# ABSTRACT

The thesis investigates the reasons for the decision made by many Zimbabweans to self-settle in remote villages in Limpopo. It shows that while significant literature exists on Zimbabweans in border and urban areas, there are several inter-related factors that are drawing Zimbabweans to rural areas. Thus, this study challenges many common assumptions about cross-border migration while supporting the idea that migrants settle in areas where economic stability can be achieved. This study also shows that the existence of parallel government structures and policy frameworks plays a major role in the ability of Zimbabweans to settle in these areas.

This is a case study of Zimbabweans settling in a rural area where there are no pre-existing ethnic or kinship ties. Utilizing empirical qualitative data, this study outlines how Zimbabweans have achieved a degree of stability in one area of Limpopo through a series of rights procurements and access to parallel government structures. This has legitimized their presence within the village while their presence in South Africa outside of this village is precarious at best. The legitimacy created by accessing these parallel structures has created de facto denizenship within the village as Zimbabweans have access to services that are not accessible to them outside of the village. This denizenship, and the security it bestows, is an instrumental factor in the decision making process that had led many Zimbabweans to self-settle in rural areas.

Key Terms: Pluralism, migrant, denizenship