



# **WATER INEQUALITY IN HOPLEY**

Empower The Community





Welcome to Hopley, a place where the most essential of resources are scarce.  
In this scorched suburb, a cool glass of clean water is hard to come by.



If you're lucky enough to have money, you could pay one of the water vendors.  
But who knows if you can trust him?



He could be collecting his water from the polluted Mukuvisi river by night.



Spreading cholera, typhoid or bilharzia by day.



It could be safer to get the water yourself, walking long distances...



...across hazardous roads. And, if you make it, the dangers don't stop there.



With women and girls forced to pay more than money for water.





There's a good reason water scarcity problems cause a rise in sexual and gender based violence, teen pregnancies and school dropouts. Which leaves few options for those who can't afford it.



The truly desperate end up in Granville cemetery, collecting water from near the graves.



80% of the water points in Hopley were found to be polluted and dangerous to drink from.  
This shocked the community.



But the people of Hopley have been fighting for equal water access ever since the settlement first started in 2005.



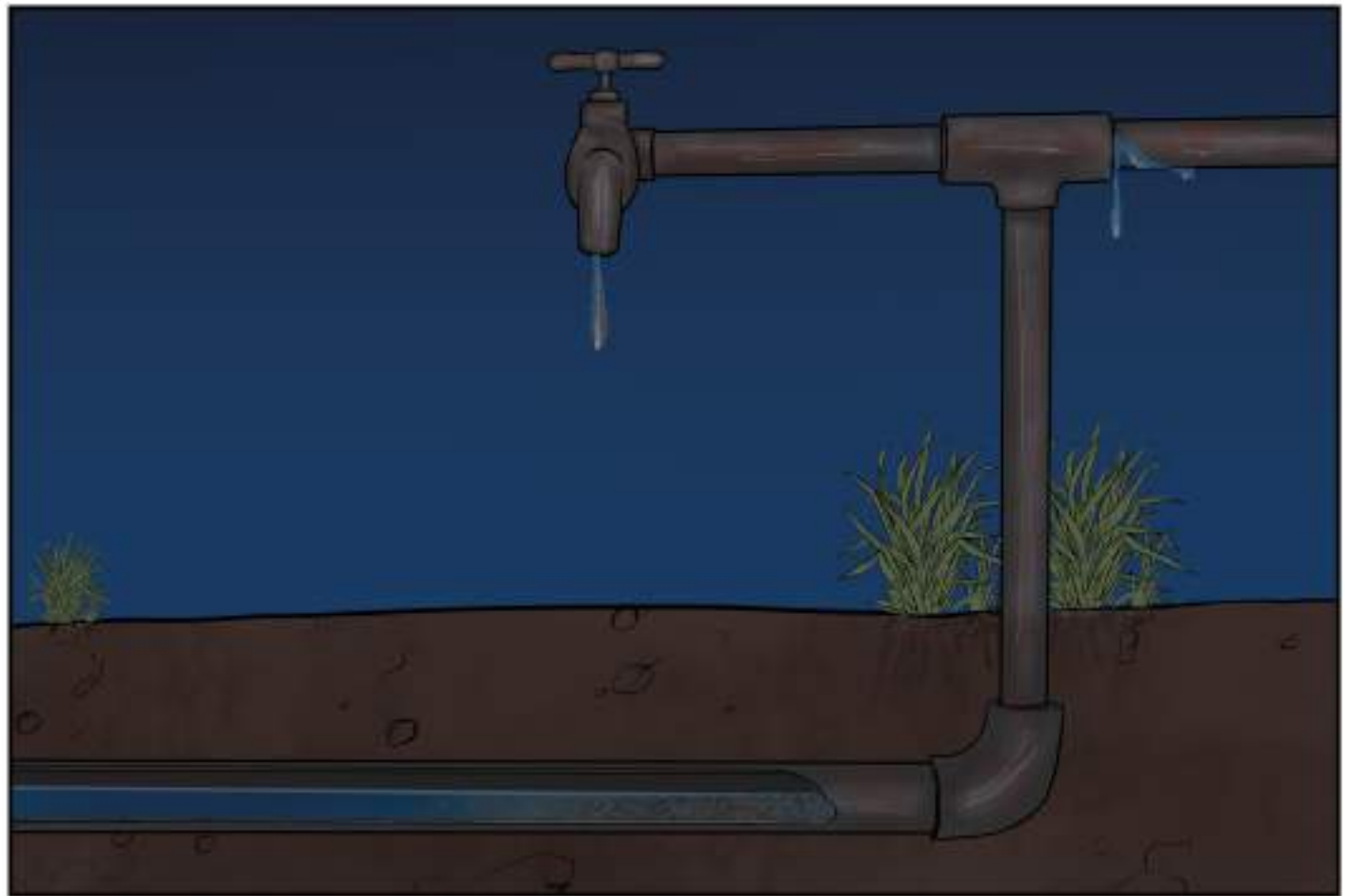
Initially, the city of Harare connected five communal water taps.



But the residents were frustrated- the water was only available at limited times and to limited parts of the community.



Then the community managed to get financial support from UNICEF, and for 5 happy years water ran through the taps in Hopley.



But after that, UNICEF did not continue its assistance and the water system fell into disarray. In 2015, the community rallied together.





They were getting sick without clean, safe water, and they worked together to fund another 7 bulk communal water taps to increase the water supply.



