

PUBLIC RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

SITUATIONAL REPORT November 2021

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1.INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Effective Public Resources Management (PRM) in Zimbabwe is needed now more than ever following the new threat from the Omicron Variant B.1.1.529. The emergence of the new COVID-19 wave calls for the government to effectively, efficiently and economically deploy its resources. This is because if utilised judiciously, public resources enable a nation to robustly manage crisis. Public resources have also been credited for transforming service delivery.

There is a correlation between second generation rights which encompasses social and economic rights and robust public resource management. To this end, poor utilisation of public resource impedes upon social and economic rights, thereby entrenching social inequalities.

In a bid to monitor and track the utilisation of public resources, ZIMCODD carried out a survey in 57 districts in Zimbabwe to evaluate the utilisation of public resources at local government level. The survey sought to bring out anomalies in the utilisation of public resources and understand the deep structural challenges so as to come up with actionable recommendations that will promote the prudent utilisation of resources

2. PURPOSE

ZIMCODD's thrust to promote social and economic justice has resulted in it developing the monthly PRM situational report which seeks to identify challenges and anomalies in PRM that impedes on effective social and economic inclusion. The PRM situational report is part of ZIMCODD's work on promoting prudent public finance management and effective utilisation of public resources.

The situational report intends to bring transformation in the management of public resources by examining the deeper structural dynamics that continue to create ground for social and economic injustices.

The research also intends to magnify the voice of the citizens by informing the policy makers about the plight that communities are encountering due to some of the ill-advised decisions by public officials that undermines effective utilization of public resources. In all this, the situational report's objectives are:

- i. To build citizen agency in public resource monitoring and in particular, COVID-19 resources; and
- ii. To promote participation in economic governance at the local level.

3. METHODOLOGY

A mixed method research to ensure an exploratory and explanatory study that captures community voices with respect to PRM utilisation. The qualitative and quantitative study used convenience and purposive sampling supplemented by systematic and stratified random sampling. All these sampling techniques allowing the research to have an emic and etic perspective in the use of PRM. Qualitative sampling was effective in ensuring that the research reaches a saturation level. While quantitative helped in eliminating bias so as to infuse research reliability, dependability and trustworthiness. Human Interest Stories (HIS) were used to reinforce study findings. 57 districts were sampled and used as illustrative case studies. The research catchment area is presented in Fig 1 below.



Source: ZIMCODD

4. PUBLIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SITUATIONAL CONTEXT

The 2022 National budget was announced in November, making the month one of the most significant months with respect to public resource management. A national budget is a conduit for public resources as it allocates resources to various ministries, government agencies and departments. Thus, the Minister of Finance and Economic Development presented a ZWL 927.3 billion budget against a 2 trillion ask. The 2022 budget presents an increase of ZWL 505.7 billion from the 2021 budget which was pegged at ZWL 421.6, a difference that either can be recorded as a commendable improvement or a clear representation of the skyrocketing of inflation rate as also evidenced by the parallel rate which is now at ZWL 200 against the official rate of ZWL 105. Fig 2 presents a glimpse of how public resources were allocated for the year 2022.





Source: Compiled by ZIMCODD From 2022 National Budget

Educational inequality and exclusion worsened in the month of November as over 30 000 students failed to register for ZIMSEC¹. This is further aggravated by government's questionable commitment towards inclusive education as government's spending in the educational sector continues to fall short of the 20% Dakar Education for all framework. The government's allocation for education sector decreased from 16.5%

1. https://thenewshawks.com/unions-blast-government-as-30-000-studentsfail-to-register-with-zimsec/ in 2021 to 13.4% in 2022. At the same time, school fees in Zimbabwe has become relatively expensive considering the low salaries of most civil servants. Examination fees have also gone beyond the reach of the majority as Ordinary Level examinations are priced at USD15 per subject. These charges encroach on access to education especially for the marginalised poor children. To this end, over 30 000 students failed to register for ZIMSEC and this undermines universal access to education.

