	2.00
9 years	368	898	1 266	1.38
10 years and above	23 296	32 485	55 781	60.99
Not Stated	335	754	1 089	1.19
Grand Total	33 457	57 999	91 456	100.00

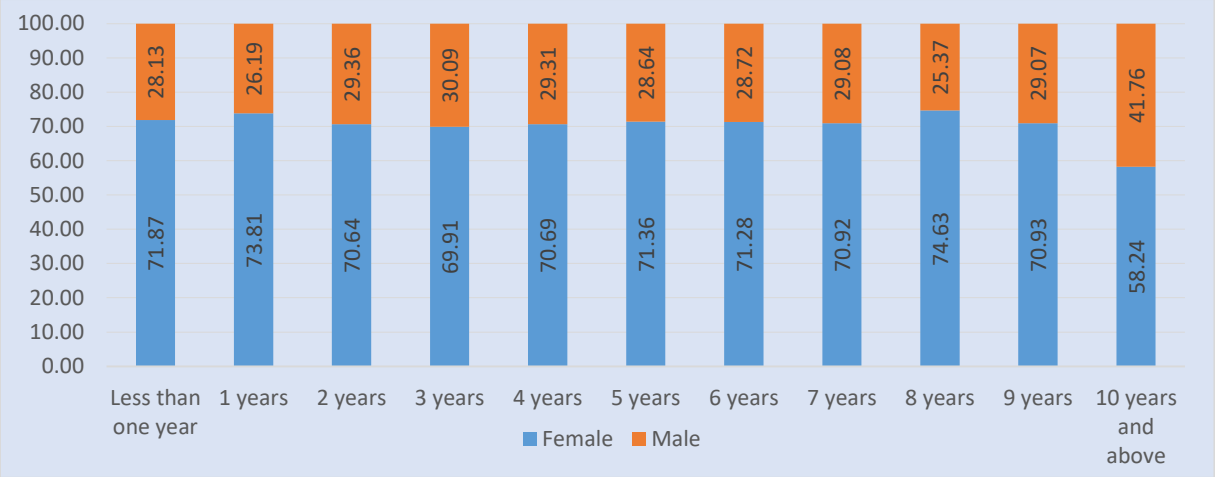


Figure 7.9: Primary Teachers by Teaching Experience and Sex, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

Table 7.14 illustrates the distribution of primary school teachers in Zimbabwe in 2025 by substantive grade and sex, highlighting both hierarchical structure and gender dynamics within the profession. The largest share of teachers was in the Senior Teacher grade, numbering 66,649 and accounting for 59.06% of the workforce, with females comprising 66.52% of this category. This was followed by Teachers at entry and general classroom level, who totalled 30,283 (26.83%), of whom nearly three-quarters (73.66%) were female. These two grades together constituted more than 85% of all primary school teachers. In contrast,

leadership positions showed a markedly different gender pattern. Heads/Principals numbered 5,589 (4.95% of the total), with males forming the majority; females accounted for only 36.43% of this grade. Similarly, Deputy Heads totalled 4,045 (3.58%), with females making up 43.71%, indicating a persistent gender gap in senior management roles despite the overall feminisation of the teaching workforce.

Lower-status and transitional grades were overwhelmingly female. Teacher-in-Charge positions (3,222 teachers; 2.86%) were 78.52% female, while ECD Para Professionals (2,560 teachers; 2.27%) had the highest female representation at 90.12%. Relief and temporary teachers together accounted for less than 0.5% of the workforce, with females still forming the majority in both categories. Overall, females constituted 67.0% of all primary school teachers in 2025, underscoring a strong gender imbalance across the profession, particularly at classroom and junior levels, alongside under-representation of women in top leadership positions.

Table 7.14: Primary School Teachers by Teacher Substantive Grade by Sex, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Substantive Grade	Primary School Teachers, No.			% Total	% Female
	Male	Female	Total		
Head/Principal	3 553	2 036	5 589	4.95	36.43
Deputy Head	2 277	1 768	4 045	3.58	43.71
Senior Teacher	22 314	44 335	66 649	59.06	66.52
Teacher	7 977	22 306	30 283	26.83	73.66
Teacher in-Charge	692	2 530	3 222	2.86	78.52
ECD Para Professional	253	2 307	2 560	2.27	90.12
Relief	70	121	191	0.17	63.35
Temporary	105	209	314	0.28	66.56
Grand Total	37 241	75 612	112 853	100.00	67.00

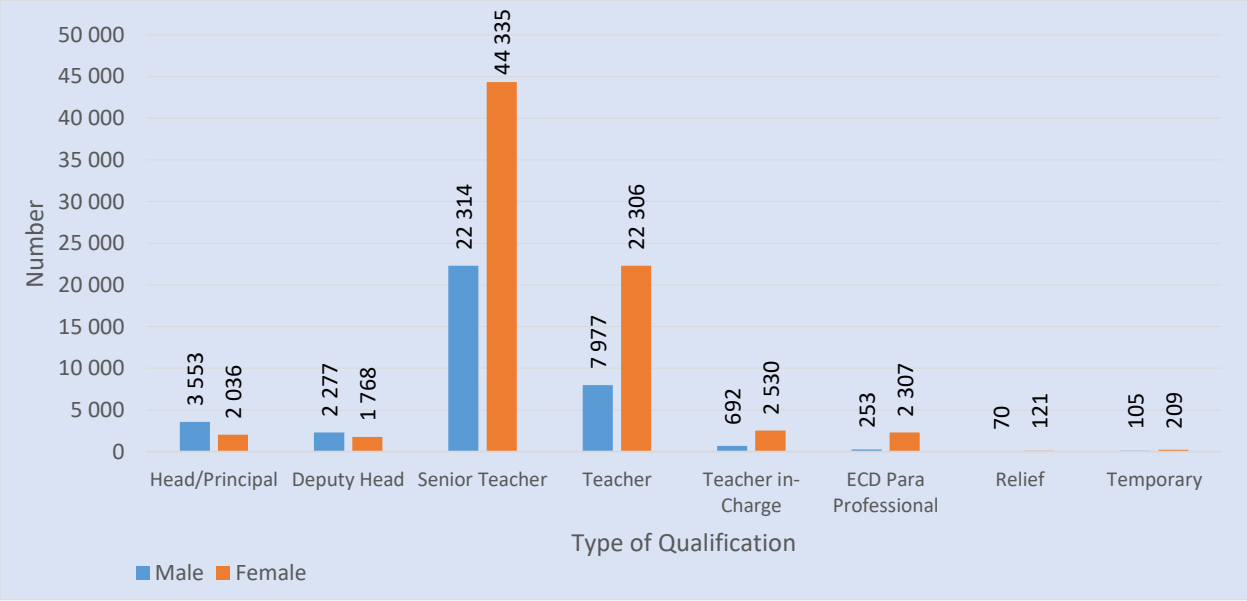


Figure 7.10: Primary School Teachers by Teacher Substantive Grade and Sex, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Table 7.15 presents the distribution of primary school teachers and pupil–teacher ratios (PTR) by location in Zimbabwe in 2025. Rural areas accounted for most teachers, with 63,156 total teachers, of whom 62,005 were trained, serving 2,016,870 pupils. This resulted in a PTR of 32 and a pupil-to-trained-teacher ratio (PTTR) of 33, indicating relatively higher pupil loads per teacher in rural schools.

Urban areas, by comparison, had 28,300 teachers (including 27,466 trained teachers) catering for 854,969 pupils. The PTR of 30 and PTTR of 31 suggest slightly better staffing conditions than in rural settings. Nationally, Zimbabwe recorded 91,456 primary school teachers (with 89,471 trained) serving 2,871,839 pupils, yielding an overall PTR of 31 and PTTR of 32. These figures highlight persistent rural–urban disparities in teacher distribution, with rural schools experiencing comparatively higher pupil–teacher ratios.

Table 7.15: Primary School Teachers, Pupil to Teacher Ratio by Location, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Location	Trained Teachers, No.	Total Teachers, No.	Pupils, no.	PTR	PTTR
Rural	62 005	63 156	2 016 870	32	33
Urban	27 466	28 300	854 969	30	31
Grand Total	89 471	91 456	2 871 839	31	32

7.5 Primary School Pupil -Teacher Ratios

Table 7.16 presents the primary teacher workforce (trained versus total), primary pupil counts, and resulting Pupil-to-Teacher Ratios (PTR) and Pupil-to-Trained-Teacher Ratios by province for 2025. Nationally, there were 2,871,839 primary pupils taught by 91,456 teachers, yielding a PTR of 31:1. There were 89,471 trained teachers, the pupil-to-trained-teacher ratio is 32:1, reflecting a high trained-teacher share of approximately 97.82%. This small gap (typically one point) between PTR and pupil-to-trained-teacher ratio indicates that nearly all teachers were trained in every province.

Provincial PTRs range from 25:1 in Bulawayo (lowest) to 34:1 in Harare (highest), with most provinces clustered around 30–33:1. Trained-teacher coverage was uniformly strong across provinces, generally 96–99%, for example: Masvingo 98.9%, Midlands 98.6%, Mashonaland East 98.1%, Manicaland 98.0%, Bulawayo 97.8%, and Harare 96.6%. Provinces with the largest pupil loads like Manicaland (438,898), Masvingo (368,153) and Midlands (362,341) maintained PTRs around 31–32, suggesting broadly comparable staffing intensity despite enrolment size differences.

Table 7.16: Primary School Teachers and Pupil to Teacher Ratio by Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Trained Teachers, No.	Total Teachers, No.	Primary School Pupils, No.	Pupil to Teacher Ratios	Pupil to Trained Teacher Ratios
Bulawayo	4 573	4 677	118 772	25	26
Harare	9 293	9 623	328 095	34	35
Manicaland	13 651	13 931	438 898	32	32
Mashonaland Central	8 122	8 358	273 951	33	34
Mashonaland East	10 556	10 757	318 547	30	30
Mashonaland West	10 176	10 492	340 579	32	33
Masvingo	11 433	11 565	368 153	32	32
Matabeleland North	5 169	5 300	167 329	32	32
Matabeleland South	4 933	5 017	155 174	31	31
Midlands	11 565	11 736	362 341	31	31
Grand Total	89 471	91 456	2 871 839	31	32

7.6 Secondary School (Form 1-6) Teacher

Table 7.17 shows that secondary school teaching workforce in 2025 was predominantly trained, with 49,507 trained teachers, representing 91.42% of the total, compared to 4,647 untrained teachers (8.58%). Female teachers constituted a slightly larger share of the trained cohort (26,233) than males (23,274), indicating a modest female majority among trained secondary teachers nationally.

At provincial level, the proportion of trained teachers was consistently high across all provinces, ranging from 87.09% in Harare to 94.88% in Matabeleland South. Provinces such as Manicaland (93.69%), Masvingo (93.08%), Matabeleland North (93.06%), and Matabeleland South (94.88%) recorded particularly strong training coverage, while Harare (12.91%) and Bulawayo (10.31%) had the highest shares of untrained teachers. Overall, the findings point to a generally well-trained secondary school teaching force nationwide, though with some provincial variation that may have implications for the quality and equity of secondary education delivery.

Table 7.17: Secondary School Teachers by Training Status and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Trained				Untrained			
	Male	Female	Total	% Trained	Male	Female	Total	% Untrained
Bulawayo	1 008	2 010	3 018	89.69	192	155	347	10.31
Harare	2 483	3 850	6 333	87.09	594	345	939	12.91
Manicaland	3 896	3 925	7 821	93.69	349	178	527	6.31
Mashonaland Central	1 804	1 910	3 714	90.65	257	126	383	9.35
Mashonaland East	2 711	2 891	5 602	90.97	320	236	556	9.03
Mashonaland West	2 595	2 937	5 532	90.63	372	200	572	9.37
Masvingo	3 310	2 718	6 028	93.08	311	137	448	6.92
Matabeleland North	1 282	1 478	2 760	93.06	117	88	205	6.91
Matabeleland South	1 252	1 584	2 836	94.88	73	80	153	5.12
Midlands	2 933	2 930	5 863	91.90	323	194	517	8.10
Grand Total	23 274	26 233	49 507	91.42	2 908	1 739	4 647	8.58

Figure 7.11:Secondary School Teachers by Training Status and Province, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

The secondary school teaching staff in 2025 were largely trained, with an overall training rate of 91.42%. Out of 54,154 secondary school teachers, 49,507 were trained while 4,647 (8.58%) were untrained. Female teachers had been trained (93.78%) compared to males (88.89%), reflecting a consistent gender advantage in training status.

By location, rural areas employed most secondary school teachers (34,099) and also recorded a higher proportion of trained teachers (93.08%) than urban areas (88.60%). Training levels were particularly high among rural female teachers (94.96%), compared to 91.31% among rural males. In urban schools, although females again showed higher training coverage (92.08%) than males (83.95%), the overall lower urban training rate suggests a greater concentration of untrained teachers in urban secondary schools relative to rural ones.

Table 7.18: Secondary School Teachers by Location, Training Status and Sex, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Location	Secondary School Teachers (Form 1-6), No.											
	Trained			Untrained			Grand Total			% Trained		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Rural	16 056	15 683	31 739	1 528	832	2 360	17 584	16 515	34 099	91.31	94.96	93.08
Urban	7 218	10 550	17 768	1 380	907	2 287	8 598	11 457	20 055	83.95	92.08	88.60
Grand Total	23 274	26 233	49 507	2 908	1 739	4 647	26 182	27 972	54 154	88.89	93.78	91.42

Most secondary school teachers were professionally qualified, with over half holding a graduate degree with a teaching qualification. Specifically, 27,733 teachers (51.21%) fell into this category, reflecting a relatively strong level of professional preparation at secondary level. Teachers with a diploma or certificate in education accounted for a further 21,774 (40.21%), meaning that more than 91% of secondary school teachers possessed a recognised professional teaching qualification.

In terms of gender, females constituted a slight majority of the secondary teaching workforce (51.65%). Female representation was particularly strong among teachers with diploma or certificate qualifications (54.81%) and those with graduate teaching qualifications (51.56%). In contrast, males dominated among teachers who were graduates without teaching qualifications (62.25%) and the unqualified category (63.93%), indicating that unqualified or partially qualified teaching staff were males.

Table 7.19: Secondary School Teachers by Qualification Status and Sex, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Highest Qualification	Secondary School Teachers, No.			% Total	%Female
	Male	Female	Total		
Graduate with Teaching Qualification	13 434	14 299	27 733	51.21	51.56
Diploma or Certificate	9 840	11 934	21 774	40.21	54.81
Graduate without Teaching Qualification	2 325	1 410	3 735	6.90	37.75
Other (unqualified)	583	329	912	1.68	36.07
Grand Total	26 182	27 972	54 154	100.00	51.65

Most secondary school teachers (Form 1–6) in Zimbabwe were permanently employed by the PSC, accounting for 44,635 teachers (82.42%) of the total workforce. Among these, those with a graduate teaching qualification formed the largest group (23,306), followed by teachers with a diploma or certificate in education (19,041). This indicates that most permanently employed teachers were professionally qualified, reflecting stability and capacity within the secondary school teaching establishment. Table 7.20 and Fig 7.12 show the distribution.

Teachers on PSC contracts were relatively few (574; 1.1%), while those classified as “other” forms of employment numbered 8,945 (16.5%). A notable proportion of teachers without teaching qualifications were concentrated in the “other” employment category (1,778 graduates without teaching qualifications and 439 unqualified teachers), suggesting that non-permanent employment is more common among the less-qualified staff. Overall, females slightly outnumbered males across all employment types (27,972 females against 26,182 males), with the gender balance particularly pronounced among permanently employed, professionally qualified teachers.

Table 7.20: Secondary School Teachers by Type of Employment, Sex and Qualification Status, Number, Zimbabwe 2025

Highest Qualification	Secondary School Teachers (Form 1-6), Type of Employment, No.									
	Permanent PSC			Contract PSC			Other			Grand Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Graduate with Teaching Qualification	10 910	12 396	23 306	123	92	215	2 401	1 811	4 212	27 733
Diploma or Certificate	8 436	10 605	19 041	126	91	217	1 278	1 238	2 516	21 774
Graduate without Teaching Qualification	1 144	704	1 848	73	36	109	1 108	670	1 778	3 735
Other (unqualified)	267	173	440	21	12	33	295	144	439	912
Grand Total	20 757	23 878	44 635	343	231	574	5 082	3 863	8 945	54 154

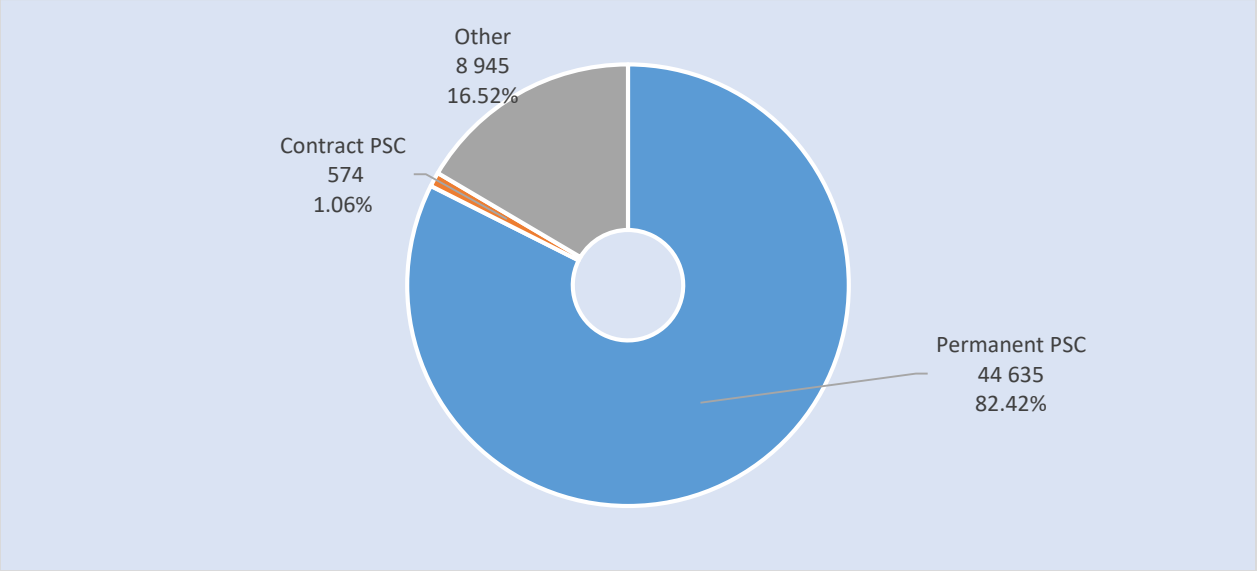


Figure 7.12: Secondary School Teachers by Type of Employment, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe 2025

The secondary school teaching workforce was predominantly well-experienced staff, with 34,371 teachers (63.47%) having 10 years or more of teaching experience. This suggests a relatively stable and mature workforce capable of supporting curriculum delivery at the secondary school level. Teachers with five years and below of teaching experience accounted for 13,898 (25.6%), reflecting a steady inflow of newer entrants into the profession. See Table 7.21 and Figure 7.13.

Early-career teachers were most concentrated in the 1-year experience category (8.06%) and those with less than one year of experience (4.91%), while progressively smaller proportions were observed as years of service increased up to nine years. Female teachers slightly outnumbered males across most experience categories, and overall (27,963 females compared to 26,176 males), indicating near gender parity in the secondary teaching workforce. The very small proportion of teachers with unstated experience (0.98%) suggests that the data are largely complete and reliable.

Table 7.21: Secondary School Teachers by Teaching Experience, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Experience	Secondary School Teachers (Form 1-6)			%Total
	Male	Female	Total	
Less than one year	29	28	57	0.11
1 years	1 295	1 365	2 660	4.91
2 years	1 739	2 622	4 361	8.05
3 years	1 417	1 820	3 237	5.98
4 years	919	1 143	2 062	3.81
5 years	675	846	1 521	2.81
6 years	714	840	1 554	2.87
7 years	790	966	1 756	3.24
8 years	537	661	1 198	2.21
9 years	418	486	904	1.67
10 years and above	17 468	16 903	34 371	63.47
Not Stated	181	292	473	0.87
Grand Total	26 182	27 972	54 154	100.00

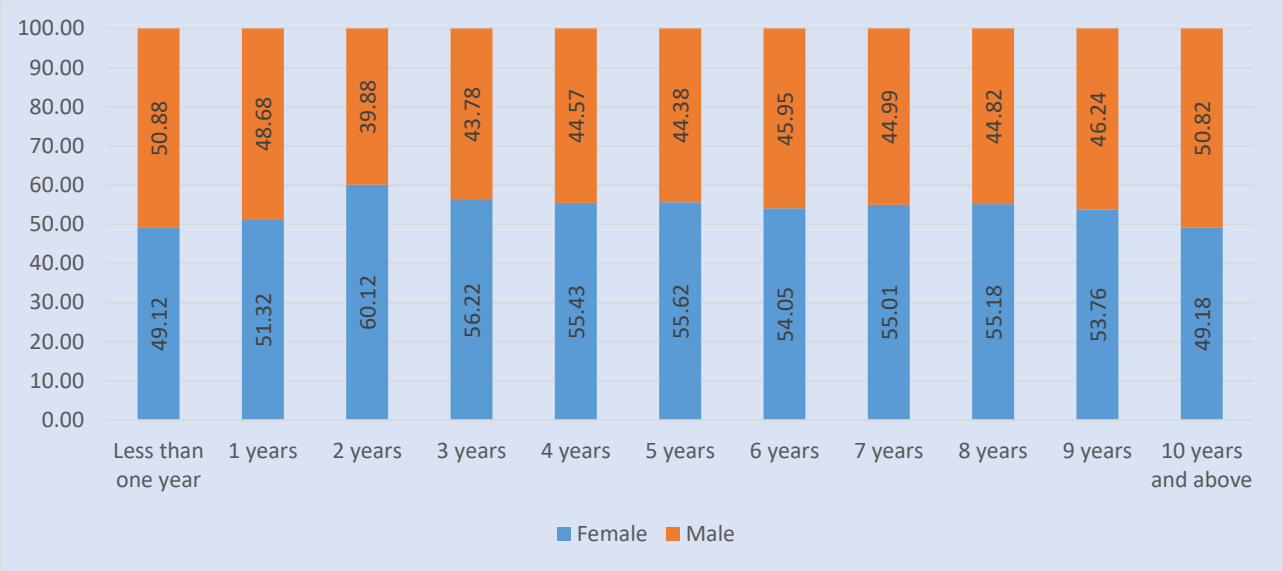


Figure 7.13: Secondary Teachers by Teaching Experience and Sex, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

The secondary school teaching workforce in 2025 was largely concentrated at the Senior Teacher and Teacher grades. Senior Teachers accounted for 34,008 educators (62.80%), while Teachers numbered 15,585 (28.78%), together comprising over 91% of all secondary school teachers. Leadership positions were relatively few, with 2,112 Heads/Principals (3.90%), 1,431 Deputy Heads (2.64%), and 682 Teachers-in-Charge (1.26%), highlighting a pyramidal staffing structure typical of the secondary education system.

Table 7.22: Secondary School Teachers by Teacher Substantive Grade and Sex, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Substantive Grade	Secondary School Teachers, No.			% of Total			% Female
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Head/Principal	1 697	415	2 112	6.48	1.48	3.90	19.65
Deputy Head	990	441	1 431	3.78	1.58	2.64	30.82
Teacher in-Charge	420	262	682	1.60	0.94	1.26	38.42
Senior Teacher	15 747	18 261	34 008	60.14	65.28	62.80	53.70
Teacher	7 146	8 439	15 585	27.29	30.17	28.78	54.15
Relief	56	70	126	0.21	0.25	0.23	55.56
Temporary	126	84	210	0.48	0.30	0.39	40.00
Grand Total	26 182	27 972	54 154	100.00	100.00	100.00	51.65

Gender distribution varied by grade, with women forming a slight majority overall (51.65%) but being underrepresented in top leadership roles. Females constituted only 19.65% of Heads/Principals and 30.82% of Deputy Heads, compared to stronger representation in classroom-based positions such as Teachers (54.15%) and Senior Teachers (53.70%). This pattern points to persistent gender disparities in school leadership despite near parity in the overall secondary teaching workforce.

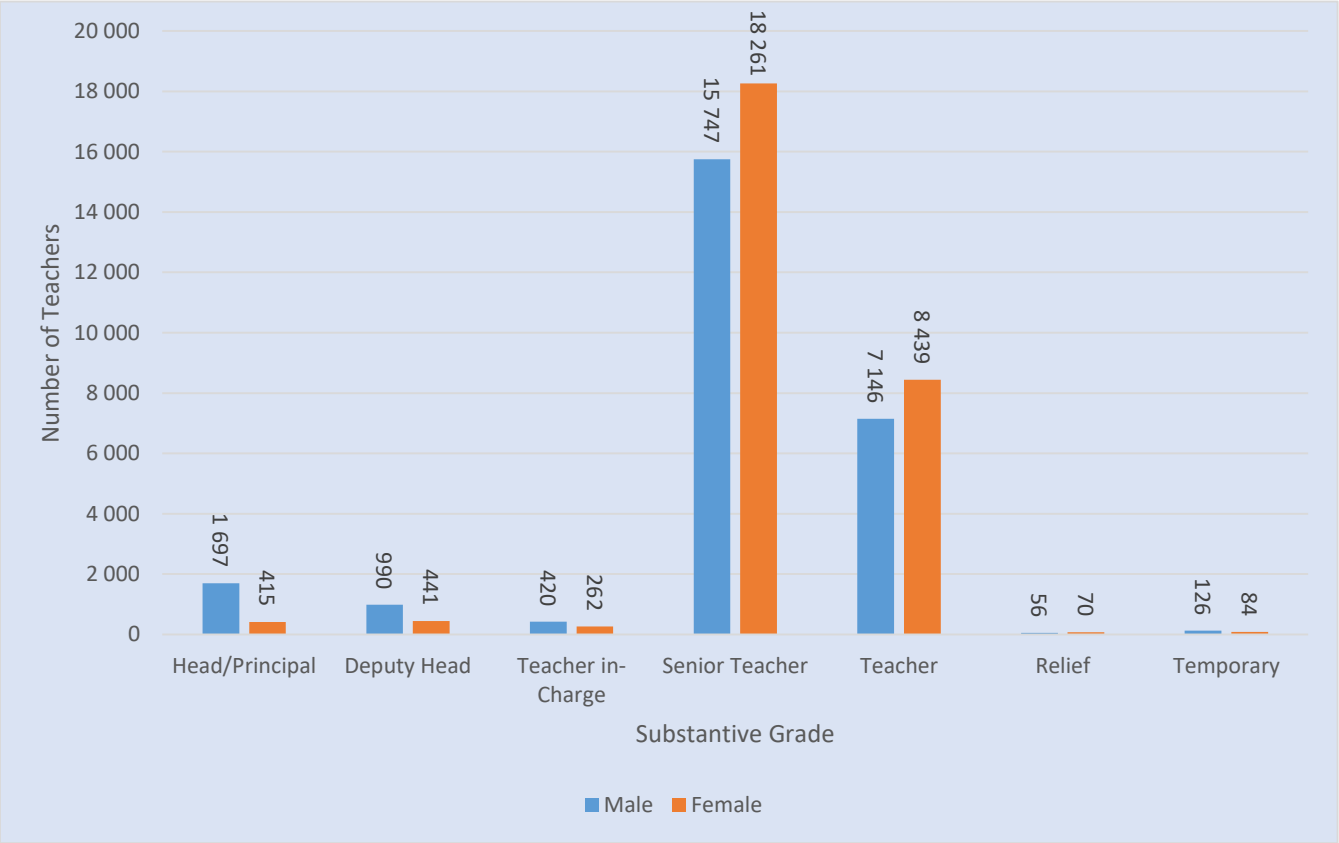


Figure 7.14: Secondary School Teachers by Teacher Substantive Grade and Sex, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

7.7 Secondary School Pupil (Form 1-6) -Teacher Ratios

Table 7.23 indicates that in 2025, secondary schools (Forms 1–6) in Zimbabwe recorded a national pupil–teacher ratio (PTR) of 21:1, while the pupil–trained-teacher ratio (PTTR) stood at 23:1, reflecting a generally moderate teaching load at the national level. A total of 54,139 teachers, of whom 49,507 were trained, were responsible for 1,158,015 secondary school pupils. Clear location-based disparities are evident. Rural schools, which enrolled 753,851 pupils, had a higher PTR of 22:1 and PTTR of 24:1, compared to urban schools, which had 404,164 pupils and more favourable ratios of 20:1 (PTR) and 23:1 (PTTR). This suggests that although staffing levels are relatively adequate overall, rural secondary schools continue to face comparatively higher pupil loads per teacher, particularly per trained teacher.

Table 7.23: Secondary School (Form 1-6) Pupil to Teacher Ratio by Location, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Location	Teachers, No.		Pupils, No.	PTR	PTTR
	Trained Teachers	Total Teachers			
Rural	31 739	34 099	753 851	22	24
Urban	17 768	20 055	404 164	20	23
Grand Total	49 507	54 154	1 158 015	21	23

Table 7.24 shows 54,154 secondary school teachers (Forms 1–6), of whom 49,507 were trained, serving a total of 1,158,015 pupils, resulting in a national pupil–teacher ratio (PTR) of 21:1 and a pupil–trained-teacher ratio (PTTR) of 23:1. Provincial PTRs generally clustered around the national average, with Bulawayo recording the lowest PTR (18:1), indicating comparatively better staffing levels, while Masvingo (24:1) and Midlands (23:1) had the highest pupil loads per teacher. Differences were more pronounced when considering trained teachers. The highest PTTRs were observed in Masvingo (26:1) and Midlands (25:1), suggesting relatively greater pressure on qualified teachers in these provinces. In contrast, Bulawayo (20:1) and Matabeleland North and South (22:1 each) exhibited more favourable pupil–trained-teacher ratios. Overall, while teacher availability at the secondary level is broadly adequate nationally, the variations across provinces highlight persistent regional disparities in access to trained teachers.

