

# Draft Report: Patterns of Employment Arrangements and Working Conditions for Domestic Work in Zambia



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## Background and Methodology

The main aim of this study was to provide more in depth information on the terms and conditions of work and employment for domestic workers in Zambia including salaries, working hours, rest days and leave, health care and insurance and benefits, contractual arrangements with employers and interpersonal relationships of domestic workers. In order to do this, qualitative information was collected with a number of key informants including domestic workers and their employers in both urban and rural Zambia, as well as maid centres, which increasingly are involved in the recruitment of domestic workers.

## In-depth Interviews

A total of 180 in-depth interviews with employers and workers were conducted as shown in the table below.

Lusaka DWs	Urban	Rural	Total
Live in	20	8	
Live out	25	12	
Total	45	22	65
Lusaka EDWs			
Live in	15	8	
Live out	22	12	
Total	37	20	57
Kitwe DWs			
Live in	8	4	
Live out	12	8	
Total	20	12	32
Kitwe EDWs			
Live in	5	3	
Live out	11	7	
Total	16	10	26
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>180</b>

NB: DW = Domestic worker, E = Employer

## Focus Group Discussions

A total of 16 FGDs with different entry points were conducted using the target sampling framework described below:

### Lusaka (Total 12)

Live-in domestic workers (rural and urban settings) = 2

Live out domestic workers (rural and urban settings) = 2

Employers of live-in domestic workers (rural and urban settings) = 2

Employers of live-out domestic workers (rural and urban settings) = 2

Domestic workers (members of maid centres ) = 2

Employers of domestic workers (AB Socio economic class – high income employers) = 2

### **Kitwe (Total 5)**

Live-in domestic workers (urban setting) = 1

Live out domestic workers (urban setting) = 1

Domestic Workers (members of maid centres) = 1

Employers of live-in domestic workers (urban setting) = 1

Employers of live-out domestic workers (urban setting) = 1

### **Demographics**

Most employers were aged between 35 – 49 and households had an average of 4 to 5 members. Results showed that household incomes varied considerably between areas as well as between male and female employers interviewed. Incomes were highest for male employers and those living in Lusaka, whilst those in rural Kitwe and Chongwe earned the least. Most employers had employed their domestic worker for between 6 months and 3 years. Very few reported that they had the same worker for more than 3 years.

Most domestic workers were between the age of 25 and 34. However, those who lived in with their employer tended to be female, younger and single, whilst those that lived out were more likely to be older and married. Of the domestic workers interviewed, 90% of them had attended school at some time whilst 10% had not. In terms of Educational Level, the majority of respondents had completed some secondary school. Many domestic workers reported that their main motivation for working was to earn money so that they could go back to school and get further qualifications.

### **Recruitment and Placement Practices**

The majority of Domestic Workers were reportedly recruited through referrals (75%) compared to 17% who found work through self seeking and 8% who were recruited through maid centres. Referrals were the preferred form of recruitment for employers, given that employers were more likely to know who they were hiring and get a recommendation. Self seeking was a much less common form of recruitment. Usually, these workers had done piecework for the households before being hired on a full time basis. Very few domestic workers were hired through maid centres despite the fact that the maid centres interviewed indicated there was high demand from employers, and they had a high number of domestic workers on their books. Employers often reported that they felt domestic workers recruited through maid centres were too expensive.

When it came to criteria for recruitment, religion and tribe on the whole were not considered by employers. However, there were a small number of employers who reported that they would only recruit a domestic worker of the same religion or tribe as themselves.

### **Contractual Arrangements**

Overall, just 60% of domestic workers reported that they had some form of contract with their employer. Of those that did, the majority were oral contracts (92%) compared to just 8% who had written contracts. Those that had written contracts tended to have been recruited through a maid centre, or through self seeking recruitment. In these instances, such forms of recruitment gave domestic workers a better ability to be able to negotiate the terms of their contract.

Despite this, the majority of employers and domestic workers interviewed indicated that they would prefer to have a written contract if at all possible, as a basis for sorting out any disputes if they arose.

Preferences for live-in or live-out domestic work depended on the situation for both the employer and the domestic worker. Employers who stated they would prefer to have a live in domestic worker often had young children or babies in the household, who would require help around the clock if necessary. Domestic workers who were married and had family commitments generally preferred to live out, whereas those saving up for school and who had less family commitments were more likely to want to live with their employer to save on costs.

### **Remuneration Arrangements**

In total, 85% of those interviewed were paid whilst 15% were unpaid. Those that were unpaid tended to be relatives who had been brought to work for the family. On the whole, domestic workers were paid much more in urban compared to rural areas, as in rural areas items such as food were considered as payment and often replaced cash.

Perceptions of in kind payment such as food and clothing differed significantly between domestic workers and their employers. Whereas employers often saw this as part of payment, particularly for live in workers, domestic workers saw this as kindness on the part of the employer.

Most of those interviewed had heard of the minimum wage, however both domestic workers and employers indicated that it was not always implemented. Most domestic workers did not feel that their salary was enough to meet their needs, and many thought it would need to be doubled or tripled in order to be sufficient for the work they undertake.

Late payment of salaries was common, particularly when employers had not been paid themselves or had their own commitments to fulfil. Salary deductions were not as common, but were still reported, for things like medical expenditure as well as missing days through sick leave.

### **Scope of Work**

The scope of work for domestic workers varied considerably from household to household, and was very different for male and female domestic workers as well as those in rural compared to urban areas. Those in rural areas were not just expected to do household chores, but also help with the households money generating activities as well as helping to build and maintain houses. In urban areas this was not the case, and domestic work was just seeing as being within the realm of the household.

Generally, the role of female domestic workers was seen to be inside the house doing activities such as washing, cleaning, cooking and baby sitting. Male domestic workers generally worked outside the house, doing gardening, guard duties and maintenance work.

The assigning of tasks was usually done by the female employer within the household, however other household members could also assign tasks. In a few instances, even children within the household were able to give tasks to the domestic worker, which at times caused arguments between the domestic worker and their employers.

## **Working Time**

The time domestic workers worked differed considerably between employers, and particularly between live in and live out workers. Live in workers reported that they were often tired, with little time to rest, and were often called upon to work at any time of the day or night. In only a few instances did domestic workers report that they negotiated compensation with their employers before working extra days or hours. It appeared that it was very much down to the discretion of the employer as to whether domestic workers would be allowed sick leave, or given public holidays off.

## **Living Conditions**

On the whole, live-in domestic workers had much less freedom than their counterparts who lived out. Female domestic workers were more likely to have their whereabouts monitored by their employer, and some employers even reported that they try to monitor the sexual activity of their domestic worker. The reason behind this was reported to be to protect her from HIV and to prevent her from getting pregnant.

In terms of privacy, a number of live in domestic workers had their own quarters inside the property, so enjoyed high levels of privacy. This was particularly true of male domestic workers who lived with their employers. For others, they would not have any privacy as they would have to share their room, and even sometimes their bed with another member of the household, and the employer would be able to enter their room at any time.

## **Healthcare and Insurance**

None of the domestic workers interviewed had any health insurance. However, in some cases employers would contribute towards medical expenses for the domestic worker. This was particularly true of domestic workers who lived within the household and those who had a strong relationship with their employer.

In terms of maternity benefits, many domestic workers felt that if they were to become pregnant, they would be fired by their employers. This was mirrored by the responses of the employers, who said they would only be likely to keep a domestic worker on if they had worked for the household for a long time, or if they were very good at their job.

## **Domestic Worker and Employer Organisations**

Surprisingly, more employers had heard of organisations for domestic workers than domestic workers themselves, who had seen Domestic Workers Unions advertised on television or had had people visit the household to recruit for them. Many domestic workers indicated that they would be interested in joining such an organisation, however, although most employers indicated they would be happy for their domestic worker to do so, many employers had concerns that this would raise problems with the salary paid to their domestic worker.

Very few employers had heard of organisations for employers, and most indicated that they would not have the time to be actively involved in such an organisation, although they would if they were less busy.

## **Disputes, Grievance Mechanisms and Relationships**

Common disputes between domestic workers and their employers included non or late completion of tasks, late payment, poor time keeping and lateness from the domestic worker as well as stealing of money and other items. Most respondents indicated that such disagreements could be solved within the home. However, it was felt that in serious cases, the police should be contacted, or other mediators such as the church or Ministry of Labour.

Sexual abuse was reported to be relatively common, particularly of female domestic workers, although sexual harassment of males was also reported. Physical abuse was felt to be less common, though it was felt that verbal abuse of domestic workers was a common occurrence.



## 1.0 INTRODUCTORY SECTION

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Worldwide, an important army of domestic workers perform tasks in private households in exchange for remuneration and/or lodging or board. Despite the fact that the number of domestic workers is growing, they remain hidden and invisible to society. It is difficult to estimate the number of domestic workers in the world due to the lack of available and accurate data along with the high prevalence of unregulated or clandestine work relationships. Even though few countries have labour force statistics for domestic work, research has shown that:

- Most domestic workers are housekeepers and women<sup>1</sup>
- More and more immigrants, national and international, are looking for employment in the sector;
- Domestic work draws a large number of child workers.

Domestic workers are also known to suffer from poor working conditions. Case studies have shown that some of the major problems encountered by domestic workers are: long hours of work, heavy workloads, lack of privacy, low salaries, inadequate accommodation and food (live in workers), job insecurity, absence of benefits normally granted to other categories of workers as well as exposure to violence and abuse.<sup>1</sup>

According to the 2010 Zambian Labour Survey, the capital city Lusaka has an estimated 50,000 domestic workers the majority of whom are illiterate and poor.<sup>2</sup> These workers are found to be underpaid, fired without notice and rarely receive days off or paid leave. While the Zambian labour law stipulates that domestic workers are entitled to rights such as a pension, gratuity and social protection, in practice these rights are rarely respected and enforced.<sup>3</sup>

### 1.2 BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

The Domestic Workers Convention 2011 (No. 189) defined domestic work as “work performed within an employment relationship in or for a household or households”. The convention also defines a domestic worker as any person engaged in domestic work within an employment relationship and not a person who performs domestic work only occasionally or sporadically, not on an occupational basis.<sup>4</sup> In the Zambian context, this can include house workers, gardeners as well as child minders and carers. In fact, according to the Minimum Wages and Conditions of Employment (Domestic Workers) order, 2010, a domestic worker includes: (A) a person who takes care of a child, an aged person, a sick person, a frail person or a person with disability, within a household; and (B) a gardener.

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<sup>1</sup>Ramirez-Machado, J.M (2003) Domestic work: Conditions of work and employment: A legal perspective. Conditions of Work and Employment Program. ILO, Geneva.

<sup>2</sup> Mweetwa (2010) Domestic Workers Union in Zambia struggles to gain members. Global News.

<sup>3</sup> Global Network (2011) Decent Work Deficits – Zambia.

<sup>4</sup> ILO (2013) Domestic Workers Across the World: Global and regional statistics and the extent of legal protection. P.16

The findings of this study are intended to help provide more in depth information on the terms and conditions of work and employment for domestic workers including salaries, working hours, rest days and leave, health care and insurance and benefits, contractual arrangements with employers and interpersonal relations of domestic workers. In order to do this, qualitative information was collected with a number of key informants including domestic workers and their employers in both urban and rural Zambia, as well as maid centres, which increasingly are involved in the recruitment of domestic workers in Zambia.

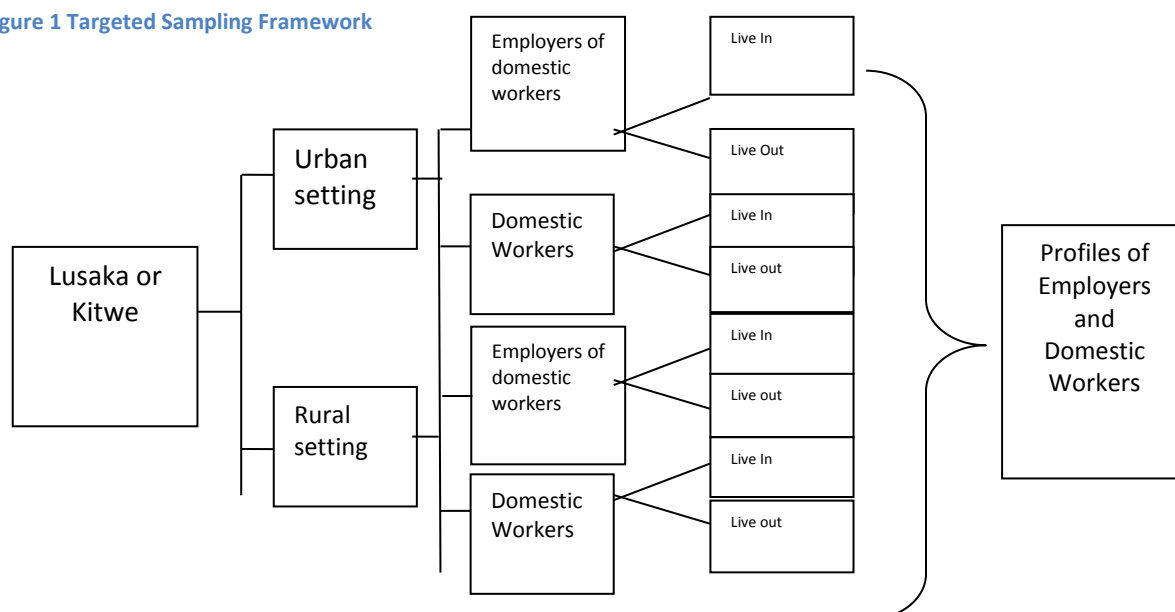
Information was collected using both in depth interviews, as well as focus group discussions, utilising the sample outlined below.