The decline in government's education spending has affected the once glorified Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) thereby limiting its coverage. This has worsened inequalities in access to education as many children fail to pay for schools and examination fees. In 2019 the government supported 415 000 children under BEAM and the coverage increased to 1 million children in 2020, in 2022 the government will support 1.5 million children against 4.6 million children in need of formal and informal education². The BEAM facility has also been wanting as it is now failing to pay for children's examination fees. All this is due to government reduction in education spending which is also low among regional peers.

In addition, the government's ambition to consolidate the financial sector was also brought to light in the month of November as it moved to amalgamate, bundle or merge the leading banks in Zimbabwe. This will result in the creation of a financial giant that will give vast influence and power to a few individuals such as Kuda Tagwirei – attesting to the allegations of state capture and economies of affection due to Tagwirei's proximity to the executive. This will also qualify the Zimbabwean government under the banner of plutocracy and oligarchy government. A plutocracy government is a government that is ruled by people of great wealth, while an oligarchy is a government that is ruled by a few partisan individuals who have similar interest or are united by the same cause.

The merging of CBZ Holdings, ZB Financial Holdings, First Mutual Holdings Limited (FMHL) and First Mutual Properties (FMP) in an ideal environment would have been a call for celebration as it increases the asset base of the banking sector and enhance national growth and productivity due to financial capacity. However, Zimbabwe's structural system has been characterised by state capture with the elite usurping state resources for self-aggrandizement. The said amalgamation will culminate in an asset base of US\$ 2.5 billion. Although, such financial muscle will be ideal in propelling the nation towards vision 2030 by investing in infrastructural revolution projects and agriculture, it is ironic that this will not be the case as attested by previous government projects that have been used as conduit pipes for self-enrichment³

The new financial giant will increase monopoly in the banking sector that will be detrimental for development and growth. The inclusion of Kuda Tagwirei in the merger seals his control over a number of key sectors in the economy, presenting

UNICEF (2020). 2020 Social Protection Budget Brief. UNICEF Zimbabwe.
Command Agriculture Women Development Fund RBZ Farm Mechanisation Scheme

a unique case of government-enhanced self-enrichment. This development is contrary to international best practise which is against the unfair business ethics meted by the market-controlling new financial outfit formed out of this merger. In the US, mergers of big financial players were abolished as a way of abolishing the 'too big to fail' syndrome whereby the failure of such an outfit shakes the whole economy given its control over several prime sectors. It is imperative for the Competition and Tariff Commission of Zimbabwe to look into the effects of this merger before sanctioning its launch.

The Minister for National Housing and Social Amenities commissioned the first block of flats at Aspire Heights, in Aspindale. The Minister reiterated that the project dove-tailed with the housing targets of Vision 2030 premised on the development of modern, sustainable and affordable housing. Further details linked to the Aspire Heights Flats show that the project is privately funded and is the brain-child of a politically-exposed individual attesting to allegations of economies of affection. The asking price of a unit of the flats is structured in such a way that one pays US\$20 000 deposit followed by 12 monthly payments of US\$4 000, amounting to US\$68 000.

Whereas the offer is open to all, the units outprice many who are paid in the local currency. The average salary is around ZWL 30 000 per month, translating into US\$285 at the going auction market rate and US\$150 at the ruling parallel market rate. Deductively, one would take 239 months (20 years) to pay-off a unit of the flats if they were to allocate all their monthly income towards buying a unit of the flats. This defines the pauper status of the working class in Zimbabwe and un-inclusiveness of the housing programme. In essence, the government must develop own-funded low-cost housing meant for its lowly remunerated employees and citizens. Where the private sector is roped in to address housing delivery shortfalls, the government must provide incentives that keep the prices within reach of the average citizen.