Table 7.24: Secondary School (Form 1-6) Teachers and Pupil to Teacher Ratio by Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Secondary School (Form 1-6) Teachers, No		Secondary Pupils (Form 1-6), No	Pupil to Teacher Ratios	Pupil to Trained Teacher Ratios
	Trained Teachers	Total Teachers			
Bulawayo	3 018	3 365	60 193	18	20
Harare	6 333	7 272	144 225	20	23
Manicaland	7 821	8 348	175 976	21	23
Mashonaland Central	3 714	4 097	89 320	22	24
Mashonaland East	5 602	6 158	131 657	21	24
Mashonaland West	5 532	6 104	127 429	21	23
Masvingo	6 028	6 476	156 562	24	26
Matabeleland North	2 760	2 965	61 280	21	22
Matabeleland South	2 836	2 989	63 768	21	22
Midlands	5 863	6 380	147 605	23	25
Grand Total	49 507	54 154	1 158 015	21	23

7.8 Conclusion

At the ECD level, Zimbabwe recorded 21,397 teachers serving 641,295 pupils, of whom 17,493 (81.75%) were trained. Training coverage improved steadily from 73.58% in 2021 to 81.75% in 2025, accompanied by a reduction in the national pupil–teacher ratio from 50 to 37 over the same period. However, disparities remained pronounced. Rural areas employed the majority of ECD teachers (13,820 compared to 7,577 in urban areas) and, despite higher training coverage (86.66% versus 72.81% in urban areas), recorded higher pupil–teacher ratios (40 in rural areas compared to 30 in urban areas). Provincially, the proportion of trained ECD teachers ranged from 70.79% in Manicaland to 90.27% in Matabeleland South, while pupil–trained-teacher ratios varied from 25 in Bulawayo to 43 in Matabeleland North, reflecting unequal access to qualified teachers. The ECD workforce was overwhelmingly female, with women accounting for 82.32% of teachers, and was dominated by teachers holding a diploma or certificate in education (63.79%), supplemented by 15.10% ECD para-professionals, most of whom were employed outside the permanent PSC structure.

Primary school education demonstrated the strongest staffing profile nationally. In 2025, the sector employed 91,456 teachers, of whom 89,471 (97.83%) were trained, serving 2,871,839 pupils. The national pupil–teacher ratio stood at 31, with rural schools experiencing a slightly higher ratio (32) than urban schools (30). The primary teaching workforce was highly experienced, with 55,781 teachers (60.99%) having 10 years or more of teaching experience, indicating workforce stability. Females constituted 63.42% of all primary school teachers and were particularly dominant at classroom and senior teacher levels. Despite this feminisation, women remained underrepresented in leadership, accounting for only 36.43% of Heads/Principals and 43.71% of Deputy Heads, pointing to persistent gender gaps in school management.

At the secondary level, Zimbabwe recorded 54,154 teachers, including 49,507 trained teachers (91.42%), responsible for 1,158,015 pupils. The national pupil–teacher ratio was 21, while the pupil–trained-teacher ratio stood at 23, suggesting moderate teaching loads overall. Rural secondary schools served 753,851 pupils with a higher pupil–teacher ratio (22) compared to 20 in urban areas. Provincial differences were evident, with overall pupil–teacher ratios ranging from 18 in Bulawayo to 24 in Masvingo, and pupil–trained-teacher ratios reaching 26 in Masvingo and 25 in Midlands. More than half of secondary teachers (51.21%) held a graduate degree with a teaching qualification, while 63.47% had 10 or more years of teaching experience. Although females formed a slight majority of the secondary workforce (51.65%), they accounted for only 19.65% of Heads/Principals positions and 30.82% of Deputy Heads, highlighting pronounced gender imbalances in senior leadership positions.

In conclusion, the chapter shows that Zimbabwe's education system in 2025 was supported by a largely trained, experienced, and increasingly professional teaching workforce, both at primary and secondary levels. Nonetheless, the persistence of rural–urban and provincial disparities in pupil–teacher ratios, the continued reliance on non-permanent staff in ECD, and the under-representation of women in leadership roles remain critical challenges. Addressing these issues through targeted teacher deployment, expanded professional development, and gender-responsive leadership pathways will be essential for improving equity, efficiency, and educational quality across all levels of the education system.

CHAPTER 8 : Internal Efficiency in the Education System

Internal efficiency in the education system refers to how effectively schools and the system as a whole uses resources such as teachers, classrooms, and time to help pupils progress and complete their education on schedule with minimum wastage. It is measured by indicators like promotion, repetition, dropout, and survival rates, reflecting whether pupils advance through grades, complete educational levels, and achieve learning goals without wasting too many resources. High internal efficiency means most pupils move through the system smoothly, repeat few grades, and successfully finish their education, while low efficiency indicates high repetition, dropout rates, and underutilized resources.

8.1 Repetition

Between 2021 and 2025, the number of repeaters in Zimbabwe remained consistently higher at secondary school level than at primary school level in proportional terms, despite the primary school level having larger absolute numbers.

In 2021, a total of 18,165 repeaters were recorded, comprising 10,582 in primary (0.30%) and 7,583 in secondary (0.70%), with males outnumbering females at both levels. Repetition peaked in 2022, rising sharply to 34,207 repeaters, driven by increases in both primary (20,187; 0.58%) and secondary school levels (14,020; 1.25%), marking the highest repetition rates over the period. This was followed by a decline in 2023 to 26,648 repeaters (primary 16,489; 0.45%, secondary 10,159; 0.91%) and further reduction in 2024 to 24,831, the lowest total in the five-year period. In 2025, repeater numbers increased again to 28,000, with 16,651 primary school repeaters (0.48%) and 11,349 secondary school repeaters (0.98%), indicating a rebound but not to the 2022 levels. Table 8.1 and figure 8.1 show the distribution.

Across all years, male repeaters consistently exceeded females in the primary school sector, while gender gaps were narrower in the secondary school sector, underscoring persistent challenges in pupil progression, particularly at the secondary school level where repetition rates remained close to or above 1% in most years.

Table 8.1: Repeaters by Level of Education and Sex, Number and Percentage Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

Year	Primary (including ECD)			Secondary (Form 1-6)			Grand Total	% repeaters Primary	% repeaters Secondary
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total			
2021	5 903	4 679	10 582	3 930	3 653	7 583	18 165	0.30	0.70
2022	10 835	9 352	20 187	6 629	7 391	14 020	34 207	0.58	1.25
2023	9 686	6 803	16 489	5 245	4 914	10 159	26 648	0.45	0.91
2024	7 989	5 998	13 987	5 550	5 294	10 844	24 831	0.39	0.95
2025	9 862	6 789	16 651	5 898	5 451	11 349	28 000	0.48	0.98

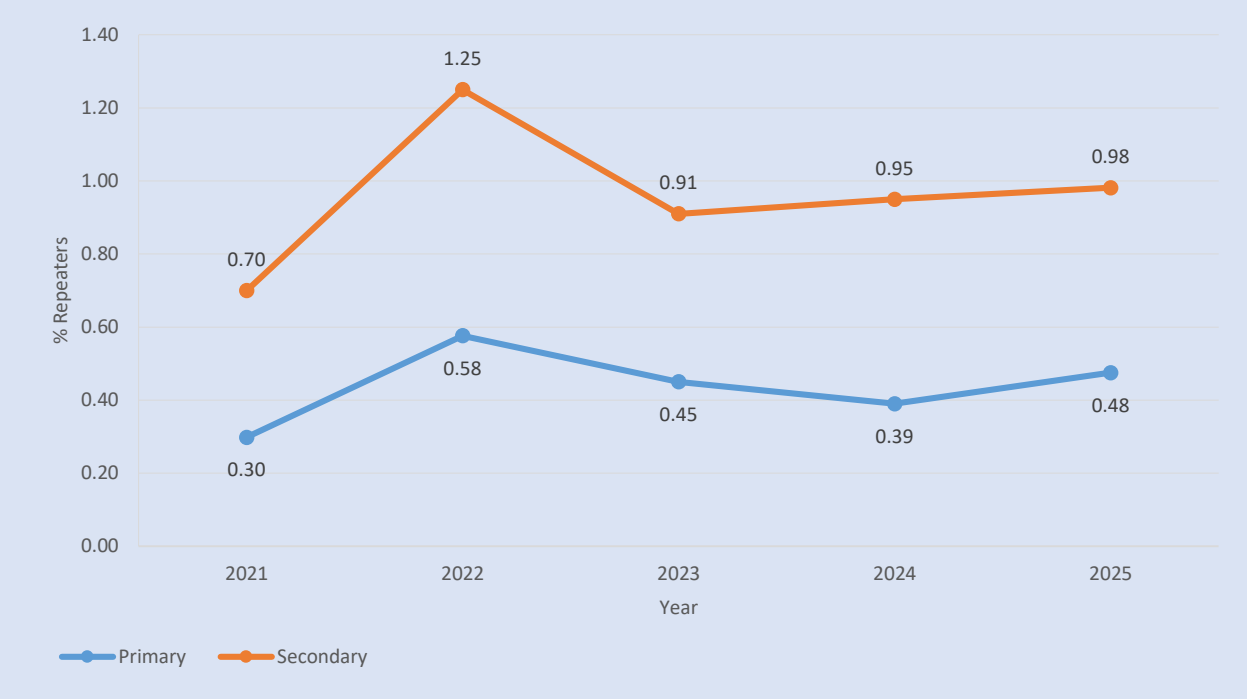


Figure 8.1: Repeaters by Level of Education, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

The distribution of repeaters by grade in 2025 shows that repetition is concentrated in the early primary grades, with a clear male disadvantage across all levels. A total of 16,651 repeaters were recorded, comprising 9,862 males (59.2%) and 6,789 females (40.8%), yielding an overall repeater rate of 0.48% and a Gender Parity Index (GPI) of 0.69, indicating substantially fewer female repeaters. Repetition is highest in Grade 1, which recorded 3,635 repeaters (0.90%), followed by Grade 2 (2,552; 0.63%) and Grade 3 (2,241; 0.54%), after which the rates decline steadily through the upper grades to Grade 7 (509; 0.13%). In both ECD A and ECD B, repeater rates remain relatively low at 0.25% and 0.39%, respectively, but still show male rates exceeding female ones. Across all grades, male repeater rates are consistently higher, peaking at 1.03% in Grade 1 compared to 0.76% for females, while the lowest rates are observed in Grade 7 for both sexes. The declining repeater trend with progression through grades suggests improved pupil retention over time, while the persistently low GPI values (ranging from 0.60 to 0.80) highlight a systematic gender imbalance in repetition, disproportionately affecting males, particularly in the lower primary grades.

Table 8.2: Primary Education Level Repeaters as a Percentage of Enrolment by Sex, GPI and Grade, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Grade	Repeaters, No.			Enrolment			% Repeaters			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
ECD A	438	325	763	155 636	153 420	309 056	0.28	0.21	0.25	0.75
ECD B	719	561	1 280	167 852	164 387	332 239	0.43	0.34	0.39	0.80
Grade 1	2 117	1 518	3 635	205 442	200 264	405 706	1.03	0.76	0.90	0.74
Grade 2	1 561	991	2 552	206 398	201 315	407 713	0.76	0.49	0.63	0.65
Grade 3	1 266	975	2 241	206 891	205 116	412 007	0.61	0.48	0.54	0.78
Grade 4	1 162	781	1 943	205 631	206 248	411 879	0.57	0.38	0.47	0.67
Grade 5	1 205	794	1 999	206 424	206 685	413 109	0.58	0.38	0.48	0.66
Grade 6	1 083	646	1 729	207 874	208 255	416 129	0.52	0.31	0.42	0.60
Grade 7	311	198	509	195 090	199 962	395 052	0.16	0.10	0.13	0.62
Grand Total	9 862	6 789	16 651	1757 238	1745 652	3502 890	0.56	0.39	0.48	0.69

The chart in Figure 8.2 clearly shows that repetition rates are highest in the early grades and are consistently higher for males than females across all primary school levels. In ECD, repetition remains relatively low but begins to exhibit a gender gap, at 0.28% for males versus 0.21% for females in ECD A, rising to 0.43% and 0.34% respectively in ECD B. Repetition peaks sharply in Grade 1, where 1.03% of males repeated compared to 0.76% of females, making this the most critical transition point in primary school education. Although repetition declines after Grade 1, it remains elevated in the lower primary school grades, with male rates exceeding female rates in Grade 2 (0.76% vs 0.49%) and Grade 3 (0.61% vs 0.48%). From Grade 4 to Grade 7, repetition rates continue to fall steadily for both sexes, reaching the lowest levels in Grade 7 (0.16% for males and 0.10% for females), indicating improved pupil progression in upper primary school.

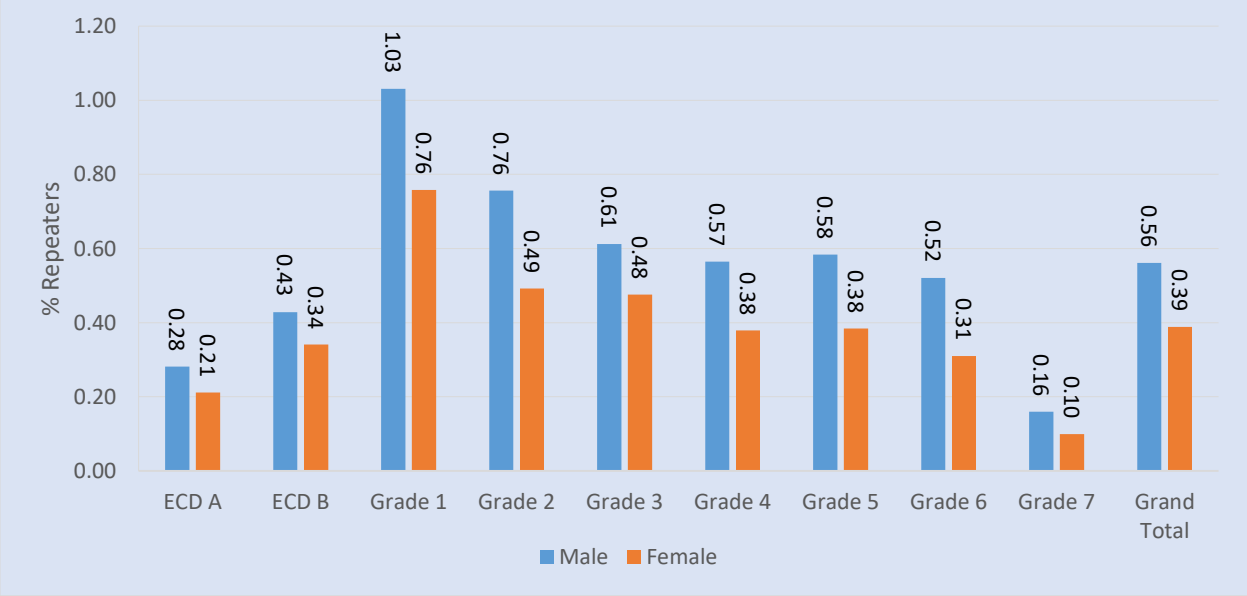


Figure 8.2: Primary Education Level Repeaters by Grade and Sex, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

The secondary school repetition remains low overall (0.98%) but is highly concentrated in the examination and transition grades, with clear gender differences. Out of 1,156,261 pupils enrolled, 11,349 repeated in 2025, comprising 5,898 males (1.05%) and 5,451 females (0.92%), yielding a Gender Parity Index (GPI) of 0.87, which indicates higher repetition among males. The repetition rates were minimal in Form 1 (0.32%) and Form 2 (0.16%), although Form 1 shows a slight female disadvantage (0.33% for females vs 0.31% for males; GPI 1.06). The rates rose sharply in Form 3 and Form 4, which together accounted for 9,876 repeaters (87% of all secondary repeaters) Form 3 recorded 4,757 repeaters (1.80%) and Form 4 recorded the highest rate at 2.23% (5,119 repeaters), with males consistently more likely to repeat than females (GPI 0.86 and 0.91, respectively). In contrast, repetition in Upper Secondary was negligible, at 0.07% in Lower 6 and 0.06% in Upper 6, indicating strong progression once pupils reach advanced levels. Overall, the data identify Forms 3 and 4 as critical bottlenecks in pupil progression, particularly for male pupils, underscoring the need for targeted academic support at these stages.

Table 8.3: Secondary Education Level Repeaters as a Percentage of Enrolment by Sex, GPI and Form, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Grade	Repeaters, No.			Enrolment			% Repeaters			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Form 1	443	509	952	143 411	155 242	298 653	0.31	0.33	0.32	1.06
Form 2	246	225	471	137 525	148 121	285 646	0.18	0.15	0.16	0.85
Form 3	2 506	2 251	4 757	129 373	134 710	264 083	1.94	1.67	1.80	0.86
Form 4	2 676	2 443	5 119	114 524	115 442	229 966	2.34	2.12	2.23	0.91
Lower 6	15	13	28	19 156	21 344	40 500	0.08	0.06	0.07	0.78
Upper 6	12	10	22	17 934	19 479	37 413	0.07	0.05	0.06	0.77
Total	5 898	5 451	11 349	561 923	594 338	1 156 261	1.05	0.92	0.98	0.87

In Form 1, repetition was 0.31 percent for males and 0.33 percent for females, giving 0.32 percent overall. In Form 2, repetition declined to 0.18 percent for males and 0.15 percent for females. In Form 3, repetition increased to 1.94 percent for males and 1.67 percent for females. In Form 4, repetition peaked at 2.34 percent for males and 2.12 percent for females, with a total of 2.23 percent. In Lower 6, repetition was 0.08 percent for males and 0.06 percent for females, while in Upper 6 repetition was 0.07 percent for males and 0.05 percent for females.

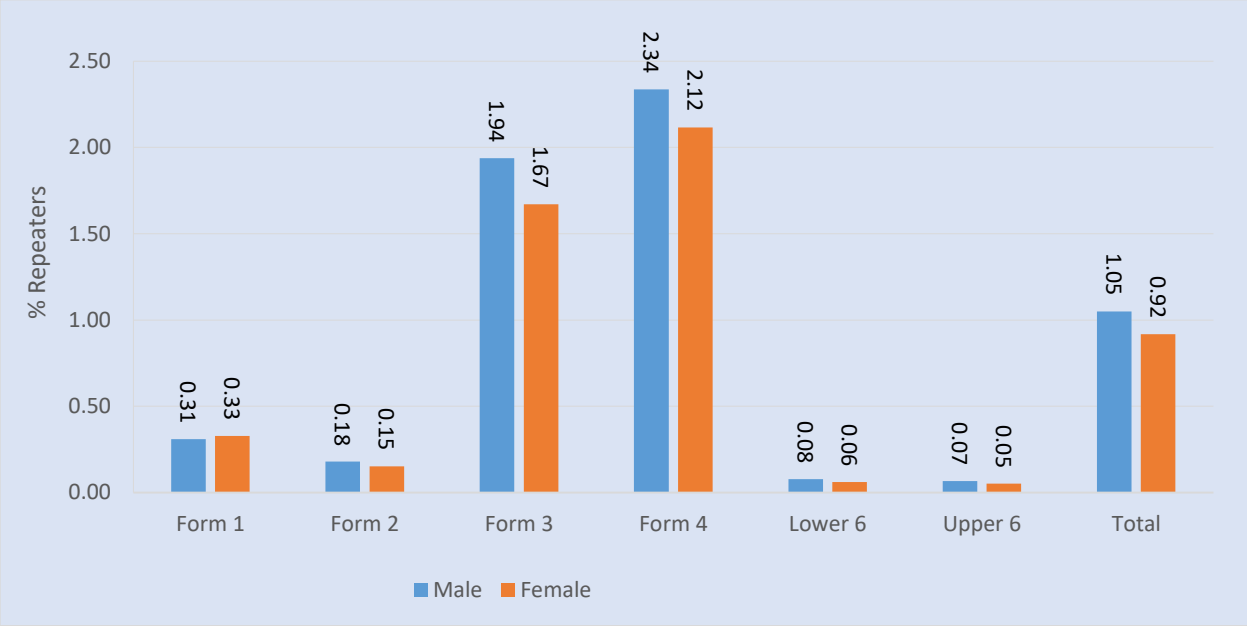


Figure 8.3: Secondary Education Level Repeaters by Form and Sex, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

The provincial distribution of repeaters in 2025 shows that repetition was most prevalent at primary school level (Grades 1–7) across all provinces, followed by secondary school education, with comparatively low repetition in ECD A and B. Nationally, 2,043 pupils repeated in ECD, 14,608 in primary, and 11,349 in secondary, confirming that primary education accounts for the largest share of repeaters. Provinces with the highest overall repetition burden were Masvingo (4,805 repeaters across all levels), Midlands (4,998), Mashonaland Central (3,395), and Mashonaland East (2,875), largely driven by high primary school level repetition. At ECD level, repetition remained low nationwide, with the highest totals recorded in Masvingo (405) and Mashonaland East (428). At primary school level, repetition peaked in Masvingo (2,928), Midlands (2,907), and Mashonaland Central (2,104), while Bulawayo (219) recorded the lowest. In the secondary school sector, the highest numbers of repeaters were observed in Midlands (1,791), Masvingo (1,472), and Harare (1,346). Across nearly all provinces and levels, male repeaters outnumbered females, particularly at primary and secondary school levels, indicating a persistent male disadvantage in progression.

Table 8.4: Repeaters by Level of Education, Sex and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Repeaters, No.								
	ECD A and B			Grade 1-7			Form 1-6		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bulawayo	41	51	92	132	87	219	344	312	656
Harare	77	54	131	561	304	865	732	614	1 346
Manicaland	63	39	102	731	564	1 295	459	494	953
Mashonaland Central	174	125	299	1 253	851	2 104	537	455	992
Mashonaland East	233	195	428	948	692	1 640	449	358	807
Mashonaland West	75	80	155	821	535	1 356	629	550	1 179
Masvingo	244	161	405	1 735	1 193	2 928	838	634	1 472
Matabeleland North	58	39	97	612	354	966	587	688	1 275
Matabeleland South	19	15	34	196	132	328	379	499	878
Midlands	173	127	300	1 716	1 191	2 907	944	847	1 791
Grand Total	1 157	886	2 043	8 705	5 903	14 608	5 898	5 451	11 349

In 2025, repeater rates in Zimbabwe varied markedly by province, education level and sex, with repetition being consistently lowest in ECD, higher in primary (Grades 1–7), and highest in secondary (Form 1–6). Nationally, total repeater rates stood at 0.32% in ECD, 0.51% in primary, and 0.98% in secondary, with males recording higher rates than females at all levels (ECD: 0.36% vs 0.28%; primary: 0.61% vs 0.41%; secondary: 1.05% vs 0.92%). At ECD level, provincial totals ranged from just 0.08% in Matabeleland South to 0.61% in Mashonaland East, with Mashonaland Central and Masvingo both at 0.45%. In primary school education, repetition was highest in Midlands and Masvingo (both 0.80%), followed by Mashonaland Central (0.77%), while Bulawayo (0.19%) recorded the lowest rate.

The Secondary school level repetition was substantially higher, peaking in Matabeleland North (2.08%), Midlands (1.22%), Mashonaland Central (1.11%), and Bulawayo (1.09%), with the lowest observed in Manicaland (0.54%). Gender disparities persisted across provinces, with male rates exceeding female rates in most cases, particularly in primary and secondary education, although Matabeleland South showed slightly higher female repetition at secondary level (1.44% vs 1.30%)

Table 8.5: Repeaters by Level of Education, Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	ECD A and B			Grade 1-7			Form 1-6		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bulawayo	0.31	0.39	0.35	0.23	0.15	0.19	1.23	0.97	1.09
Harare	0.31	0.22	0.27	0.35	0.18	0.26	1.06	0.83	0.94
Manicaland	0.13	0.08	0.11	0.33	0.26	0.30	0.52	0.56	0.54
Mashonaland Central	0.52	0.38	0.45	0.92	0.63	0.77	1.23	1.00	1.11
Mashonaland East	0.65	0.57	0.61	0.59	0.44	0.52	0.68	0.54	0.61
Mashonaland West	0.21	0.23	0.22	0.48	0.32	0.40	0.99	0.87	0.93
Masvingo	0.54	0.36	0.45	0.94	0.66	0.80	1.09	0.79	0.94
Matabeleland North	0.27	0.18	0.23	0.74	0.43	0.58	2.15	2.02	2.08
Matabeleland South	0.09	0.07	0.08	0.25	0.17	0.21	1.30	1.44	1.38
Midlands	0.39	0.29	0.34	0.95	0.66	0.80	1.34	1.10	1.22
Grand Total	0.36	0.28	0.32	0.61	0.41	0.51	1.05	0.92	0.98

The data show a strong rural concentration of repeaters at both primary and secondary levels in Zimbabwe in 2025, with rural schools accounting for the majority of repetition cases. At the primary school level, a total of 16,651 repeaters were recorded, of whom 13,881 pupils (83.36%) were in rural areas, compared to 2,770 (16.64%) in urban areas. This rural dominance is evident for both sexes, with 83.24% of male repeaters (8,209) and 83.55% of female repeaters (5,672) located in rural schools. At the secondary school level, although the rural share was slightly lower, it remained predominant with 7,516 repeaters (66.23%) in rural areas versus 3,833 (33.77%) in urban areas. Male repeaters were more concentrated in rural secondary schools (67.14%) than females (65.24%), while urban areas accounted for a relatively higher share of female repeaters at secondary level (34.76%) compared to males (32.86%).

Table 8.6: Repeaters by Level of Education, Location, Sex and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

School Level		Repeaters			% of Total Repeaters		
	Location	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Primary	Rural	8209	5672	13881	83.24	83.55	83.36
	Urban	1653	1117	2770	16.76	16.45	16.64
	Total	9862	6789	16651	100.00	100.00	100.00
Secondary	Rural	3960	3556	7516	67.14	65.24	66.23
	Urban	1938	1895	3833	32.86	34.76	33.77
	Total	5898	5451	11349	100.00	100.00	100.00

At the primary school level, 83.36 percent of repeaters were in rural areas and 16.64 percent in urban areas. Among males, 83.24 percent were rural, while 83.55 percent of female repeaters were rural. At secondary school level, 66.23 percent of repeaters were rural and 3.77 percent urban. Male rural secondary school repeaters accounted for 67.14 percent, while females accounted for 65.24 percent.

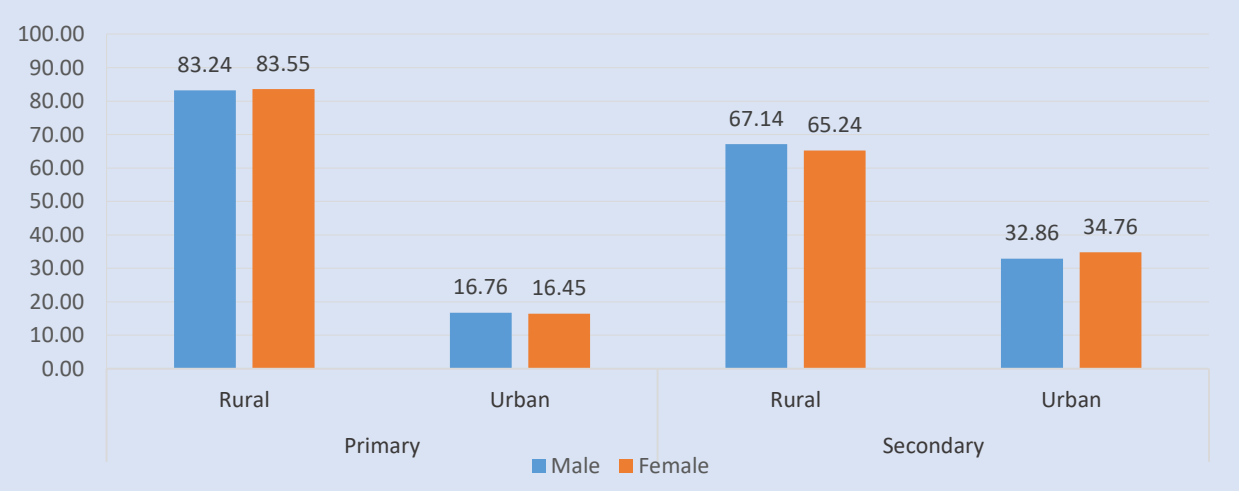


Figure 8.4: Repeaters by Education Level, Location and Sex, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

8.2 Dropouts

A total of 13,032 primary school dropouts, with 7,242 males (55.5%) and 5,790 females (44.5%) were recorded in 2025. The leading cause of dropout was financial constraints, affecting 5,548 pupils (42.78%), slightly higher among females (44.20%) than males (41.27%). The second most common reason was absconding, accounting for 4,866 pupils (37.34%), with males (40.13%) more likely to abscond than females (33.85%). Death accounted for 599 dropouts (4.60%), and distance to school contributed to 519 cases (3.98%), reflecting challenges in accessibility. Child labour was responsible for 368 dropouts (2.82%), more prevalent among males (3.24%) than females (2.30%), while illness caused 276 dropouts (2.12%), slightly higher among females (2.50%) than males (1.81%).

Other notable reasons included marriage (116 pupils, 0.89%) and pregnancy (102 pupils, 0.78%), predominantly affecting females, whereas pupils with special needs accounted for 138 dropouts (1.06%), almost evenly distributed between sexes. Less common causes included religion-related issues (142, 1.09%), violence including bullying (61, 0.47%), harassment including sexual (18, 0.14%), expulsion (13, 0.10%), and other unspecified reasons (266, 2.04%).

Table 8.7: Primary School Dropouts by Reasons, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Dropout by reason	Primary			% of Dropouts		
	M	F	T	M	F	T
Financial	2 989	2 559	5 548	41.27	44.20	42.57
Absconded	2 906	1 960	4 866	40.13	33.85	37.34
Death	348	251	599	4.81	4.34	4.60
Distance	269	250	519	3.71	4.32	3.98
Child labour	235	133	368	3.24	2.30	2.82
Illness	131	145	276	1.81	2.50	2.12
Other	144	122	266	1.99	2.11	2.04
Religion Related	85	57	142	1.17	0.98	1.09
Pupils with Special Needs (Specific to disability)	82	56	138	1.13	0.97	1.06
Marriage	4	112	116	0.06	1.93	0.89
Pregnancy	5	97	102	0.07	1.68	0.78
Violence (including bullying)	37	24	61	0.51	0.41	0.47
Harassment (including sexual)	1	17	18	0.01	0.29	0.14
Expulsion	6	7	13	0.08	0.12	0.10
Grand Total	7 242	5 790	13 032	100.00	100.00	100.00

A total of 26,704 secondary school dropouts, comprising 11,228 males (42.1%) and 15,476 females (57.9%) were recorded, indicating that dropout rates were higher among females at the secondary school level. The leading cause of dropout was financial constraints, affecting 9,974 pupils (37.35%), with a higher proportion among males (46.54%) compared to females (30.69%). The second most prevalent reason was absconding, responsible for 6,961 dropouts (26.07%), again more common among males (36.16%) than females (18.75%). Gender-specific factors played a significant role. Marriage accounted for 3,917 dropouts (14.67%), almost entirely among females (24.41%), while pregnancy contributed to 2,433

dropouts (9.11%), predominantly affecting females (15.49%). Other notable causes included distance to school (802, 3.00%), child labour (555, 2.08%), pupils with special needs (479, 1.79%), illness (296, 1.11%), and death (225, 0.84%). Less common reasons were religion-related issues (125, 0.47%), violence including bullying (82, 0.31%), harassment including sexual (38, 0.14%), expulsion (56, 0.21%), and other unspecified causes (761, 2.85%).