## In-depth Interviews

The sample framework for the in-depth interviews is presented below (Figure 1). On this basis, the research has adopted a quota sample, presented also below, for a total of 180 interviews.

Measures were taken to ensure: basic characteristics of domestic workers were reflected (sex, young and very young), of employers (rich, poor/low-income) were reflected; diversity in entry points so that interview respondents were not concentrated in a few entry points/networks; and a limit on the number of recommended respondents per entry point.

**Figure 1 Targeted Sampling Framework**



A total of 180 in-depth interviews with employers and workers will be conducted as shown in **Table 1**.

**Table 1 Sampling Strategy**

Lusaka DWs	Urban	Rural	Total
Live in	20	8	
Live out	25	12	
Total	45	22	65

<b>Lusaka EDWs</b>			
Live in	15	8	
Live out	22	12	
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Kitwe DWs</b>			
Live in	8	4	
Live out	12	8	
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Kitwe EDWs</b>			
Live in	5	3	
Live out	11	7	
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>180</b>

NB: DW = Domestic worker, E = Employer

The research used a purposive sampling method to identify and select respondents for the Interviews. In order to reduce bias, the research selected respondents for the In-depth Interviews based on the following parameters: (i) sampled enumeration areas covered by the national household survey on domestic work and identified as having presence of domestic workers and employers; (ii) identified households in sampled areas employing live-in domestic workers and live-out domestic workers, and identified households which have members who work as domestic workers in other households. The first set of entry points in this study are geographical areas rather than the individuals. The research team will selected as many participants as those who meet the agreed quota/criteria.

In depth interviews will were done with the following key informants, as displayed in **table 2** below:

**Table 2 Key Informant Interviews**

<b>Key Informant</b>	<b>Number of Interviews</b>
Maid Centres	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>

### **Focus Group Discussions**

The domestic workers who took part in the focus group discussions were recruited separately from those who took part in the in depth interviews. The Research team ensured that: (i) an FGD consisted of participants from households that did not reside in the same area because individuals who know each other may not be ready to share their practices and views; (ii) domestic workers were not invited through employer contacts as this could give doubts about the confidentiality of their inputs to the FGD; and (iii) the Researchers explained personally to invitees and participants the objectives of the research and assure them of the confidentiality of their identities. Care was taken to ensure that the worker participants in the FGDs must have at least 6 months of work experience as a DW.

A total of 16 FGDs with different entry points were conducted using the target sampling framework described below:

**Lusaka (Total 12)**

Live-in domestic workers (rural and urban settings) = 2

Live out domestic workers (rural and urban settings) = 2

Employers of live-in domestic workers (rural and urban settings) = 2

Employers of live-out domestic workers (rural and urban settings) = 2

Domestic workers (members of maid centres) = 2

Employers of domestic workers (AB Socio economic class – high income employers) = 2

**Kitwe (Total 5)**

Live-in domestic workers (urban setting) = 1

Live out domestic workers (urban setting) = 1

Domestic Workers (members of maid centres) = 1

Employers of live-in domestic workers (urban setting) = 1

Employers of live-out domestic workers (urban setting) = 1

## 2.0 FINDINGS

### 2.1 PROFILE AND DEMOGRAPHICS OF DOMESTIC WORKERS AND THEIR EMPLOYERS

The first section will outline the demographic characteristics of the domestic workers interviewed for the study, along with the employers of domestic workers. This will focus on demographic factors such as age and educational attainment as well as a working profile, including the length of employment, salary of employers and household composition.

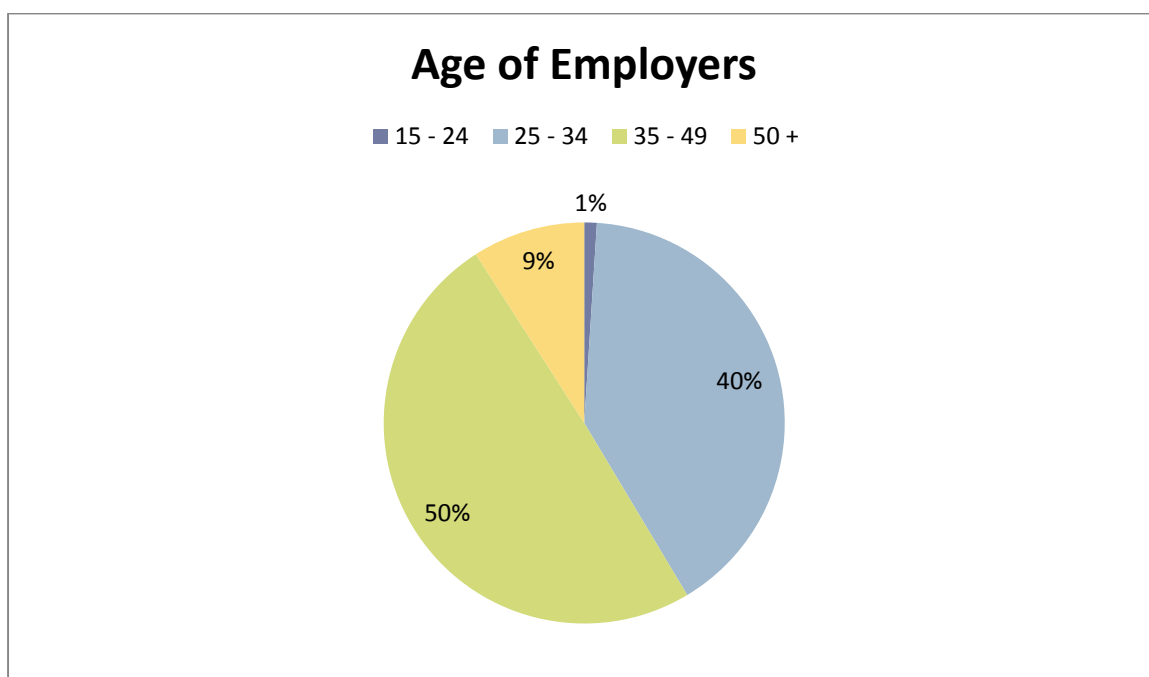
#### 2.1.1 PROFILE OF EMPLOYERS

The following section will outline the demographics and profile of the employers interviewed for the study.

##### Age of Employers

As is visible in **Figure 2** below, the majority of employers were ages between 35 – 39 (50%) or between 25 – 34 (40%). Very few of those interviewed were under the age of 25.

**Figure 2 Age of Employers**



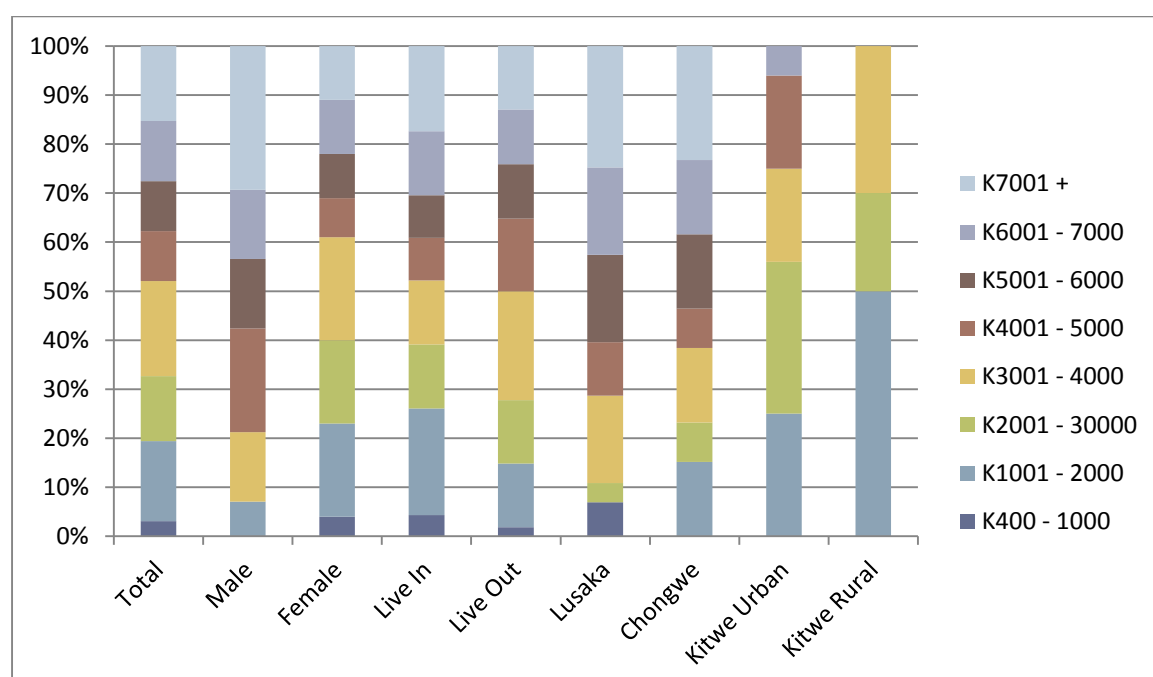
##### Household Composition

Results showed that most households either had four (24%) or five (27%) members. Only 15% of employers interviewed had more than six people living in their household.

## Employer Household Income

The household income of the employers interviewed was an important factor, given the impact it was likely to have on the remuneration of domestic workers working within that household. Results showed that household incomes varied considerably between areas as well as between male and female employers interviewed. In Kitwe rural, no employers had an income above K4000 a month. In Lusaka on the other hand, employers earned much more, where 25% of those interviewed had an income of over K7001 a month. Male employers who were interviewed also reported higher income levels on average than female employers who were interviewed with 29% of males reported their household income was over K7001 per month, compared to 11% of female employers.

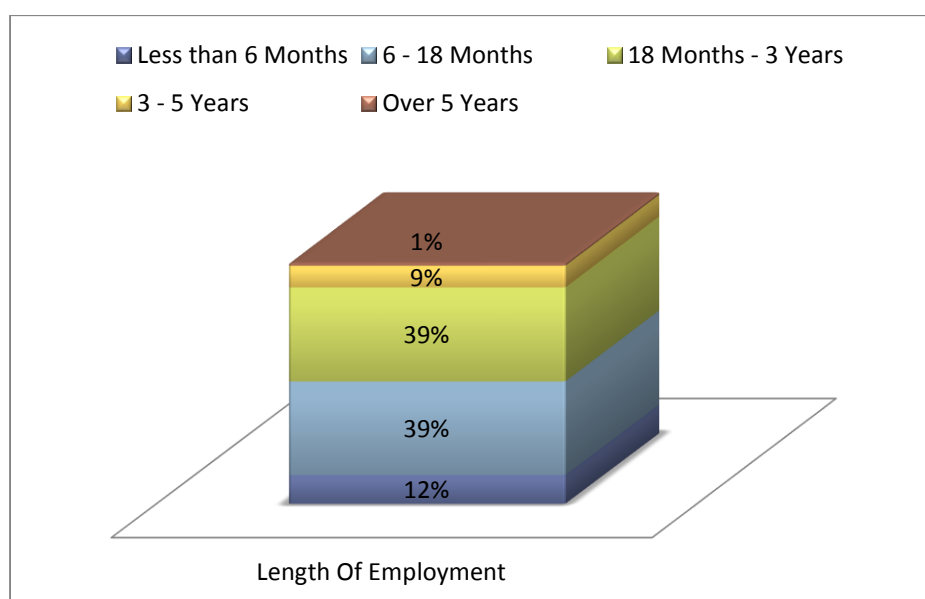
**Figure 3 Employer Household Income**



## Length of Employment

In terms of the length of employment, the majority of employers reported that they had employed their domestic worker between 6 and 18 months (39%) or between 19 months and 3 years (39%). Only 1% of employers had the same domestic worker for more than 5 years.