5.0 PUBLIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SURVEY FINDINGS

It is believed that Zimbabwe's social and economic challenges are not due to lack of resources but rather poor management of available resources. Such challenges include inadequate social infrastructure, dilapidating service delivery, severe power cuts and declining living conditions for most ordinary citizens, among others. Against this background, the November situational report calls for fiscal hygiene and effective PRM at both central and local government levels to ensure that public resources are managed with integrity, transparency and accountability for efficient and responsive service delivery, sustainable economic growth and development. The section below presents an overview of how public resources are managed at local government level across Zimbabwe's 10 provinces.

5.1 Availability of public resources of economic value in Zimbabwe

It is public knowledge that Zimbabwe is endowed with numerous resources of economic value. The survey carried out in 57 districts also attest to this assertion. From the survey, public resources of economic value are both natural and man-made and these include timber, land, water bodies, estates, fish, kapenta, forestry, wildlife, minerals such as coal, gold, limestone, chrome, diamonds, dolomite, black granite, white granite, quarry, copper; roads; schools; boreholes; hospitals; and clinics among others. Survey respondents believe that if these resources are harnessed through prudent public resource governance and good stewardship of public resources, the country can bridge inequality gap, eradicate poverty, foster economic growth and move the country towards attainment of vision 2030.





Fig 3: Distribution of benefits from Local Public Resources

The majority of respondents i.e. 73% reported that there is no equity in the distribution of public resource benefits. This is in spite of availability of legal frameworks that guarantee equal distribution of public resources at the community level. Only 27% of respondents reported that public resources are to a lesser extent distributed equitably in communities.



5.3. Citizens Involvement in Decisions to do with Public Resources

Fig 4: Informed about the Exploitation and Use of Public Resources

While citizen involvement is critical to foster transparency and accountability in PRM, the November survey results revealed that citizens across all districts are not fully aware of public resource decisions, and neither are they consulted when the same are made at the local level.

65% reported that they are not consulted in public resource governance, 26% are sometimes consulted while 9% of the 57 districts reported that they are consulted. 60% of the 57 districts are not aware of public resource decisions and 32% are sometimes made aware while only 8% reported that they are aware of public resource decisions made by duty bearers.

5.4. Access to Information on Public Resources

With the passing of the Freedom of Information Act, citizens hope that the Act will allow them to access critical information for purposes of public accountability. While access to information promotes good public resource governance through improved transparency and accountability, it also allows citizens to monitor and determine how public resources are used. Fig 5 below presents the findings of the survey on citizen's access to information on public resource management.





As with the previous months, respondents generally lack of access to information on public resource management at community level thereby presenting challenges for citizens to hold local authorities to account. Access to information has continued to receive a poor rating across all variables as depicted above. Access to information in one central source was rated poor by 79% of the respondents; information legibility/ clearly displayed and printed community information rated poor in 67% districts; free access to technology, computers and the Internet in public places was rated poorly by 84% respondents; access to community information that is delivered in person to people who may have difficulty in leaving their home was rated poor by 86% of respondents. Community information that is translated in different languages was rated poor by 76% of respondents while access to information on public resources such as minerals and wildlife was rated poor by 80% of respondents.

Case: When demanding information rights is treated as a threat, Chiadzwa

The recent arrest and detention of Headman Chiadzwa and 27 other villagers set a very bad precedent as far as demanding one's rights is concerned. The arrests occurred on 01 November 2021 in Chiadzwa when Headman Chiadzwa accompanied the Chiadzwa community to have a dialogue with Anjin diamond mining company. The community numbered around 600. Interestingly, the women and youth far outnumbered their male counterparts.

The reason behind staging this demonstration stems from lack of beneficiation and transparency in the use of funds being realised from Anjin mine. The ownership structure of Anjin is not known although the public is meant to believe that it is a joint venture between government through ZCDC and Chinese company AFECC. This opaque relationship has made it impossible for the public to have access to information on production as well as on profits realized from the mining venture.