Table 8.8: Secondary School Dropouts by Reasons, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

	Secondary			% of Total		
Dropout by Reason	M	F	T	M	F	T
Financial	5225	4749	9974	46.54	30.69	37.35
Absconded	4060	2901	6961	36.16	18.75	26.07
Marriage	139	3778	3917	1.24	24.41	14.67
Pregnancy	36	2397	2433	0.32	15.49	9.11
Distance	395	407	802	3.52	2.63	3.00
Other	414	347	761	3.69	2.24	2.85
Child labour	322	233	555	2.87	1.51	2.08
Pupils with Special Needs (Specific to disability)	289	190	479	2.57	1.23	1.79
Illness	101	195	296	0.90	1.26	1.11
Death	111	114	225	0.99	0.74	0.84
Religion Related	38	87	125	0.34	0.56	0.47
Violence (including bullying)	49	33	82	0.44	0.21	0.31
Expulsion	32	24	56	0.29	0.16	0.21
Harassment (including sexual)	17	21	38	0.15	0.14	0.14
Grand Total	11228	15476	26704	100.00	100.00	100.00

8.3 Readmission

Table 8.9 shows the distribution among primary school readmissions in 2025 by reason and sex, showing both numbers and percentages of the total (N = 4,744; 2,634 males and 2,110 females). The dominant driver of readmission was financial hardship, accounting for 56.83 percent of all cases (2,696 pupils), with a slightly higher share among females (58.53 percent) than males (55.47 percent). The second-largest category was absconding at 18.57 percent (more prevalent among males: 20.77 percent versus females: 15.83 percent). Pupils with special needs (disability-specific) constituted 8.71 percent, followed by illness (4.81 percent), distance (4.34 percent), and other reasons (3.46 percent). Lower-frequency reasons included child labour (1.58 percent), violence including bullying (1.12 percent), and very small shares for marriage (0.36 percent; females only), harassment including sexual (0.11 percent), religion-related (0.11 percent), and expulsion (0.02 percent; 1 female case).

The data highlights gendered patterns where males were comparatively more represented in absconding, violence, and distance-related readmissions, while females showed slightly higher shares in financial, illness, marriage, and harassment categories. Overall, financial barriers dominate readmission drivers for both sexes, and disability-related needs formed a notable proportion, pointing to priorities around fee/exemption support, attendance follow-up, inclusive education services, and pupil protection.

Table 8.9 Primary School Readmission by Reasons, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Readmission Reason	Primary			% of Total		
	M	F	T	M	F	T
Financial	1461	1235	2696	55.47	58.53	56.83
Absconded	547	334	881	20.77	15.83	18.57
Pupils with Special Needs (Specific to disability)	229	184	413	8.69	8.72	8.71
Illness	112	116	228	4.25	5.50	4.81
Distance	121	85	206	4.59	4.03	4.34
Other	86	78	164	3.26	3.70	3.46
Child labour	42	33	75	1.59	1.56	1.58
Violence (including bullying)	32	21	53	1.21	1.00	1.12
Marriage		17	17	0.00	0.81	0.36
Harassment (including sexual)	2	3	5	0.08	0.14	0.11
Religion Related	2	3	5	0.08	0.14	0.11
Expulsion		1	1	0.00	0.05	0.02
Grand Total	2634	2110	4744	100.00	100.00	100.00

Table 8.10 summarises secondary school readmissions in 2025 by reason and sex. The leading driver was financial hardship, accounting for 54.39% of all readmissions (2,538 pupils), with a higher share among males (58.18%) than females (51.20%). The second-largest reason was absconding, at 17.83% overall, notably more common among males (24.19%) than females (12.48%). Marriage was the third-largest category at 10.72% of all cases and occurred exclusively among females (500 cases; 19.74% of female readmissions).

Lower-frequency reasons collectively accounted for a small fraction of readmissions: distance (4.99%), other (3.73%), illness (2.79%), child labour (2.53%), and disability-specific special needs (1.91%). Very small shares were recorded for violence including bullying (0.45%), expulsion (0.36%; females only, 17 cases), harassment including sexual (0.15%), and religion-related (0.15%).

Table 8.10: Secondary School Readmission by Reasons, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Readmission Reason	Secondary			% of Total		
	M	F	T	M	F	T
Financial	1241	1297	2538	58.18	51.20	54.39
Absconded	516	316	832	24.19	12.48	17.83
Marriage		500	500	0.00	19.74	10.72
Distance	115	118	233	5.39	4.66	4.99
Other	91	83	174	4.27	3.28	3.73
Illness	49	81	130	2.30	3.20	2.79
Child labour	59	59	118	2.77	2.33	2.53
Pupils with Special Needs (Specific to disability)	47	42	89	2.20	1.66	1.91
Violence (including bullying)	9	12	21	0.42	0.47	0.45
Expulsion		17	17	0.00	0.67	0.36
Harassment (including sexual)	3	4	7	0.14	0.16	0.15
Religion Related	3	4	7	0.14	0.16	0.15
Grand Total	2133	2533	4666	100.00	100.00	100.00

8.4 Incidents

Table 8.11 presents incidences reported in schools in 2025 by reason and education level. At primary level, the highest number of incidences was recorded for bullying (7,928 cases), followed by health-related incidences (3,450), emotional abuse (3,198), and theft (3,198). Behavioural inconsistence accounted for 2,180 incidences, while physical abuse accounted for 1,820 cases. Pregnancy-related incidences at primary level were 114 cases, all among female pupils.

At secondary level, bullying remained the most reported incidence with 3,601 cases. Early marriage accounted for 2,381 incidences, while pregnancy accounted for 2,125 cases, all recorded among females. Drug and substance abuse accounted for 2,217 incidences, and health-related cases totalled 2,264 incidences. Emotional abuse accounted for 1,948 cases, and theft for 2,084 cases.

Table 8.11: Incidences by Reason, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Incidents Reason	Primary			Secondary		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Behavioral inconsistence	1 223	957	2 180	958	782	1 740
Bullying	5 067	2 861	7 928	2 156	1 445	3 601
Drowning	91	58	149	19	90	109
Drug and Substance Abuse	332	62	394	1 800	417	2 217
Early marriage	41	104	145	105	2 276	2 381
Emotional abuse	1 464	1 734	3 198	859	1 089	1 948
Health Related	1 673	1 777	3 450	1 092	1 172	2 264
Improper association	106	135	241	89	140	229
Missing	16	18	34	9	40	49
Physical Abuse	957	863	1 820	606	439	1 045
Pregnancy	0	114	114	0	2 125	2 125
Rape	15	243	258	19	100	119
Religion Related	312	324	636	52	120	172
Sexual Assault/Indecent Assault	122	272	394	64	162	226
Suicide	54	8	62	26	24	50
Theft	2 029	1 160	3 189	1 067	1 017	2 084

The figures 8.5 and 8.6 illustrate that bullying, health-related issues, emotional abuse, and theft dominate reported incidences at both primary and secondary levels. Gender-specific incidences such as pregnancy and early marriage are prominent only at secondary level, while suicide and drowning remain among the least reported incidences across both education levels.

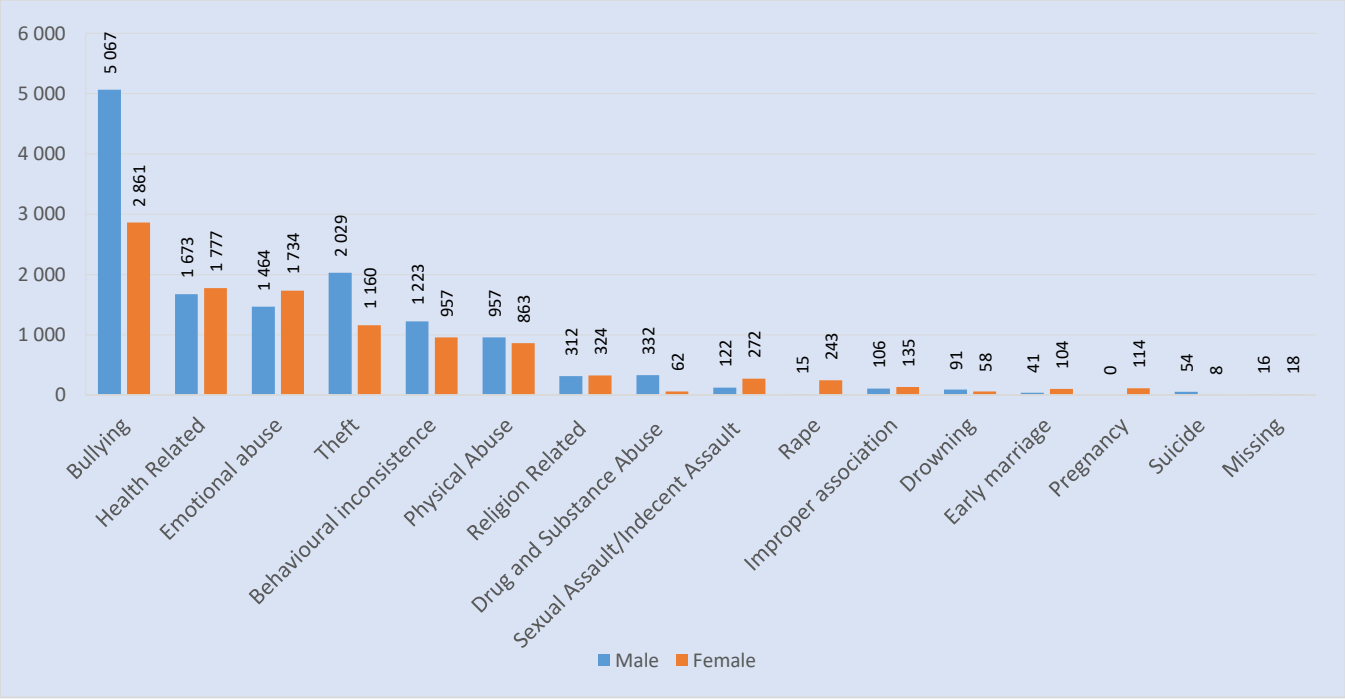


Figure 8.5: Primary School Incidences by Reasons, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

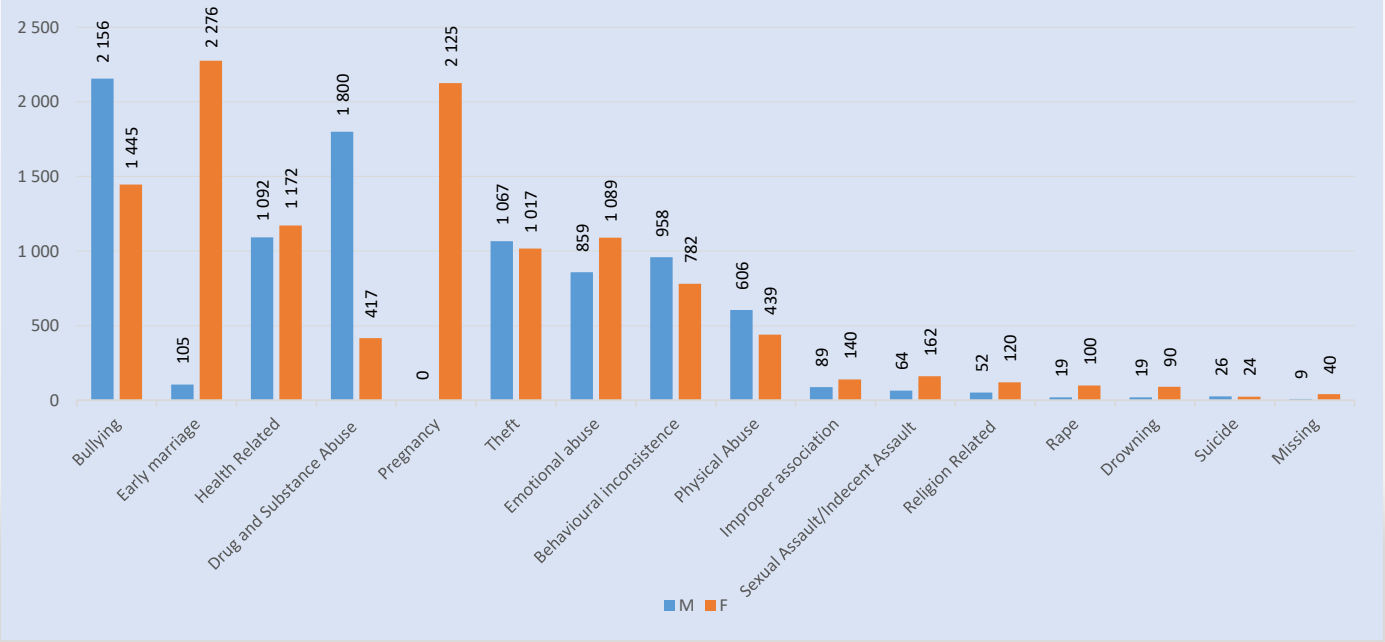


Figure 8.6:Secondary School Incidences by Reasons, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

8.5 Promotion, Repetition, and Dropout Rates

The table below compares enrolment, repetition, and promotion outcomes between 2024 and 2025 by grade and form. At primary school level, total enrolment declined from 2,928,818 in 2024 to 2,861,595 in 2025. In 2025, a total of 14,608 primary pupils repeated, comprising 8,705 males and 5,903 females. During the same year, 2,742,617 pupils were promoted, including 1,377,929 females and 1,364,688 males.

At grade level, Grade 1 recorded 3,635 repeaters (2,117 males and 1,518 females) out of an enrolment of 405,706 pupils, while 405,161 pupils were promoted. Grade 7 recorded the lowest number of repeaters at primary level, with 509 pupils (311 males and 198 females) repeating, while 297,701 pupils were promoted. At secondary school level, total enrolment increased from 1,145,049 in 2024 to 1,156,261 in 2025. In 2025, a total of 11,349 secondary pupils repeated, comprising 5,898 males and 5,451 females. A total of 877,211 pupils were promoted, including 449,154 females and 428,057 males.

Form-level data show that Form 4 recorded the highest number of repeaters, with 5,119 pupils (2,676 males and 2,443 females), while Form 1 recorded 952 repeaters. At upper secondary school level, repetition was minimal, with 28 repeaters in Lower 6 and 22 in Upper 6.

Table 8.12: Enrolments, Repeaters, and Promotion by Grade/ Form, Number, Zimbabwe 2024 and 2025

	Enrolment 2024			Enrolment 2025			Repetition 2025			Promotion 2025		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Grade 1	210048	203855	413,903	205442	200264	405,706	2117	1518	3,635	204,837	200,324	405,161
Grade 2	211981	207783	419,764	206398	201315	407,713	1561	991	2,552	205,625	204,141	409,766
Grade 3	212343	211241	423,584	206891	205116	412,007	1266	975	2,241	204,469	205,467	409,936
Grade 4	212170	210895	423,065	205631	206248	411,879	1162	781	1,943	205,219	205,891	411,110
Grade 5	216343	215454	431,797	206424	206685	413,109	1205	794	1,999	206,791	207,609	414,400
Grade 6	211591	212709	424,300	207874	208255	416,129	1083	646	1,729	194,779	199,764	394,543
Grade 7	192633	199772	392,405	195090	199962	395,052	311	198	509	142,968	154,733	297,701
Total Primary	1 467 109	1 461 709	2 928 818	1 433 750	1 427 845	2 861 595	8 705	5 903	14 608	1 364 688	1 377 929	2 742 617
Form 1	143457	156383	299,840	143411	155242	298,653	443	509	952	137,279	147,896	285,175
Form 2	135008	143698	278,706	137525	148121	285,646	246	225	471	126,867	132,459	259,326
Form 3	129565	132867	262,432	129373	134710	264,083	2506	2251	4,757	111,848	112,999	224,847
Form 4	115069	115104	230,173	114524	115442	229,966	2676	2443	5,119	19,141	21,331	40,472
Total 1-4	523 099	548 052	1 071 151	524 833	553 515	1 078 348	5 871	5 428	11 299	395 135	414 685	809 820
Lower 6	18569	20098	38,667	19156	21344	40,500	15	13	28	17,922	19,469	37,391
Upper 6	17057	18174	35,231	17934	19479	37,413	12	10	22	15,000	15,000	30,000
Total 5-6	35 626	38 272	73 898	37 090	40 823	77 913	0 27	0 23	0 50	32 922	34 469	67 391
Total Secondary	558 725	586 324	1 145 049	561 923	594 338	1 156 261	5 898	5 451	11 349	428 057	449 154	877 211

Table 8.13 shows that promotion rates at primary school level exceeded 95 percent from Grade 1 to Grade 6. Promotion declined to 92.99 percent at Grade 7, comprising 93.9 percent for females and 92.1 percent for males. correspondingly, the dropout rate at Grade 7 was 6.61 percent, with 7.4 percent for males and 5.8 percent for females.

Transition from Grade 7 to Form 1 recorded a promotion rate of 75.87 percent, while the dropout rate stood at 24.00 percent. At Form 4, the promotion rate to Form 5 was 17.58 percent, with a dropout rate of 80.19 percent. Repetition rates remained relatively low across all grades and forms, generally below 2.3 percent.

Table 8.13: Promotion, Repetition, and Dropout Rates by Grade/Form, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2024 to 2025

	Promotion Rate			Repetition Rate			Dropout Rate		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
To Grade 2	97.5	98.3	97.89	1	0.7	0.88	1.5	1	1.23
To Grade 3	97	98.2	97.62	0.7	0.5	0.61	2.3	1.3	1.77
To Grade 4	96.3	97.3	96.78	0.6	0.5	0.53	3.1	2.3	2.69
To Grade 5	96.7	97.6	97.17	0.5	0.4	0.46	2.7	2	2.37
To Grade 6	95.6	96.4	95.97	0.6	0.4	0.46	3.9	3.3	3.57
To Grade 7	92.1	93.9	92.99	0.5	0.3	0.41	7.4	5.8	6.61
To Form 1	74.2	77.5	75.87	0.2	0.1	0.13	25.6	22.4	24
To Form 2	95.7	94.6	95.11	0.3	0.3	0.32	4	5.1	4.57
To Form 3	94	92.2	93.05	0.2	0.2	0.17	5.8	7.7	6.78
To Form 4	86.3	85	85.68	1.9	1.7	1.81	11.7	13.3	12.51
To Form 5	16.6	18.5	17.58	2.3	2.1	2.22	81	79.3	80.19
To Form 6	96.5	96.9	96.7	0.1	0.1	0.07	3.4	3.1	3.23

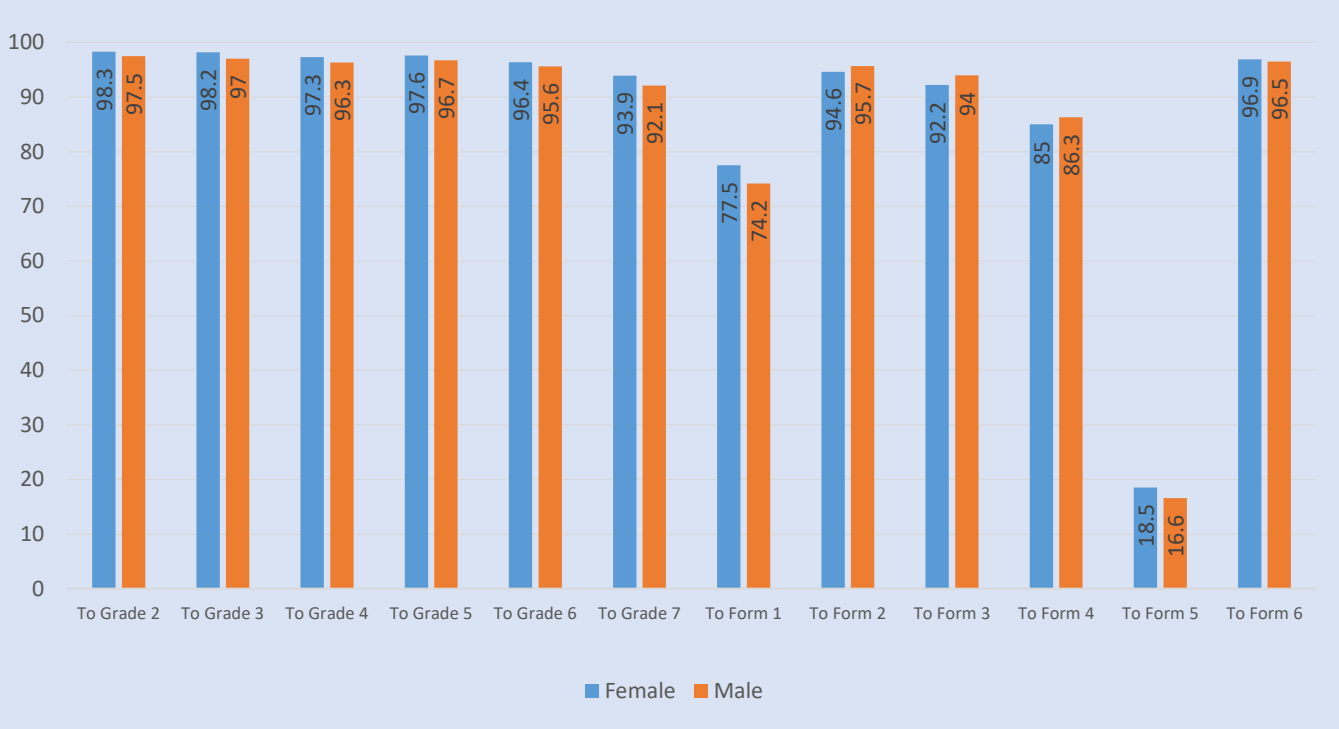


Figure 8.7: Distribution of Promotion Rates by Grade/Form, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2024 to 2025

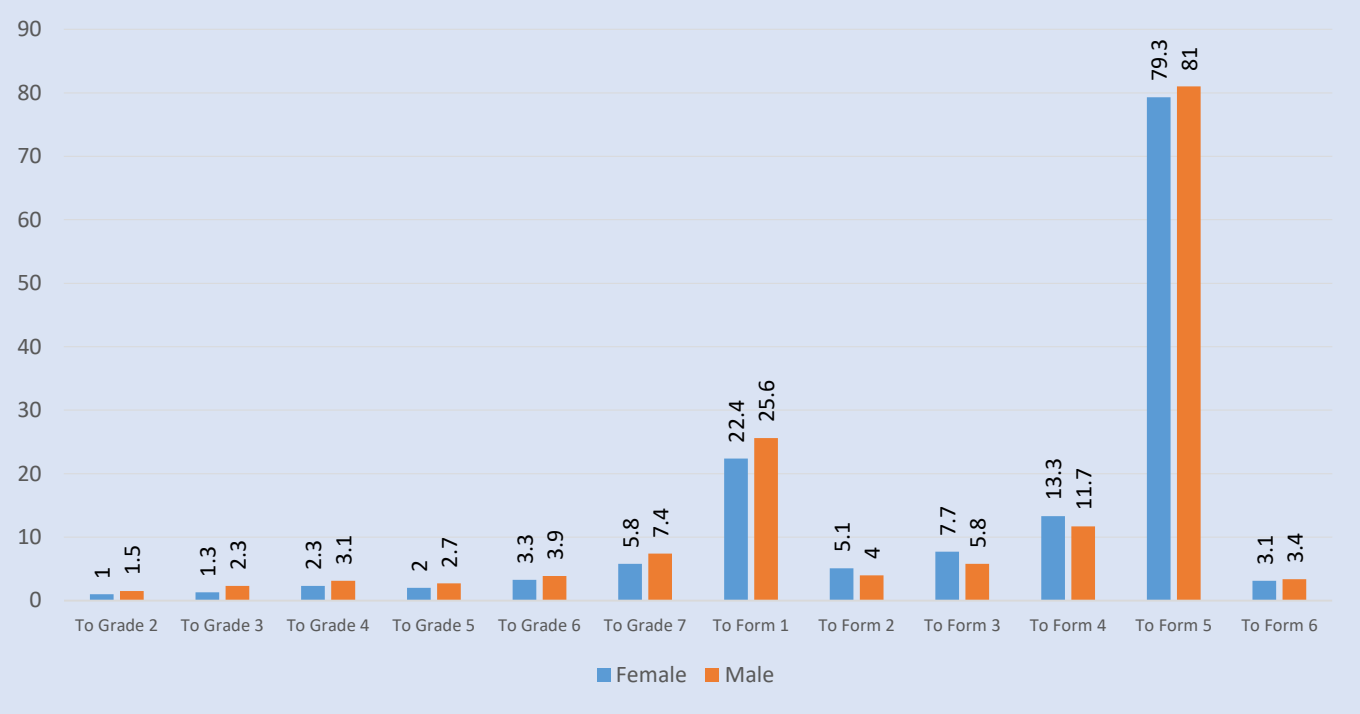


Figure 8.8: Distribution of Dropout Rates by Grade/Form, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2024 to 2025

8.6 Transition Rates

Table 8.14 indicates that transition from Grade 7 to Form 1 declined from 81.46 percent in 2020–2021 to 75.87 percent in 2024–2025. Over the same period, male transition declined from 79.78 percent to 74.22 percent, while female transition declined from 83.12 percent to 77.45 percent.

Transition from Form 4 to Lower 6 remained consistently low, increasing slightly from 17.01 percent in 2020–2021 to 17.58 percent in 2024–2025. Female transition increased from 17.68 percent to 18.53 percent, while male transition increased marginally from 16.37 percent to 16.63 percent.

Table 8.14: Transition Rates, Grade 7 to Form 1 and Form 4 to Form 5, by Sex and GPI, Percentage, Zimbabwe 2020-2021 to 2024 – 2025

Years	Transition Rate, %			GPI	Transition Rate, %			GPI
	From Grade 7 to Form 1				From Form 4 to Lower 6			
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
2020 to 2021	79.78	83.12	81.46	1.04	16.37	17.68	17.01	1.08
2021 to 2022	83.64	86.44	85.06	1.03	17.65	18.63	18.13	1.06
2022 to 2023	79.92	83.79	81.89	1.05	15.28	16.69	15.98	1.09
2023 to 2024	77.85	81.14	79.53	1.04	16.61	18.23	17.42	1.1
2024 TO 2025	74.22	77.45	75.87	1.04	16.63	18.53	17.58	1.11

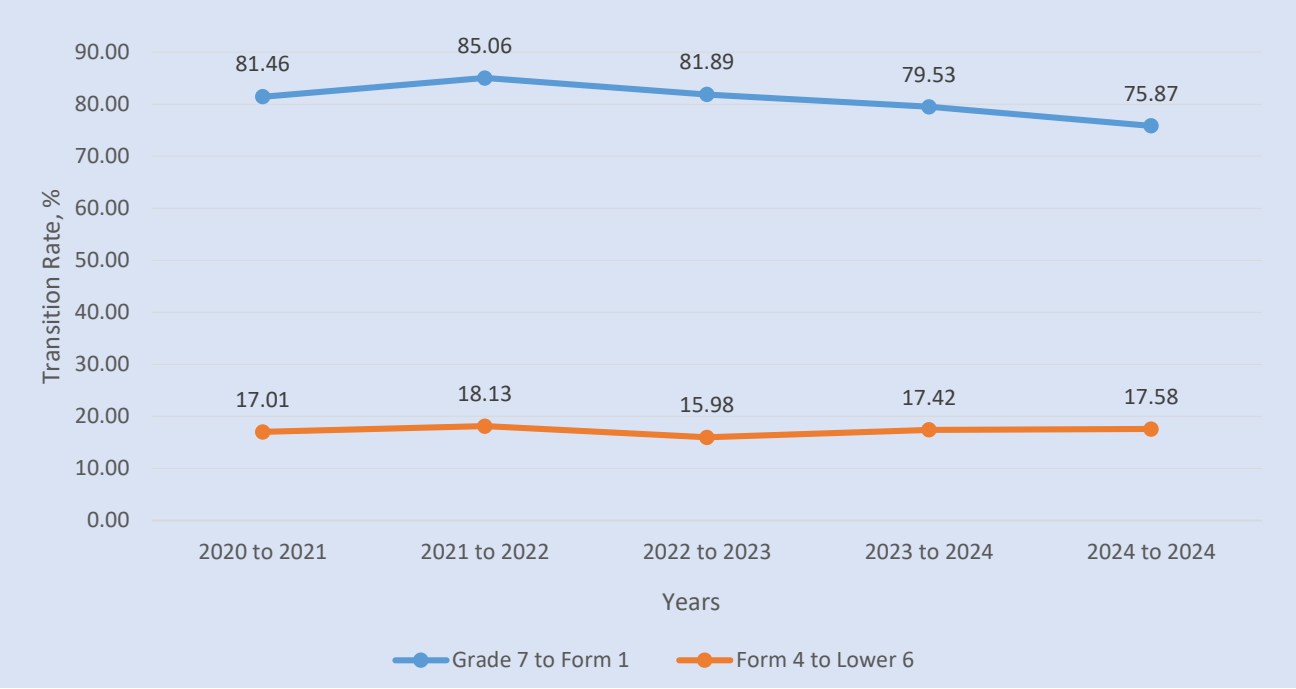


Figure 8.9: Transition Rates, Grade 7 to Form 1 and Form 4 to Form 5, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2020-2021 to 2024 – 2025

In 2025, Masvingo Province recorded the highest Grade 7 to Form 1 transition rate at 82.53 percent, followed by Matabeleland South (80.38 percent) and Midlands (79.26 percent). Harare recorded the lowest transition rate at 65.78 percent. Female transition rates exceeded male rates in all provinces, resulting in GPIs above 1.00 nationally (1.04).

For Form 4 to Form 5, transition rates were highest in Harare (27.14 percent) and Bulawayo (24.33 percent), and lowest in Mashonaland Central (12.50 percent) and Mashonaland West (13.11 percent). The national transition rate stood at 17.58 percent, with a GPI of 1.11.

