

## **Remembering Zimbabwe's War of Liberation through Memories of the August 25 1979 Mushayi Battle, Dambara Area, Gutu**

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### **Abstract**

In rural areas, the liberation war is often remembered through specific battles which afflicted permanent scars on communities. This is the case with the Mushayi battle of 25 August 1979 which involved the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) guerrillas and Rhodesian Security Forces (RSFs). The Mushayi homestead is about 63 km from the small town of Gutu in Masvingo Province. It is located in Dambara area comprising small scale commercial farms (formerly Native/African Purchase Areas). The suffering of affected people as a result of the said battle is central to understanding post-war healing, reconciliation and integration at local level because memory is key in making sense of the world people live in. Grassroots perceptions are important because the sense of sameness over time is sustained by remembering. Political status in Zimbabwe today, 41 years after the armed struggle is hinged on liberation war credentials. The importance of the paper lies in locating demands for compensation and restitution by some victims of the war not only in Zimbabwe but throughout Africa. It also dispels allegations that African Purchase Area farmers always sided with the minority regime since Rhodesians had originally established them to create a content loyal middle class. Last, the article explores the contribution of Purchase Areas as important places for resting, meeting and recuperating under the cover of vegetation.