In the matrix of the joint venture is the presence of the Zimbabwe Defense who literally runs the administration of the Company. Apparently, the workers at Anjin are also complaining of poor working conditions with some being subjected to degrading and inhumane behavior or assaulted.

Anjin has mined loads of carats but this has not translated to material benefits for the community. The infrastructure development remains poor and the use by the company has strained the structures. Roads remain dusty and narrow with potholes along it. Worse still this company has not been able to produce its audited financial accounts. It's not about their capacity to produce but their linkage to the government which has caused the mine to enjoy special protection over the community members. Health and education services have also been overwhelmed by increase of population due to mining.

Faced by these challenges, the community demanded information on how the resources are being utilised. Trending with the #HowFar campaign under the ZIMCODD banner this made every sense to question how many diamonds they have mined. Section 13 (4) provides that communities have the right to benefit from the revenue of resources mined in their communities and the government has an obligation under this section of ensuring community beneficiation. Also, section 62 of access to information is important as it consolidates the demands of Chiadzwa community and the nation at large.

However, the Zimbabwean government has shown complete disregard of these rights and constitutional provisions of access to information and right to access to information. This means illicit financial flows are far from being curbed as the government and mining companies are not yet ready to be transparent and accountable. In light of this, the National Development Strategy 1 and the vision 2030 of becoming an upper Middle-class economy will remain a dream. Good governance, rule of law and good public finance management are tools towards development and the government has not yet committed to local economic development as long as community Voices are thwarted for demanding accountability.

5.5 Public Resources Access by Demographic Groups

Access to public resources was generally poor across the different demographic groups. Access to resources was poorest for People with Disabilities with a rating of 93% poor followed by the elderly at 57% poor rating and youth with a 46% poor rating on access to public resources. On a positive note, access to public resources by women has been rated fairly by 46% respondents and good in 13% of the 57 districts.



Fig 6: Access to Public Resources by Demographic groups

The November situational survey also assessed access to employment opportunities across different demographic groups. While the significance of employment to social protection is indispensable, particularly in Zimbabwe where poverty and economic distress coupled with public resource governance challenges have made social protection a pie in the sky for majority of citizens. From the survey results, the situation seems dire for people with disabilities which was rated 97% poor across the 57 districts. Lack of job opportunities for youth and adult population was also rated highly poor with ratings of 80% and 70% poor respectively as presented in the chart below:



Fig 7: Access to Jobs by demographic groups

5.6. Access to Information on Devolution Funds

Of the 57 surveyed districts, 92% reported to have access to information on devolution funds for 2021 while 8% did not have access to such information and these include Binga, Bubi, Insiza and Chipinge districts. For Mutare City, the situation was different as residents questioned why devolution funds for 2021 had not been released to the city as late as end of November 2021. CORAs have also noted that where there is access to devolution funds information, local authorities are reported to be withholding granular expenditure information as well as variance reports on same. It has also remained unclear whether some of the projects implemented using devolution funds were priority projects or not.

Case: Devolution stalls development at community level, Vungu

With devolution in Zimbabwe currently in the form of economic resources, local authorities have been gaining access to funds disbursed from the national purse. Local authorities have thus been able to purchase equipment and carry out projects from these devolution funds.

It is however unfortunate that these devolution funds are not disbursed on time as witnessed during 2021 in some local authorities that include Vungu Rural District Council and Gweru City Council. The majority of projects that leverage on devolution funds in these local authorities are construction projects and such projects would be effectively carried out if the funds are received on time. Local authorities have echoed these sentiments in recent encounters with residents in which they state how the rain season may possibly derail projects which could have been carried out if the funds were received on time. The timely disbursement of devolution funds therefore has an impact on the ability of local authorities to deliver services to residents in their areas of jurisdiction.