Table 8.15: Transition Rates, Grade 7 to Form 1 and Form 4 to Form 5 by Province Sex and GPI, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Grade 7 to Form 1			GPI	Form 4 to Form 5			GPI
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	76.74	79.45	78.13	1.04	21.95	26.41	24.33	1.20
Harare	64.94	66.57	65.78	1.03	25.74	28.48	27.14	1.11
Manicaland	76.28	78.40	77.35	1.03	16.90	18.04	17.45	1.07
Mashonaland Central	69.54	72.67	71.15	1.05	11.83	13.22	12.50	1.12
Mashonaland East	78.31	79.66	78.99	1.02	16.83	18.86	17.79	1.12
Mashonaland West	71.87	73.81	72.84	1.03	12.25	14.05	13.11	1.15
Masvingo	81.16	83.83	82.53	1.03	16.03	16.78	16.40	1.05
Matabeleland North	67.78	80.21	74.17	1.18	11.33	12.44	11.94	1.10
Matabeleland South	76.26	84.36	80.38	1.11	16.48	19.56	18.17	1.19
Midlands	77.26	81.17	79.26	1.05	14.08	15.49	14.80	1.10
Grand Total	74.22	77.45	75.87	1.04	16.63	18.53	17.58	1.11

8.7 Survival Rates

Table 8.16 shows that survival rates in primary education declined progressively with increasing grade. Survival to Grade 2 was 98.76 percent overall, comprising 98.51 percent for males and 99.01 percent for females, yielding a GPI of 1.01. Survival declined to 96.99 percent at Grade 3, 94.37 percent at Grade 4, 92.13 percent at Grade 5, and 88.83 percent at Grade 6. By Grade 7, survival stood at 82.94 percent, with 80.67 percent for males and 85.27 percent for females, resulting in a GPI of 1.06.

Table 8.16: Survival Rates by Education Level, Grade and Sex, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Grade	Survival Rate, %			
	Male	Female	Total	GPI
To Grade 2	98.51	99.01	98.76	1.01
To Grade 3	96.27	97.74	96.99	1.02
To Grade 4	93.26	95.51	94.37	1.02
To Grade 5	90.70	93.59	92.13	1.03
To Grade 6	87.18	90.51	88.83	1.04
To Grade 7	80.67	85.27	82.94	1.06

Survival rates declined from 98.76 percent at Grade 2 to 82.94 percent at Grade 7. Female survival to Grade 7 was 85.27 percent, compared to 80.67 percent for males.

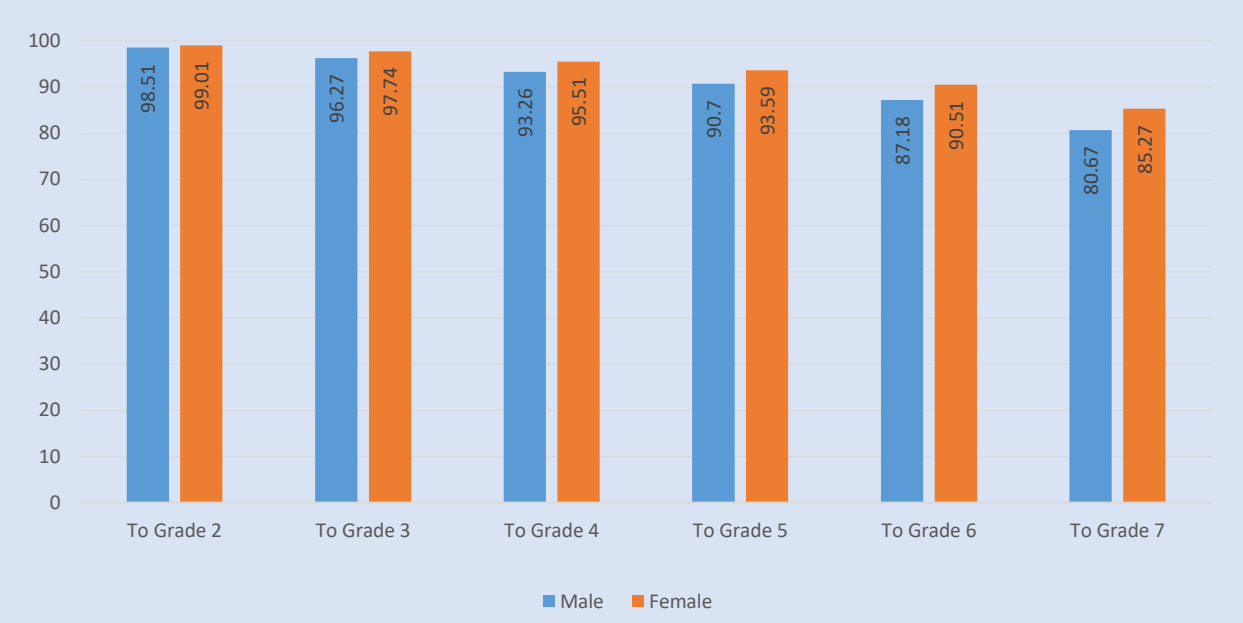


Figure 8.10: Primary School Survival Rate by Grade and Sex, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

At secondary school level, survival declined sharply with progression through forms. Survival to Form 2 was 95.41 percent, comprising 95.99 percent for males and 94.88 percent for females. Survival declined to 88.93 percent at Form 3 and 77.60 percent at Form 4. A sharp decline was observed thereafter, with survival to Form 5 at 14.05 percent and to Form

6 at 13.60 percent. Females recorded slightly higher survival at upper secondary, resulting in a GPI of 1.06 at both Form 5 and Form 6.

Table 8.17: Survival Rates by Education Level, Form, and Sex, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Form	Survival Rate, %			
	Male	Female	Total	GPI
To Form 2	95.99	94.88	95.41	0.99
To Form 3	90.37	87.60	88.93	0.97
To Form 4	79.55	75.79	77.60	0.95
To Form 5	13.66	14.43	14.05	1.06
To Form 6	13.20	13.99	13.60	1.06

Survival to Form 4 stood at 77.60 percent, declining sharply to 14.05 percent at Form 5 and 13.60 percent at Form 6. Female survival to Form 5 was 14.43 percent, compared to 13.66 percent for males

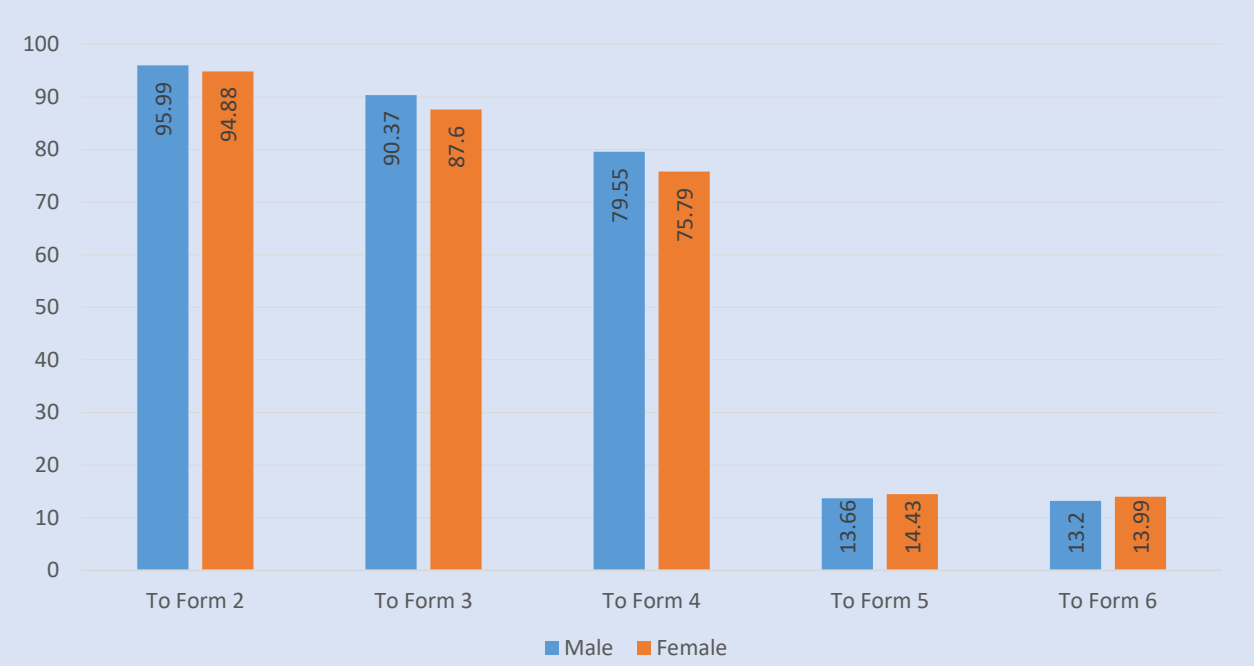


Figure 8.11: Secondary School Survival Rate by Form and Sex, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

8.8 Completion Rate

Table 8.18 indicates that ECD completion rates increased from 73.76 percent in 2021 to 81.61 percent in 2025. Primary school completion rates improved from 83.34 percent in 2021 to 90.45 percent in 2025. Lower secondary completion remained relatively stable, averaging 63.45 percent in 2025, while upper secondary school completion rates remained low at 11.92 percent in 2025. Across all levels, females generally recorded slightly higher completion rates than males, reflected by GPIs close to or above 1.00.

Table 8.18: Completion Rate by Level of Education and Sex, Percentage, Zimbabwe 2021-2025

	Male	Female	Total	GPI
ECD				
2021	74.67	72.85	73.76	0.98
2022	86.57	84.48	85.52	0.98
2023	89.47	87.53	88.5	0.98
2024	86.74	84.22	85.47	0.97
2025	82.62	80.60	81.61	0.98
Primary				
2021	82.71	83.97	83.34	1.02
2022	89.58	92.38	90.98	1.03
2023	81.24	84.55	82.90	1.04
2024	89.96	92.92	91.44	1.03
2025	89.98	90.91	90.45	1.01
Lower Secondary				
2021	55.17	54.30	54.73	0.98
2022	65.98	65.93	65.95	1.00
2023	67.42	67.74	67.58	1.00
2024	64.92	64.89	64.90	1.00
2025	63.35	63.55	63.45	1.00
Upper Secondary				
2021	13.27	13.38	13.32	1.01
2022	12.87	12.64	12.75	0.98
2023	11.1	11.58	11.34	1.04
2024	10.21	11.02	10.61	1.08
2025	11.35	12.49	11.92	1.10

In 2025, completion rates were 81.61 percent at ECD, 90.45 percent at primary, 63.45 percent at lower secondary, and 11.92 percent at upper secondary school level.

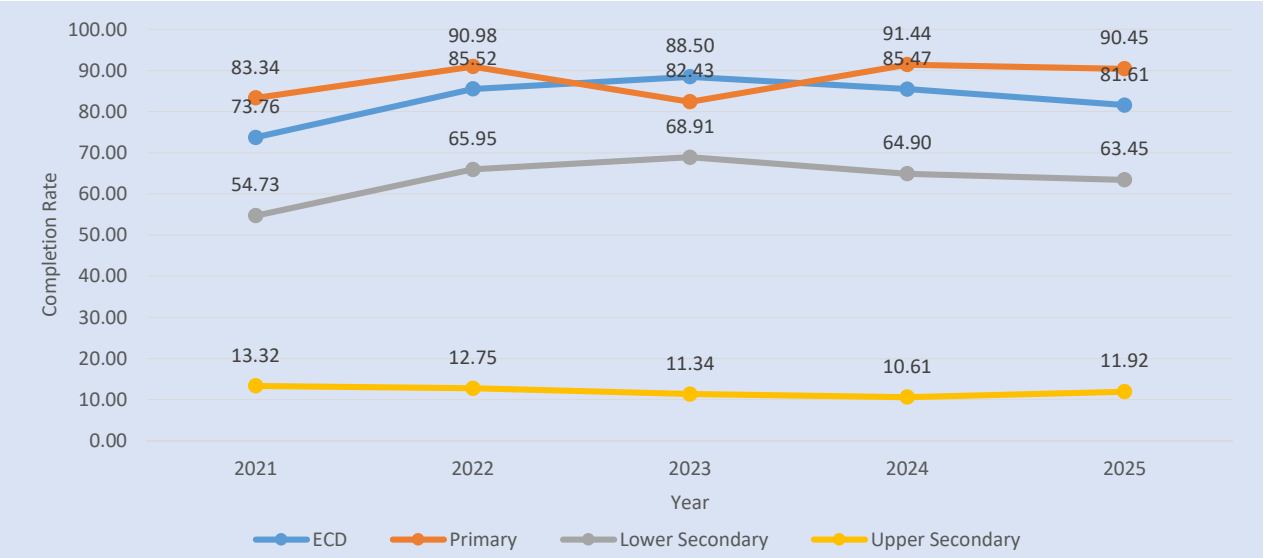


Figure 8.12: Completion Rate by Level of Education, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

At national level, 330,959 pupils completed ECD B, compared to a population of 405,531 children aged 5, resulting in a completion rate of 81.61 percent. Provincial completion rates ranged from 49.36 percent in Harare to 105.56 percent in Matabeleland South. Bulawayo recorded 103.71 percent, Masvingo 102.07 percent, and Matabeleland South 105.56 percent, indicating completion rates above 100 percent. GPIs ranged between 0.96 and 1.00 across provinces.

Table 8.19: ECD Completion Rate by Sex, GPI and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Enrolment ECD B less Repeaters			Population Aged 5			Completion Rate, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	6 851	6 791	13 642	6 544	6 610	13 154	104.69	102.74	103.71	0.98
Harare	13 869	13 718	27 587	27 791	28 101	55 892	49.90	48.82	49.36	0.98
Manicaland	25 648	24 946	50 594	28 543	28 869	57 412	89.86	86.41	88.12	0.96
Mashonaland Central	16 975	16 694	33 669	20 031	19 821	39 852	84.74	84.22	84.49	0.99
Mashonaland East	18 279	17 649	35 928	23 950	24 166	48 116	76.32	73.03	74.67	0.96
Mashonaland West	18 282	18 142	36 424	26 285	26 457	52 742	69.55	68.57	69.06	0.99
Masvingo	23 349	22 815	46 164	22 644	22 585	45 229	103.11	101.02	102.07	0.98
Matabeleland North	10 887	10 625	21 512	11 023	11 204	22 227	98.77	94.83	96.78	0.96
Matabeleland South	10 597	10 433	21 030	10 049	9 873	19 922	105.45	105.67	105.56	1.00
Midlands	22 396	22 013	44 409	25 421	25 564	50 985	88.10	86.11	87.10	0.98
Total	167 133	163 826	330 959	202 281	203 250	405 531	82.62	80.60	81.61	0.98

Nationally, 394,543 pupils completed Grade 7, compared to a population of 436,207 children aged 12, yielding a completion rate of 90.45 percent. Provincial completion rates ranged from 86.00 percent in Matabeleland North to 111.19 percent in Bulawayo. Female completion rates exceeded male completion rates in most provinces, resulting in a national GPI of 1.01.

Table 8.20: Primary School Completion Rate by Sex, GPI and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Enrolment Grade 7 less Repeaters			Population Aged 12			Completion Rate			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	8 613	9 078	17 691	7 652	8 259	15 911	112.56	109.92	111.19	0.98
Harare	24 987	25 631	50 618	27 962	29 427	57 389	89.36	87.10	88.20	0.97
Manicaland	29 046	29 520	58 566	32 828	33 059	65 887	88.48	89.29	88.89	1.01
Mashonaland Central	17 257	17 693	34 950	19 860	19 935	39 795	86.89	88.75	87.83	1.02
Mashonaland East	22 180	22 318	44 498	25 288	25 343	50 631	87.71	88.06	87.89	1.00
Mashonaland West	23 842	23 881	47 723	26 095	26 467	52 562	91.37	90.23	90.79	0.99
Masvingo	24 121	24 704	48 825	26 730	27 032	53 762	90.24	91.39	90.82	1.01
Matabeleland North	10 448	11 464	21 912	12 818	12 661	25 479	81.51	90.55	86.00	1.11
Matabeleland South	10 466	10 566	21 032	11 027	11 037	22 064	94.91	95.73	95.32	1.01
Midlands	23 819	24 909	48 728	26 214	26 513	52 727	90.86	93.95	92.42	1.03
Total	194 779	199 764	394 543	216 474	219 733	436 207	89.98	90.91	90.45	1.01

At lower secondary school level, 224,847 pupils completed Form 4, against a population of 354,362 adolescents aged 16, resulting in a national completion rate of 63.45 percent.

Provincial completion rates ranged from 53.74 percent in Matabeleland North to 69.74 percent in Masvingo. GPIs varied from 0.92 in Mashonaland East to 1.27 in Matabeleland North.

Table 8.21: Lower Secondary School Completion Rate by Sex, GPI and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Enrolment less Repeaters			Population Aged 16			Completion Rate, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	5 875	6 551	12 426	6 521	7 404	13 925	90.09	88.48	89.24	0.98
Harare	14 002	14 507	28 509	21 834	24 244	46 078	64.13	59.84	61.87	0.93
Manicaland	17 891	16 918	34 809	26 720	26 224	52 944	66.96	64.51	65.75	0.96
Mashonaland Central	8 444	8 433	16 877	15 928	15 211	31 139	53.01	55.44	54.20	1.05
Mashonaland East	13 359	12 192	25 551	20 011	19 913	39 924	66.76	61.23	64.00	0.92
Mashonaland West	12 538	11 612	24 150	21 041	20 798	41 839	59.59	55.83	57.72	0.94
Masvingo	15 743	15 176	30 919	22 180	22 153	44 333	70.98	68.51	69.74	0.97
Matabeleland North	5 142	6 401	11 543	10 844	10 635	21 479	47.42	60.19	53.74	1.27
Matabeleland South	5 444	6 639	12 083	9 431	9 321	18 752	57.72	71.23	64.44	1.23
Midlands	13 410	14 570	27 980	22 036	21 913	43 949	60.85	66.49	63.66	1.09
Total	111 848	112 999	224 847	176 546	177 816	354 362	63.35	63.55	63.45	1.00

At upper secondary school level, 37,391 pupils completed Form 6, compared to a population of 313,788 youths aged 18, resulting in a completion rate of 11.92 percent. Provincial completion rates ranged from 6.46 percent in Matabeleland North to 22.88 percent in Bulawayo. Females recorded higher completion rates than males nationally, yielding a GPI of 1.10.

Table 8.22: Upper Secondary School Completion Rate by Sex, GPI and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Enrolment less Repeaters			Population Aged 18			Completion Rate, %			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	1 352	1 750	3 102	6 152	7 404	13 556	21.98	23.64	22.88	1.08
Harare	3 676	4 099	7 775	20 483	24 119	44 602	17.95	16.99	17.43	0.95
Manicaland	2 819	2 848	5 667	23 105	21 477	44 582	12.2	13.26	12.71	1.09
Mashonaland Central	1 037	1 047	2 084	14 330	12 879	27 209	7.24	8.13	7.66	1.12
Mashonaland East	2 042	2 107	4 149	17 924	17 410	35 334	11.39	12.1	11.74	1.06
Mashonaland West	1 512	1 490	3 002	18 956	18 222	37 178	7.98	8.18	8.07	1.03
Masvingo	2 401	2 424	4 825	19 444	18 785	38 229	12.35	12.9	12.62	1.04
Matabeleland North	520	670	1 190	9 538	8 886	18 424	5.45	7.54	6.46	1.38
Matabeleland South	749	1 050	1 799	8 433	7 953	16 386	8.88	13.2	10.98	1.49
Midlands	1 814	1 984	3 798	19 523	18 765	38 288	9.29	10.57	9.92	1.14
Total	17 922	19 469	37 391	157 888	155 900	313 788	11.35	12.49	11.92	1.1

8.9 Conclusion

Internal efficiency in Zimbabwe's education system between 2021 and 2025 was characterised by generally high promotion rates at primary level, overall low repetition rates, but significant inefficiencies at key transition and examination stages, particularly at

secondary school level. Repetition remained consistently higher at secondary school level than at primary in proportional terms, peaking in 2022 before declining and then rising again to 28,000 repeaters in 2025, comprising 16,651 primary pupils (0.48%) and 11,349 secondary school pupils (0.98%). Repetition was concentrated in Grade 1 at primary school level (0.90%) and in Forms 3 and 4 at secondary school level (1.80% and 2.23%), with males recording higher repetition rates than females across almost all grades and forms.

Promotion rates exceeded 95% from Grade 1 to Grade 6, but declined sharply at key exit and transition points, notably Grade 7 (92.99%) and Form 4 to Form 5 (17.58%), where dropout reached 80.19%. Transition from Grade 7 to Form 1 declined from 81.46% in 2020–2021 to 75.87% in 2024–2025, while Form 4 to Lower 6 transition remained persistently low at 17.58%, with females consistently recording higher transition rates than males. Survival rates declined steadily with progression, from 98.76% at Grade 2 to 82.94% at Grade 7, and from 95.41% at Form 2 to 77.60% at Form 4, before dropping sharply to 14.05% at Form 5 and 13.60% at Form 6.

For primary school pupils, financial barriers dominated readmission drivers for both sexes, and disability-related needs formed a notable proportion, pointing to the need to prioritise fee/exemption support, attendance follow-up, inclusive education services, and pupil protection. Among secondary pupils, financial barrier was the dominant issue for both sexes, absconding as a male-skewed driver, and marriage as a significant female-specific factor, pointing to priorities around fee support/waivers, attendance and retention follow-up, and protection pathways for females.

Completion rates improved at lower levels, reaching 81.61% at ECD and 90.45% at primary in 2025, but remained moderate at lower school secondary level (63.45%) and very low at upper secondary (11.92%). Dropout patterns further reflected internal inefficiencies, with 13,032 primary and 26,704 secondary school dropouts recorded in 2025, driven mainly by financial constraints and absconding, while gender-specific factors such as marriage and pregnancy accounted for a substantial share of female dropouts at secondary school level.

CHAPTER 9 : Facilities

9.1 Classrooms

Between 2021 and 2025, the number of classrooms increased across all education levels, while pupil-to-classroom ratios generally improved. At ECD level, classrooms rose from 12,180 in 2021 to 14,390 in 2025, while enrolment declined slightly from 655,132 to 641,295, resulting in a reduction in the pupil-to-classroom ratio from 54 to 45. Primary school classrooms increased from 62,753 to 64,994 over the period, with enrolment peaking at 2,953,307 in 2023 before declining to 2,871,839 in 2025, leading to an improvement in the ratio from 46 pupils per classroom in 2021 to 44 in 2025. At secondary school level, classrooms expanded from 29,216 to 30,526, while enrolment increased steadily from 1,087,632 to 1,158,015, with the pupil-to-classroom ratio remaining relatively stable, fluctuating between 37 and 40 and returning to 38 in 2025. Overall, the trends indicated infrastructure expansion that broadly kept pace with enrolment growth, particularly at ECD and primary school levels.

Table 9.1: ECD, Primary and Secondary Classrooms, Enrolment and Pupil to Classroom Ratio Trend, Number, Zimbabwe 2021-2025

Year	Classrooms, No.	Enrolment	Pupil to Classroom Ratio
	ECD		
2021	12 180	655 132	54
2022	12 945	654 979	51
2023	12 688	679 582	54
2024	13 813	650 753	47
2025	14 390	641 295	45
	Primary		
2021	62 753	2 899 259	46
2022	64 691	2 943 370	45
2023	61 801	2 953 307	48
2024	63 836	2 938 939	46
2025	64 994	2 871 839	44
	Secondary		
2021	29 216	1 087 632	37
2022	29 124	1 121 591	39
2023	28 266	1 117 552	40
2024	29 654	1 145 814	39
2025	30 526	1 158 015	38

The classroom ratio trend illustrated a general improvement in learning space availability over the period 2021–2025. ECD ratios declined from 54 pupils per classroom in 2021 to 45 in 2025, mirroring steady classroom expansion alongside moderating enrolment. Primary school ratios fluctuated modestly, rising to 48 in 2023 before improving to 44 in 2025, while those for secondary school ratios remained comparatively lower and more stable, ranging between 37 and 40 pupils per classroom. The figure 9.1 highlighted that secondary schools

consistently experienced the least congestion, whereas ECD classes remained the most crowded despite notable improvements.

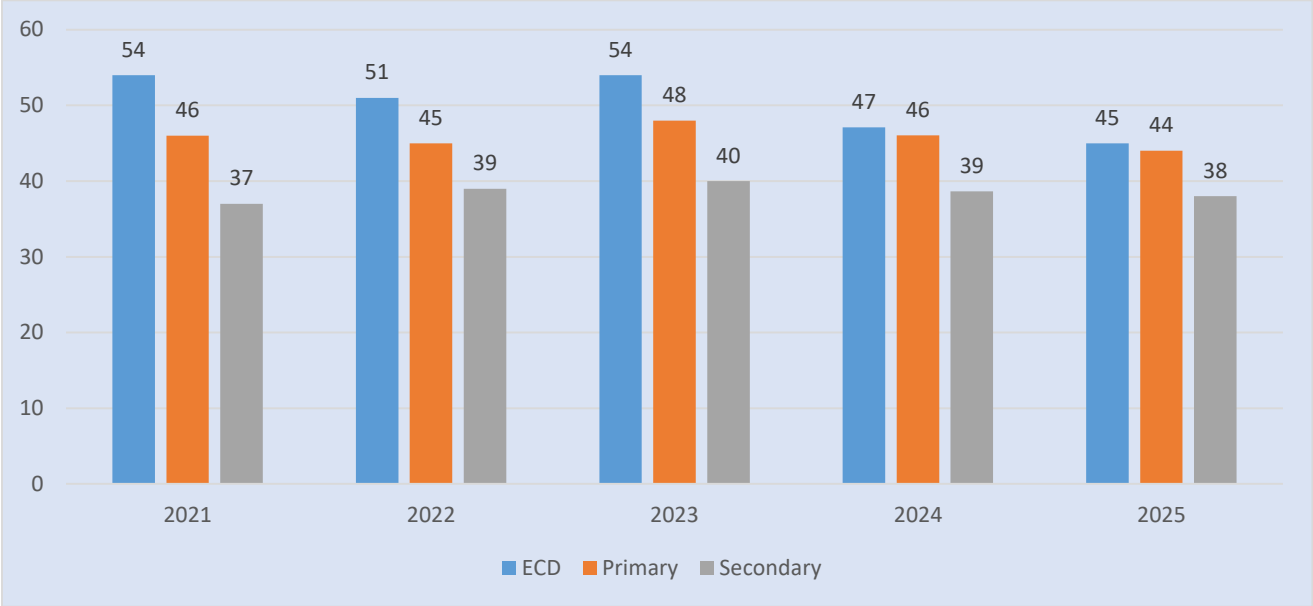


Figure 9.1: ECD, Primary and Secondary Classroom Ratio Trend, Number, Zimbabwe 2021-2025

In 2025, a total of 14,390 ECD classrooms accommodated 641,295 pupils nationally, yielding an average pupil-to-classroom ratio of 45. Provincial variation was pronounced. Bulawayo and Harare recorded the lowest ratios at 27 pupils per classroom, reflecting relatively favourable learning conditions. In contrast, Matabeleland North (63), Masvingo (56), and Matabeleland South (57) exhibited the highest congestion levels. Mashonaland Central (52) and Midlands (49) also exceeded the national average, while Manicaland (40) and Mashonaland West (44) were closer to optimal levels. These disparities indicated uneven distribution of ECD infrastructure across provinces.

Table 9.2: ECD Classrooms, Enrolments, and Pupil to Classroom Ratio (PCR) by Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	ECD Classrooms, No.	Enrolment	PCR
Bulawayo	972	26 320	27
Harare	1 790	48 819	27
Manicaland	2 448	96 911	40
Mashonaland Central	1 275	66 565	52
Mashonaland East	1 530	70 418	46
Mashonaland West	1 581	70 333	44
Masvingo	1 593	89 519	56
Matabeleland North	679	43 025	63
Matabeleland South	747	42 221	57
Midlands	1 775	87 164	49
Grand Total	14 390	641 295	45

At primary school level, 64,994 classrooms served 2,871,839 pupils nationally in 2025, producing an average ratio of 44 pupils per classroom. Provincial ratios ranged from a low of 38 in Matabeleland South to highs of 50 in Mashonaland Central and Harare. Manicaland recorded one of the lowest congestion levels at 41 pupils per classroom despite having the highest enrolment (438,898). Mashonaland West (48) and Midlands (45) also exceeded the national average, while Matabeleland North recorded ratio of 42. The findings showed persistent provincial inequalities in classroom adequacy at primary level.

Table 9.3: Primary Level Classrooms, Enrolments, and Pupil to Classroom Ratio (PCR) by Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Primary School Classrooms, No.	Enrolment, No.	PCR
Bulawayo	2 723	118 772	44
Harare	6 607	328 095	50
Manicaland	10 827	438 898	41
Mashonaland Central	5 523	273 951	50
Mashonaland East	7 397	318 547	43
Mashonaland West	7 084	340 579	48
Masvingo	8 637	368 153	43
Matabeleland North	4 001	167 329	42
Matabeleland South	4 103	155 174	38
Midlands	8 092	362 341	45
Grand Total	64 994	2 871 839	44

In 2025, secondary schools comprised 30,526 classrooms accommodating 1,158,015 pupils, resulting in a national pupil-to-classroom ratio of 38. Harare recorded the lowest ratio at 34 pupils per classroom, followed by Mashonaland East at 35. The highest congestion was observed in Midlands (42) followed by Mashonaland Central and Mashonaland West which both recorded a ratio of 40, while Mashonaland East (35) and Harare (34) recorded the least ratios. Overall, secondary schools demonstrated more favourable classroom learning conditions than primary schools and ECD levels across most provinces.

Table 9.4: Secondary Level Classrooms, Enrolments, and Pupil to Classroom Ratio (PCR) by Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Secondary School Classrooms, No.	Enrolment, No	PCR
Bulawayo	1 647	60 193	37
Harare	4 234	144 225	34
Manicaland	4 781	175 976	37
Mashonaland Central	2 230	89 320	40
Mashonaland East	3 711	131 657	35
Mashonaland West	3 182	127 429	40
Masvingo	3 967	156 562	39
Matabeleland North	1 596	61 280	38
Matabeleland South	1 638	63 768	39
Midlands	3 540	147 605	42
Grand Total	30 526	1 158 015	38

9.2 Access to Electricity

In 2025, grid electricity was the dominant power source for both primary and secondary schools. In primary schools, 4,318 schools (51.97%) relied on grid power, while 2,454 schools (29.54%) had no electricity. Solar energy accounted for 1,112 schools (13.38%), and generators were used by only 191 schools (2.30%). At secondary school level, 2,071 schools (59.43%) were grid-connected, 792 schools (22.73%) lacked electricity, and 440 schools (12.63%) used solar power. The data showed that secondary schools had better electricity access than primary schools, though a substantial proportion of schools at both levels still operated without power.

Table 9.5: Schools Main Source of Electricity by Type and Level of Education, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Main Electricity Source	Primary		Secondary	
	No	% Primary	No	% Secondary
Grid	4 318	51.97	2 071	59.43
Generator	191	2.30	101	2.90
Solar	1 112	13.38	440	12.63
None	2 454	29.54	792	22.73
Other	233	2.80	81	2.32
Grand Total	8 308	100.00	3 485	100.00

The percentage distribution highlighted the dominance of grid electricity, particularly at secondary school level, where nearly three-fifths of schools were connected. Primary schools showed greater reliance on non-grid sources, including solar and generators, and a higher proportion without electricity. The figure 9.2 underscored persistent infrastructure gaps, especially at primary school level, despite growing adoption of solar energy.