**Figure 4 Length of Employment of Domestic Workers**



### **Motivation for hiring a Domestic Worker**

Employers were asked both in focus group discussions and in-depth interviews what their main motivations were for hiring a domestic worker, and whether it was common for people to employ domestic workers within their area.

The most common responses to this question was that members of the household are too busy, so they have little time to complete domestic chores. It was also noted that in many cases whether or not a household had a domestic worker was based on income, and whether the household could afford to employ a domestic worker. There was therefore a variation between different areas when it came to perceptions of whether people can hire domestic workers, as is mentioned by this employer within a focus group:

*“it depends on the area because you cannot expect every household in a compound to have a domestic worker as compared to areas such as PHI where almost every household has a domestic worker.”*

### **Male Employer of Live out Worker, Lusaka**

Employers noted that in households in high income areas, almost 100 percent of households are likely to have domestic workers, however, in compounds and low income areas, it was predicted that less than 20 percent of households are likely to have a domestic worker.

It was also noted within focus groups that demand for domestic workers was growing, as more women are entering the work place. It was reported that, increasingly, women are going into work and having full time jobs, and as a result there is increasing need for child care within the home. This has increased demand for domestic workers who can provide child care duties, which in the Zambian context are primarily seen to be female domestic workers who are more likely to work within the home, whereas male domestic workers are more likely to have tasks focused outside the home, such as gardening.

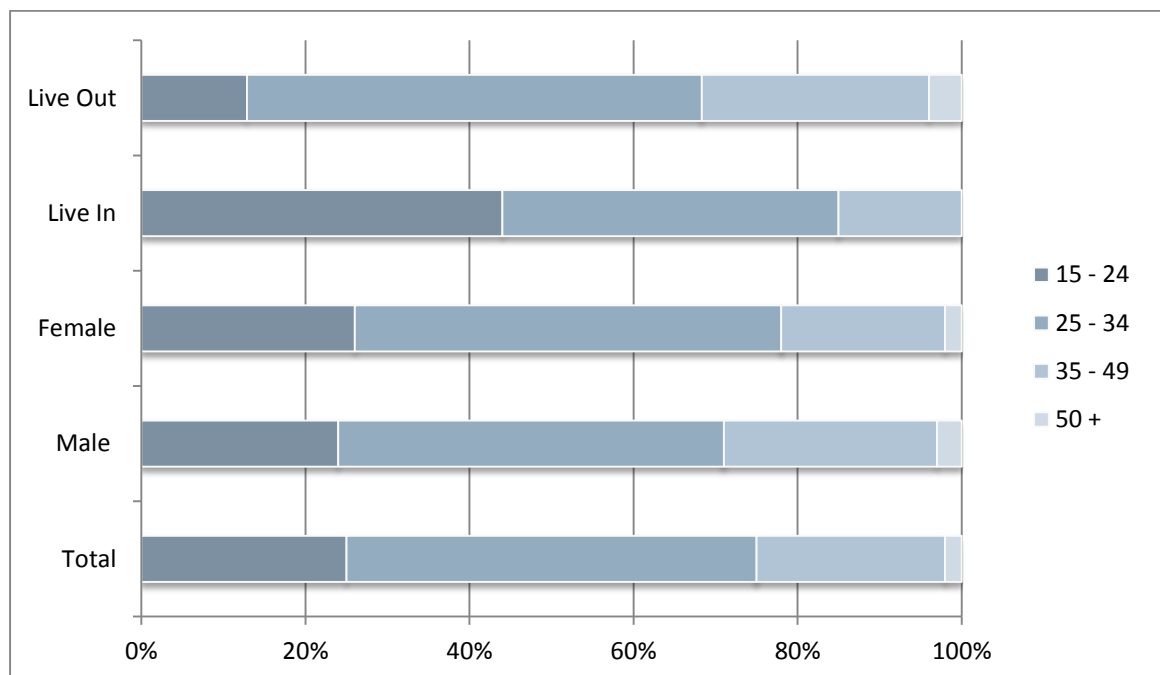
## 2.1.2 PROFILE OF DOMESTIC WORKERS

This section will outline the demographics and profile characteristics of the domestic workers interviewed for the study.

### Age of Domestic Workers

Overall, most of the domestic workers interviewed were between the ages of 25 and 34, though there was a difference in the ages of live in and live out as well as male and female domestic workers. Live in domestic workers tended to be younger, with 44% being between the ages of 15 and 24. One of the reasons for this was that in many cases unpaid domestic workers who lived inside the household of their employers tended to be younger, and in many cases were related to the employer in some way. Additionally, female domestic workers were on the whole, younger than their male counterparts.

Figure 5 Age of Domestic Workers

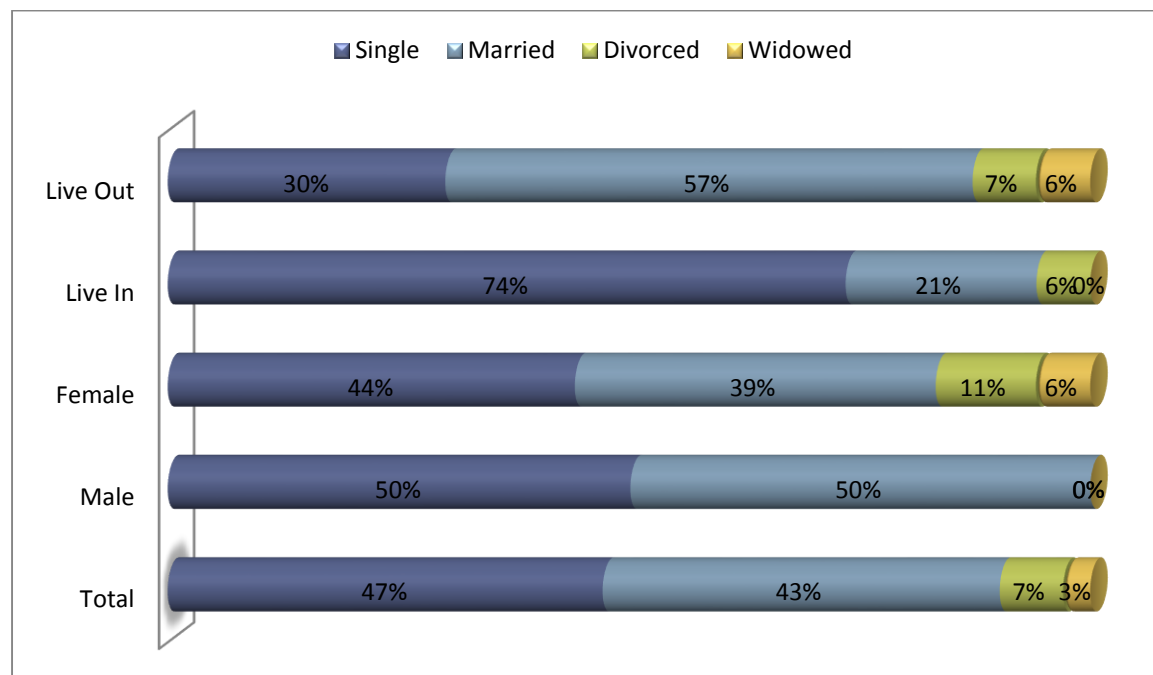


### Marital Status of domestic workers.

In terms of the marital status of domestic workers, overall, the majority (47%) were single whilst 43% were married. There was a marked difference between the marital status of domestic workers who lived out and those who lived in however. Only 30% of live out domestic workers were single compared to 74% of live in, which suggests that marital status has a big impact on the decision of a domestic worker of whether to live in than live out, with those who are married much more likely to live outside their employers home.



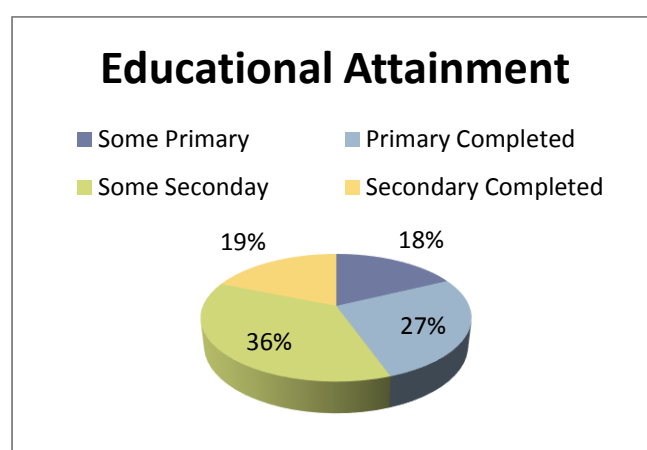
**Figure 6 Marital Status of Domestic Workers**



### **Educational Attainment**

Of the domestic workers interviewed, 90% of them had attended school at some time whilst 10% had not. In terms of Educational Level, the majority of respondents had completed some secondary school. This tallies with our findings in the qualitative survey that found that many domestic workers had dropped out of Secondary school, and many were looking to go back, using their employment as a domestic worker to help them to raise funds.

**Figure 7 Educational Attainment**



### **Motivation for Becoming a Domestic Worker**

One of the key questions asked of Domestic workers was their motivation for finding a job in the domestic work sector. Overwhelmingly, the majority of domestic workers reported that they needed a job in order to support themselves and their families. However, it was also

commonplace for domestic workers to be in work whilst raising money to continue their education. This was particularly common amongst younger, female domestic workers, and particularly those that live with their employer. One example of this is a 23 year old female domestic worker from Lusaka who reported that: *“The reason why I started working was to raise funds for my education so that I become educated. I want to start grade 9 and my employer has agreed that I start next year.”*

Many of the domestic workers who reported that one of the key aims was to get educated wanted to do so in order to get a better job. Another female domestic worker in Lusaka who was looking to complete her grade 12 education said that:

*“I want to do this job to raise money so I can finish school. It’s not that I enjoy the work, it is not well paid. Even if I can get another job working in a shop, you can get more money from that so I can do that. I want better employment when I have finished school”.*

## 2.2 UNPAID DOMESTIC WORKERS

Of all of the domestic workers interviewed, 15% reported that they were unpaid. Many of these domestic workers came to work for their employers through family arrangements, either going to work for friends and relatives. For instance, in one case a 20 year old female live in domestic worker was found work by her mother, but is not paid on a monthly basis. Her arrangement is that after working for three years, her employer will help her pay for school, as she describes: *“my boss I should work for three years then after that I will be given some money for the three years that I will work here so I am supposed to work for three years.”*

In other cases, relatives were taken from rural areas to help their relatives in town with domestic work, and were not paid. Within focus group discussions, there was some disagreement amongst employers as to whether or not relatives who work as domestic workers should be paid. Some employers felt that they should not: *“Because he is a relative and he is not supposed to be paid but just provided with his day to day needs.”* Whereas other employers felt that domestic workers in this situation should be given some kind of remuneration:

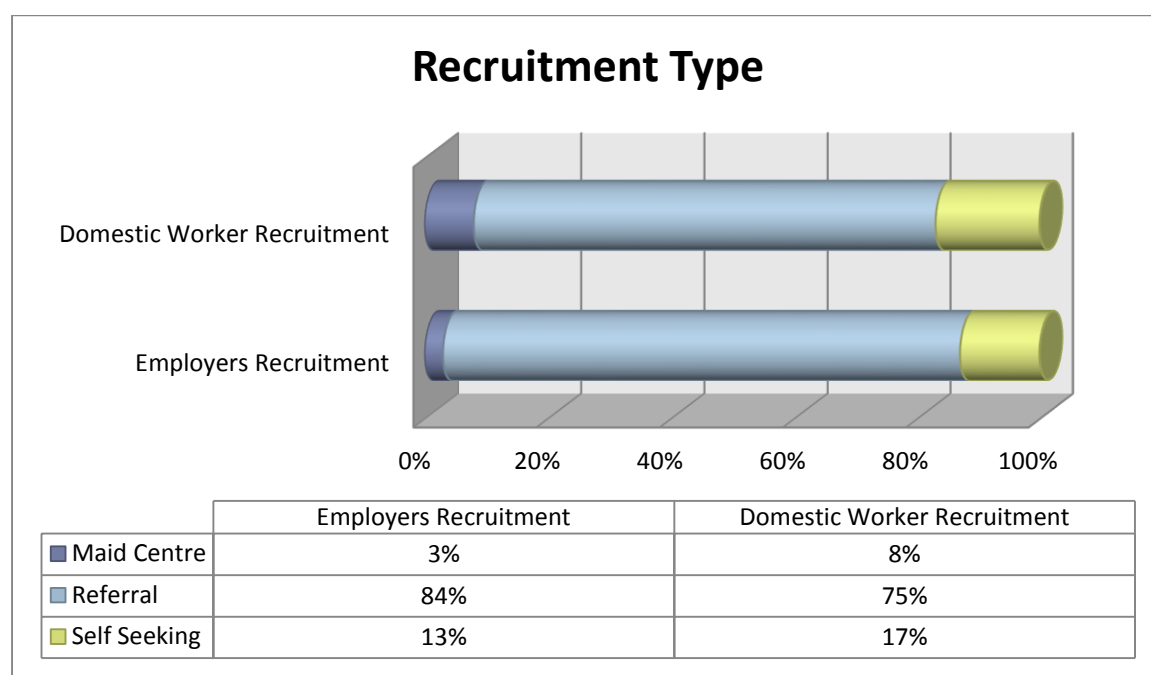
*“Some who are kind can provide him with the daily requirements as well as give him some extra money to get what he desires. They should also be divisions of tasks as in each person should have a role to play towards the welfare of the house hold rather than just leaving it to one person.”*

## 2.3 RECRUITMENT AND PLACEMENT PRACTICES

### 2.3.1 TYPE OF RECRUITMENT

When it came to recruitment arrangements, the vast majority of employers and domestic workers indicated that they had been recruited through a referral, usually from a friend or family member of the employer.