As at 6 November, Vungu rural district council had received devolution funds amounting to 49 million Zimbabwean Dollars with 34 million dollars received between October and November clearly showing how disbursement of these funds is delayed. From an initial allocation of 138 million Zimbabwean dollars Vungu Rural District Council had received only 49 million as of November 2021 indicating how some planned projects would be stalled as a result of failure to meet actual devolution funds allocations by central government.

Case: Bona Rural Health finally opens, Bubi District

Bona rural health clinic in Bubi District Matabeleland North has been officially declared open. The clinic was a fruitful product of government's devolution funds which were funded to the local Bubi rural district council. The clinic was officially declared open on the 6th of November by Matabeleland North Minister of State for Provincial Affairs and Devolution, Hon Richard Moyo. Bona rural health clinic

was reportedly to be constructed at a cost of ZWL \$9 2000 000 and it consists of two offices, utility room, storeroom, labor room, post-natal rooms, consultation rooms, two drug rooms, two staff rooms, solar power, water scheme and both Blair and flush system toilets. The health institution is set to serve an estimated number of 1.200 families from Bona, Goodwood, Nkayi-Tshanke and Dabe areas.

Hon Richard Moyo complemented the Rural district council for keeping and fulfilling its promises which they made to communities concerning the use and distribution devolution funds. He further complemented the Bubi Rural District Council for the transparency and diligence they displayed in handling of the devolution funds. This was commendable as the community has been relieved of the burden of traveling long distance for over 25 kilometers to seek medical assistance or to access health services.

Below are the pictures of the new Bona rural health clinic



It should be appreciated that devolution remains central to achieving an upper middle-income economy by 2030. To this effect chapter 14 of the constitution notes in its preamble, "the equitable allocation of national resources and the participation of local communities in the determination of development priorities within their areas; it further notes that there must be devolution of power and responsibilities to lower tiers of government in Zimbabwe". Despite the legal provisions, the implementation of devolution remains constrained due to late disbursement of funds, inadequacy of the funds, lack of a clear devolution disbursement framework and general lack of political will to implement true devolution.

5.7. COVID-19 Resources and Key Issues

The November survey noted that, Zimbabwe's COVID-19 resources was still good although there was a decrease in ratings as compared to the month of October. The availability of isolation centres was rated 89% a decrease from 91% rated in October. Effectiveness of anti-vaccine cheating mechanism⁴ decreased from 68% in October to 50% in November. A decrease that is largely attributed to the emergence of the new Omicron variant and government's announcement that only vaccinated people will use public transport. Cold chain storage facilities also received a decrease in rating from 88% in October to 75% in November. A decrease that might be explained by technical faults. The November survey had a new variable that was tested, the variable sought to ascertain if the government was prepared to deal with the new variant or not. 60% of the respondents noted that the government was prepared to deal with the Omicron. This is despite government's claim that it has enough vaccines and all was in order for the festive season⁵. The findings of the survey are presented in figure 7 below:



Fig 8: COVID-19 Management

Case: COVID-19 Management, Budiriro

Panic around the new COVID-19 variant, Omicron has already affected communities across Harare. This can be evidenced by large numbers of people turning up at Budiriro clinic seeking to be vaccinated. Although, the turn up is high, there has not yet been a case of vaccine shortage. Nevertheless, this does not mean that all has been well as the new variant has exposed poor service delivery due to bad attitude by health personnel. Nurses shouts at patients, an attitude that is not professionally correct. The poor wages have also aggravated things as they have led to the resignation of health personnel. Approximately 2 000 personnel's are said to have resigned in search of greener pastures^{6.}

- These are mechanisms that are put in place to guard against cases of vaccine cheating such as obtaining fake certificates WE HAVE ENOUGH VACCINES FOR EVERYONE : ED newsdzeZimbabweNewsdzeZimbabwe
- 5. https://www.herald.co.zw/health-sector-loses-2-000-workers-in-2021/ 6