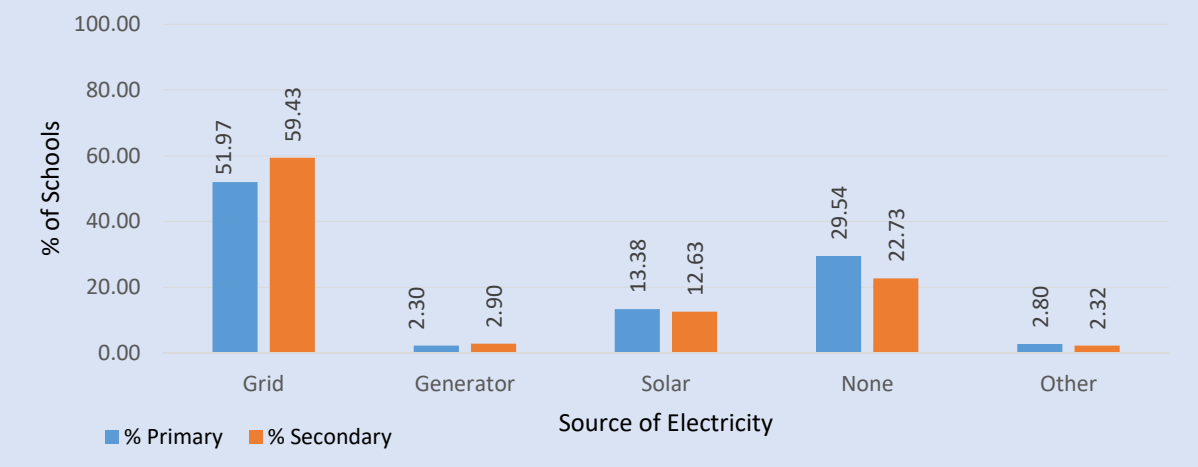


Figure 9.2: Schools Main Source of Electricity by Type and Level of Education, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

Nationally, 5,854 primary schools (70.46%) had access to electricity in 2025, while 2,454 schools (29.54%) operated without power. Urban provinces recorded near-universal access, with Harare (96.99%) and Bulawayo (92.74%) having the highest coverage. In contrast, rural-dominated provinces such as Matabeleland North (54.78%), Masvingo (58.44%), and Mashonaland West (62.46%) recorded the lowest electrification levels. The provincial pattern revealed stark urban–rural disparities in access to electricity among primary schools.

Table 9.6: Primary Schools With and Without Electricity by Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Number			Percentages		
	Schools with electricity	Schools without electricity	Total Schools	Schools with electricity	Schools without electricity	Total Schools
Bulawayo	396	31	427	92.74	7.26	100.00
Harare	645	20	665	96.99	3.01	100.00
Manicaland	1 020	262	1 282	79.56	20.44	100.00
Mashonaland Central	511	279	790	64.68	35.32	100.00
Mashonaland East	642	260	902	71.18	28.82	100.00
Mashonaland West	614	369	983	62.46	37.54	100.00
Masvingo	571	406	977	58.44	41.56	100.00
Matabeleland North	361	298	659	54.78	45.22	100.00
Matabeleland South	440	136	576	76.39	23.61	100.00
Midlands	654	393	1 047	62.46	37.54	100.00
Grand Total	5 854	2 454	8 308	70.46	29.54	100.00

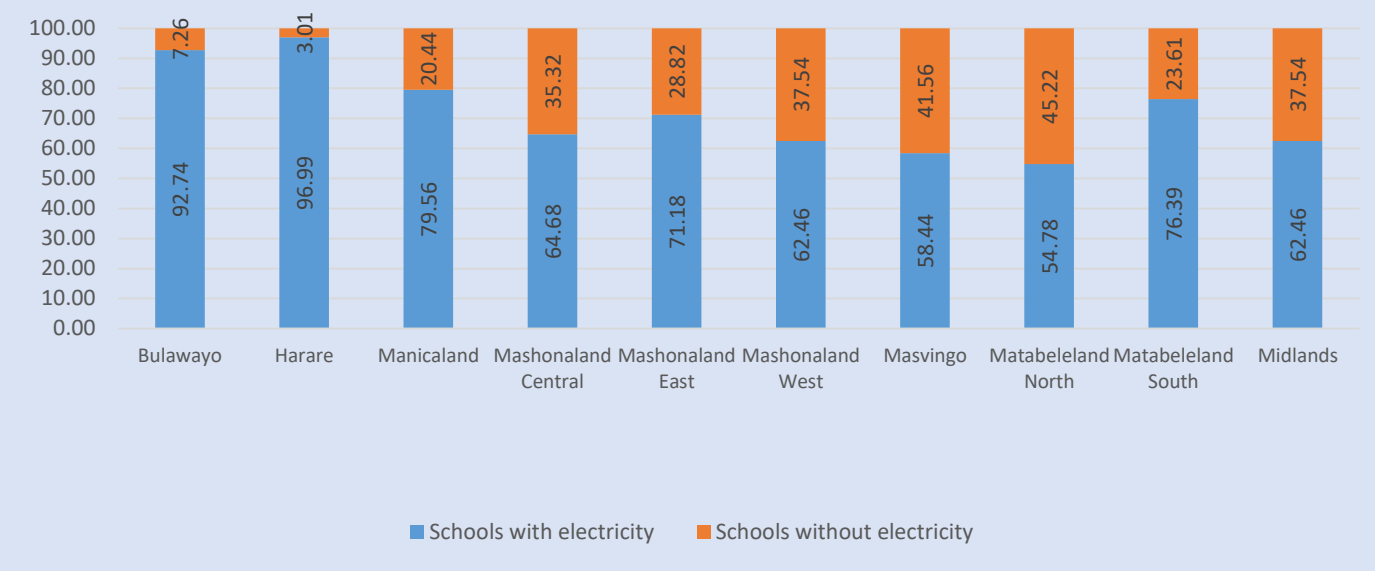


Figure 9.3: Primary Schools With and Without Electricity by Province, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

Secondary schools demonstrated higher electrification levels nationally, with 2,693 schools (77.27%) having electricity and 792 schools (22.73%) without. Harare (95.53%) and Bulawayo (95.45%) again recorded the highest access rates, while Mashonaland Central (65.63%) and Matabeleland North (67.86%) lagged. Although secondary schools fared better than primary schools, significant provincial disparities persisted.

Table 9.7: Secondary Schools With and Without Electricity by Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Number			Percentages		
	Schools with electricity	Schools without electricity	Total Schools	Schools with electricity	Schools without electricity	Total Schools
Bulawayo	126	6	132	95.45	4.55	100.00
Harare	342	16	358	95.53	4.47	100.00
Manicaland	400	93	493	81.14	18.86	100.00
Mashonaland Central	210	110	320	65.63	34.38	100.00
Mashonaland East	356	125	481	74.01	25.99	100.00
Mashonaland West	320	146	466	68.67	31.33	100.00
Masvingo	311	84	395	78.73	21.27	100.00
Matabeleland North	152	72	224	67.86	32.14	100.00
Matabeleland South	158	38	196	80.61	19.39	100.00
Midlands	318	102	420	75.71	24.29	100.00
Grand Total	2 693	792	3 485	77.27	22.73	100.00

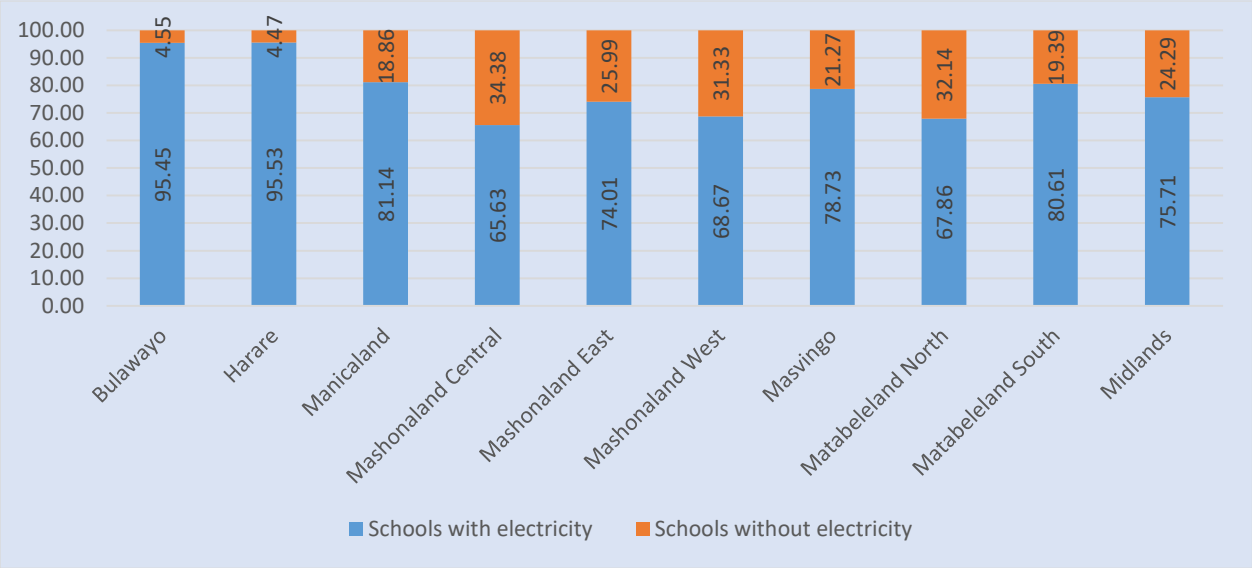


Figure 9.4: Distribution of Secondary Schools With and Without Electricity by Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Electricity access varied markedly by grant classification. Grid electricity dominated among P1 (72.47%), P2 (72.34%), and S1 schools (80.30%), while P3 and S3 schools showed much lower grid reliance at 44.17% and 53.35%, respectively. Notably, 38.34% of P3 schools and 30.31% of S3 schools had no electricity, highlighting infrastructural disadvantages among lower-grant aided schools. Solar energy played a supplementary role across all categories, particularly among P1 and S2 schools.

Table 9.8: Schools by Grant Classification and Main Source of Electricity, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Source of Power	P1		P2		P3		S1		S2		S3	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Grid	466	72.47	1 198	72.34	2 654	44.17	269	80.30	503	70.35	1 299	53.35
Solar	109	16.95	273	16.49	730	12.15	43	12.84	130	18.18	267	10.97
Generator	30	4.67	39	2.36	122	2.03	9	2.69	27	3.78	65	2.67
None	31	4.82	119	7.19	2 304	38.34	11	3.28	43	6.01	738	30.31
Other	7	1.09	27	1.63	199	3.31	3	0.90	12	1.68	66	2.71
Grand Total	643	100.00	1 656	100.00	6 009	100.00	335	100.00	715	100.00	2 435	100.00

9.3 Water and Sanitation Hygiene (WASH) Facilities

9.3.1 Pupil and Teacher to Toilet Ratios

From 2021 to 2025, pupil-to-toilet ratios improved gradually, particularly at ECD level. Male ECD pupil ratios declined from 20 to 17, while female ratios improved from 18 to 16. Primary school pupil ratios decreased marginally from 28 to 27 for males and from 26 to 24 for

females. Secondary school pupil ratios remained relatively stable at around 18 for males and 17 for females. Teacher-to-toilet ratios remained low and constant across the period, averaging 2 toilets per male teacher and 4 per female teacher at primary level, and about 3 per teacher at secondary school level.

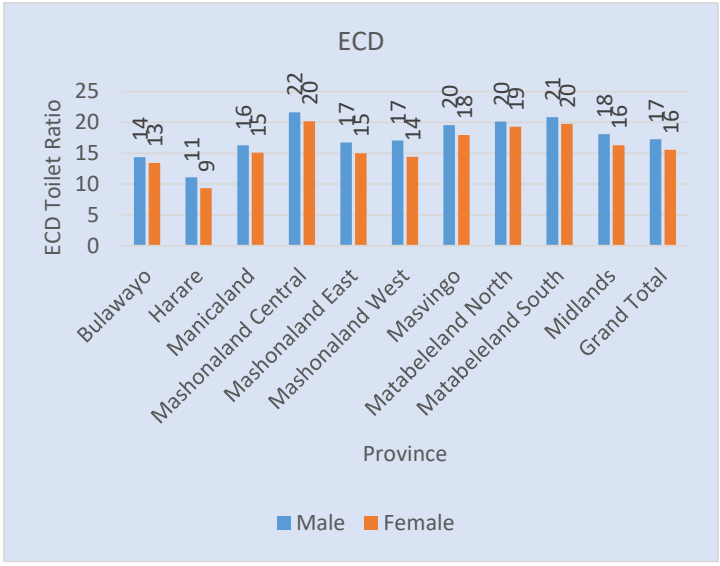
Table 9.9: Pupils and Teachers to Toilet Ratios by Education Level and Sex, Zimbabwe, 2021-2025

Year	Primary School Pupil and Teacher to Toilet Ratio by Sex						Secondary School Pupil and Teacher Toilet Ratio by Sex			
	ECD		Primary		Teachers		Pupil		Teachers	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
2021	20	18	28	26	2	4	18	17	3	3
2022	19	18	28	26	2	4	19	17	3	3
2023	20	18	28	26	2	4	18	17	3	3
2024	18	16	27	25	2	4	18	17	3	3
2025	17	16	27	24	2	4	18	17	3	3

In 2025, ECD pupil-to-toilet ratios for males ranged from 11–14 in Harare and Bulawayo to over 22 in Mashonaland Central. Primary school pupil-to-toilet ratios were highest in Bulawayo (40 for males and 32 for females) and Harare (45 for males and 38 for females), indicating higher congestion. Teacher-to-toilet ratios were generally favourable across provinces, averaging 2 toilets per male teacher and 4 per female teacher nationally. The data revealed considerable provincial variation, with urban provinces experiencing higher pupil pressure despite better infrastructure availability.

Table 9.10: ECD and Primary Teacher and Pupil to Toilet Ratios by Sex and Province, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Toilets for teachers		Toilets for ECD		Toilets for Primary		Teacher to Toilet Ratio		ECD Pupil to Toilet Ratio		Primary Pupil to Toilet Ratio	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Bulawayo	338	541	918	979	1 472	1 904	3	9	14	13	40	32
Harare	972	1 229	2 222	2 590	3 634	4 351	2	8	11	9	45	38
Manicaland	2 945	3 089	3 001	3 193	9 771	10 576	2	3	16	15	23	21
Mashonaland Central	1 590	1 751	1 557	1 633	4 649	5 111	2	4	22	20	30	27
Mashonaland East	2 318	2 576	2 146	2 301	6 436	6 990	2	3	17	15	25	23
Mashonaland West	1 684	1 761	2 070	2 432	5 661	6 137	3	5	17	14	30	28
Masvingo	2 594	2 792	2 314	2 476	7 458	7 991	2	3	20	18	25	23
Matabeleland North	902	1 088	1 073	1 115	4 103	4 361	2	4	20	19	20	19
Matabeleland South	958	1 089	1 017	1 064	4 060	4 519	2	4	21	20	19	17
Midlands	2 023	2 218	2 436	2 642	6 363	6 780	2	4	18	16	28	27
Grand Total	16 324	18 134	18 754	20 425	53 607	58 720	2	4	17	16	27	24



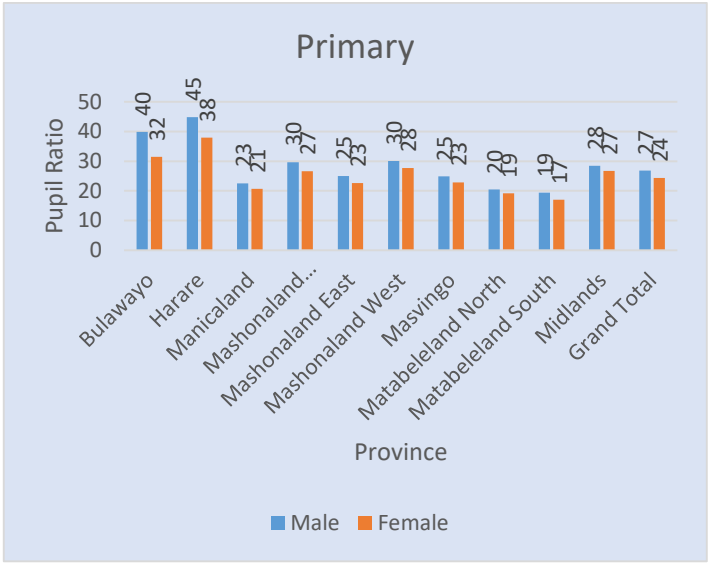


Figure 9.5: Primary School Pupil to Toilet Ratio by Sex, Zimbabwe, 2025

Nationally, secondary schools recorded pupil-to-toilet ratios of 18 for males and 17 for females. Harare and Bulawayo showed higher congestion, with ratios exceeding 30 pupils per toilet for males in some cases. In contrast, Manicaland, Matabeleland South and Mashonaland East recorded lower ratios of 14–16. Teacher-to-toilet ratios remained consistently low across provinces, averaging three teachers per toilet, indicating adequate sanitation provision for staff relative to pupils.

Table 9.11: Secondary Pupil and Teacher to Toilet Ratios by Sex and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Toilets for Pupils, No.		Toilets for Teachers, No.		Secondary Pupil to Toilet Ratio		Teacher to Toilet Ratio	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Bulawayo	878	1 248	243	282	32	26	5	8
Harare	2 334	3 205	754	825	30	23	4	5
Manicaland	5 482	5 878	1 551	1 592	16	15	3	3
Mashonaland Central	2 587	2 698	785	809	17	17	3	3
Mashonaland East	4 494	4 652	1 408	1 442	15	14	2	2
Mashonaland West	3 420	3 645	862	893	19	17	3	4
Masvingo	4 346	4 653	1 364	1 291	18	17	3	2
Matabeleland North	1 698	1 923	423	460	16	18	3	3
Matabeleland South	2 102	2 408	521	526	14	14	3	3
Midlands	3 897	4 331	1 175	1 138	18	18	3	3
Grand Total	31 238	34 641	9 086	9 258	18	17	3	3

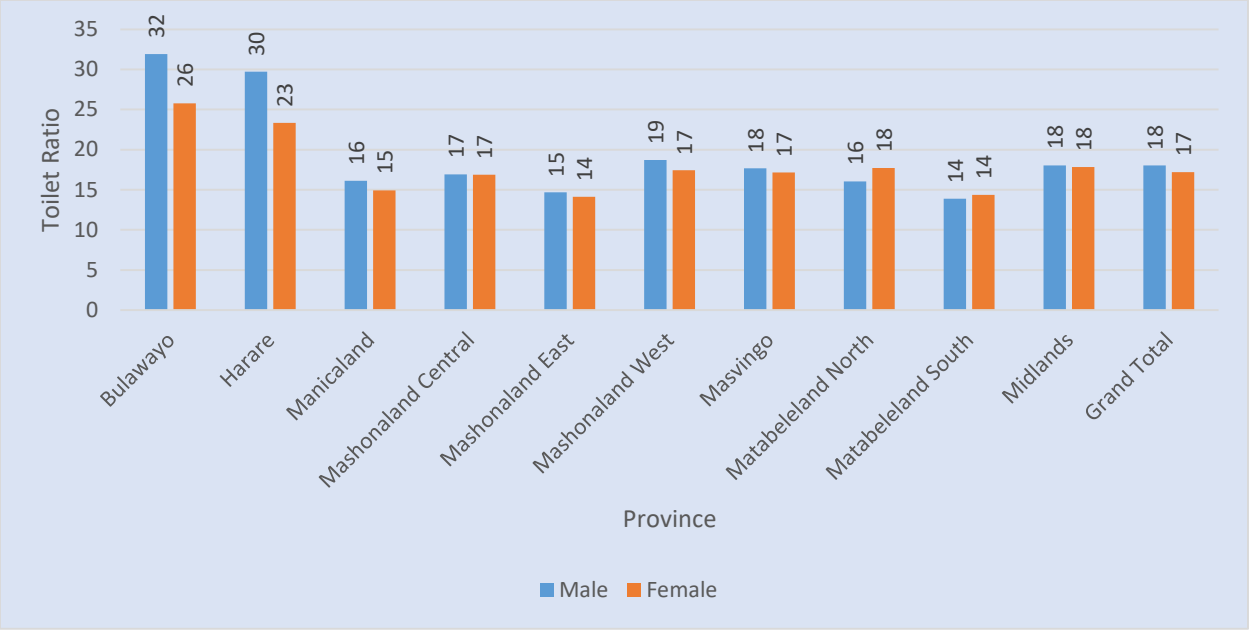


Figure 9.6: Secondary School Pupil to Toilet Ratio by Sex, Zimbabwe, 2025

9.3.2 Number of Toilets by Type and Province

Across ECD, primary, and secondary school levels, Blair toilets constituted the dominant sanitation facility type, particularly in rural provinces such as Manicaland, Masvingo, and Mashonaland Central. Flush or pour-flush toilets were concentrated in urban provinces, notably Harare and Bulawayo. Pit latrines without slabs were relatively few but persisted across all levels, signaling residual sanitation risks. Female toilets consistently outnumbered male toilets, reflecting gender-responsive sanitation planning.

Table 9.12: ECD Toilets for Pupils by Type and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Flush/Pour Flush		Blair Toilets (holes)		Pit Latrines with Slab (holes)		Pit Latrines without Slab (holes)		Urinals
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Bulawayo	884	947	32	32	0	0	2	0	236
Harare	2 168	2 533	40	47	7	7	7	3	730
Manicaland	790	880	2 131	2 235	73	72	7	6	366
Mashonaland Central	345	396	1 154	1 183	40	43	18	11	191
Mashonaland East	612	705	1 448	1 510	70	72	16	14	326
Mashonaland West	813	1 108	1 179	1 245	69	70	9	9	256
Masvingo	392	428	1 874	2 004	44	41	4	3	137
Matabeleland North	178	209	859	868	34	36	2	2	52
Matabeleland South	194	217	801	830	13	11	9	6	62
Midlands	723	856	1 638	1 707	60	65	15	14	297
Grand Total	7 099	8 279	11 156	11 661	410	417	89	68	2 653

Table 9.13 shows that primary school sanitation facilities for pupils in Zimbabwe in 2025 were dominated by Blair toilets, which accounted for the largest share across all provinces, with a combined 83,886 holes nationally (40,607 for males and 43,292 for females). Flush or pour-flush toilets were concentrated mainly in urban provinces such as Harare and Bulawayo, which together accounted for a substantial proportion of the national total of 25,235 flush facilities. In contrast, rural provinces such as Manicaland, Masvingo, Mashonaland East and Midlands relied heavily on Blair toilets, reflecting disparities in infrastructure development between urban and rural areas.

Pit latrines, both with and without slabs, constituted a relatively small share of facilities nationally (2,860 with slabs and 333 without slabs), but their presence in provinces such as Manicaland, Mashonaland West and Mashonaland Central highlights ongoing sanitation quality concerns. The existence of pit latrines without slabs, though limited, poses health and safety risks, particularly for young pupils. Overall, while Zimbabwe has made progress in expanding basic sanitation through Blair toilets, the distribution and quality of facilities remain uneven, underscoring the need for continued investment in improved, gender-responsive and safer sanitation infrastructure, especially in rural primary schools.

Table 9.13: Primary Toilets for Pupils by Type and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Flush/Pour Flush		Blair Toilets (holes)		Pit Latrines with Slab (holes)		Pit Latrines without Slab (holes)		Urinals
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Bulawayo	1 419	1 846	52	57	1	1	0	0	333
Harare	3 440	4 158	172	179	14	14	8	0	916
Manicaland	1 044	1 264	8 467	9 058	227	232	33	22	653
Mashonaland Central	581	677	3 850	4 180	193	226	25	28	239
Mashonaland East	1 169	1 305	5 051	5 442	199	224	17	19	534
Mashonaland West	1 377	1 651	4 011	4 210	238	234	35	42	397
Masvingo	733	874	6 549	6 964	174	147	2	6	269
Matabeleland North	325	401	3 657	3 823	108	125	13	12	75
Matabeleland South	389	435	3 562	3 974	83	79	26	31	74
Midlands	952	1 195	5 236	5 405	168	173	7	7	322
Grand Total	11 429	13 806	40 607	43 292	1 405	1 455	166	167	3 812

Table 9.14 indicates that secondary school sanitation facilities for pupils in Zimbabwe in 2025 are more diversified than at primary level, with a stronger presence of flush/pour-flush toilets, particularly in urban provinces. Nationally, there are 25,114 flush or pour-flush toilets (11,381 for males and 13,733 for females), with Harare and Bulawayo accounting for a large share, reflecting better access to waterborne sanitation in urban secondary schools. Blair toilets remain significant, with a combined 37,507 holes nationwide, and are most prevalent in largely rural provinces such as Manicaland, Masvingo, Midlands and Mashonaland East.

Pit latrines persist in secondary schools, though at lower levels than Blair toilets. In total, 2,800 pit latrines with slabs and 458 pit latrines without slabs were recorded nationally,

with provinces such as Manicaland, Mashonaland East and Masvingo showing relatively higher numbers. The continued existence of pit latrines without slabs, albeit limited, raises concerns about safety, hygiene and dignity for pupils, especially adolescents. Overall, while secondary schools demonstrated comparatively better sanitation infrastructure than primary schools, particularly through increased use of flush toilets provincial disparities remain pronounced, underscoring the need for targeted investments to upgrade sanitation facilities in rural and underserved secondary schools.

Table 9.14: Secondary Toilets for Pupils by Type and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Flush/Pour Flush		Blair Toilets (holes)		Pit Latrines with Slab (holes)		Pit Latrines without Slab (holes)		Urinals
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Bulawayo	838	1 209	35	37	0	2	5	0	274
Harare	2 215	3 103	60	67	31	34	28	1	930
Manicaland	1 284	1 442	3 939	4 184	201	191	58	61	627
Mashonaland Central	608	678	1 811	1 855	162	159	6	6	247
Mashonaland East	1 722	1 866	2 477	2 505	232	245	63	36	590
Mashonaland West	1 342	1 455	1 844	1 951	199	201	35	38	411
Masvingo	1 091	1 254	2 978	3 149	255	248	22	2	360
Matabeleland North	350	396	1 231	1 404	106	112	11	11	114
Matabeleland South	771	927	1 257	1 404	59	66	15	11	197
Midlands	1 160	1 403	2 548	2 771	149	148	40	9	432
Grand Total	11 381	13 733	18 180	19 327	1 394	1 406	283	175	4 182

9.4 Access to Water

The distribution of water sources among primary schools revealed notable disparities in access to safe and reliable water. Boreholes were the most widely used source, serving 4,900 schools, followed closely by piped water, which supplied 3,909 schools. Protected wells accounted for 662 schools, while less secure sources such as streams/rivers and unprotected wells were used by 227 and 196 schools respectively. Dams and other sources were the least utilized, with 128 and 81 schools. Overall, the data indicated that while most schools relied on boreholes and piped water, a significant minority continued to depend on unsafe or less sustainable sources. Figure 9.7 shows the distribution.

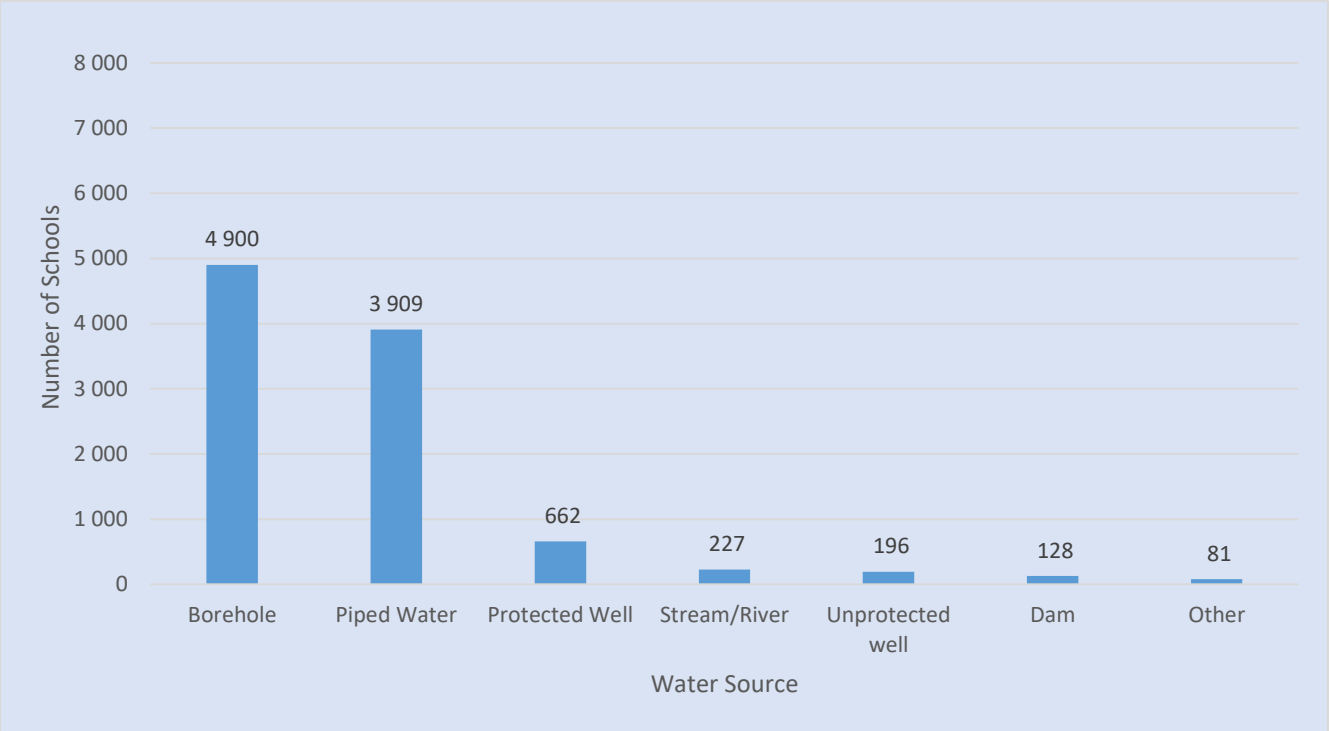


Figure 9.7: Distribution of Primary Schools with Access to Water and Water Sources by Type, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

In 2025 Zimbabwe had a total of 8,308 primary schools, of which 8,165schools (98.28%) had access to some form of water source, leaving 143 schools (1.72%) without water access. Access was highest in Bulawayo (100%), Manicaland (99.3%), Masvingo (98.98%), and Mashonaland East (98.78%), while Matabeleland North had the lowest coverage at 93.02%. Among schools with water, boreholes were the most common source, serving 4,900 schools, followed closely by piped water (3,909 schools). Protected wells were available in 662 schools, while streams/rivers served 227 schools, unprotected wells 196 schools, dams 128 schools, and other sources 81 schools. Urban provinces like Bulawayo and Harare relied heavily on piped water, with Bulawayo having 392 schools with piped water and Harare 360 schools, whereas rural provinces like Manicaland, Mashonaland Central, and Matabeleland North had a higher reliance on boreholes and wells for their sources of water.