**Figure 8 Type of Recruitment**



As is visible in **Figure 8**, 84% of employers used a referral to recruit their domestic worker, whilst 75% of domestic workers were recruited using this method. The second most utilised method was domestic workers seeking work themselves, whilst only 3% of employers recruited through a maid centre.

Both employers and domestic workers were asked about recruitment arrangements. As is reflected within the data above, the vast majority were recruited through a referral, as is mentioned by this female live out worker from Lusaka:

*“My employer told her young sister if she would ask someone from her work place, if anyone knew someone who wanted to work as a domestic worker. When the one we stay with in John leng heard that they wanted someone to work as domestic worker, she informed me. That is how I found the job.”*

**Female Live out Worker, Lusaka**

Similar to this example, employers tended to find domestic workers through referrals from friends, relatives and work colleagues as well as through other domestic workers working for

themselves or their friends. The main reason stated for this is that often it enables you to get a recommendation beforehand, so employers feel more able to get an idea of their previous work experience and ability to do the work.

Another common occurrence was domestic workers gaining employment through self-seeking, by asking around their communities to see if any households require any extra help. One example of this is described by a male domestic worker in Kitwe:

*“Well, how I found this job was just through going round the community asking for peace jobs until I found this one and I was told that I will be cleaning the surroundings.”*

#### **Male Domestic Worker, Kitwe**

This form of recruitment was common for both male and female domestic workers, who often offered to do one off jobs for certain households before getting hired full time. The nature of this work was different between male and female workers however, as male workers were more likely to ask to do work outside, including gardening and landscaping. Women on the other hand were most likely to ask for part time jobs washing clothes, and occasionally other jobs such as cleaning.

Maid centres were not found to be a common form of recruitment within the study, as most employers reported that they favoured referrals as they were more likely to know more about the domestic worker before they were employed. Additionally, some employers reported that they did not like recruiting through maid centres, as they tended to be expensive, and they did not always trust remuneration arrangements whereby maid centres take some of the domestic workers salary. However, employers did report that there could be some benefits of hiring through maid centres, given that domestic workers will be given specialised training:

*“These maid centers can be good as they will show these people in these categories when you go there. If it is babysitting they will train them strictly to do babysitting, if it is housekeep they will train them strictly to housekeep and if it is general maid they will train them to do all these jobs. And if you employ a maid in babysitting it will be strictly babysitting and when you employ a maid to housekeeping should do that.”*

#### **Live in Employer, Chongwe**

Additionally, despite the fact that it would found that few employers interviewed for the survey recruited domestic workers through maid centres, most of the maid centres interviewed for the survey indicated that they did have a lot of employers who came to recruit from them, so they had no shortage of clients. One representative from Auntie Violet’s maid centre in Lusaka said that *“everyone is looking for a worker. This is so because most mothers are busy working. They mostly look for live-in DW because they usually knock off late in the evening so they need someone to remain with the children in the house.”* As such, maid centres had no shortage of work. Another reason for this was given by an employer in a focus group who said that turnover levels for domestic workers was very high, and as such, it was often necessary to keep trying to find replacements. Nevertheless, both employers and domestic workers had a mixed perception of maid centres, which are outlined in **table 3** below.

**Table 3 Perceptions of Maid Centres as a Method of Recruitment**

<b>Perceptions of Domestic Workers</b>	
<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you are recruited from a maid centre you are more likely to have a written contract which stipulates your conditions</li> <li>• Maid centres usually have a contract where domestic workers are paid at least minimum wage</li> <li>• You can get training before you start your job</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Even though you might be paid more, the maid centre will take a large proportion of your salary</li> <li>• A number of cases have been reported of non or late payment by maid centres</li> </ul>
<b>Perceptions of Employers</b>	
<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If one domestic worker leaves, it is easy for another to be sent to cover them</li> <li>• Some maid centres offer specialised training in cooking, baby sitting and general housework</li> <li>• Easy to find a domestic worker who is available to work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domestic workers from maid centres are expensive</li> <li>• Lack of trust when paying through maid centre</li> <li>• Part of domestic workers salary should be paid through the maid centre</li> <li>• Training received by domestic workers is sometimes poor</li> </ul>

### 2.3.2 RECRUITMENT CRITERIA

Employers were also questioned about the recruitment criteria, and whether factors such as tribe and religion had an impact on the domestic worker they would employ. In the majority of cases, employers said that factors such as tribe and religion would not have an impact on whether or not they would employ a domestic worker. However, in other cases, several employers did indicate that they had certain preferences. For instance, one female employer from Lusaka stated that:

*“Well, I am a Lunda and if they are a different tribe they will speak maybe Tonga or Lozi to my children and I do not want my children to be spoiled.so I would rather Bemba or Lunda.”*

**Female Employer, Lusaka**

This suggests that some employers may have preferences based on tribe, and the language that a domestic worker is able to speak, which will affect the likelihood of a domestic worker being employed. This was particularly the case with live in workers, perhaps because they are likely to have more interaction with the family and live within the household.

More frequently, it was also found that religion may factor in the employment decisions of employers . Another female employer of live in domestic worker in Lusaka stated that:

*“They have to strictly Christian and they have to pass through deliverance, so I take them to the pastor. I do not want a Muslim nor a Hindu in my house.”*

#### **Female Employer of a Live in Worker, Lusaka**

Whilst another female employer of a live out worker within Lusaka reported that:

*“Religion may be an issue because I would not love to have an Seventh Day Adventist because she will have to work half day and it is inconveniencing since they go to church on Saturday.”*

#### **Female Employer of a Live Out Worker, Lusaka**

Again, this is indicative of the fact that employers may discriminate against domestic workers of a certain religion when looking for someone to work in their household. Religion was reported to be an issue with the same frequency by employers of both live in workers and live out workers. However, the reasons given above show that there are differences between employers in the motivations for wanting a domestic worker of a particular religion. In some instances, employers only wanted workers within their household to be of the same religion as themselves, as in the first example. In others, employers did not want workers of certain religions or denominations because of the perception that they may not be able to work at certain times.

Additionally, it was mentioned by several male domestic workers that they felt it was easier for a female to get a job than a man, due to the work which is necessary. As is described by a male domestic worker in a focus group from Lusaka:

*“Mainly the people who work much as domestic workers are women because each and every household need someone to cook for them but they are very few houses who have big yard with lawn and swimming pool where they can need a worker but houses where they need someone to cook for them are many so you will find that there are so many women working in this job.”*

#### **Male Live Out Domestic Worker, Lusaka**

It was due to a perceived higher demand for tasks such as child care and cooking that it was felt that female workers were more likely to be employed. However, focus group discussions with employers also revealed that they would not feel able to trust a man to do certain tasks such as child care, given that some employers are afraid of their children being defiled.

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### **2.3.3. TRAINING**

Employers were asked within both the focus groups and in-depth interviews how important they perceived training to be for domestic workers before they began to work. Responses for this were mixed, with some employers valuing training more than others.

On the whole, the majority of employers reported that they did not feel training was important, as they felt it was something which could be done from within the home. For instance, one

female employer from Lusaka reported that she felt training would be something which would need to be done by an individual employer, as everyone has individual preferences, and for tasks such as cooking you would be able to train a domestic worker to cook the food your family likes.

In terms of the providers of training, maid centres were mentioned as the only place where domestic workers can be trained. The general perception was that domestic workers from maid centres were expensive due to the training they received, which put a number of employers off from getting domestic workers from these centres. There were also mixed views on the training given by these centres, where it was felt that some provide better training than others. On the positive side, some employers felt that domestic workers did receive good specialised training, which could be useful if you were employing a domestic worker for a particular task such as looking after children. On the negative side, some employers did not feel that the training provided by maid centres was of good quality, and that further training would need to be provided when the domestic worker came to work within the home.

## 2.3 CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENTS

The majority of employers (60%) did have a contract with their domestic workers. However, of those that did only 8% of employers had a written contract. The other 92% of employers had an oral contract with their domestic worker.

However, as illustrated in **table 4**, the way in which a domestic worker was recruited had an impact on the type of contract they are likely to have, with 71% of those recruited through a maid centre having a written contract, compared to 7% of those who were self-seeking and just 1.5% who found employment through a referral.

**Table 4 Recruitment Type Versus Contract Type**

Type of Contract	Recruitment Type		
	Maid Centre	Referral	Self-Seeking
Oral	29%	98.5%	93%
Written	71%	1.5%	7%

Therefore, overall, very few of the domestic workers in the study had a written contract with their employer. Of those that did, the majority were under a maid centre. Within written contracts, there were several clauses which were commonly specified, these included:

- ✓ **Remuneration for the Domestic Worker** - Including monthly salary as well as any transport allowances if applicable
- ✓ **Scope of Work** – It was common for contracts with maid centres to specify the tasks which were expected to be done by the domestic worker. This included child care, cooking, cleaning, washing as well as gardening.
- ✓ **Hours Worked** – The hours a domestic worker would be expected to work was specified in some of the contracts, as well as the days to be worked during the week. Common working hours for live out workers were 07.00 – 17.00 from Monday to Friday. Many domestic workers also worked a half or full day on a Saturday.

- ✓ **Days off and Holiday Allowance** – In some of the contracts, days off including Sundays and public holidays were specified, along with annual leave in some cases.
- ✓ **Termination and Dismissal** – In some contracts the terms around termination and dismissal of a domestic worker were specified. This included clauses such as one months notice should an employer want to terminate the contract of a domestic worker. Contracts also specify a notice period which should be given by the domestic worker to an employer should they wish to leave employment, which was usually one month.

Issues which were commonly not included in written contracts included health and other benefits to domestic workers, NAPSA payments, form of payment, as well as living conditions and maternity leave.

In terms of oral contracts, domestic workers and employers reported that similar issues were discussed, including remuneration, working hours as well as scope of work. However, this did not mean that domestic workers would only do tasks as set out in their oral and written contracts. As is explored further in **section..** domestic workers often had to do work assigned to them by employers which were not discussed in the original agreement, but often had to adapt to different situations within the household.

### **Perceptions of Written Versus Oral Contracts**

Both employers and domestic workers were asked whether they would prefer to have a written or oral contract. The vast majority of domestic workers specified that they would prefer a written contract, some of the key responses why this was the case are outlined below:

- ✓ *“Yes, a written contract is very good because in cases where you argue with your employees you will have a written document to prove your claim”.*
- ✓ *“Yes it is necessary because the employer won’t keep their word but if there is paper work, it will stand as evidence”.*
- ✓ *“A written agreement is better because will start giving tasks that weren’t meant for you in the first place”.*

Most employers also indicated that they would rather have a written contract with their domestic worker:

- ✓ *“They are important because they serve as proof when you have a dispute with the domestic worker. And after they work there are certain amounts of money that should be given to the domestic worker. So written documents are imperative for record keeping as well because if you have not signed the domestic worker may lie about some things.”*
- ✓ *“Yes written contracts are necessary and we need to adhere to them because when you sign a contract you know that you have to follow those rules and regulations and also pay money to NAPSA for those people that you have employed.”*
- ✓ *“We are human beings sometimes you maybe spotted doing a different thing. In as much as we will have a document to safeguard the payments. If am to opt to do otherwise I will always be reminded that sir you are doing something that’s not in the contract and I can only say am sorry please forgive me.”*



Therefore, overall the key reasons why both employers and domestic workers would prefer to have a written contract is so that if there any disagreements, it can be used as a basis for sorting out the dispute. It was felt by both employers and domestic workers that more sensitization needs to be done on the need for written contracts for domestic workers, and that the government and organisations for domestic workers should do more to promote this.