But the water infrastructure had eroded with broken valves that needed repairing.  
The community decided on a monthly maintenance payment of USD 5.



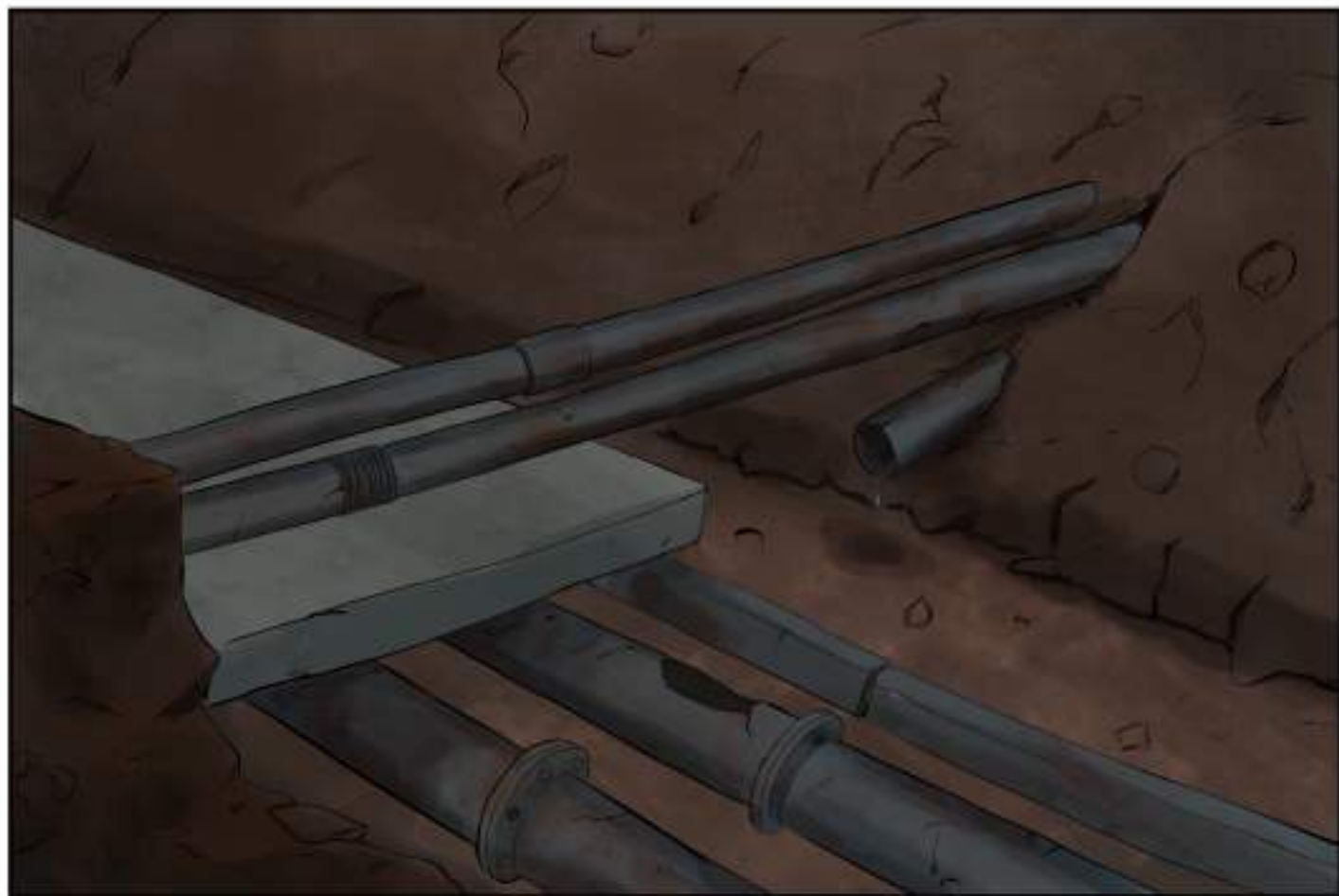
But some members couldn't afford this.

Others felt it wasn't their responsibility to maintain infrastructure.

Then there were those who began to take matters into their own hands,



Making illegal connections to the communal water taps.  
The billing system began to fall apart.



And the communal water taps were disconnected by the City of Harare in 2016.  
Then the council employers in the community (who had regular paychecks) decided to take the lead.



Making contributions towards the water system that would mean that at last every house would get its own water meter and tap.

They started with USD \$62 per household and increased to USD \$87.



Others were not willing to make contributions, fearing their homes were not tenure secure and they may be evicted.



This community led project managed to cover 1000 households.





Then, in 2018, City of Harare urged the residents to submit their plans to Vitens Evides International (VEI) who might be able to support them. After a long wait, the community were thrilled to hear their application was succesful.



The VEI agreed to assist the community members and managed to cover 2020 households with water reticulation.



But the community members had to pay meter connection fees to start accessing the water. And once again some of the community couldn't afford the charge. The water project is not yet complete so the challenges are ongoing.



If the government supported Hopley with water grants, providing materials and mobilising communities for a labour based approach,



And helping them to install intermediate water sources, The residents will progress towards their dream of bringing water to each and every household.



And, finally, the community will be empowered to put an end to the dark days of water scarcity.

## **CREDITS**

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***The Inclusive Urban Infrastructure research project explores how urban infrastructure is provided in the Global South and how it can benefit the most marginalised.***

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