The data in the table below shows that while nearly all primary schools had access to water, the type and reliability of the water source varied considerably, with urban schools predominantly served by piped water and rural schools more dependent on boreholes and wells. This disparity underscores ongoing challenges in ensuring safe and consistent water access across all provinces, which is critical for sanitation, hygiene, and overall learning environments.

Table 9.15: Primary Schools with Access to Water and Water Sources by Type and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Total Primary	With Water Source		Without Water Source		Water source						
		No.	%	No.	%	Borehole	Piped Water	Protected Well	Stream/River	Unprotected well	Dam	Other
Bulawayo	427	427	100.00		0.00	163	392	7			1	9
Harare	665	664	99.85	1	0.15	497	360	72	2	2	1	8
Manicaland	1 282	1 273	99.30	9	0.70	635	745	120	55	22	4	12
Mashonaland Central	790	788	99.75	2	0.25	515	283	108	15	22	20	6
Mashonaland East	902	891	98.78	11	1.22	612	340	150	17	31	12	3
Mashonaland West	983	959	97.56	24	2.44	680	324	58	13	23	20	10
Masvingo	977	967	98.98	10	1.02	609	427	47	41	27	28	6
Matabeleland North	659	613	93.02	46	6.98	316	282	25	25	20	11	5
Matabeleland South	576	563	97.74	13	2.26	328	266	9	30	10	8	11
Midlands	1 047	1 020	97.42	27	2.58	545	490	66	29	39	23	11
Grand Total	8 308	8 165	98.28	143	1.72	4 900	3 909	662	227	196	128	81

The primary schools relied on a variety of water sources, with boreholes being the most widely used source (58.98% of schools), followed by piped water (47.05%). Protected wells served 7.97%, streams/rivers 2.73%, unprotected wells 2.36%, dams 1.54%, and other sources 0.97%.

Provincial variations were notable. In urban provinces like Bulawayo, piped water dominated, with 91.80% of schools having access, though 38.17% also used boreholes. Harare showed a mixed reliance, with 74.74% of schools using boreholes and 54.14% having piped water, while a smaller percentage depended on protected wells or other sources. Rural provinces tended to rely more on boreholes. For example, Mashonaland West had 69.18% of schools using boreholes and only 32.96% piped water, whereas Manicaland and Mashonaland Central also had high borehole reliance at 49.53% and 65.19%, respectively. Reliance on streams, rivers, and unprotected wells was higher in provinces like Matabeleland South (5.21% using streams/rivers) and Matabeleland North (3.79% for both streams/rivers and protected wells), reflecting limited access to piped infrastructure in these areas.

Table 9.16: Primary Schools by Source of Water, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Water Source, %						
	Borehole	Piped Water	Protected Well	Stream/River	Unprotected well	Dam	Other
Bulawayo	38.17	91.80	1.64	0.00	0.00	0.23	2.11
Harare	74.74	54.14	10.83	0.30	0.30	0.15	1.20
Manicaland	49.53	58.11	9.36	4.29	1.72	0.31	0.94
Mashonaland Central	65.19	35.82	13.67	1.90	2.78	2.53	0.76
Mashonaland East	67.85	37.69	16.63	1.88	3.44	1.33	0.33
Mashonaland West	69.18	32.96	5.90	1.32	2.34	2.03	1.02
Masvingo	62.33	43.71	4.81	4.20	2.76	2.87	0.61
Matabeleland North	47.95	42.79	3.79	3.79	3.03	1.67	0.76
Matabeleland South	56.94	46.18	1.56	5.21	1.74	1.39	1.91
Midlands	52.05	46.80	6.30	2.77	3.72	2.20	1.05
Grand Total	58.98	47.05	7.97	2.73	2.36	1.54	0.97

Out of 8,308 primary schools in Zimbabwe, 6,321 schools (76.08%) had water sources located within 500 metres, while 1,987 schools (23.92%) had water sources more than 500 metres away, highlighting challenges in water accessibility for nearly a quarter of the schools. Regarding water quality and availability, most schools reported access to safe-to-drink water, with 7,531 schools (90.65%) confirming safety. However, 6,525 schools (78.54%) had sufficient water for school needs, and only 6,203 schools (74.66%) reported water being consistently available, indicating that some schools still face intermittent supply. Treatment of water was limited, with 3,796 schools (45.69%) treating their water to ensure safety.

Community use of water sources was observed in 4,442 schools (53.47%), suggesting shared dependence between schools and local communities, while within-school usage was reported in 6,532 schools (78.62%), reflecting widespread on-site water utilization for hygiene, sanitation, and learning purposes.

Provincially, urban areas showed better access and quality. Bulawayo had 99.06% safe water, 92.97% sufficient supply, and 98.13% treated water, while Harare reported 98.5% safe water, 95.64% sufficient, and 86.17% treated. Rural provinces faced greater challenges, with Matabeleland North and South having the lowest safe water access (81.34% and 86.63%, respectively), and fewer schools reporting consistent supply and treatment.

Table 9.17: Primary Schools by Access to Water and Use of Water, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Total Primary	Distance from Source			Safe to Drink		Sufficient		Consistently Available		Water is Treated		Used by the community		Within the School	
		< 500 metres	> 500 metres	% > 500 meter	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Bulawayo	427	343	88	20.61	423	99.06	397	92.97	298	69.79	419	98.13	58	13.58	405	94.85
Harare	665	562	99	14.89	655	98.50	636	95.64	613	92.18	573	86.17	198	29.77	636	95.64
Manicaland	1 282	991	291	22.70	1 175	91.65	1 019	79.49	983	76.68	605	47.19	735	57.33	1 053	82.14
Mashonaland Central	790	598	192	24.30	716	90.63	620	78.48	619	78.35	286	36.20	482	61.01	603	76.33
Mashonaland East	902	716	186	20.62	840	93.13	697	77.27	675	74.83	346	38.36	551	61.09	744	82.48
Mashonaland West	983	725	258	26.25	880	89.52	750	76.30	741	75.38	461	46.90	593	60.33	784	79.76
Masvingo	977	708	269	27.53	883	90.38	730	74.72	697	71.34	350	35.82	645	66.02	686	70.21
Matabeleland North	659	489	170	25.80	536	81.34	465	70.56	457	69.35	168	25.49	330	50.08	460	69.80
Matabeleland South	576	427	149	25.87	499	86.63	430	74.65	389	67.53	159	27.60	294	51.04	382	66.32
Midlands	1 047	762	285	27.22	924	88.25	781	74.59	731	69.82	429	40.97	556	53.10	779	74.40
Total	8 308	6 321	1 987	23.92	7 531	90.65	6 525	78.54	6 203	74.66	3 796	45.69	4 442	53.47	6 532	78.62

A high proportion of primary schools (90.65%) reported having water that is safe to drink, indicating substantial progress in meeting basic drinking water standards. Similarly, 78.54% of schools indicated that water supply is sufficient, while 74.66% reported that water is consistently available, suggesting that most schools have relatively reliable water access. However, gaps remain in other critical dimensions. Only 53.47% of school water sources are reported to be used by the surrounding community, which may reflect access restrictions or concerns about sustainability and shared infrastructure. Even more concerning, less than half of the schools (45.69%) treat their water, exposing a significant proportion of pupils to potential health risks from untreated sources.

In terms of physical accessibility, 78.62% of schools have water within the school premises, which supports hygiene practices such as handwashing and sanitation. Nevertheless, 23.92% of schools still rely on water sources located more than 500 metres away, posing challenges for daily school operations, particularly for younger pupils during dry seasons.

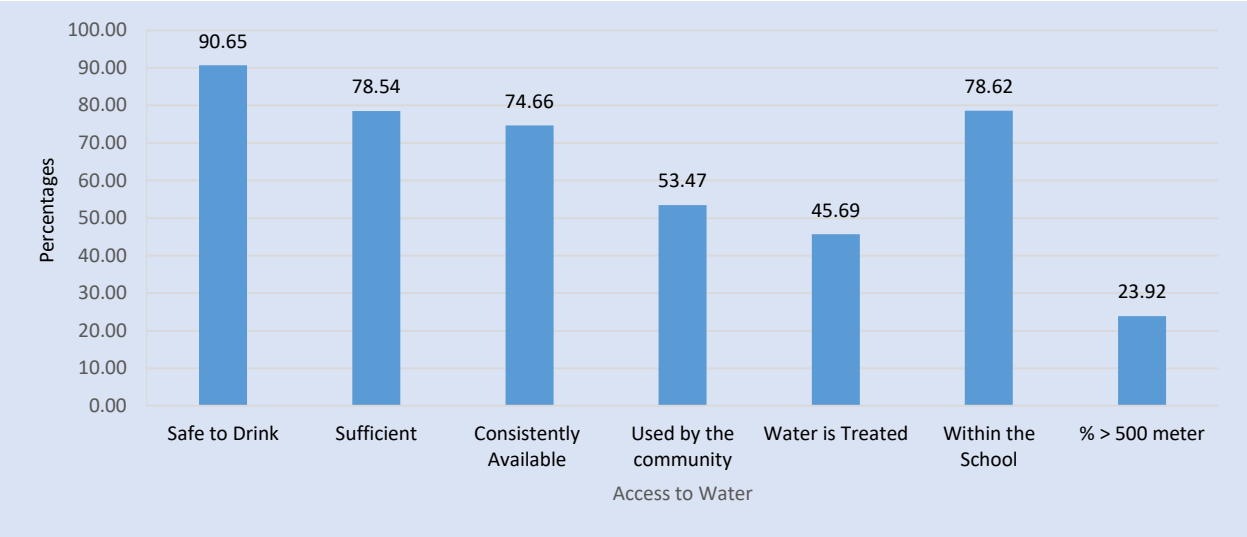


Figure 9.8: Distribution of Primary Schools by Access to Water, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Most secondary schools obtained water from boreholes (2,183 schools), making this the most commonly used water source. Piped water was the second most prevalent source, serving 1,742 secondary schools. While this represents a substantial number, it was notably lower than borehole access, suggesting challenges related to water infrastructure coverage, service interruptions, or affordability of municipal supply in some areas. A smaller proportion of secondary schools relied on protected wells (278 schools), which, while considered improved sources, may be vulnerable to seasonal fluctuations and maintenance challenges.

There was also reliance on surface and unimproved sources, with 92 schools using water from streams or rivers, 79 schools depend on unprotected wells, while 63 schools obtained water from dams. These sources pose high risks of contamination and may compromise water safety, particularly during the rainy season or periods of drought. Only 24 schools reported using other sources.

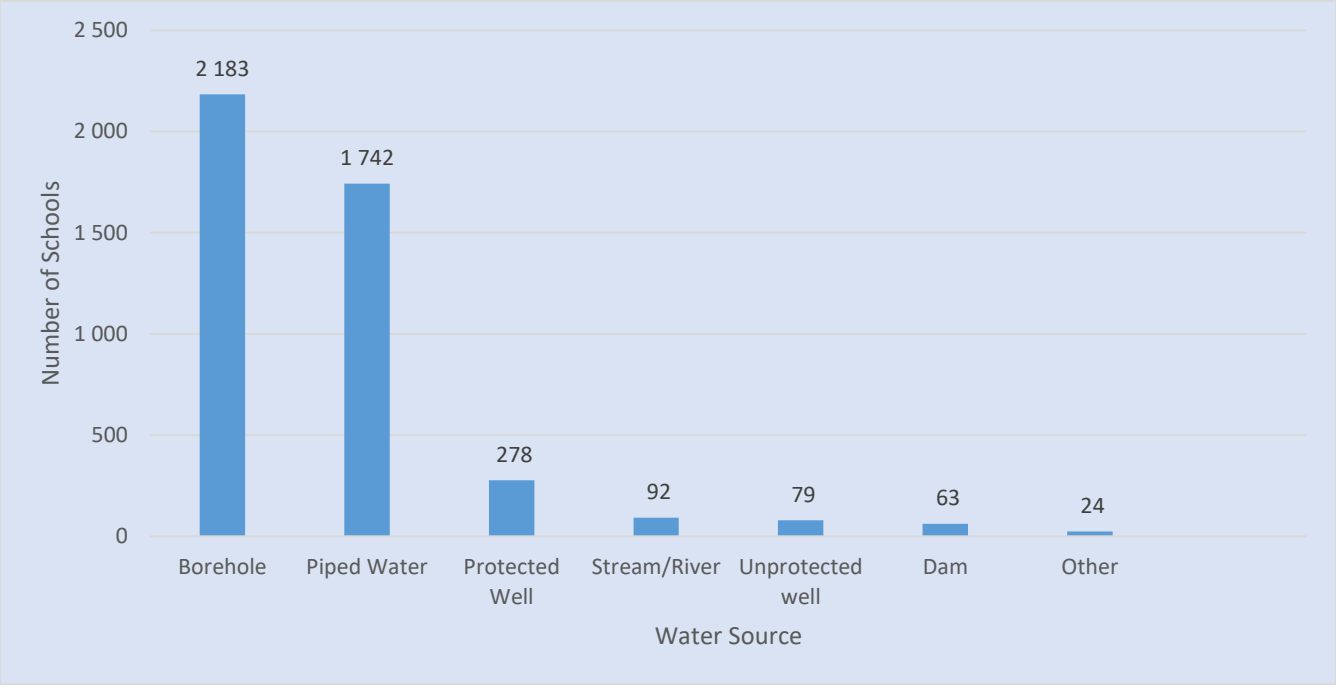


Figure 9.9: Distribution of Secondary Schools with Access to Water and Water Sources by Type, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Table 9.18 shows that out of 3,485 secondary schools, 3,405 (97.70%) had access to a water source, while 80 schools (2.30%) lacked water access. Water availability was universal in urban provinces, with Bulawayo and Harare reporting 100% coverage, whereas Matabeleland North had the lowest coverage at 89.29%, reflecting regional disparities in water infrastructure. Across the country, boreholes were the most common water source, serving 2,183 schools, followed by piped water in 1,742 schools. Protected wells served 278 schools, streams/rivers 92 schools, unprotected wells 79 schools, dams 63 schools, and other sources 24 schools. Urban provinces such as Bulawayo and Harare relied heavily on piped water (113 and 206 schools, respectively) alongside boreholes, while rural provinces such as Manicaland, Mashonaland Central, and Matabeleland North relied more on boreholes and wells.

This distribution highlights that while water access is widespread in secondary schools, the type and reliability of water sources varied by province. Urban schools were better served by piped systems, whereas rural schools depended more on boreholes and wells.

Table 9.18: Secondary Schools with Access to Water and Water Sources by Type and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	No. of Secondary	With Water Source		Without Water Source		Water Source						
		No	%	No	%	Borehole	Piped Water	Protected Well	Stream/River	Unprotected well	Dam	Other
Bulawayo	132	132	100.00		0.00	64	113	2				4
Harare	358	358	100.00		0.00	267	206	38		2		1
Manicaland	493	487	98.78	6	1.22	283	287	50	24	8	6	3
Mashonaland Central	320	320	100.00		0.00	219	143	27	5	9	7	1
Mashonaland East	481	470	97.71	11	2.29	323	203	82	8	12	6	2
Mashonaland West	466	449	96.35	17	3.65	328	167	25	10	11	8	3
Masvingo	395	393	99.49	2	0.51	237	223	17	15	15	14	1
Matabeleland North	224	200	89.29	24	10.71	119	88	6	8	3	4	3
Matabeleland South	196	192	97.96	4	2.04	115	107	3	5	2	9	2
Midlands	420	404	96.19	16	3.81	228	205	28	17	17	9	4
Grand Total	3 485	3 405	97.70	80	2.30	2 183	1 742	278	92	79	63	24

Table 9.19 shows that secondary schools relied on a range of water sources, with boreholes being the most common (62.64% of schools), followed by piped water (49.99%). Protected wells served 7.98%, streams/rivers 2.64%, unprotected wells 2.27%, dams 1.81%, and other sources 0.69%. Urban provinces had high piped water coverage: Bulawayo (85.61%) and Harare (57.54%), though Harare also had a large reliance on boreholes (74.58%). Rural provinces generally depended more on boreholes, such as Mashonaland West (70.39%), Mashonaland East (67.15%), and Mashonaland Central (68.44%). Reliance on streams, rivers, and dams was limited but slightly higher in provinces like Manicaland (4.87% streams/rivers), Masvingo (3.54% dams), and Matabeleland South (4.59% dams), reflecting regional variations in water infrastructure.

Table 9.19: Secondary Schools by Source of Water, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Water Source, %						
	Borehole	Piped Water	Protected Well	Stream/River	Unprotected well	Dam	Other
Bulawayo	48.48	85.61	1.52	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.03
Harare	74.58	57.54	10.61	0.00	0.56	0.00	0.28
Manicaland	57.40	58.22	10.14	4.87	1.62	1.22	0.61
Mashonaland Central	68.44	44.69	8.44	1.56	2.81	2.19	0.31
Mashonaland East	67.15	42.20	17.05	1.66	2.49	1.25	0.42
Mashonaland West	70.39	35.84	5.36	2.15	2.36	1.72	0.64
Masvingo	60.00	56.46	4.30	3.80	3.80	3.54	0.25
Matabeleland North	53.13	39.29	2.68	3.57	1.34	1.79	1.34
Matabeleland South	58.67	54.59	1.53	2.55	1.02	4.59	1.02
Midlands	54.29	48.81	6.67	4.05	4.05	2.14	0.95
Grand Total	62.64	49.99	7.98	2.64	2.27	1.81	0.69

Table 9.20 shows that out of 3,485 secondary schools in Zimbabwe, 2,832 schools (81.26%) had water sources within 500 metres, while 653 schools (18.74%) had water sources located more than 500 metres away, highlighting accessibility challenges for nearly one in five schools. Regarding water quality and availability, 3,185 schools (91.39%) reported access to safe-to-drink water, while 2,767 schools (79.40%) had a sufficient supply to meet school needs. Consistent water availability was slightly lower, reported by 2,653 schools (76.13%). Water treatment was limited, with 1,526 schools (43.79%) treating their water to ensure safety.

Community use of water sources was common, with 1,823 schools (52.31%) sharing water with local communities, while 2,816 schools (80.80%) reported water use within the school for sanitation, hygiene, and learning purposes. Provincially, urban areas exhibited better water access and quality. Bulawayo had 99.24% safe water, 94.70% sufficient supply, and 93.94% treated, while Harare reported 99.44% safe water, 97.49% sufficient, and 79.05% treated. Rural provinces faced more challenges, with Matabeleland North and Midlands having the lowest sufficiency and treatment percentages (72.32% and 75.95% sufficient, 20.54% and 37.62% treated, respectively).

Table 9.20: Secondary Schools by Access to Water and Use of Water, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Total Secondary	Distance from Source			Safe to Drink		Sufficient		Consistently Available		Water is Treated		Used by the community		Within the School	
		< 500 metres	> 500 metres	% > 500 meter	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Bulawayo	132	117	15	11.36	131	99.24	125	94.70	107	81.06	124	93.94	26	19.70	128	96.97
Harare	358	314	44	12.29	356	99.44	349	97.49	334	93.30	283	79.05	138	38.55	349	97.49
Manicaland	493	422	71	14.40	452	91.68	383	77.69	367	74.44	192	38.95	310	62.88	418	84.79
Mashonaland Central	320	263	57	17.81	298	93.13	241	75.31	237	74.06	86	26.88	207	64.69	248	77.50
Mashonaland East	481	387	94	19.54	442	91.89	369	76.72	352	73.18	199	41.37	285	59.25	389	80.87
Mashonaland West	466	350	116	24.89	416	89.27	362	77.68	340	72.96	223	47.85	240	51.50	369	79.18
Masvingo	395	311	84	21.27	362	91.65	293	74.18	293	74.18	154	38.99	233	58.99	294	74.43
Matabeleland North	224	186	38	16.96	181	80.80	162	72.32	156	69.64	46	20.54	93	41.52	157	70.09
Matabeleland South	196	160	36	18.37	185	94.39	164	83.67	150	76.53	61	31.12	81	41.33	147	75.00
Midlands	420	322	98	23.33	362	86.19	319	75.95	317	75.48	158	37.62	210	50.00	317	75.48
Total	3 485	2 832	653	18.74	3 185	91.39	2 767	79.40	2 653	76.13	1 526	43.79	1 823	52.31	2 816	80.80

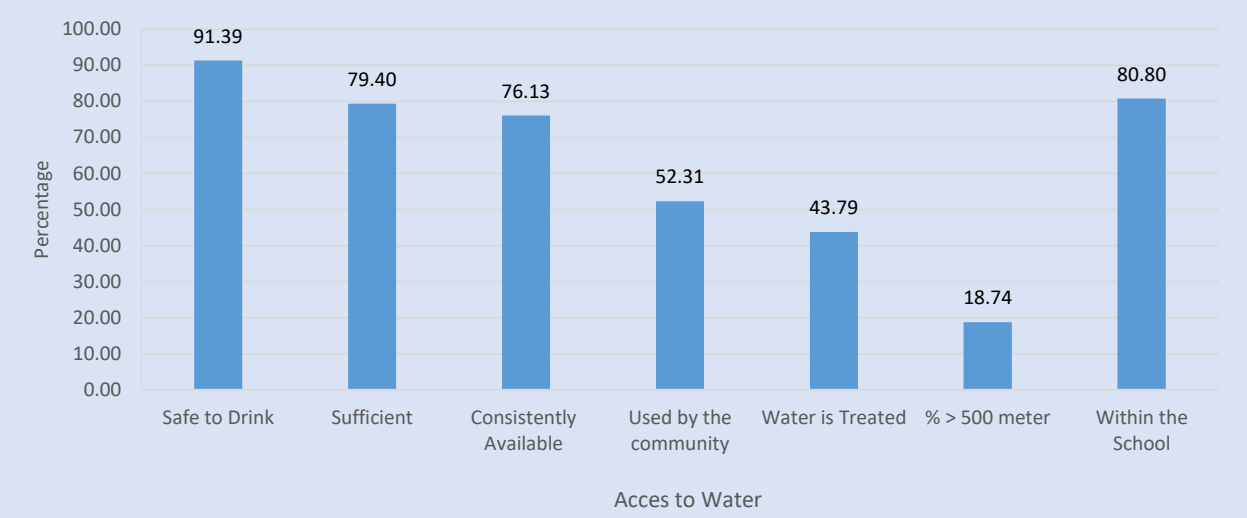


Figure 9.10: Distribution of Secondary Schools by Access to Water, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

9.5 Seating and Writing Places

Significant shortages of seating and writing places were observed, especially at ECD and primary school levels. Nationally, 26.30% of ECD pupils lacked seating and 37.70% lacked writing places, with the highest deficits in Masvingo, Matabeleland North, and Midlands. At primary school level, 22.88% of pupils were without seating and 25.47% without writing places, with Mashonaland Central and Mashonaland West being the most affected. Secondary schools were comparatively better resourced, with some provinces, such as Harare and Masvingo, recording surpluses in seating, though writing place shortages persisted nationally at 10.72%. These patterns highlighted persistent infrastructure inequities, particularly at lower education levels.

Table 9.21: ECD Seating and Writing Places by Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Seating Places				Writing Places			
	Seating Places, No.	Pupil to Seating Place Ratio	No Required	% Pupils Without Seating	Writing Places, No.	Pupil to Writing Place Ratio	No. Required	% Pupils Without Writing
Bulawayo	25 114	1.05	1 206	4.58	27 206	0.97	- 886	-3.37
Harare	49 679	0.98	- 860	-1.76	43 252	1.13	5 567	11.40
Manicaland	74 828	1.30	22 083	22.79	62 053	1.56	34 858	35.97
Mashonaland Central	41 857	1.59	24 708	37.12	35 831	1.86	30 734	46.17
Mashonaland East	51 938	1.36	18 480	26.24	46 258	1.52	24 160	34.31
Mashonaland West	50 655	1.39	19 678	27.98	45 444	1.55	24 889	35.39
Masvingo	58 554	1.53	30 965	34.59	45 095	1.99	44 424	49.63
Matabeleland North	27 756	1.55	15 269	35.49	21 658	1.99	21 367	49.66
Matabeleland South	32 836	1.29	9 385	22.23	26 057	1.62	16 164	38.28
Midlands	59 430	1.47	27 734	31.82	46 679	1.87	40 485	46.45
Grand Total	472 647	1.36	168 648	26.30	399 533	1.61	241 762	37.70

Table 9.22 shows that primary schools faced notable shortages of both seating and writing places in 2025, with a national pupil-to-seating ratio of 1.30 and a pupil-to-writing-place ratio of 1.34. Overall, 22.88% of pupils in school (657,179 pupils) were without adequate seating, while an even higher 25.47% (731,591 pupils) lacked proper writing places. Provinces such as Mashonaland Central and Mashonaland West were the most affected, where nearly 30% of pupils were without seating and about 30–32% lacked writing places, reflecting severe pressure on learning infrastructure.

In contrast, Bulawayo and Harare recorded relatively better conditions, though gaps remained significant, with 14.8% and 11.6% of pupils without seating, respectively, and over 17% without writing places. Across all provinces, shortages of writing places were consistently more pronounced than seating shortages, underscoring a widespread challenge in providing adequate classroom furniture. These disparities highlight persistent infrastructure inequities across provinces, which have direct implications for pupil comfort, participation, and overall quality of primary education.

Table 9.22: Primary School (Grade 1-7) Seating and Writing Places by Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Seating Places				Writing Places			
	Seating Places, No.	Pupil to Seating Place Ratio	No Required	% Pupils Without Seating	Writing Places, No.	Pupil to Writing Place Ratio	No. Required	% Pupils Without Writing
Bulawayo	101 197	1.17	17 575	14.80	92 428	1.29	26 344	22.18
Harare	289 941	1.13	38 154	11.63	269 587	1.22	58 508	17.83
Manicaland	346 808	1.27	92 090	20.98	330 220	1.33	108 678	24.76
Mashonaland Central	192 875	1.42	81 076	29.60	192 046	1.43	81 905	29.90
Mashonaland East	243 104	1.31	75 443	23.68	231 909	1.37	86 638	27.20
Mashonaland West	239 769	1.42	100 810	29.60	231 672	1.47	108 907	31.98
Masvingo	280 115	1.31	88 038	23.91	273 621	1.35	94 532	25.68
Matabeleland North	126 402	1.32	40 927	24.46	123 055	1.36	44 274	26.46
Matabeleland South	125 454	1.24	29 720	19.15	126 674	1.22	28 500	18.37
Midlands	268 995	1.35	93 346	25.76	269 036	1.35	93 305	25.75
Grand Total	2 214 660	1.30	657 179	22.88	2 140 248	1.34	731 591	25.47

Table 9.23 indicates that secondary schools (Forms 1–6) were generally better equipped with seating than writing places in 2025, although significant provincial disparities remain. Nationally, the pupil-to-seating-place ratio stood at 0.88, reflecting an overall surplus of about 152,495 seating places, largely driven by substantial excess capacity in provinces such as Mashonaland East and Masvingo. In contrast, provinces including Matabeleland North (17.28%), Mashonaland Central (12.67%), Midlands (12.59%), and Matabeleland South (11.19%) still experienced notable seating shortages. The national pupil-to-writing-place ratio was 1.12, indicating a deficit of approximately 123,854 writing places, with 10.70% of secondary pupils lacking adequate desks. The most affected provinces were Matabeleland North (19.39%), Mashonaland Central (15.47%), Masvingo (15.13%), and Mashonaland West (14.09%), while Harare recorded a surplus of writing places. Overall, the findings highlight that, despite progress in seating provision at secondary level, shortages of writing

facilities persist, particularly in several provinces, posing ongoing challenges to effective teaching and learning.

Table 9.23: Secondary School (Form 1-6) Seating and Writing Places, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Seating Places				Writing Places			
	Seating Places, No.	Learner to Seating Place Ratio	No. Required	% Pupils Without Seating	Writing Places, No.	Pupil to Writing Place Ratio	No. Required	% Pupils Without Writing
Bulawayo	57 644	1.04	2 549	4.23	57 615	1.04	2 578	4.28
Harare	148 249	0.97	-4 024	-2.79	149 983	0.96	-5 758	-3.99
Manicaland	161 857	1.09	14 119	8.02	160 999	1.09	14 977	8.51
Mashonaland Central	78 001	1.15	11 319	12.67	75 503	1.18	13 817	15.47
Mashonaland East	275 388	0.48	-143 731	-109.17	116 372	1.13	15 285	11.61
Mashonaland West	116 867	1.09	10 562	8.29	109 473	1.16	17 956	14.09
Masvingo	236 163	0.66	-79 601	-50.84	132 879	1.18	23 683	15.13
Matabeleland North	50 691	1.21	10 589	17.28	49 395	1.24	11 885	19.39
Matabeleland South	56 633	1.13	7 135	11.19	55 019	1.16	8 749	13.72
Midlands	129 017	1.14	18 588	12.59	126 923	1.16	20 682	14.01
Grand Total	1 310 510	0.88	-152 495	-13.17	1034 161	1.12	123 854	10.70

9.6 ICT, Computer Access, Use and Connectivity

In 2025, internet connectivity in Zimbabwean schools remained uneven across provinces and education levels, with secondary schools consistently better connected than primary schools. Nationally, only 38.57% of primary schools (3,204 out of 8,308) had internet access, compared to 55.75% of secondary schools (1,943 out of 3,485), highlighting a significant connectivity gap between the two levels. At primary school level, Harare recorded the highest connectivity rate at 72.48% (482 of 665 schools), followed by Bulawayo at 52.93%, while the lowest proportions were observed in Matabeleland North (28.83%) and Mashonaland Central (29.37%), where fewer than three in ten primary schools were connected. Provinces with large rural populations such as Manicaland (34.48%), Mashonaland West (33.88%), and Midlands (32.95%) also reported relatively low primary school connectivity. At secondary school level, connectivity levels were notably higher across all provinces, peaking in Harare at 79.05% (283 of 358 schools) and Bulawayo at 73.48%, while Mashonaland Central recorded the lowest secondary connectivity at 40.94%. Despite these improvements at secondary school level, several provinces—including Mashonaland East (47.61%) and Manicaland (52.13%)—still had nearly half of their secondary schools without internet access.