Nevertheless, it was also reported that having a written contract would not always be possible, especially in cases where the domestic worker was there as part of a family arrangement, or in rural areas and in cases where a domestic worker had poor literacy skills. Therefore, although a written contract was seen as the best case scenario, in practice it would not always be possible.

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### 2.3.2 TERMINATION AND DISMISSAL

When it came to termination and dismissal, overwhelmingly, domestic workers reported that they felt they could have their employment terminated by an employer at any time. Domestic workers reported that they felt turn-over was very high, as commented by one male domestic worker in Kitwe:

*“It seems like everyone wants a domestic worker, but then when you look at it employers will just keep you for some months and then let you go if they cannot afford or have a problem with your work. Most times you just end up working for some months and then finding new work.”*

Domestic workers also reported that at times they could be fired for unfair reasons or for no reason at all. One example of this is given below, where one male domestic worker reported that he was fired because his religious beliefs were not in line with his employers:

*“When I worked for just 1 month 2 weeks my boss asked to say what type of fasting do you do and I told them that every Thursday we have prayer and fasting and Wednesday is the day for prayers. No they told me I don’t a person who is prayerful. So I lost my job.”*

Other reported reasons for dismissal included an employer’s inability to pay their domestic workers, suspicions of the domestic worker being too close to the wife or husband within the household (it was commonly mentioned by employers that some employers feared their domestic worker would have an affair with their spouse), a domestic worker not completing work to an employer’s satisfaction as well as a domestic worker becoming pregnant.

It was felt by both domestic workers and employers that one of the best ways to tackle unfair dismissal was to promote written contracts, outlining the rights of both domestic workers and their employers.

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### 2.3.3 PERCEPTIONS OF LIVE IN VERSUS LIVE OUT EMPLOYMENT

One of the key issues we investigated during the study was perceptions of live-in employment versus live out employment from both domestic workers and their employers. The key responses are outlined below in **table 5**.

**Table 5 Perceptions of Live in versus Live Out employment**

<b>Perceptions of Live in Employment</b>	
<b>Domestic Workers</b>	<b>Employers</b>
<b>Positive Aspects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Better for those that live far from their employers house</li> <li>✓ Better for those that have few family commitments</li> <li>✓ Prevents you from being late for work</li> <li>✓ You don't have to think of accommodation and food costs</li> </ul>	<b>Positive Aspects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Better for those with young children and babies who need to be looked after</li> <li>✓ Can help with chores after hours</li> </ul>
<b>Negative Aspects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ You will have little time to rest</li> <li>✓ You can be called upon to work at any time</li> <li>✓ You will have less time off</li> <li>✓ An employer may monitor your movements</li> </ul>	<b>Negative Aspects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ On the negative side you won't have as much privacy</li> <li>✓ More expensive to keep a live in worker</li> </ul>
<b>Perceptions of Live Out Employment</b>	
<b>Domestic Workers</b>	<b>Employers</b>
<b>Positive Aspects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Better as you have more time to spend with your family</li> <li>✓ You will have set working hours so you will have more time to rest</li> <li>✓ Your tasks are more likely to be set, whereas live-in workers can be asked to do anything</li> </ul>	<b>Positive Aspects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Cheaper to keep a live out domestic worker</li> <li>✓ You have more privacy with a live out worker</li> <li>✓ Better for those with smaller houses</li> </ul>
<b>Negative Aspects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Food and accommodation costs will not be covered</li> <li>✓ It may be difficult to get to your employers house if they live far away</li> </ul>	<b>Negative Aspects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Live Out workers are more likely to steal as they can take things from your house</li> <li>✓ Live out workers will not be able to help after hours</li> <li>✓ Transport allowance may have to be provided</li> </ul>

The preference for live-in or live-out domestic work depended on the situation for both the employer and the domestic worker. Employers who stated they would prefer to have a live in domestic worker often had young children or babies in the household, who would require help around the clock if necessary. Employers who felt they had a higher work load also were more likely to state they would prefer a live in domestic worker. However, employers who did not feel they needed much help around the house, and who did not have young children generally tended to prefer a live out worker.

For domestic workers, those who were married with families generally stated they would prefer to live out, as is stated by this female, married domestic worker from Lusaka: *"I am in*

*support of living out because as they have said you work extra hours when you stay at your employer's residence and some of us need time to spend with our families."* However, there were also other domestic workers who did not want to live in because of the perceived increase in work load, as is described by the female, live out domestic worker below:

*"Living out is better for me because when you sleep there you find that if the boss has a baby, you will be the changing the baby's diapers even at awkward hours meaning that you will have less resting hours as you start very early in the morning and work throughout the day and in the evenings, some households don't have gardeners and so you would find that you will even be opening the gate for them."*

Those who said they would prefer to live in were more likely to be single, with less family commitments. Many domestic workers who said they would prefer to live in, in order to save money, as it described below:

*"It is because where we come from is very far, maybe you don't have transport money then you report at work late so it is better just to stay there at the servants quarter and you cut on transport costs and you won't be getting late at work."*

#### **Female, Live in Domestic Worker, Chongwe**

Other domestic workers reported that they would prefer to live in for convenience, especially if they live far from the employers house. One male live-in domestic worker from Lusaka explained why he prefers to live at his employers house:

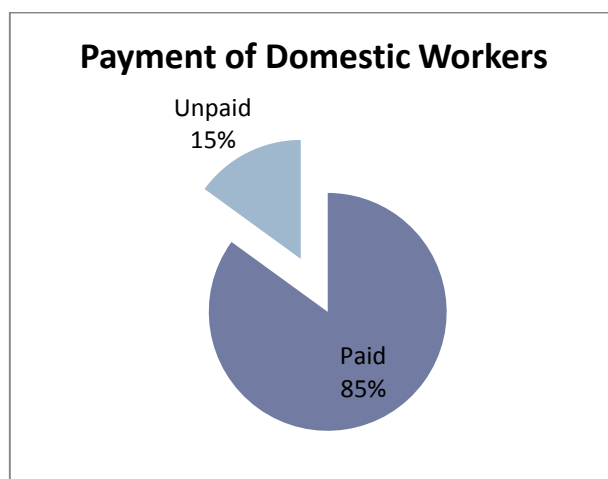
*"There is situation like maybe sometimes you were drinking yesterday and today you don't have transport money then you don't go for work and if that continues then they can even fire you and you lose your job so when you are staying at your workplace it is better because even if you start at 05:00hrs AM you can manage."*

#### **Male, Live In Domestic Worker, Lusaka**

## 2.4 REMUNERATION PRACTICES

Overall, as is illustrated in **Figure 9**, 85% of domestic workers were paid, whilst 15% were unpaid.

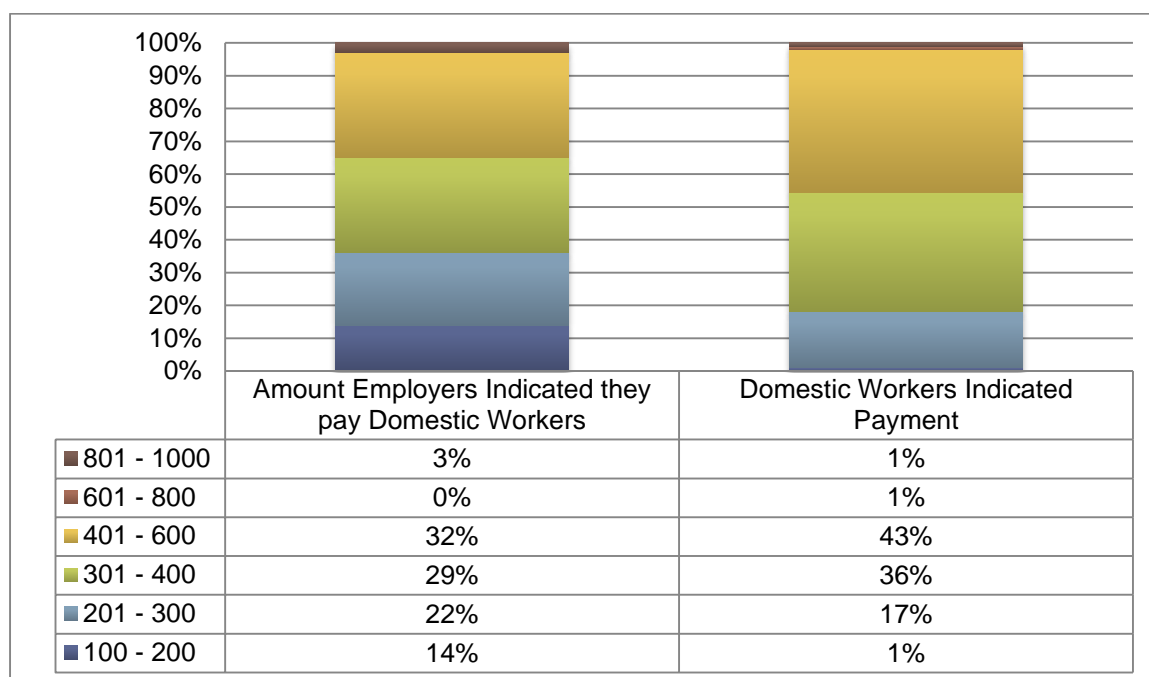
**Figure 9 Remuneration Practices**



Most of those who were unpaid were in Lusaka, where only 74% of domestic workers indicated that they received payment, compared to over 90% of those in other districts. One of the key reasons for this could have been that in Lusaka, it was more common for domestic workers to be brought from rural areas and from within extended family as part of a family arrangement.

Overall, as can be seen in **figure 10**, the majority of domestic workers were paid between K401 – 600. This is in line with the minimum wage for domestic workers. No domestic workers were paid more than K1000 per month, and very few were paid over K600. There were generally few differences between the amounts domestic workers indicated they were paid, and the amount employers indicated they paid domestic workers. However, surprisingly, a large number of employers admitted to paying their domestic workers under the minimum wage with 14% of employers revealing they pay between K100 – 200 and 22% revealing they pay between K 201 – 300.

**Figure 10 Remuneration for Domestic Workers**



The pay received by domestic workers varied considerably between different areas, with those in rural areas getting less than their urban counterparts. For instance, in FGDs in Chongwe it was reported by domestic workers that they had never heard of someone being paid more than K400 for domestic work, and that most workers were paid between K200 – 300. In Lusaka on the other hand, domestic workers reported that usually domestic workers were commonly paid between K300 – 600 depending on the area you worked in and the salary of your employer.

### 2.5.1 PERCEPTIONS OF PAYMENT IN KIND

On the whole, the majority of employers and domestic workers reported that they received their payment in cash and not in kind. However, this was not always the case. In a number of instances, it was reported that employers did not only give cash, but also gave other items such as food and clothing as in kind payment. This was particularly common in rural areas, for instance, it was reported by one female domestic worker in rural Kitwe that:

*“You find that you may get many things such as mealie meal and vegetables which affects the kind of salary your employer will give you”*

This was also reported in focus group discussions, where it was noted that in-kind payment of food and other items was more likely to be considered a form of payment in rural areas, compared to in urban areas, where domestic workers were more likely to receive cash.

Overall, a common trend was that employers were likely to see in-kind payment of food, clothes and other items as being part of the domestic workers pay, whereas domestic workers simply saw this as an act of kindness from their employers. As explained by one female employer in Lusaka:

*“I pay the maid K500 but they I wouldn’t say just that because at times we also buy her clothes and even books for school. She eats by our place, she is one of the family”*

This contrasts with the perceptions of domestic workers, who although acknowledge the food and other items given to them by their employers, they often do not see it as part of their payment, as explained by one live in domestic worker in Lusaka:

*“My employers do give me food every day, I don’t know what the value is but I think it is just their responsibility as I am living within their house, I need to eat”.*

The status of such payments is also tied in with how the domestic worker is seen within the family. Often it was found, particularly with live in workers, that they were seen as a family member and as such, in kind payments were seen as an extension of this relationship.

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#### 2.4.2 MODE OF PAYMENT

In terms of the mode of payment, the vast majority of employers and domestic workers interviewed reported that they were paid in cash. None of the domestic workers or employers interviewed indicated that money was paid into their bank account. The only difference in modes of payment was in cases where in-kind payment was considered as part of the package, particularly in rural areas. Other cases involved employers of domestic workers paying part or all of their salary to a maid centre, particularly within the first few months of them being hired, in order to pay for the training that they received. There was one reported instance of where an employer paid their domestic worker through a maid centre, and they then did not receive any money. Following this, the employer decided to pay the domestic worker directly and not go through the maid centre.

