

## **Rubbish piles up in Harare**

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### **Ivory Park residents complain of poor city services**

By Tariro Washinyira

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“It is by the grace of God that we didn’t experience cholera outbreak during the rainy season,” says Ivory Park resident. Photo: Tariro Washinyira

Residents of Ivory Park in Harare, Zimbabwe, have been without refuse collection for years despite paying their rates every month.

Ivory Park, located about 30 minutes’ drive from the city centre, is a relatively new township, popular with the younger generation. A resident says that since she moved to the neighbourhood with her family in 2009, the city council has never provided bins or collected refuse. “The children born here don’t even know what a madhodha bin [garbage truck] looks like,” she said.

She showed GroundUp her rates receipt for US\$100 a month.

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As there is no city collection, people burn their garbage. “We also suffer from air pollution every time the garbage is burnt ... We have more than three dumping places and they are always near houses and wells where we get drinking water,” she complained.

“It is by the grace of God that we didn’t experience a cholera outbreak during the rainy season,” she says. Zimbabwe has had several cholera outbreaks. In 2008–2009, over 4,000 people died. In January this year the country was on high alert after 200 cases of [typhoid were reported](#) [2] in Harare and cholera broke out in Chegutu.

Many residents in the area are poor and have informal employment, selling airtime, sweets, chips, vegetables and eggs at market stalls. Some are black market money changers, buying and selling US dollars and South African rands and Ecocash (a popular mobile payment system).

“It’s not just refuse collection. All the roads have potholes and have become gravel. Government funds national government projects with money that should be used to develop Ivory Park,” said a resident.

“Here in Zimbabwe you can’t complain about services ... They are not providing anything besides water reticulation. Tap water is now only used to flush toilets. It’s filthy and smells badly,” he said.

He said many councillors are aligned to the main opposition party, the MDC, and he accused the ZANU-PF national government of sabotaging service delivery. “Harare has collapsed in the hands of the current government, from the sunshine city to nothing, but they [ZANU-PF] still can’t let go,” he said.

The problem is not limited to Ivory Park. In other townships and some places in the city centre there are also piles of stinking garbage.

Spokesperson for the Harare City Council Michael Chideme acknowledged receipt of GroundUp’s questions on Wednesday but had not replied at the time of publication.

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