Table 9.24: Schools With and Without Internet Connectivity by Level of Education and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Primary Schools, No.			% With Internet	Secondary Schools, No			% With Internet
	With Internet	Without	Total		With Internet	Without	Total	
Bulawayo	226	201	427	52.93	97	35	132	73.48
Harare	482	183	665	72.48	283	75	358	79.05
Manicaland	442	840	1 282	34.48	257	236	493	52.13
Mashonaland Central	232	558	790	29.37	131	189	320	40.94
Mashonaland East	391	511	902	43.35	229	252	481	47.61
Mashonaland West	333	650	983	33.88	241	225	466	51.72
Masvingo	355	622	977	36.34	252	143	395	63.80
Matabeleland North	190	469	659	28.83	118	106	224	52.68
Matabeleland South	208	368	576	36.11	115	81	196	58.67
Midlands	345	702	1 047	32.95	220	200	420	52.38
Grand Total	3 204	5 104	8 308	38.57	1 943	1 542	3 485	55.75

The type of internet connectivity available to primary schools in Zimbabwe varied considerably by province, with satellite-based technologies dominating among connected schools, while a substantial number of schools still had no connectivity at all. Nationally, 5,104 primary schools had no internet access, underscoring the scale of the digital access gap at primary level. Among connected schools, Starlink (841 schools) and VSAT (828 schools) were the most prevalent connectivity solutions, reflecting their suitability for remote and rural settings where terrestrial infrastructure is limited. Fibre optic connectivity was available in 462 schools, largely concentrated in urban provinces, while ADSL (599 schools) and LTE (360 schools) remained moderately utilised nationwide. By contrast, radio link (55 schools) and SHDSL/XDSL (137 schools) were the least used technologies.

Provincial patterns reveal strong urban–rural contrasts. Harare recorded the highest uptake of high-capacity connections, including 143 fibre optic, 97 LTE, and 132 ADSL-connected primary schools, alongside 86 schools using Starlink, reflecting relatively advanced digital infrastructure. Bulawayo similarly showed notable reliance on ADSL (115 schools) and LTE (31 schools), although 201 schools remained without internet access. In predominantly rural provinces, satellite technologies were more prominent; Manicaland reported 180 VSAT-connected schools and 95 using Starlink, yet it also had the highest number of unconnected primary schools (840). Mashonaland East (142 VSAT; 82 Starlink), Mashonaland Central (89 VSAT; 46 Starlink), and Midlands (118 VSAT; 83 Starlink) exhibited similar patterns, where satellite solutions served as the primary means of connectivity.

Table 9.25: Primary Schools by Type of Connectivity and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	ADSL	Dongle	Fibre Optic	LTE	Radio Link	SHDSL/XDSL	VSAT	Starlink	None
Bulawayo	115	13	27	31		11	3	41	201
Harare	132	71	143	97	2	15	5	86	183
Manicaland	79	21	30	30	11	20	180	95	840
Mashonaland Central	24	20	21	31	6	6	89	46	558
Mashonaland East	54	24	48	36	10	17	142	82	511
Mashonaland West	72	10	53	36	4	23	89	75	650
Masvingo	21	14	58	23	4	17	82	179	622
Matabeleland North	26	5	9	15	5	11	63	76	469
Matabeleland South	26	8	20	20	6	5	57	78	368
Midlands	50	9	53	41	7	12	118	83	702
Grand Total	599	195	462	360	55	137	828	841	5 104

Table 9.26 presents the percentage distribution of primary schools by type of internet connectivity across provinces in Zimbabwe in 2025, highlighting marked provincial differences in the adoption of specific technologies. Overall, the distribution confirms that connectivity types are unevenly spread geographically, with urban provinces accounting for a disproportionate share of fixed and mobile broadband connections, while rural provinces dominate satellite-based solutions. Harare accounted for the largest shares of ADSL (22.04%), dongle-based connectivity (36.41%), fibre optic connections (30.95%), and LTE (26.94%), underscoring its relatively advanced ICT infrastructure. Bulawayo also contributed notably to ADSL uptake (19.20%) and LTE (8.61%), reinforcing the urban concentration of terrestrial connectivity.

In contrast, satellite technologies were largely concentrated in rural and semi-rural provinces. Manicaland accounted for the highest share of VSAT-connected primary schools (21.74%), followed by Mashonaland East (17.15%) and Midlands (14.25%), while Masvingo alone contributed 21.28% of all Starlink-connected primary schools nationally, indicating a strong reliance on low-earth-orbit satellite solutions in hard-to-reach areas. Radio link connectivity was similarly concentrated outside major cities, with Manicaland (20.00%), Mashonaland East (18.18%), and Midlands (12.73%) together accounting for over half of all such connections nationwide. SHDSL/XDSL connections were most prominent in Mashonaland West (16.79%) and Manicaland (14.60%), reflecting localised infrastructure availability.

The distribution of schools without any internet connectivity further illustrates spatial inequality, with Manicaland (16.46%), Midlands (13.75%), Mashonaland West (12.74%), and Masvingo (12.19%) together accounting for more than half of all unconnected primary schools nationally, while Harare (3.59%) and Bulawayo (3.94%) contributed relatively small shares.

Table 9.26: Primary Schools by Type of Connectivity and Province, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	ADSL	Dongle	Fibre Optic	LTE	Radio Link	SHDSL/ XDSL	VSAT	Starlink	None
Bulawayo	19.20	6.67	5.84	8.61	0.00	8.03	0.36	4.88	3.94
Harare	22.04	36.41	30.95	26.94	3.64	10.95	0.60	10.23	3.59
Manicaland	13.19	10.77	6.49	8.33	20.00	14.60	21.74	11.30	16.46
Mashonaland Central	4.01	10.26	4.55	8.61	10.91	4.38	10.75	5.47	10.93
Mashonaland East	9.02	12.31	10.39	10.00	18.18	12.41	17.15	9.75	10.01
Mashonaland West	12.02	5.13	11.47	10.00	7.27	16.79	10.75	8.92	12.74
Masvingo	3.51	7.18	12.55	6.39	7.27	12.41	9.90	21.28	12.19
Matabeleland North	4.34	2.56	1.95	4.17	9.09	8.03	7.61	9.04	9.19
Matabeleland South	4.34	4.10	4.33	5.56	10.91	3.65	6.88	9.27	7.21
Midlands	8.35	4.62	11.47	11.39	12.73	8.76	14.25	9.87	13.75
Grand Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Secondary school internet connectivity was characterised by a strong reliance on satellite-based technologies alongside persistent connectivity gaps across provinces. Nationally, 1,542 secondary schools had no internet access, while among connected schools, Starlink was the most widely used technology (822 schools), followed by VSAT (464 schools), indicating the central role of satellite solutions in extending connectivity beyond urban centres. Terrestrial technologies were less prevalent overall, with 294 schools connected via fibre optic, 239 using ADSL, and 162 relying on LTE, while radio link (22 schools) and SHDSL/XDSL (61 schools) remained marginal.

Provincial patterns reflected pronounced infrastructure disparities. Harare recorded the highest concentration of high-capacity connections, accounting for 87 fibre optic, 64 ADSL, and 49 LTE-connected secondary schools, consistent with its advanced ICT infrastructure, although 75 schools still lacked connectivity. Bulawayo similarly showed a comparatively strong uptake of fixed broadband, with 34 ADSL and 17 fibre optic connections, yet 35 schools remained unconnected. In contrast, rural provinces depended heavily on satellite technologies. Manicaland reported 89 VSAT-connected and 98 Starlink-connected secondary schools, alongside 236 schools without internet, the highest number nationally. Mashonaland East (73 VSAT; 84 Starlink), Mashonaland West (75 VSAT; 72 Starlink), and Midlands (62 VSAT; 100 Starlink) exhibited similar reliance on satellite connectivity.

Notably, Masvingo recorded the highest number of Starlink-connected secondary schools (158), far exceeding its uptake of other technologies, underscoring the growing importance of low-earth-orbit satellite internet in geographically dispersed areas. Meanwhile, Matabeleland North and South also showed strong dependence on Starlink and VSAT, with limited use of fibre and mobile broadband.

Table 9.27: Secondary Schools by Type of Connectivity and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	ADSL	Dongle	Fibre Optic	LTE	Radio Link	SHDSL/XDSL	VSAT	Starlink	None
Bulawayo	34	4	17	10		3	2	39	35
Harare	64	27	87	49	4	11	5	77	75
Manicaland	29	10	31	16	4	8	89	98	236
Mashonaland Central	14	7	16	5	1	5	45	49	189
Mashonaland East	25	8	28	24	2	5	73	84	252
Mashonaland West	31	6	36	28	3	11	75	72	225
Masvingo	4	10	35	12	4	4	42	158	143
Matabeleland North	13		7	4	1	2	39	72	106
Matabeleland South	5	3	7	3	1	5	32	73	81
Midlands	20	13	30	11	2	7	62	100	200
Grand Total	239	88	294	162	22	61	464	822	1 542

Table 9.28 shows the percentage distribution of secondary schools by type of internet connectivity across provinces in Zimbabwe in 2025, further illustrating the uneven spatial distribution of digital infrastructure. Harare dominated the distribution of fixed and mobile broadband technologies, accounting for 26.78% of all ADSL-connected, 29.59% of fibre optic, and 30.25% of LTE-connected secondary schools nationally, reflecting its superiority in ICT infrastructure provision. Harare also contributed the largest share of dongle-based connections (30.68%) and a notable proportion of radio link (18.18%) and SHDSL/XDSL (18.03%) connections.

Satellite connectivity was more evenly spread across provinces but remained concentrated in predominantly rural areas. Manicaland accounted for the largest share of VSAT-connected secondary schools (19.18%), followed by Mashonaland West (16.16%), Mashonaland East (15.73%), and Midlands (13.36%), underscoring the reliance on satellite technologies where terrestrial networks are limited. Starlink connectivity was most concentrated in Masvingo (19.22%), with substantial shares also being recorded in Midlands (12.17%), Manicaland (11.92%), and Mashonaland East (10.22%), highlighting the growing role of low-earth-orbit satellite solutions in rural and remote provinces.

The distribution of secondary schools without internet connectivity further reinforces regional disparities, with Mashonaland East (16.34%), Manicaland (15.30%), Mashonaland West (14.59%), and Midlands (12.97%) together accounting for the majority of unconnected secondary schools nationally, while Bulawayo (2.27%) and Harare (4.86%) accounted for relatively small shares. The percentage distribution confirms that urban provinces concentrate fixed and mobile broadband access, while rural provinces rely heavily on satellite-based connectivity, underscoring the need for differentiated, province-specific strategies to achieve equitable secondary school internet access across the country.

Table 9.28: Secondary Schools by Type of Connectivity and Province, Percentage Distribution, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	ADSL	Dongle	Fibre Optic	LTE	Radio Link	SHDSL/XDSL	VSAT	Starlink	None
Bulawayo	14.23	4.55	5.78	6.17	0.00	4.92	0.43	4.74	2.27
Harare	26.78	30.68	29.59	30.25	18.18	18.03	1.08	9.37	4.86
Manicaland	12.13	11.36	10.54	9.88	18.18	13.11	19.18	11.92	15.30
Mashonaland Central	5.86	7.95	5.44	3.09	4.55	8.20	9.70	5.96	12.26
Mashonaland East	10.46	9.09	9.52	14.81	9.09	8.20	15.73	10.22	16.34
Mashonaland West	12.97	6.82	12.24	17.28	13.64	18.03	16.16	8.76	14.59
Masvingo	1.67	11.36	11.90	7.41	18.18	6.56	9.05	19.22	9.27
Matabeleland North	5.44	0.00	2.38	2.47	4.55	3.28	8.41	8.76	6.87
Matabeleland South	2.09	3.41	2.38	1.85	4.55	8.20	6.90	8.88	5.25
Midlands	8.37	14.77	10.20	6.79	9.09	11.48	13.36	12.17	12.97
Grand Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Computer availability in Zimbabwean schools was generally high, with secondary schools consistently having higher access than primary schools across all provinces. Nationally, 82.33% of primary schools and 87.63% of secondary schools were equipped with computers, indicating that most schools have at least some digital resources.

Urban provinces reported the highest computer coverage. Harare led, with 95.64% of primary schools and 97.21% of secondary schools equipped with computers, followed by Bulawayo (82.20% primary; 91.67% secondary). This reflects stronger ICT infrastructure and resource allocation in major cities. Rural and semi-urban provinces also demonstrated substantial coverage but with slightly lower percentages. For example, Manicaland had 78.16% of primary schools and 88.03% of secondary schools with computers, while Mashonaland Central recorded 77.22% and 82.50%, respectively. Matabeleland North had the lowest computer availability at 74.51% in primary schools and 79.02% in secondary schools, highlighting persistent infrastructure challenges in more remote areas. Other provinces such as Mashonaland East (86.03% primary; 87.11% secondary), Mashonaland West (79.96% primary; 83.91% secondary), Masvingo (83.42% primary; 87.09% secondary), Matabeleland South (86.11% primary; 90.82% secondary), and Midlands (83.76% primary; 90.00% secondary) all had strong computer coverage, particularly in secondary schools.

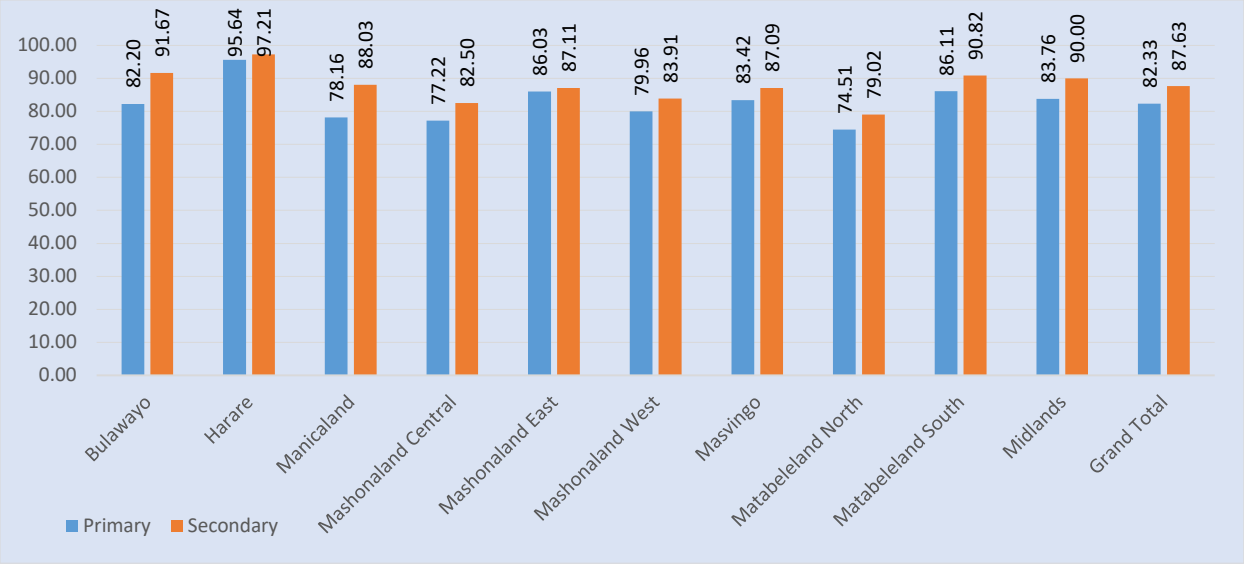


Figure 9.11: Primary and Secondary Schools with Computers by Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Figure 9.12 shows the average number of computers per school in primary and secondary schools across Zimbabwe's provinces in 2025. For secondary schools, the national average was 19 computers per school, but there were notable provincial differences. Harare had the highest average at 34 computers per school, followed by Bulawayo (28 computers per school) and Matabeleland South (22 computers per school), reflecting better infrastructure in urban areas. In contrast, several provinces had much lower averages, including Mashonaland Central (14) and Mashonaland West (14), Masvingo (15), and Matabeleland North (15), indicating limited access to digital resources in these regions. Other provinces such as Manicaland (19), Mashonaland East (16), and Midlands (20) were near the national average. The figure highlights considerable disparities in computer availability per school, with urban provinces generally better equipped, while rural provinces face challenges in providing adequate computer resources for both administrative and pupil use.

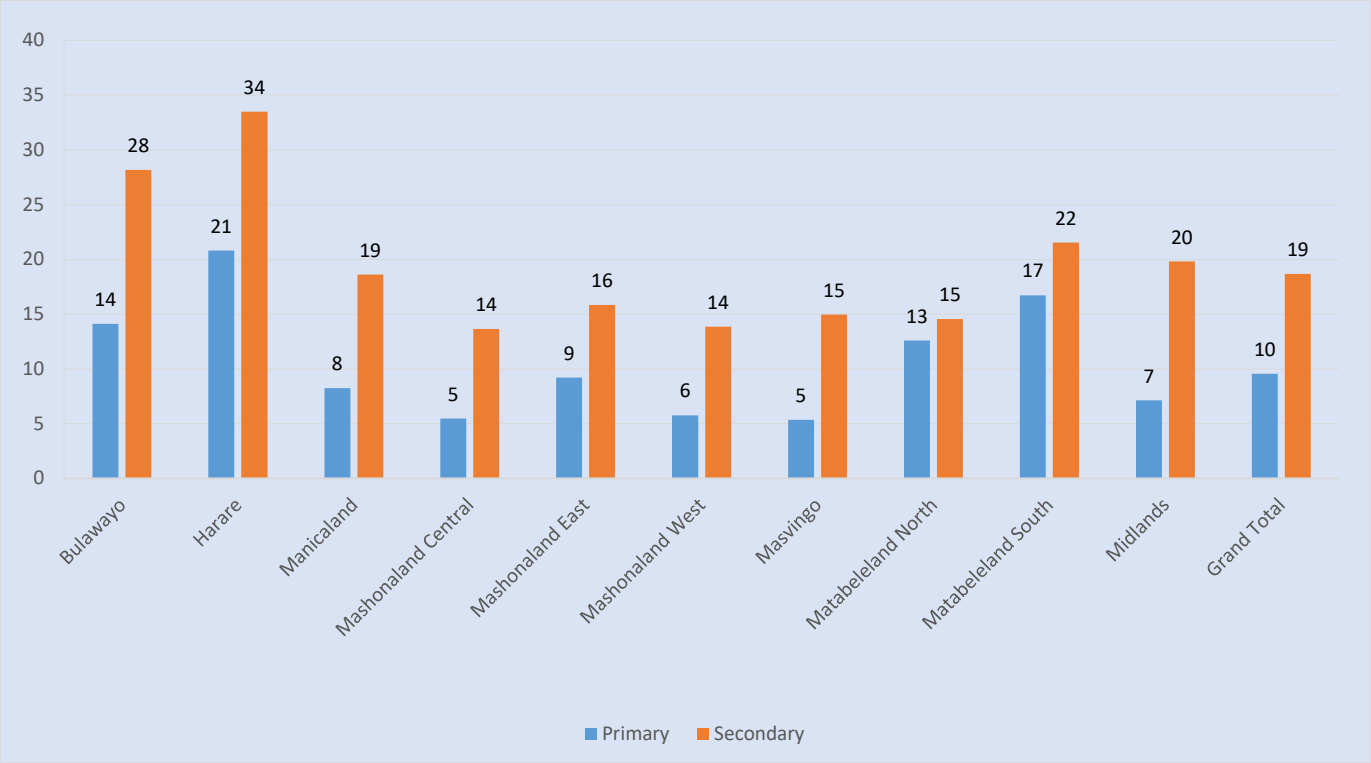


Figure 9.12: Primary and Secondary Schools, Average Computers per School, by Province, Zimbabwe, 2025

Figure 9.13 shows the average number of pupils per computer in primary and secondary schools across Zimbabwe's provinces in 2025. For secondary schools, the national average was 25 pupils per computer, but this varied considerably by province. Harare had the most favourable ratio at 17 pupils per computer, followed by Matabeleland South (20:1) and Midlands (21:1). Provinces with higher pupil-to-computer pressure included Masvingo (38:1), Mashonaland Central (31:1), and Mashonaland West (31:1). Other provinces such as Bulawayo (25:1), Manicaland (25:1), Mashonaland East (23:1), and Matabeleland North (26:1) were close to the national average.

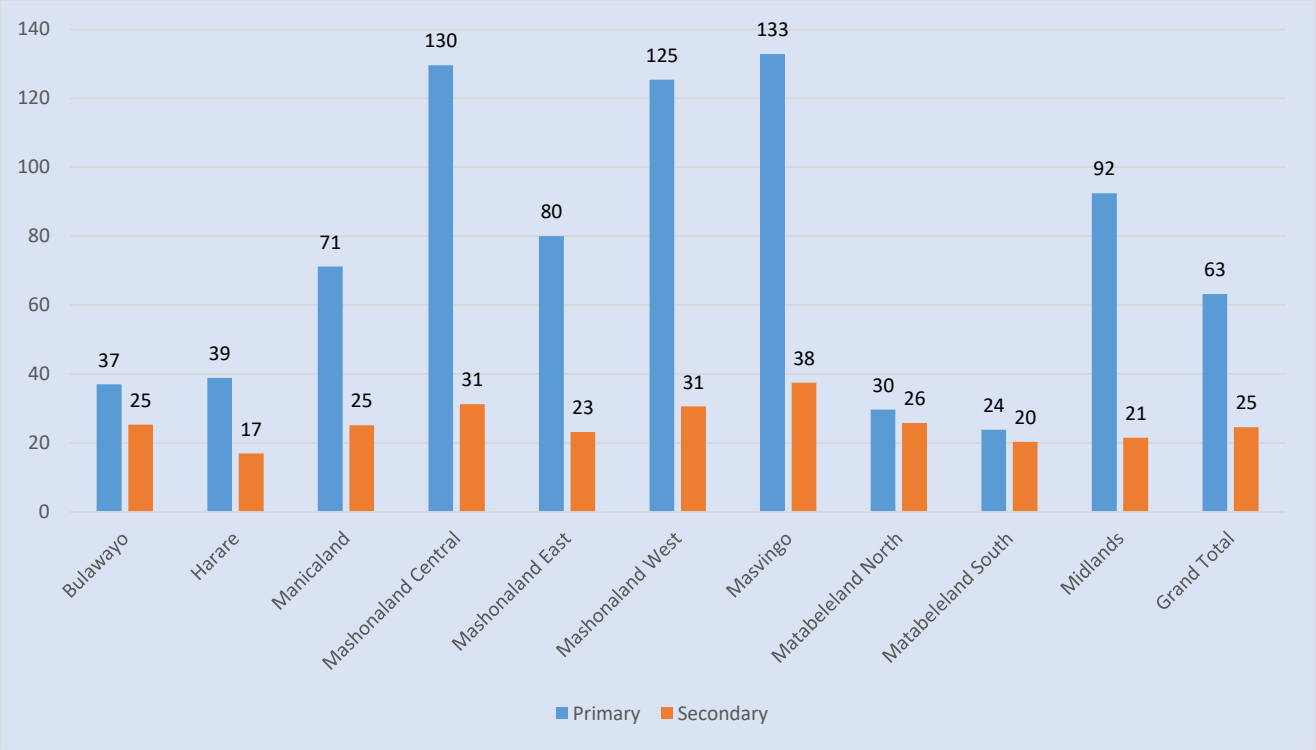


Figure 9.13: Primary and Secondary Schools, Average Pupils per Computer by Province, Zimbabwe, 2025

Access to functional computers in Zimbabwean primary schools was moderate to high, with 6,840 out of 8,308 schools (82.33%) reporting at least one functional computer. However, only 3,233 schools (38.91%) had computers specifically available for pupils, highlighting a significant gap between overall computer availability and pupil access.

The average number of functional computers per school was 10, but this varied widely by province. Urban provinces such as Harare and Bulawayo had higher averages (21 and 14 computers per school, respectively), while rural provinces generally had fewer, for example, Mashonaland Central (5 computers per school) and Masvingo (5 computers per school). The pupil-to-computer ratio further emphasizes disparities in access. Nationally, there were 63 pupils per computer, but rural provinces faced much higher ratios: Mashonaland Central had 130 pupils per computer, Masvingo 133, and Mashonaland West 125, indicating overcrowded computer use and limited hands-on access for pupils. In contrast, urban and smaller provinces like Matabeleland South (24 pupils per computer), Matabeleland North (30), Bulawayo (37), and Harare (39) provided comparatively better computer access to pupils.

Harare led both in schools with computers (95.64%) and schools with pupil-accessible computers (74.44%). Bulawayo showed strong overall computer availability (82.20%) and decent pupil access (61.59%). Mashonaland Central, Masvingo and Mashonaland West lagged behind, with less than 30% of schools providing computers to pupils, despite moderate overall computer availability. Matabeleland South and North performed well in

pupilaccess to computers relative to rural peers, with 49.13% and 33.54% of schools offering pupil-accessible computers, respectively.

The data reveal that while most primary schools have functional computers for administration and teaching, while direct lpupil access is limited, especially in rural provinces. This highlights the need for targeted investment in computers for pupils and improved pupil-to-computer ratios to ensure equitable digital learning opportunities.

Table 9.29: Primary School Computers for Pupils, Teachers and Administration, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Total No. of Schools	Schools with functional computers	Schools with computers for pupils	Total Functional Computers	Computers for pupils	Pupils	% of schools with computers	% of schools with computers for pupils	Average computers per school	Pupils per computer
Bulawayo	427	351	263	6 029	3 922	145 092	82.20	61.59	14	37
Harare	665	636	495	13 829	9 699	376 914	95.64	74.44	21	39
Manicaland	1 282	1 002	497	10 575	7 533	535 809	78.16	38.77	8	71
Mashonaland Central	790	610	210	4 321	2 628	340 516	77.22	26.58	5	130
Mashonaland East	902	776	396	8 298	4 862	388 965	86.03	43.90	9	80
Mashonaland West	983	786	269	5 656	3 278	410 912	79.96	27.37	6	125
Masvingo	977	815	281	5 225	3 445	457 672	83.42	28.76	5	133
Matabeleland North	659	491	221	8 296	7 083	210 354	74.51	33.54	13	30
Matabeleland South	576	496	283	9 634	8 280	197 395	86.11	49.13	17	24
Midlands	1 047	877	318	7 452	4 861	449 505	83.76	30.37	7	92
Grand Total	8 308	6 840	3 233	79 315	55 591	3513 134	82.33	38.91	10	63

Table 9.30 shows that Zimbabwe had a total of 3,485 secondary schools, of which 3,054 schools (87.63%) had functional computers. However, only 1,840 schools (52.80%) had computers specifically available for pupils. The total number of functional computers across all schools was 65,032, with 47,157 allocated for pupils, serving a population of 1,158,015 pupils, resulting in an overall pupil-to-computer ratio of 25:1. On average, there were 19 computers per school nationwide.

Provincially, Harare led in computer access with 97.21% of schools having functional computers and 79.33% of schools providing computers for pupils, with the highest average of 34 computers per school and the most favourable pupil-to-computer ratio of 17:1. Bulawayo also performed well, with 91.67% of schools equipped with computers and 69.70% providing pupil access, averaging 28 computers per school.

In contrast, Mashonaland Central had the lowest proportion of schools with computers for pupils at 40.63%, despite 82.50% of schools having functional computers. The province also recorded one of the highest pupil-to-computer ratios at 31:1, alongside Mashonaland West. Masvingo had the most strained pupil access, with a pupil-to-computer ratio of 38:1, despite 87.09% of schools having functional computers.

Other notable provincial statistics included Matabeleland South, where 90.82% of schools had computers and 60.20% provided pupil access, maintaining a relatively favourable pupil-

to-computer ratio of 20:1. Matabeleland North lagged behind somewhat in overall coverage, with 79.02% of schools having computers and 45.09% providing pupil access.

Table 9.30: Secondary Schools Computers for Pupils, Teachers and Administration, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Total No. of Secondary Schools	Schools with functional computers	Schools with computers for pupils	Total Functional Computers	Computers for pupils	Pupils	% of schools with computers	% of schools with computers for pupils	Average computers per school	Pupils per computer
Bulawayo	132	121	92	3 718	2 377	60 193	91.67	69.70	28	25
Harare	358	348	284	11 994	8 506	144 225	97.21	79.33	34	17
Manicaland	493	434	276	9 181	7 004	175 976	88.03	55.98	19	25
Mashonaland Central	320	264	130	4 366	2 860	89 320	82.50	40.63	14	31
Mashonaland East	481	419	228	7 617	5 684	131 657	87.11	47.40	16	23
Mashonaland West	466	391	206	6 447	4 163	127 429	83.91	44.21	14	31
Masvingo	395	344	185	5 908	4 174	156 562	87.09	46.84	15	38
Matabeleland North	224	177	101	3 260	2 379	61 280	79.02	45.09	15	26
Matabeleland South	196	178	118	4 221	3 139	63 768	90.82	60.20	22	20
Midlands	420	378	220	8 320	6 871	147 605	90.00	52.38	20	21
Grand Total	3 485	3 054	1 840	65 032	47 157	1158 015	87.63	52.80	19	25

9.7 Health and Feeding

Out of 8,308 primary schools in Zimbabwe, 4,884 schools (58.79%) had a nutritional garden, 5,476 schools (65.91%) participated in a feeding programme, and 6,461 schools (77.77%) had a school health programme. Provincial variations were notable. Mashonaland East led in school feeding, with 78.16% of schools participating, and also had a high proportion of nutritional gardens (65.19%) and school health programmes (84.92%). Matabeleland South had the highest coverage of nutritional gardens (71.88%) and school health programmes (89.06%), as well as strong participation in school feeding (78.30%).

Bulawayo and Harare had moderate coverage i.e Bulawayo had 57.38% of schools with nutritional gardens, 57.61% in school feeding, and 61.12% in school health programmes, while Harare reported 54.44%, 57.44%, and 65.56%, respectively. Rural provinces generally had higher coverage of school health programmes but varied in other areas. For example, Mashonaland Central had only 46.20% of schools with nutritional gardens, though 76.58% had school health programmes.