5.8. Natural Resource Governance Issues

Generally, if there is good natural resource governance and economic inclusion, when a mine is opened in an area, local people are expected to benefit the most in terms of employment opportunities. This is vital in the alleviation of poverty and realization of shared economic growth. The country is targeting to achieve an upper-middle-income status by 2030 and this is largely anchored on the performance of the mining sector. There is a rising global demand for mineral commodities especially those that support green energy like platinum, lithium, and nickel.⁷ The mining sector has been booming as new mining investments are registered. However, the mining host communities are not experiencing significant benefits in terms of job creation. About 88% of total respondents highlighted that most decent posts are being occupied by people from outside, with locals only given menial jobs and being employed on a temporary basis. One respondent in Mhondongori in Zvishavane highlighted that mining workers are being drawn as far as from Harare when they have capable individuals in the local area.



Figure 9: Employment opportunities for locals in mining communities

The study also established that of the few people who are in mining, older men were dominating whilst there are fewer women and youths. The lack of employment creation is largely affecting young people who are already struggling with unemployment which has risen to over 80% over the years. Consequently, the youths are now indulging in alcohol and substance abuse, early marriages, and other criminal activities. About 82% of respondents attested to increased crime in the mining communities especially from violent machete gangs as well as increased cases of unwanted pregnancies and high prevalence of diseases like HIV. The study also noted challenges for other groups like people with disabilities (PWD). The respondents narrated a lack of support for the Persons with Disability to increase

7. https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2020/05/11/mineral-production-tosoar-as-demand-for-clean-energy-increases their participation in mining. According to one key informant, the mining sector has institutionalised disability exclusion and it seems like the government will not do anything about it any time soon. As there is great policy mismatch with respect to disability and mining frameworks. The youth with disability are facing double discrimination for being young as well as having a disability.

Case: Unresponsive and irresponsible City of Mutare in Chinese sick quarrying deal

Residents on seeing that something unholy happening on Dangamvura mountain were up in arms against this oriental carving of the mountain. It was spontaneous as residents demanded for accountability and transparency regarding the mining activities. In an online petition dubbed #gomoharibatwi" concerned residents lampoon the incestuous and corrupt deal calling for the immediate stoppage of all mining activities. Residents demanded that Council explain itself and also produce the contract with the Chinese company.

In opposing the quarrying deal, residents have raised the following critical issues:

- That the mine is less than 100 m from the main Dangamvura water pipeline
- That there are two huge water reservoirs/tanks 200m away which may be affected by the blasting activities.
- There are two major roads 400m away namely Dangamvura link road and Chimanimani Road
- There is a new residential location Natao Destiny 500m away from the mining location.
- Dangamvura is 600m away with a school nearby.
- That City of Mutare provide the contract

In the absence of an EIA and a technical report from Council which prompted the parceling out of the mountain, there is no objective means of verifying how the Freestone Mining envisaged mining activities will not ruin the infrastructure and health of residents. As pressure mounted, council issued a statement on the 17th of November where they professed ignorance of the fact the Freestone had commenced mining activities on site and directed that the company seize the earthworks since the company had not done an EIA as required. Freestone Mining also issued a statement on the 18th of November in which they claim that they were only preparing the ground but not mining. They further said that the company was in the process of acquiring an EIA and will only start mining when all legal requirements had been met. The company then removed its plant and equipment from the site.

CORAs leading the battle for accountability and transparency demanded for a meeting with the local authority to thrash out the outstanding issues resulting in

two meetings where Council was forced to reveal the terms of the lease agreement although the local authority wants to proceed with this deal despite the opposition from residents. Although the lease was presented, however, council failed to provide the contract. Residents have vowed to resist the Chinese attack on Dangamvura mountain ready to defend their mountain and a number of options are being considered which range from occupying the site, litigation, demonstrations, and other non-violent actions.