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#### 2.4.3 PERCEPTIONS OF THE MINIMUM WAGE

Overall, knowledge of the minimum wage was high, although less employers and domestic workers knew that a transport allowance should be paid if the domestic worker lives more than 3kms away from the household.

Nevertheless, despite the knowledge that this legislation is in place, it was acknowledged by both employers and domestic workers that in many cases, the minimum wage is not given. This usually was reported to come about in situations where employers are unable to afford the minimum wage, but come to an agreement with their domestic worker that they will be paid less. The reason for this was that it was felt that given high unemployment levels, many people are willing to accept to work at less than minimum wage in order to get money to feed their families. Meanwhile, many employers simply do not earn enough to pay their domestic worker the minimum wage. Despite this, domestic workers who agree to work for under the minimum wage did not report to have better working conditions than those who got paid more, and worked similar hours and doing the same chores as those who earned more.

Domestic workers were then asked whether the amount they were paid was sufficient, given the work that they did, to meet their needs. The vast majority of those interviewed said that it was not enough, such as this male domestic worker in Lusaka:

*“I think I should be getting K1500 or even K1400 for the three yards of houses that I am working on. “*

Domestic workers also felt that, although in some cases domestic workers were not being paid the minimum wage, that the minimum wage of K470 is not enough:

*“The amount is too small looking at the transport cost that has been increased. For example, like from here to town you use about K5 and again from town to where I stay it’s about K5. So you will be using about K10 just when going home. Therefore I don’t think that amount is enough for one to use for one month.”*

As is described above, the amount was seen as particularly low by live out domestic workers who had to commute for work. These workers reported that given high rentals and transport costs, they were left with very little at the end of the month in order to meet their basic needs.

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#### 2.4.4 SALARY DEDUCTIONS AND LATE PAYMENT

In many countries, domestic workers face difficult working conditions including salary deductions by employers as well as late payment by employers. In this study, domestic workers reported that late payment was common, whereas salary deductions were less commonplace.

Around a quarter of the domestic workers interviewed reported that they had at some time or other received their salary late. The main reasons given for this were that the employer was paid late themselves, or had other bills such as school fees to pay, so the domestic worker’s salary was delayed. In most cases, delays were said to be between a few days to a week. However, in other cases domestic workers reported that they waited up to a month to receive their salary. Usually in these cases, employers explain to their workers the reason for the delay, as described by a live in female domestic worker in Chongwe: *“Sometimes they could explain to me when they had problems at home to sort out but they used to fulfil their promise and pay me when they had money.”*

However, in some instances it was reported that domestic workers feel pressure to continue working, even when they haven’t been paid for some time. One example of this was a male domestic worker in Lusaka who reported that:

*“Yes some people would want to secure their job through that [continuing to work whilst not being paid]. There’s somewhere I once worked I wasn’t being paid as often as I should and I left without being paid in frustration”*

**Male live out domestic worker, Lusaka**

In terms of deductions, the most commonly reported deduction was when a domestic worker got a salary advance which was later deducted from their pay. In one instance, a domestic worker reported that he had borrowed some clothing from his employer which he did not return, so an amount was deducted from his salary. In another, this employer recounts how as his domestic worker missed three days of work, he deducted that from her pay, given that she has given a daily rate:

*“With the fixed rate that we use I can deduct if she misses days. For example, if she gets a k200 for working in one week, then per day she gets a k35, then on that day she does not come for work then I have to deduct. Unless otherwise out of my own will I then can let things be, just be because maybe she is sick so in such a case I do not deduct”*

**Male Employer of Live out Worker, Chongwe**

## 2.5 SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work for domestic workers differed markedly between males and females as well as those in rural and urban areas. On the whole, domestic workers in urban areas had a much narrower scope of work than their rural counterparts:

*“Urban domestic worker are at a better advantage in the sense that they are also considered as humans and that they also get tired unlike in the rural areas where you do almost everything from farming to household maintenance.”*

**Female Employer, Kitwe**

It was notable that in rural areas, domestic workers were not only seen to have to be involved in household chores, but would also be asked to do other things such as agricultural activities and helping to build houses. This suggests that in rural areas there is a much wider conception of the role a domestic worker should play, where they have a role doing piecework, helping households with their income generating activities.

There was also a big difference between what roles male and female domestic workers were expected to play. Men predominantly worked outside of households doing duties such as gardening and household maintenance and guarding duties. Females on the other hand were more likely to work within the household, doing tasks such as cooking, cleaning, child care and washing clothes.

Nevertheless, particularly with female workers, it was reported that culturally there should be some jobs within the household which the wife should do for her husband rather than the domestic worker:



*“You find that the maid is the one who does everything including making the matrimonial bed washing the husband’s underwear and cooking. Eventually you find that the husband gets irritated and ends up marrying the maid. Men need special attention just like children but some women don’t know how to take care of their husbands.”*

#### **Female Employer, Lusaka**

It was therefore reported by a number of employers that a female domestic worker should not do some tasks within the household, including cooking for the husband. This was taken more seriously by some households than others. In some households, it was reported that the domestic worker was not allowed in the bedroom of husband and wife of the household. In other cases the domestic worker would do duties including cooking for all members of the household and would be allowed in the bedroom of the employer.

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#### **2.6.1 ASSIGNMENT OF TASKS**

Another key issue when it came to the scope of work for domestic workers was who was allowed to assign tasks. In some cases, just the employer was allowed to give tasks for the domestic worker to complete, whereas in others other family members could also assign tasks, even including children in some instances.

Most commonly, it was usually the employer who assigned tasks to the domestic worker. In most cases this was the female employer, as the wife was seen to be responsible for running the household, and therefore was in charge of assigning tasks for the domestic worker. However, it was reported that usually any adult from within the household could assign tasks to the domestic worker, but most of the time it was only the household head or their spouse who would assign the majority of tasks.

In other instances where the employer was not around the house much, the domestic worker themselves would take charge of the tasks they were to complete, such as a male domestic worker in Lusaka who said that no one would assign him tasks as *“most of the people are not there and so I just work on my own.”*

Domestic workers admitted feeling challenged when more than one person in the household could assign them with tasks, such as this male domestic worker from Lusaka:

*“If it was well arranged then it was going to be much easier unlike in my case where by am doing a task and another person comes and gives me another to do at the same time.”*

In four instances, the domestic workers interviewed indicated that anyone within the household was able to assign them tasks, even children, and that it had caused some friction with the employer. One female domestic worker from Kitwe reported that she had a dispute with her employer due to the fact that she did not get on well with the children within the household, who would give her too much work to do and *“speak to me as if they were speaking to a child”*. As a result, she ended up leaving her place of employment and finding new work.

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### 2.5.2 NON COMPLETION OF TASKS

The reaction of employers to the non-completion of tasks was also an issue which was explored during the study. In the majority of instances, domestic workers and their employers reported that if a worker was unable to complete the tasks for that day, it would not matter and they would complete them the next.

In other cases, it was reported that domestic workers are shouted at if they are unable to complete the assigned tasks for that day. For instance one female domestic worker in Chongwe reported that if she was unable to complete the tasks for the day her employer would shout at her: *“she gets upset and shouts at me, she just yells at me”*. Another worker in Lusaka reported that *“they get so upset and shout at me forgetting that they gave me so many tasks”*.

On the other side, employers reported that if a domestic worker was consistently unable to complete the tasks for the day, they would talk to their worker about the tasks which were expected of them, and how much time they expected them to take.

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### 2.5.3 ASSESSMENT OF WORKLOAD

In terms of workload, many domestic workers felt that they had too much to do and that their work-loads were too high. This was particularly true of live in domestic workers, those that lived out were more likely to feel their workload was manageable. In some instances, domestic workers felt they were doing work which was outside the realms of what they had been brought on to do, such as this female domestic worker within Lusaka:

*My employer just needs to increase my salary because I am now doing the things that we didn't agree on. I am now working even the job that was supposed to be done by a garden boy like watering the grass outside.*

**Female Live Out Domestic Worker, Lusaka**

Employers on the other hand, were more likely to feel that the workload for their domestic worker was manageable given the time available.

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### 2.5.4 PHYSICALLY DIFFICULT AND DANGEROUS TASKS

The majority of domestic workers reported that they generally did not have to do any physically difficult or dangerous tasks. However, there were a number of cases where workers reported that they had to do tasks that they either found physically difficult or were not comfortable with:

- ✓ *“I do not like picking up dog remains, I did not agree this with my employer, but now it is part of my job”*
- ✓ *“Digging a garbage pit and also digging in the garden. I feel sick and at times I develop body pains”*
- ✓ *“Things like washing the carpet. You need to dust off the carpet and then wash the same carpet. That causes me to have body pains”*

- ✓ *“Yes there are times when you feel so tired especially after cleaning the walls, it was physically difficult”*
- ✓ *“Like cleaning the corridor which we never agreed on with them. For me, we only agreed that I should be cleaning outside and ironing. Not the corridor that they want me to start doing”*
- ✓ *“Yes, like the things that involve the use of electricity, for example when I am doing laundry. These machines make me feel dizzy at times especially when I am in the laundry room for a long time.”*
- ✓ *“The employer got me to do construction work which was not within my contract”*

## 2.6 WORKING TIME

When it came to working time, there was a noticeable difference between live in workers and live out workers in terms of the time they were expected to work. Many live in workers felt that they had too many tasks to do and did not have enough time to rest:

*“I would have chosen to go home and be a live out maid because I get tired and there is no time to rest even at night I have to work. I am supposed to stop working at eighteen hours but sometimes when there are visitors I would work until I go to sleep but if I was a live out maid I would be resting at night.”*

This was a very common perception, where domestic workers felt that the hours worked during the day were just too long, and they did not have enough time to rest. For instance, one female live in domestic worker in Lusaka described her typical day:

*“I wake up at 04:30hrs, prepare the school going children and make sure they leave by 6:00hours. then I start washing, when I finish washing, I start sweeping after sweeping I start cooking lunch to take to their work place then come back wash dishes and then start cooking. I don't have that time to do my own things. The only time I rest is when it's time to sleep.”*

Live out domestic workers were more likely to report that they worked for less time. For live out workers, they commonly started work between 06.30 and 08.00am and finished between 16.00 and 18.00. The only key exceptions to this were for live out domestic workers whose chores included child care. In these instances, the domestic worker would have to stay looking after the children until later in the evening, when the employers had finished work. Given that male domestic workers were more likely to live out, and were less likely to deal with childcare, they were more likely to have a fixed working day where they started and finished at the same time every day.

Unlike the perceptions of the workers, employers generally felt that the domestic workers working for them did not work too long hours and had enough time to rest. Some employers felt that the length of time a domestic worker is active for should depend on how productive they are at finishing the tasks assigned to them, as described by a male employer from Lusaka:

*“Being given specific time to do the tasks is not possible. There are some who are slow and some who are fast. If she is fast, she can be finishing before the*

*time she is told to do the other tasks comes. So it is better she is given the chance to control herself in terms of what she should do and what time she should do those things. You should give her a chance to stop working by 16hrs or 17hrs."*

These differences in perceptions between domestic workers and employers suggest that employers may often be unaware of the time which their workers put into the job, as well as the fact that domestic workers may not be communicating to their employers when they feel they have too much work to do.

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### 2.7.1 COMPENSATION FOR EXTRA TIME WORKED

Responses were mixed when it came to whether or not domestic workers were given compensation for time worked outside of their stated contract. The majority of domestic workers reported that they were not compensated when they had to work extra hours or days, whilst others reported that they were given something but they did not feel it to be enough given the time they put in:

- ✓ *"They just give something for a drink or air time which is not enough considering the amount of work that I do."*
- ✓ *"No they have never mentioned compensation but they sometimes just give something for my air time according to what they say".*
- ✓ *"yes but I only get K5 when knocking off"*

In only a few instances did domestic workers report that they negotiated compensation with their employers before working extra days or hours. This was contrary to what was reported by employers, the majority of whom reported they compensated their domestic workers for extra time worked, such as this employer in Chongwe: *"Once he worked longer hours, but of course we had to make extra payment, like when we ask him to accompany us to our plot like where we're doing some building."* None of the employers interviewed reported that they did not compensate their domestic worker for any extra time worked.