Table 9.31: Percentage of Primary Schools with Nutritional Garden, School Feeding Programme and School Health Programme by Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Total No. of Primary Schools	No. of Primary Schools with:			% of Primary Schools with:		
		Nutritional Garden	School Feeding	School Health Programme	Nutritional Garden	School Feeding	School Health Programme
Bulawayo	427	245	246	261	57.38	57.61	61.12
Harare	665	362	382	436	54.44	57.44	65.56
Manicaland	1 282	781	818	932	60.92	63.81	72.70
Mashonaland Central	790	365	472	605	46.20	59.75	76.58
Mashonaland East	902	588	705	766	65.19	78.16	84.92
Mashonaland West	983	482	604	775	49.03	61.44	78.84
Masvingo	977	626	481	806	64.07	49.23	82.50
Matabeleland North	659	381	488	542	57.81	74.05	82.25
Matabeleland South	576	414	451	513	71.88	78.30	89.06
Midlands	1 047	640	829	825	61.13	79.18	78.80
Grand Total	8 308	4 884	5 476	6 461	58.79	65.91	77.77

Of the 3,485 secondary schools, 1,718 schools (49.30%) had a nutritional garden, 1,120 schools (32.14%) participated in a school feeding programme, and 2,547 schools (73.08%) had a school health programme. Provincial coverage varied widely. Matabeleland South had the highest proportion of schools with nutritional gardens (64.29%) and school health programmes (87.76%), and strong participation in feeding programmes (43.37%). Matabeleland North also had high coverage, with 58.48% of schools with nutritional gardens and 82.14% with school health programmes.

Urban provinces showed lower implementation of nutrition and feeding initiatives. For example, Bulawayo had 35.61% of schools with nutritional gardens, 5.30% in feeding programmes, and 50.00% with school health programmes, while Harare reported 30.45%, 5.87%, and 47.77%, respectively. Rural provinces such as Manicaland, Mashonaland Central, and Midlands reported moderate to high coverage, particularly for school health programmes (78.30%, 79.38%, and 80.00%, respectively), while participation in feeding programmes for rural provinces ranged from 28% to 58%. Table 9.32 shows the distribution.

Table 9.32: Percentage of Secondary Schools with Nutritional Garden, School Feeding Programme and School Health Programme by Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	Total Secondary	No. of Secondary Schools with:			% of Secondary Schools with:		
		Nutritional Garden	School Feeding	School Health Programme	Nutritional Garden	School Feeding Programme	School Health Programme
Bulawayo	132	47	7	66	35.61	5.30	50.00
Harare	358	109	21	171	30.45	5.87	47.77
Manicaland	493	280	149	386	56.80	30.22	78.30
Mashonaland Central	320	149	132	254	46.56	41.25	79.38
Mashonaland East	481	236	163	336	49.06	33.89	69.85
Mashonaland West	466	190	133	339	40.77	28.54	72.75
Masvingo	395	211	113	303	53.42	28.61	76.71
Matabeleland North	224	131	71	184	58.48	31.70	82.14
Matabeleland South	196	126	85	172	64.29	43.37	87.76
Midlands	420	239	246	336	56.90	58.57	80.00
Grand Total	3 485	1 718	1 120	2 547	49.30	32.14	73.08

9.8 Conclusion

Between 2021 and 2025, Zimbabwe recorded steady improvements in the provision of education facilities across all levels. The number of classrooms increased at ECD, primary, and secondary levels, contributing to improved pupil-to-classroom ratios. At ECD level, the ratio declined from 54 pupils per classroom in 2021 to 45 in 2025, while primary school ratios improved from 46 to 44 over the same period. Secondary school ratios remained relatively stable, fluctuating between 37 and 40 pupils per classroom and returning to 38 in 2025. These trends indicate that classroom expansion broadly kept pace with enrolment changes, particularly at ECD and primary school levels. Provincial variations were observed, with urban provinces recording lower congestion levels compared to predominantly rural provinces.

Access to electricity improved across the education system, with grid electricity remaining the main source of power. In 2025, 70.46% of primary schools and 77.27% of secondary schools had access to electricity. Secondary schools consistently demonstrated higher electrification rates than primary schools. However, a notable proportion of schools continued to operate without electricity, particularly at primary level. Provincial disparities persisted, with Harare and Bulawayo recording near-universal access, while lower access levels were observed in provinces such as Matabeleland North, Masvingo, and Mashonaland

West. Electricity access also varied by grant classification, with lower-grant schools showing higher proportions without power.

Water and sanitation facilities showed gradual improvements over the period under review. Pupil-to-toilet ratios declined slightly at ECD level and remained relatively stable at primary and secondary levels. In 2025, national pupil-to-toilet ratios stood at 17–18 at ECD and secondary levels and 24–27 at primary level. Teacher-to-toilet ratios remained low and stable across provinces and levels. Sanitation infrastructure was dominated by Blair toilets, particularly in rural provinces, while flush or pour-flush toilets were more prevalent in urban areas. Pit latrines without slabs, though limited in number, were recorded across all levels.

Access to water was high across the country. In 2025, 98.28% of primary schools and 97.70% of secondary schools reported access to a water source. Boreholes and piped water were the most reported sources, with urban provinces relying more on piped water and rural provinces on boreholes and wells. While most schools reported access to safe drinking water, lower proportions reported water treatment and consistent availability. In addition, a notable share of schools relied on water sources located more than 500 metres from the school premises.

Significant shortages of seating and writing places were recorded, particularly at ECD and primary school levels. Nationally, 26.30% of ECD pupils and 22.88% of primary pupils lacked seating in 2025, while shortages of writing places affected 37.70% of ECD pupils and 25.47% of primary pupils. Secondary schools recorded an overall surplus of seating at national level; however, 10.70% of secondary pupils lacked writing places. Provincial disparities were evident, with higher deficits generally recorded in rural provinces.

At primary level, 4,884 schools (58.79%) had nutritional gardens, 5,476 schools (65.91%) participated in school feeding programmes, and 6,461 schools (77.77%) implemented school health programmes, with higher coverage recorded in provinces such as Matabeleland South (71.88% nutritional gardens; 78.30% feeding; 89.06% health) and Mashonaland East (65.19%, 78.16%, and 84.92%, respectively). Urban provinces recorded comparatively lower coverage, with Bulawayo and Harare reporting nutritional garden coverage of 57.38% and 54.44%, and feeding programme participation of 57.61% and 57.44%, respectively. At secondary level, programme coverage was lower, particularly for feeding initiatives, where only 1,120 schools (32.14%) participated nationally, while 1,718 schools (49.30%) had nutritional gardens and 2,547 schools (73.08%) had school health programmes. Rural provinces such as Matabeleland South (64.29% nutritional gardens; 43.37% feeding; 87.24% health) and Matabeleland North (58.48%; 31.70%; 82.14%) recorded higher participation, whereas urban provinces lagged behind, with Bulawayo and Harare reporting feeding programme coverage below 6% and school health coverage below 50%.

ICT infrastructure remained unevenly distributed. In 2025, 38.57% of the primary schools and 55.75% of secondary schools had internet connectivity. Connectivity levels were

highest in urban provinces, particularly Harare and Bulawayo, while rural provinces recorded lower coverage. Satellite-based technologies, including VSAT and Starlink, were the most common connectivity solutions outside major urban centres. Computer availability was relatively high, with over 80% of schools reporting functional computers; however, access to computers for pupils was more limited, especially at primary school level, where fewer than 40% of schools had computers available for pupil use.

CHAPTER 10 : Non-Formal Education

10.1 Non-Formal Education Enrolment

In 2025, total enrolment in Non-Formal Education (NFE) programmes stood at 54,263 learners, comprising 22,738 males (41.91%) and 31,525 females (58.09%), indicating a strong female predominance. Manicaland recorded the highest enrolment with 12,521 learners (23.07%), followed by Masvingo with 5,918 (10.91%) and Harare with 5,849 (10.78%). The lowest enrolment was observed in Midlands at 2,373 learners (4.37%). Female participation exceeded male enrolment in all provinces, highlighting consistently higher female engagement in NFE programmes nationwide.

Table 10.1: Total Enrolment in NFE Programmes (Primary and Secondary Education Levels) by, Sex and Province, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	NFE Enrolment and Education Level, No.						
	Number			% of Total			% Female
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Bulawayo	1 867	2 773	4 640	8.21	8.80	8.55	59.76
Harare	3 194	2 655	5 849	14.05	8.42	10.78	45.39
Manicaland	4 805	7 716	12 521	21.13	24.48	23.07	61.62
Mashonaland Central	1 806	2 219	4 025	7.94	7.04	7.42	55.13
Mashonaland East	2 154	3 532	5 686	9.47	11.20	10.48	62.12
Mashonaland West	2 328	3 313	5 641	10.24	10.51	10.40	58.73
Masvingo	2 649	3 269	5 918	11.65	10.37	10.91	55.24
Matabeleland North	1 739	2 415	4 154	7.65	7.66	7.66	58.14
Matabeleland South	1 143	2 313	3 456	5.03	7.34	6.37	66.93
Midlands	1 053	1 320	2 373	4.63	4.19	4.37	55.63
Grand Total	22 738	31 525	54 263	100.00	100.00	100.00	58.10

Figure 10.1 illustrates marked provincial disparities in NFE participation, with Manicaland, Masvingo and Harare dominating enrolment volumes. Female learners consistently outnumbered males across all provinces, reinforcing the overall female share of 58.10% of total enrolment.

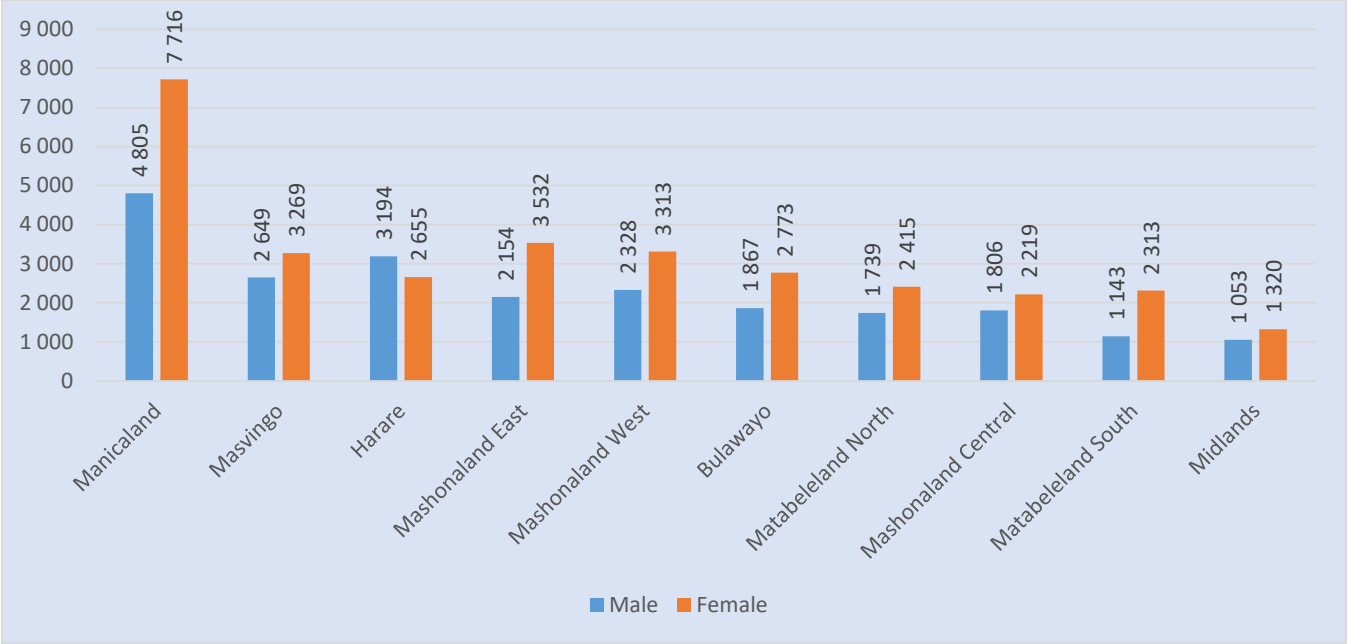


Figure 10.1: Total Enrolment in NFE Programmes (Primary and Secondary Education Levels) by, Sex and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

At primary school level, NFE enrolment totaled 28,109 learners, of whom 62.80% were female, while secondary enrolment stood at 26,154 learners, with females accounting for 53.02%. Manicaland accounted for the largest share at both levels

Table 10.2: Enrolment in NFE Programmes (Primary and Secondary Education Level) by Sex and Province, Number, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	NFE Enrolment (Primary Levels)			NFE Enrolment (Secondary Levels)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bulawayo	798	1 119	1 917	1 069	1 654	2 723
Harare	683	956	1 639	2 511	1 699	4 210
Manicaland	2 845	5 419	8 264	1 960	2 297	4 257
Mashonaland Central	1 060	1 367	2 427	746	852	1 598
Mashonaland East	983	2 187	3 170	1 171	1 345	2 516
Mashonaland West	885	1 718	2 603	1 443	1 595	3 038
Masvingo	1 101	1 556	2 657	1 548	1 713	3 261
Matabeleland North	928	1 299	2 227	811	1 116	1 927
Matabeleland South	726	1 509	2 235	417	804	1 221
Midlands	446	524	970	607	796	1 403
Grand Total	10 455	17 654	28 109	12 283	13 871	26 154

Percentage distributions showed that Manicaland contributed the highest share of primary enrolment (29.40%) and secondary enrolment (16.28. Female participation exceeded male participation in nearly all provinces and levels.

Table 10.3: Enrolment in NFE Programmes (Primary and Secondary Education Level) by Sex and Province, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

Province	% of Primary Total			% of Secondary Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bulawayo	7.63	6.34	6.82	8.70	11.92	10.41
Harare	6.53	5.42	5.83	20.44	12.25	16.10
Manicaland	27.21	30.70	29.40	15.96	16.56	16.28
Mashonaland Central	10.14	7.74	8.63	6.07	6.14	6.11
Mashonaland East	9.40	12.39	11.28	9.53	9.70	9.62
Mashonaland West	8.46	9.73	9.26	11.75	11.50	11.62
Masvingo	10.53	8.81	9.45	12.60	12.35	12.47
Matabeleland North	8.88	7.36	7.92	6.60	8.05	7.37
Matabeleland South	6.94	8.55	7.95	3.39	5.80	4.67
Midlands	4.27	2.97	3.45	4.94	5.74	5.36
Grand Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

10.2 Non-Formal Education Programmes

Non-Formal Education (NFE) enrolment in primary and secondary schools totalled 54,263 learners, comprising 22,738 males (41.91%) and 31,525 females (58.09%), indicating a strong female participation advantage across NFE programmes. Skills Development programmes accounted for the largest share of enrolment at 25,775 learners (47.51%), followed by Part-Time and Continuing Education with 22,138 learners (40.79%). Together, these two programmes constituted 88.30% of total NFE enrolment, underscoring their central role in providing flexible learning pathways.

The Zimbabwe Adult Basic Education Course (ZABEC) streams collectively enrolled 6,350 learners (11.70%), with ZABEC 1 contributing the largest share at 3,010 learners (5.55%), followed by ZABEC 3 at 1,776 learners (3.27%) and ZABEC 2 at 1,564 learners (2.88%). Female learners consistently outnumbered their male counterparts across all NFE levels, with the highest female share observed in ZABEC 1 (61.06%), while the lowest was recorded in ZABEC 2 (55.95%).

Table 10.4: Enrolment in NFE Programmes by Sex and NFE Level, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

NFE Level	Primary and Secondary Schools			%F	% of Total		
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total
Part Time and Continuing Education	9 484	12 654	22 138	57.16	41.71	40.14	40.80
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	10 661	15 114	25 775	58.64	46.89	47.94	47.50
ZABEC 1	1 172	1 838	3 010	61.06	5.15	5.83	5.55
ZABEC 2	689	875	1 564	55.95	3.03	2.78	2.88
ZABEC 3	732	1 044	1 776	58.78	3.22	3.31	3.27
Grand Total	22 738	31 525	54 263	58.10	100.00	100.00	100.00

Figure 10.2 highlighted Skills Development and Part-Time programmes as the backbone of NFE provision, together accounting for nearly 89% of enrolment, with females dominating participation.

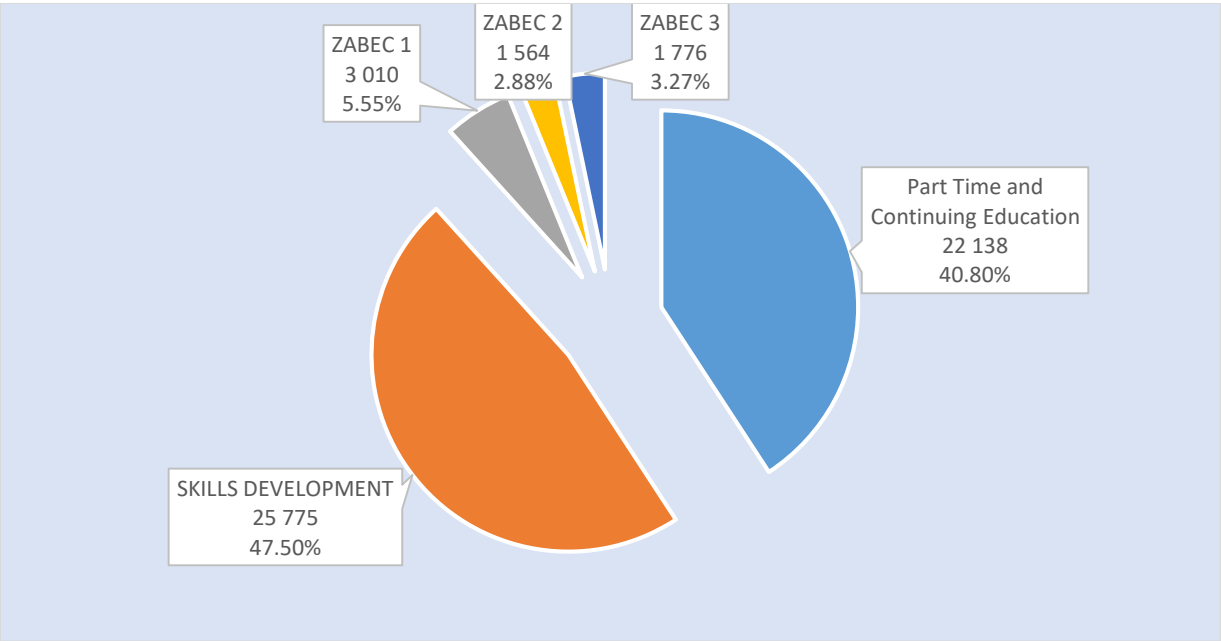


Figure 10.2: Enrolment in NFE Programmes by Sex and NFE Level, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

In 2025, enrolment in Non-Formal Education (NFE) programmes in primary and secondary schools totaled 54,263 learners, with 28,109 (51.8%) enrolled at primary level and 26,154 (48.2%) at secondary level. Female participation was higher at both levels, accounting for 62.81% of primary enrolment (17,654 females) and 53.04% of secondary enrolment (13,871 females). At primary school level, Skills Development dominated with 18,495 learners (65.8%), followed by Part-Time and Continuing Education at 3,739 learners (13.3%), while ZABEC programmes collectively enrolled 5,875 learners (20.9%).

At secondary school level, Part-Time and Continuing Education was the largest programme with 18,399 learners (70.3%), while Skills Development accounted for 7,280 learners (27.8%). ZABEC streams contributed a relatively small share, with a combined enrolment of

475 learners (1.8%). Female enrolment exceeded male enrolment in most NFE levels, particularly in primary Skills Development (63.50%) and primary Part-Time and Continuing Education (64.08%), while lower female participation was observed in secondary ZABEC 2 (41.07%), indicating gender variations by programme and level.

Table 10.5: Enrolment in NFE Programmes in Primary and Secondary Schools by Sex and NFE Level, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2025

NFE Level	Primary Enrolment			%F	Secondary Enrolment			%F
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
Part Time and Continuing Education	1 343	2 396	3 739	64.08	8 141	10 258	18 399	55.75
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	6 751	11 744	18 495	63.5	3 910	3 370	7 280	46.29
ZABEC 1	1 056	1 713	2 769	61.86	116	125	241	51.87
ZABEC 2	623	829	1 452	57.09	66	46	112	41.07
ZABEC 3	682	972	1 654	58.77	50	72	122	59.02
Grand Total	10 455	17 654	28 109	62.81	12 283	13 871	26 154	53.04

10.3 Schools Offering NFE Programmes

In 2025, a total of 2,418 schools in Zimbabwe were offering Non-Formal Education (NFE) programmes. These comprised 1,211 primary schools (50.1%) and 1,207 secondary schools (49.9%), indicating an almost equal distribution of NFE provision across the two levels. The near parity suggests that NFE programmes are well integrated within both primary and secondary education systems, supporting access to alternative learning pathways across different stages of schooling.

Table 10.6: Primary and Secondary Schools Offering NFE programmes, Number, Zimbabwe 2025

	Primary	Secondary	Grand Total
Total	1211	1207	2418

Part-Time and Continuing Education was the most widely offered NFE programme, followed by Skills Development, while ZABEC programmes were offered in fewer institutions.

Table 10.7: Primary and Secondary Schools Offering NFE programmes, Number, Zimbabwe 2025

NFE Level	Primary	Secondary	Grand Total
Part Time and Continuing Education	254	1040	1294
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	868	235	1103
ZABEC 1	262	29	291
ZABEC 2	155	9	164
ZABEC 3	150	15	165

10.4 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that Non-Formal Education (NFE) remains a critical alternative learning pathway in Zimbabwe, reaching a total of 54,263 learners in 2025, with a pronounced female participation advantage (58.10%). Enrolment was almost evenly split between primary level (28,109 learners; 51.8%) and secondary level (26,154 learners; 48.2%), demonstrating the relevance of NFE across different stages of schooling. Provincially, Manicaland dominated NFE participation with 12,521 learners (23.07%), followed by Masvingo (10.91%), and Harare (10.78%) while Midlands recorded the lowest share (4.37%), highlighting notable regional disparities in access and uptake.

Programme-wise, Skills Development (25,775 learners; 47.50%) and Part-Time and Continuing Education (22,138 learners; 40.80%) together accounted for 88.30% of total NFE enrolment, underscoring their central role in providing flexible and livelihood-oriented learning opportunities. ZABEC programmes collectively enrolled 6,350 learners (11.70%), with ZABEC 1 contributing the largest share. Female participation exceeded male enrolment across almost all programmes and levels, particularly at primary school level (62.81% female), although lower female representation was observed in specific secondary programmes such as ZABEC 2 (41.07%). The availability of NFE was supported by 2,418 schools nationwide, almost evenly distributed between primary (1,211) and secondary (1,207) schools, indicating strong institutional integration. Overall, the findings confirm that NFE plays a vital role in promoting educational access, gender inclusion, and skills development, while also pointing to the need for targeted interventions to address provincial and programme-level disparities.

Main Indicators Used in this Report

1. Completion Rate

Definition - Persons in the relevant age group who have completed the last grade of the given level of education.

Purpose -The completion rate indicates how many persons in a given age group have completed primary, lower secondary, or upper secondary education. It indicates how many children and adolescents enter school on time and progress through the education system without excessive delays.

Calculation method: The number of persons in the relevant age group who have completed the last grade of the given level of education expressed as a percentage of the total population of the same age group.

2. Dropout Rate

Definition: Proportion of pupils from a cohort enrolled in a given grade at a given school year who are no longer enrolled in the following school year.

Purpose: To measure the phenomenon of pupils from a cohort leaving school without completion, and its effect on the internal efficiency of educational systems. In addition, it is one of the key indicators for analysing and projecting pupils' flow from one grade to the other within the educational cycle.

Calculation method: Dropout rate by grade is calculated by subtracting the sum of promotion rate and repetition rate from 100 in the given school year. For cumulative dropout rate in primary education, it is calculated by subtracting the survival rate from 100 at a given grade (see survival rate)

3. Gender Parity Index (GPI)

Definition: Ratio of female to male values of a given indicator. A GPI of 1 indicates parity between sexes. In the case of pupils, we calculate GPI in terms of GER. Therefore GPI = GER Female / GER Male. The Gender Parity Index can be applied to raw data or relative data such as NER, GER, Pupil to Teacher Ratios.

Purpose: The Gender Parity Index represents the relative difference between a group of females and males. A GPI equal to 1 indicates parity between females and males. In general, a value less than 1 indicates disparity in favour of males/men and a value greater than 1 indicates disparity in favour of females/women. However, the interpretation should be the other way round for indicators that should ideally approach 0 percent (for example, repetition, dropout, illiteracy rates). In these cases, a GPI of less than 1 indicates a disparity in favour of females/women and a value greater than 1 indicates a disparity in favour of males/men.

According to the Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency, 2015, Women and Men Profile, 2012 National Population Census, page 11-, parity indices such as the GPI are considered to reflect parity within + or – 0.03 percentage points from 1 percent.

Calculation method: Divide the number or percentage of females by the number or percentage of males

4. Gross Enrolment Rate (GER)

Definition: Enrolment at a given level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population in the theoretical school-age group corresponding to this level of education. For the tertiary level, the population used is the five-year age group following on from secondary school theoretical leaving age.

Purpose: Gross Enrolment Rate is widely used to show the general level of participation in a given level of education. It indicates the capacity of the education system to enroll pupils of a particular age-group. It is used as a substitute indicator to net enrolment rate (NER) when data on enrolment by single years of age are not available. Furthermore, it can also be a complementary indicator to NER by indicating the extent of over-aged and under-aged enrolment.

Calculation method: Divide the number of pupils (or pupils) enrolled in a given level of education regardless of age by the population of the age-group which officially corresponds to the given level of education and multiply the result by 100.

5. Net Enrolment Rate (NER)

Definition: Enrolment of the theoretical school-age group for a given level of education, expressed as a percentage of the total population in that age-group.

Purpose: To show the extent of participation in a given level of education of children and youths belonging to the official age-group corresponding to the given level of education.

Calculation method: Divide the number of pupils enrolled who are of the official age-group for a given level of education by the population for the same age-group and multiply the result by 100.

6. School Teachers having Required Academic Qualifications

Definition: The number of schoolteachers with at least the minimum academic qualifications required by MoPSE for teaching at a certain level of the education system (ECD, Primary or Secondary), expressed as a percentage of the total number of primary school teachers. This indicator measures the proportion of primary school teachers who meet the basic requirement in terms of academic qualifications as specified by the authorities. It indicates the general quality of human capital involved in teaching in education. Teachers are persons who, in their professional capacity, guide and direct pupils' learning experiences

in gaining the knowledge, attitudes and skills that are stipulated in a defined curriculum programme.

Unit of Measurement: Teachers with at least minimum academic qualifications as a percentage of the total number of primary school teachers

Discussion: A high percentage of teachers having the required academic qualifications denotes the availability of academically qualified teachers and the general quality of the teaching force. Teachers' academic qualifications, together with pre-service or in-service teacher training, correlate strongly and consistently with pupils' scholastic performance, which of course is also affected by other factors, such as the experience and status of teachers, teaching methods, teaching materials and the quality of classroom conditions.

7. Pupil to Teacher Ratio (PTR)

Definition: Average number of pupils per teacher at a specific level of education in a given school-year. Teachers are defined as persons whose professional activity involves the transmission of knowledge, attitudes and skills that are stipulated in a formal curriculum programme to pupils enrolled in a formal educational institution.

Calculation Method: Divide the total number of pupils enrolled at the specified level of education by the number of teachers at the same level.

8. Repetition Rate by Grade or Form

Definition: Proportion of pupils enrolled in a given grade in a given school year who study in the same grade the following school year. This indicator measures the phenomenon of pupils repeating a grade, and is one of the measures of the internal efficiency of the primary school education cycle

Unit of Measurement: Percentage of repeaters in a grade to enrolment in that grade the previous year

Discussion: Repetition rates should ideally approach zero per cent. High repetition rates reveal problems in the internal efficiency of the education system and possibly reflect a poor level of instruction. When compared across grades, the patterns can indicate specific grades with relatively higher repetition rates, hence requiring more in-depth study of the causes and possible remedies. In some cases, low repetition rates merely reflect policies or practices of automatic promotion and may reflect poorly on the quality of a system. Repetition rate plays an important role in measuring the efficiency of the education system. The maximum repetition rate and the number of grade repetitions allowed may in some cases be determined by the education authorities in order to cope with limited capacity at certain grade levels and to increase the flow of pupils through the education cycle.

9. School Teachers who are Certified (Trained) to Teach According to National Standards

Definition: The number of schoolteachers who are certified to have received the minimum stipulated teacher-training (pre-service or in-service) required for teaching in education, expressed as a percentage of the total number of school teachers at a particular level of the education system. This indicator measures the proportion of primary school teachers trained in pedagogical skills, according to national standards, to effectively teach and use the available instructional materials. It also reveals a state's commitment to invest in the development of its human capital involved in teaching activities. Teachers are persons who, in their professional capacity, guide and direct pupils' learning experiences in gaining the knowledge, attitudes and skills that are stipulated in a defined curriculum programme.

Unit of Measurement: Percentage to total primary school teachers

Discussion: A high percentage of teachers certified to teach in primary schools implies that the majority of the teaching force is trained and has the necessary pedagogical skills to teach and use the available instructional materials in an effective manner. This indicator does not take into account differences in teachers' experiences and status, teaching methods, teaching materials and variations in classroom conditions -- all being factors that also affect the quality of teaching/learning. The details of the training imparted, duration, training agency etc. may also be analysed along with the indicator.

10. Pupil Enrolment

Pupil enrolment is defined as the total number of pupils (total, female) enrolled in a particular level of education (primary, secondary, tertiary). For secondary education, pupil enrolment includes enrolment in general programmes as well as enrolment in technical and vocational programs. (Data Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics)

11. Survival Rate to End an Education Cycle

Definition: Percentage of a cohort of pupils who enrolled in the first grade of a level of education in a given school-year and who eventually reach the final year (or target year). Its purpose is to assess the "holding power" and internal efficiency of an education system. The survival rate to final year indicates the proportion of a pupil cohort that completes each year and survives to final year. Conversely, it indicates the magnitude of dropout before final year.

Unit of Measurement: Percentage of a pupil cohort actually reaching grade V

Discussion: Survival rate to final year of education is of particular interest because the completion of at least primary schooling is commonly considered a pre-requisite for a sustainable level of literacy. The distinction between survival rate with and without repetition is necessary to determine the extent of wastage due to dropout and repetition. Given that this indicator is usually estimated using cohort analysis models that are based on a number of assumptions, care should be taken in making comparisons across states.

12. Transition Rate

Definition: The number of pupils (or pupils) admitted to the first grade of a higher level of education in a given year, expressed as a percentage of the number of pupils (or pupils) enrolled in the final grade of the lower level of education in the previous year.

Purpose: To convey information on the degree of access or transition from one cycle or level of education to a higher one. Viewed from the lower cycle or level of education, it is considered as an output indicator, viewed from the higher educational cycle or level, it constitutes an indicator of access. It can also help in assessing the relative selectivity of an education system, which can be due to pedagogical or financial requirements.

Calculation method: Divide the number of new entrants in the first grade of the specified higher cycle or level of education by the number of pupils who were enrolled in the final grade of the preceding cycle or level of education in the previous school year, and multiply by 100