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**DISASTER PREPAREDNESS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF SEMI-CURRENT RECORDS AT
THE HARARE RECORDS CENTRE**

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Abstract

Disaster preparedness is a key area in the management of records and archives. Records are always at risk of disaster and because of their importance, their loss can be crippling to the creating agencies. Some records and archives have unfortunately been destroyed or damaged as a result of carelessness, negligence and most of all due lack of disaster preparedness. Adopting disaster preparedness will prepare the organisation against disasters and will assist the organisation in responding effectively. The study assessed the adoption of disaster preparedness in the management of semi-current records at the Harare Records Centre of the National Archives of Zimbabwe. The study looked at possible threats of disaster likely to occur at HRC, existing measures available for disaster preparedness, the level of awareness among recordkeeping staff on the importance of disaster preparedness in the management of semi-current records and the frequency of activities necessary to avert disasters and. A case study approach was used, in which a questionnaire was employed to collect data. The findings show inadequate knowledge of the various possible threats of disaster that might affect records, inadequate measures against disasters, and little effort in adopting disaster preparedness. The study concluded that the Harare Records Centre is not adequately prepared for disasters and has not fully adopted disaster preparedness. The research study finally recommended that disaster preparedness should be integrated into the broad records management programme and that disaster training should at least be conducted bi-annually.