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### 2.6.2 SICK LEAVE, REST DAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

#### **Sick Leave**

There was also a mixed response when it came to whether or not domestic workers were given rest days, sick leave and public holidays. In terms of sick days, some domestic workers reported that their employers would allow them to have time off:

*"When I am sick I don't report I send some people to let my employers know and they don't mind. Sometimes I can report in the morning and later go to the clinic."*

**Female Live Out Domestic Worker, Kitwe**

Not all employers were as understanding however, where around 30 domestic workers reported that their employer is not happy when they take time off due to illness and would compel them to continue working for half of the day:

*“When I tell my employers that I am sick, they just tell me to work and knock off early. So that can be accounted as I am not given sick leave because I do work but only that I work half day.”*

It is also stated within the legislation that domestic workers should be given sick leave if their child is sick. It was reported by domestic workers that this was not always adhered to, and employers would not give time off:

*“No. We are not given any sick leave because a child or relative is sick. My employers don’t even mind about such things because all they are interested in is that I work.”*

#### **Female Live Out Domestic Worker, Lusaka**

Therefore, whether or not sick leave is given for domestic workers and their children is really down to the discretion of individual employers. Three domestic workers reported that their employer would not believe them when they wanted days off and say that they were just being lazy.

Despite this, all of the employers questioned reported that they would give their workers sick leave, however for some it would depend on how critical their condition was:

*“If he’s here and he falls ill or something, if it’s very critical, we’ll, take him home or take him to the hospital or something.”*

#### **Employer of Male Live Out Domestic worker, Chongwe**

Additionally, a trend can be seen whereby employers of live in domestic workers were more likely to report that they would aid their domestic worker by taking them to the clinic or the hospital. Employers of live-out domestic workers were more likely to say that they would just give them time off and aid them if they asked for help. This could be due to the status of the domestic worker within the household, where it is more likely that a live-in domestic worker will be seen as a member of the household.

#### **Rest Days and Public Holidays**

When it came to rest days and public holidays, it again came down to the discretion of individual employers as to whether or not they would give their domestic worker time off. In some instances, domestic workers reported that they would be given rest days as well as public holidays. For instance, one male domestic worker in Chongwe reported that he worked 4 days per week, and had agreed with his employer that he would get K700 a month, as well as public holidays. Such cases were rare however, particularly with live in workers, who were more likely to work 6 days a week with either half a day or a full day off on a Sunday.

When it came to public holidays, there was a range of responses, and again it generally came down to the discretion of individual employers as to whether or not public holidays were given. In some instances, domestic workers always had to work over public holidays, such as in the case of this female, live out domestic worker from Lusaka: *“They have never given me even on holidays I come to sweep”*. Whereas, in other instances, domestic workers would only come in when their employer had specifically asked them to, such as with this male live out worker from Lusaka: *“I do but there are just sometimes when I plead with them but if there is something urgent that they want me to do, then I will work.”* In other cases domestic workers were asked to work a half day during public holidays. There appeared to be no trends in terms of live in and live out as well as male and female domestic workers when it came to whether public holidays were given. The situation really depended on the individual circumstances of the employer. For instance, one live in female from within Lusaka reported that her employer could not afford to give her time off during public holidays as her employer was a single parent, with many commitments to fulfil.

Employers on the other hand generally reported that they did give their domestic workers time off on public holidays, though some admitted that they did at times ask their worker to work a half day or full day if they had extra commitments. Two male employers reported that they did not specify to their domestic worker whether or not they should work on a public holiday and that it was their choice whether they should come in or not.

## 2.7 LIVING CONDITIONS

One of the key things the study investigated, particularly for live-in workers, were the living conditions that domestic workers were subjected to within the home. This included finding out how domestic workers live in terms of their sleeping arrangements, levels of privacy and freedom to go anywhere in the house and to go and visit friends and family.

### **Freedoms**

In terms of freedoms, the level of freedom a domestic worker was given was very much down to the individual discretion of their employers. However, a clear trend appeared whereby employers of female domestic workers were more likely to monitor the movements of their worker compared to those who employed a male domestic worker. For instance, one employer of a live-in female domestic worker describes below how she monitors where her domestic worker goes, in order to restrict her sexual activity:

*“Yes movements have to be monitored and one should never take advantage of the fact that they are a maid and do whatever they want. This is important because you are saving her life especially in this era of HIV.”*

### **Employer of Female, Live in Domestic Worker in Lusaka**

Employers in focus group discussions reported that this was common, due to the fact that employers want to restrict the sexual activity of their domestic workers so that they do not fall

pregnant. One important part of this dynamic reported by domestic workers was that in many cases, live in workers are treated like a child within the family:

*“If you do something wrong, maybe something you did not even intend to do, your employer will not be happy with you. If they have told you what to do, you have to follow those things so that they can continue treating you as their own child. If you are not doing what they want you to do, they will chase you and it is you who will lose your job.”*

**Female Live in Domestic Worker, Lusaka**

Given this dynamic, it was seen as more acceptable that an employer should be able to restrict the movements of their domestic worker, given that they are seen as a member of the family.

### **Sleeping Arrangements and Levels of Privacy**

For live-in workers, there was a range of sleeping arrangements, which impacted on the levels of privacy a domestic worker had. Some live in workers lived within their own quarters and had their own bedroom outside of the household, within the yard of the employer. In these cases, domestic workers had more privacy and it was rare for an employer to go into their sleeping quarters. Although fewer male domestic workers lived in with their employers, those that did were more likely to have a separate sleeping quarter outside of the house of their employers. The only exception to this was when certain male domestic workers worked for a single man, or all male household, when they were then more likely to live within the house.

In other cases, a domestic worker would have their own bedroom within the house, although the employer would still be allowed to enter this room, and in many cases had their belongings in the room as well. More frequently, domestic workers had to share their bedroom with other members of the household, sometimes with children. In these cases, domestic workers felt they did not have much privacy:

*“There is no privacy. Because that is not my house and so the owners of the house can walk in your room at any time they want to and say it their room as well.”*

**Female, live in domestic worker, Lusaka**

When questioned on levels of privacy for domestic workers, employers reported that the relationship with the domestic worker was an important indicator of how much privacy a domestic worker might have. If there was a strong relationship between the employer and domestic worker, and they were seen as part of the family, the employer may be more likely to go into the domestic workers room:

*“I think the point raised also depends with the personal relationship that they have with their employers. If the employer enters her room she will not take offence, but if the relationship between them is not strong they would be offended.”*

#### **FGD, Employer of a Live in Domestic Worker, Lusaka**

Additionally, it was reported within focus group discussion that at times the movements of domestic workers within the household were constrained, particularly when it came to interactions with the husband or wife within the household:

*“Some say that if my husband is sitting in the living room, you are not supposed to pass there. And if he wants some food, you are not supposed to give him or cook for him. The day you do it, you will be chased from your job. People are so different.”*

#### **FGD, Female Live in Domestic Worker, Kitwe**

Cultural considerations were reported to be an issue for domestic workers, especially when it came to a female domestic worker’s interaction with the husband within the household. In these situations, it was reported that some wives wanted to minimise interactions between the husband and the domestic worker, and that some tasks such as cooking for him, could only be done by the wife.

#### **Eating Arrangements**

In terms of eating arrangements there was also various different situations. In most cases, employers would allow the domestic worker to eat the same food as the rest of the family. However, this was not the case across the board. It was mentioned by domestic workers in focus groups, that often live out maids would not eat with the rest of the family. One live out male domestic worker mentioned that he was not given the same food as the family, and was told he should be using plastic plates rather than the plates the rest of the family were using.

## **2.8 HEALTH CARE AND INSURANCE**

### **2.9.1 MEDICAL CARE AND HEALTH INSURANCE**

Overall, none of the domestic workers or employers questioned reported that they had health insurance as a domestic worker. However, employers did report that at times they would help with the medical expenses of their domestic worker. Overall, more live in domestic workers reported that their employer helped to pay their medical bills. This again could be due to their status within the family, where domestic workers who live with their employers are more likely to be viewed as a family member. Additionally, given that they live with their employer, employers would be able to better monitor the health of their domestic worker so would be able to tell when they are sick.



Live out workers on the other hand were more likely to be asked to pay for their own medical expenses. In some cases, live out workers were helped as the employer would pay for their prescription, as was the case with this female live out domestic worker from Kitwe:

*“At one time when I went to the hospital I was given a prescription to buy the drugs, I brought a paper and they are the ones who bought the drugs for me.”*

#### **Female Live out Domestic Worker, Kitwe**

However, in some instances, domestic workers reported to have to pay their own medical bills, and then deductions would be made from their pay given the time off work that they missed:

*“No, I am the one who paid for the medical bills. In fact when I stayed home for a week without working, my employers started complaining and deducted a K50 from the K220 that I was getting as my salary”*

#### **Male Live Out Domestic Worker**

Although this was not reported to be that common, this shows the extent to which a domestic worker's health outcomes are at the discretion of the employer.

Results from employers really confirmed these findings, where employers of live in workers were more comfortable helping with the medical bills of their domestic worker. For live out domestic workers, medical care was often seen to be out of the realm of responsibility for the employer. Many employers, particularly those with live out employees, reported doubting that the domestic worker was truly sick. This may have contributed to the lack of contribution towards medical bills, as well as deductions from pay due to sick leave.

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### **2.8.2 MATERNITY PROTECTION AND BENEFITS**

Overall, most employers reported that they would not be in a position to give paid maternity leave to their domestic worker should they become pregnant. However, whether or not the domestic worker would be accepted back after maternity leave generally depended on her status within the family, as well as how long she had been working there:

*“If she was really good at her job I wouldn't dismiss her and when you find someone that is good, you stipulate the time when she is coming back and when the 4 months up she has to go.”*

#### **FGD, Male Employer, Chongwe**

Therefore, most employers reported that if a domestic worker were to become pregnant they would be dismissed, unless they had been working for the household for a long time or were very good at their job, in which case they would be kept on. If a domestic worker was live in, employers reported that they felt that in some instances she could keep her job but could no longer continue to live within the household and would have to find somewhere else to stay with the baby:

*“I told her that if she no longer felt that she could manage to work she must leave and go rest, then later when she delivered she came back and started*

*work. But if she was a living in maid am not obliged to keep her in my home because it is easy to keep the pregnancy than the baby because you will need to buy babies milk, food and other necessities and that is very expensive on top of that I have my own three year old daughter who needs attention and things. So I cannot start to care for both my baby and her baby.”*

#### **Female Employer of a Live in Domestic Worker, Lusaka**

Within focus groups with employers there were disagreements as to what the responsibility of the employer was when it came to maternity benefits. Some felt that the domestic worker could just be let go, with no further medical bills or expenses paid for by the employer. Others felt that some assistance should be required, including medical expenses and transport to the health facility when she delivers. What is clear from these discussions is that the level of responsibility an employer feels towards their domestic worker and the benefits they get very much depends on the relationship between the employer and their domestic worker. The stronger the relationship, and the more the employer values the work done by the domestic worker, the more likely they are to let the domestic worker return to work after getting pregnant, as well as providing other benefits. Additionally, for some employers, whether or not the domestic worker was married or not was reported to have an impact on how they would feel about the pregnancy. If a domestic worker was married, they were more likely to find it acceptable than if she was single.

In terms of the perceptions of domestic workers, some felt that they would be able to get maternity leave and return to work, whilst others felt this would not be a possibility. On the whole, those who had worked for a longer period of time and had a good relationship with their employer were more likely to report that they would be given maternity leave. For others, they felt that their employer would not accept this and would fire them as soon as they found out. This reportedly has led to a situation whereby some domestic workers are afraid to reveal their pregnancy to an employer:

*“Knowing my boss if I was pregnant I just couldn’t tell her, I just can’t, she can just fire me if that was to happen”.*

#### **Female Live Out Domestic Worker, Kitwe**

In terms of obligations, domestic workers felt that employers should make an effort to help if their domestic worker became pregnant:

*“The employer should at least offer some help like buying some clothes for the baby, giving her some money to support herself and the baby and a maternity leave.”*

#### **FGD, Female Live in Domestic Worker, Lusaka**

However, the results from the assessment showed that in many cases employers did not meet such obligations, and there was generally a mismatch between what employers thought their level of responsibility should be when their domestic worker got pregnant, and what domestic workers felt their employer should provide in terms of maternity benefits. In many cases, what maternity benefits a domestic worker received depended on the

generosity of the employer, as well as the strength of the relationship between the employer and domestic worker.

### 2.8.3 NAPSA PAYMENTS

The vast majority of domestic workers and their employers reported that they did not make any payments to NAPSA, or make any pension contributions:

*“Where I used to work before I came here, I had worked for 8 years, when I went to them to complain about the salary that I was getting, they told me that if I didn’t want to work with that amount I should stop working. So that is how I decided to stop work. When I demanded that I should be given a pension package for the number of years that I worked with them”*

#### **Male Live Out Domestic Worker, Lusaka**

This was a reported to be a concern for some domestic workers, given that when they retire, they may not have any savings in order to keep them afloat. However, one of the major constraints preventing domestic workers and their employers from contributing towards NAPSA was that they were unaware that they were even supposed to contribute towards NAPSA, and those that did know were unaware of the procedures or how it should be done.