6. SOCIAL SERVICE DELIVERY FINDINGS

Social services are the backbone of most poor people who face erratic income flows. As such, State assistance becomes crucial because poor people have a high propensity to consume, i.e., they spend almost all of their incomes on consumption with little for savings and investments. This is opposite to the rich who have a lower propensity to consume thus having enough to invest in the welfare of their offspring, could be health care, education, housing, or water. Although most public goods and services generate positive externalities, a lack of government intervention may lead to a break in supply. Consequently, there is a need for government to prioritize the delivery of these services as the national gains outweigh private gains. For instance, educated (developed human capital base) and healthy individuals are relatively more innovative and productive than less educated and less healthy. Quality infrastructure will make distribution of factors of production and goods & services fast and cheaper while well maintained public parks and recreational centres will guarantee quality leisure (rest) time for citizens. This ultimately gives the country a competitive advantage against its regional counterparts thus being able to attract more investment, locally and externally. The benefits of high investment cannot be overemphasized in terms of the employment of resources like capital and labour as well as the fight against poverty. Therefore, this section gives the state of public services in Zimbabwe, guided by the findings of a survey done in 57 districts across the country for November 2021.

6.1 Availability of Home Health Care Providers

Home health care providers are crucial for the health care sector especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic as they reduce the overcrowding in medical centres. They ensure that health emergencies are resolved in the shortest period before they could get out of hand. However, the success of home health care service provision is hinged on its affordability, a function of the number of options available (to give competition). Also, home health carers should be friendly and respectful as well as have a diverse language to ensure that all members of the society are not excluded from receiving an effective diagnosis.



Fig 10: Home Health Care Provision

The survey results show that 44% of home health care centres are in a fair shape while 30% are good with only 26% rated as poor. Although this is commendable, it was shocking to note that 72% of home health care services are not affordable to locals. This is a big challenge because having a good health care centre that cannot be accessed by many people will not serve its right purpose. Be that as it may, about 53% of respondents were satisfied by the available health care options.

In terms of the health professionals' etiquette (helpful and respect), only 52% of the districts surveyed rated it as fair with a staggering 34% not satisfied at all. The lack of respect for patients by health professionals is largely linked to remuneration (salary and other fringe benefits) as well as conditions of work (availability of medical equipment, drugs, and the patient-to-nurse or doctor ratio). In Zimbabwe, conditions of service for many health care professionals have deteriorated in line with the underperformance of the economy and this is demoralizing workers. However, in terms of language diversity, only 26% of the respondents rated it as poor with the rest being satisfied (49% fair and 25% good).

Case: Chewumba and Chidobe villagers in the outskirts of Victoria Falls lament poor service delivery (lack of clinics) and ineffective representative democracy. Speaking during Policy Indaba meetings organized by Youth Invest, a community-based organization promoting the youth and women's sustainable development through synergy effort and capacity building, women from Chewumba and Chidobe village highlighted that they have limited access to health care facilities. The picture below shows Chewumba Woman Action Group members explaining that their nearest clinic is located 16km away from their village.



The women attributed this to the poor road network which connects the villages to the clinics located over 16km away, and still, does not have adequate nurses and medication. The Chairperson of Thuthukani Women Action Group said that COVID-19 saw an increase in transmission of diseases with no clinic to assist hence the need for Government to set up mobile clinics. The chairperson added that the COVID-19 lockdown increased the cases of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) with the crime rate also escalating due to lack of police presence in their villages. Hwange West Member of Parliament, Honorable Godfrey Dube who was in attendance commended the women for raising the issues and committed to table the policy issues at Parliament and work with the local leadership in tackling local issues such as the mobile clinics.

6.2. Quality of Health Care Facilities

The survey findings augur well with obtaining realities in Zimbabwe. Typically, the quality of health care facilities is a function of capital investment being made per year. The buildings need constant maintenance and this is the same for medical equipment. Unfortunately, due to years of underinvestment in health care infrastructure, public health facilities have dilapidated significantly when compared to the for-profit private sector. Ideally, private-sector health care should not be the only available option but exists to augment public health care. Most public institutions are lacking medical equipment to treat chronic illnesses like cancer and diabetes patients. Public policy experts are of the view that, for the maintenance of service quality, the government should spend at least 15% of its annual spending on the health sector -the Abuja Declaration.