## 2.9 DOMESTIC WORKER AND EMPLOYER ORGANISATIONS

### **Organisations for Domestic Workers**

One of the questions asked of domestic workers was whether or not they had heard of any organisations for domestic workers, and where they can go to report cases of abuse. The vast majority of those questioned had not heard of any organisations for domestic workers. The few that had tended to be in Lusaka, such as this female live out domestic worker:

*“I just heard from friends who were in the same organisations, the union. They used to talk about these same organisations and the things that they used to do.”*

However, when asked who should stand up for the rights of domestic workers, the majority of those interviewed indicated that they felt the labour office from the government should be monitoring the situation, to ensure domestic workers are treated fairly and paid a fair amount. However, there was some disagreement over whether or not enforcing the minimum wage would be a good thing, as it was felt that if it was enforced, many domestic workers would lose their jobs as they wouldn’t be able to afford to keep them on.

When it came to cases of abuse, most domestic workers reported that the matter should be reported to either the police in serious cases, or other stakeholders such as the church in order to sort out the difficulties.

Most of the domestic workers interviewed indicated that they would be interested in joining an organisation for domestic workers, however many felt that they would not have enough time to participate in activities given their work load.

In terms of employers, around 20 of those interviewed had heard of organisations for domestic workers, particularly the union for domestic workers. Of those that had heard, they had usually seen it advertised on the television and other media or had someone come round to register domestic workers. However, they had little or no knowledge of how the organisation worked or the membership procedures. Of those that had heard of organisations the general perception was that membership was currently not very high:

*“Well I don’t think they have that much representation. I don’t think currently they have the muscle to do anything about domestic workers. Why I am saying so is that they are not organized, they have failed to attract membership. Out of so many maids and domestic workers we have in Lusaka. I doubt how many are participating fully and are registered members of that organisation are.”*

#### **Male Employer of a Live out domestic worker, Lusaka**

When asked whether they would be happy for their domestic worker to join such an organisation, most said they would. However, several employers reported that they would not be comfortable:

*“If they don’t cause problems with the domestic workers’ salaries. We get the domestic workers from the street because we want cheap labour.”*

#### **Employer of Live out Domestic Worker, Chongwe**

The main reason that employers reported that they felt they would not be comfortable with this was that they felt such organisations may start to try and implement the minimum wage, which they felt unable to afford.

### **Organisations for Employers**

In terms of organisations for employers only a few of those interviewed had heard of any organisations. Of those that had, many reported that they would not have the time to join and participate in such an organisation, such as this male employer from Lusaka *“I don’t think I would have time to meet with them. I am a very busy person”*. This lack of time was the major reason why most employers said they would not be involved with such an organisation, though they felt they would like to be involved if they were less busy.

## **2.10 DISPUTES, GRIEVANCE MECHANISMS AND RELATIONSHIPS**

### **Disputes and Grievance Mechanisms**

In terms of disputes, the major issues which were reported to cause problems within households by employers included:

- ✓ Non or late completion of tasks
- ✓ Being Late

- ✓ Stealing
- ✓ Mistrust
- ✓ Faked illness by domestic workers

For domestic workers, the main issues which were reported to cause problems included:

- ✓ Late or non-completion of tasks
- ✓ Arguments with children/other family members within the household
- ✓ Late payments and deductions
- ✓ Sick Leave
- ✓ Suspicions of stealing

In order to overcome these disputes, both employers and domestic workers indicated they would want to have a written contract to refer to, which would help with any disagreements over payments and scope of work. For more serious disputes, it was reported that the matter could be taken to the police, especially in instances of stealing, or abuse. In other matters such as non payment of salary, it was reported that the matter could be reported to the labour office for investigation. However, the preference for both the employers and domestic workers was that disputes should be settled within the household if possible before anyone from outside is contacted.

### Physical and Sexual Abuse

Instances of physical and sexual abuse were commonly reported by domestic workers, particularly sexual abuse of male employers on female domestic workers:

- ✓ *Yes, such things happen quite often. Those things happen mainly in parklands and riverside where a lady is abused sexually by their employer. You find that when a female employer is not around, the maid will be taken to the Guest house by the male employer. Where she will be abused by their employer. In most cases when such things are happening the domestic worker will be given a lot of money and she will keep quite in fear of losing her. **Female DW, Kitwe***
- ✓ *They usually make the girl pregnant and then force her to abort either using threats or deception. Like in one incidence where a member of the house hold impregnated a girl and told her to abort on the pretext that he was going to marry her and that she wouldn't look good in a wedding dress if she was pregnant. The girl was helped and the guy was apprehended. **Female DW, Lusaka***

However, this was not just a phenomenon which reported for female domestic workers. A male domestic worker also reported experiencing sexual harassment from his female employer:

- ✓ *Like the way I found myself in the situation where my previous madam used to touch me a lot in terms of body contact, I just decided to avoid those situations that will place me in those circumstances. So I protected myself because I gave her a blind eye. Therefore one needs to just protect themselves from such vices. **Male DW, Lusaka***

On the whole, sexual abuse was reported to be relatively common, whereas physical abuse was not reported to be an issue. However, it was felt that commonly, employers do speak to

their domestic workers in an abusive manner. It was common for both male and female domestic workers, both live in and live out, to report being shouted or yelled at, or spoken down to like a child.

## Relationships within the household

Relationships between domestic workers and their employers within households varied considerably. In a number of instances, particularly with unpaid as well as live in domestic workers, the DW was considered as part of the family. As such, someone visiting the household would be unable to tell that they are not part of the family. In other instances, particularly with live out workers, the DW was treated more like an employee, which had both advantages and disadvantages. On the positive side, those who were treated more like an employee were less likely to be monitored in terms of their movements outside of the household and were given more freedom and privacy by employers. On the negative side, employers were less likely to give them benefits such as paying their medical bills, and they were more likely to be fired if they got pregnant or were unable to complete tasks.

In terms of the employers views of their relationships, most employers reported a cordial and positive relationship with their domestic worker. However, they did report that there are times when this breaks down, for instance if a domestic worker does not complete tasks as they are expected to, or are unreliable. It was also reported by some employers in FGDs that the relationship between an employer or domestic worker can break down when a DW has worked for a long period and has become comfortable within the household:

*“That’s what happens when a maid has been with one employer for a very long time they lose respect and even start going out with your husband as well as talking back at you.”*

### Female Employer of Live in DW, FGD Lusaka

Most of the domestic workers and employers described their relationship in a positive manner, as outlined in **table 6** below. However, as can be seen in the table several of the employers and domestic workers interviewed described that they did not have a positive relationship.

**Table 6 Relationships**

Positive Relationships	
✓	<i>The relationship is also very good. In fact if someone had to come for the first time that person can’t know if I am a domestic worker or a family member.</i>
✓	<i>We really have a cordial relationship, we get on well</i>
✓	<i>My employer respects me, we have a good relationship</i>
✓	<i>We have a peaceful relationship, when there is something I think she has done well, I explain it to her. But we get on well</i>
Negative Relationships	
✓	<i>The relationship is more of a slavery type but I just work so that I can provide something for my family.</i>
✓	<i>Yes they sometimes even do it deliberately saying that I did not do something well and so I will not have what an employee is supposed to have</i>
✓	<i>Just that problem of misunderstandings between me and my employer’s children. We do not get on well.</i>
✓	<i>Sometimes they shout at me that I am a plate breaker. Mostly when we don’t</i>

*enough supplies home, they say do this and that. It's from that point that the fight emanates.*

- ✓ *There's somewhere I once worked I wasn't being paid as often and I left the money in frustration. We did not get on well.*

### 3.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 3.1 CONCLUSIONS

Overall, it can be said that working practices and conditions for domestic workers differed greatly depending on context. Factors such as whether the worker was live in or live out, in a rural or urban area, a man or woman, a relative of the employer, whether they had a good relationship with the employer or whether the employers salary was high or low had an impact on the living and working conditions, including remuneration, hours worked, freedoms and levels of privacy within the home. The following are the major conclusions reached about the living and working conditions of domestic workers:

- Most domestic workers in Zambia are recruited through referrals and this has an impact on their bargaining power when it comes to contracts. Those recruited through maids centres and who found work for themselves were more able to negotiate for a written contract.
- Both employers and domestic workers would prefer to have a written contract, but this is currently not being implemented. More should be done to encourage written contracts, which give more structure to the working conditions of domestic workers as they specify the tasks, working hours and remuneration arrangements. This would help reduce the number of disputes between domestic workers and their employers.
- Maid centres are seen as expensive by employers, and the lack of standards in the industry mean that employers have very different perceptions of the level of training from maid centres with some perceiving it to be very poor whilst others feel it is good. There were a number of cases where both employers and domestic workers reported they did not trust maid centres, particularly when it came to issues of remuneration.
- Perceptions of live in versus live out employment differed greatly depending on the motivations and needs of the individual employer or domestic worker. On the whole live in domestic workers tended to work much longer hours, had less days off, less privacy and were expected to do a wider range of tasks than live out domestic workers. The pay-off for this was that they did not have to foot the bill for rent, transport and food, which was a big drain on the salaries of live out domestic workers, particularly in Lusaka where costs are high. Those who preferred to live in tended to be single, young and often did not intend to stay in domestic work for the rest of their careers, so were often saving up for school or college.
- Perceptions of remuneration differed considerably between domestic workers and their employers, particularly in terms of in kind payments. Domestic workers would not consider this to be part of their payment whilst employers did, and a small number even deducted from their domestic workers salaries for these items. Late payments were common, often when the employer had not been paid themselves or had other outstanding costs. Deductions were less common, but were still reported,



particularly when the employer and domestic worker did not have a positive relationship.

- The minimum wage continues to be a divisive issue, where many employers, particularly those in low income areas indicated that they are unable to afford to pay the minimum wage, whilst many domestic workers are desperate for work and are therefore willing to be paid less in order to support themselves and their families. This makes implementation of the legislation difficult, as although domestic workers would want to receive at least the minimum wage, if it was enforced many domestic workers would end up losing their jobs.
- Relationships between domestic workers and their employers differed considerably. Some were very positive, where domestic workers were happy doing the work they were doing and were treated with compassion and respect by their employers. In other cases, they were treated very badly. Cases of verbal, sexual and physical abuse were reported, as were cases of “slavery”, where domestic workers were working very long hours with very little or no remuneration.
- Social protection available to domestic workers also differed considerably and was dependent on the whim of the employer and the strength of the relationship between the domestic worker and employer. Domestic workers who were live in tended to have a stronger relationship with their employer, and often were seen as “part of the family”. In these cases, employers often felt more responsible towards their domestic worker and would be more likely to pay for their healthcare. Live out domestic workers on the other hand were less likely to get such benefits, as they were more likely to be seen as an employee. Employers of live out domestic workers were also more likely to report that they felt their domestic worker was lying about illness to get time off.
- Many domestic workers indicated they would be interested in joining a union. However, in some cases, employers indicated they would not be comfortable with this, especially if the union was to tackle issues of remuneration and the minimum wage. This may prevent some domestic workers from joining, as they may not want to go against their employer’s wishes.

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## 3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

In order for the working and living conditions of domestic workers to improve, the following recommendations are given:

- Written contracts between employers and domestic workers need to be promoted as much as possible by the government as well as employers and domestic workers organisations. Written contracts will reduce the number of disputes between domestic workers and employers and provide a basis upon which the conditions for domestic workers are based, including tasks to be completed, holiday provision, remuneration and social protection. In many cases domestic workers have an informal working relationship with their employer and this would formalise the relationship and the expectations of both the employer and domestic worker.



- Maid centres in Zambia are increasingly being seen as go to centres for both employers and domestic workers, where negotiations between the two parties can be undertaken. However, the sector is not well regulated meaning there are vast differences in standards between different maid centres. Increasing regulation by the government would help to change this, and improve standards within the sector. This in turn could help improve the perceptions of maid centres by both employers and domestic workers and increase trust in the sector.
- Formalised training and standardised curriculums should be provided for domestic workers through maid centres. Domestic work in Zambia is perceived more as informal work, but formalised training and recognised qualifications would help in altering this perception, and may lead to improved employment relationships and remuneration for domestic workers.
- Cases of sexual and physical abuse remain too common and are often not reported by domestic workers who fear losing their jobs. Increased sensitization campaigns should be implemented to highlight the rights of domestic workers, whilst greater penalties should be given to employers who are found guilty of abusing their domestic workers.