Fig 11: Healthcare Facility Status

ZIMCODD November PRM situational survey indicated that nearly 60% of health care institutions in Zimbabwe are in a dire state (poor) and require a complete revamp. A nadir 3% are viewed by locals as being very good and a meagre 7% are good. This is a worrisome development that should be corrected if the dividends of a healthy population are to be realized. The majority of citizens (99%) cannot afford private health care as it is too costly and have dollarized their prices. Dollarization is benefitting the rich individuals (1%) who are earning in foreign currency.



Fig 12: Health and Wellness

The survey also revealed that 78% of ambulance services in the 57 districts surveyed are in a poor state. It is shocking to note some public hospitals are having a single ambulance to service the whole population. This anomaly was also reflected by the Auditor-General, for instance, the 2019 audit report highlighted that Mutare City Council had 1 ambulance which was used for both medical and fire emergencies. Also shocking is the finding that about 65% of senior citizens' health care services are poor. While it is government's policy that senior citizens should access free health care, there is little support from the national budget specifically for the elderly yet they require top-notch care as they face numerous disturbances associated with aging such as hearing, tooth, and eyesight loss. The monthly payments being given

to pensioners by NSSA are insignificant to support private health care access. As for maternal care, the study found that it is poor in 51% of the districts surveyed.

6.3. Access to Safe Sanitation and Social Amenities

The public's access to safe sanitation and social amenities has also deteriorated significantly. This is a danger to the health of the public as local authorities are failing to guarantee access to sanitation and social amenities like a regular collection of refuse and functional public toilets.



Fig 13: Sanitation and Social Amenities

Sewer bursts have become the order of the day in many urban residential areas and this is contaminating water sources. The chief cause of this is that the urban population is growing at a faster rate than the rate the public is investing in critical social amenities. As such, urban areas particularly Harare are still struggling with medieval diseases like cholera and typhoid.

The survey found that 49% of the districts sampled are facing challenges of uncollected garbage. Also, 67% of the districts have poor public toilets, and 73% lack affordable public housing. The housing challenge continues to persist since the attainment of independence as the government has failed to devise an efficient public housing market. Currently, the country is facing a housing backlog of about 2million units. The residential land market is now dominated by corrupt land barons who are charging exorbitant prices. In some instances, these barons work hand-in-glove with public officials. Also, some local authorities like Gweru are operating without a clear housing policy.



Fig 14: Other Social Amenities

The survey also found that 72% of public parks are poor as 84% of these public areas have poor benches and other infrastructure. About 77% of respondents are not satisfied with the state of recreational facilities. As for shopping centres' convenience, 46% of the districts have poor access to shops, 29% are fair and 23% are good. This is largely the case in rural areas where shops are scattered around, and people walk long distances to access one.

Case: Rusape Town Council fails to maintain an iconic sports facility. The iconic sports facility, Makoni Country Club which was once a prestigious club lies in deplorable condition. The facility which was once well-maintained giving aesthetic views is now a thing of the past. There is nothing left to suggest that the club used to be a hub for different sports personalities. Makoni Country Club size was reduced when Rusape Town council allocated residential stands on the course. The picture below taken by ZIMCODD CORA shows a Makoni clubhouse that has dilapidated and now requires significant renovations



Moreso, the place now belongs to a farming cooperative as most of the club's and has turned into maize fields. Sand poachers have not helped the situation as the sports fields are now littered with open pits. Also, the other part has been turned into a dumping site as shown below.



Since 2019, the council wanted to resuscitate the club and take it back to its famous glory days but nothing has happened to date. There is a need for proper management and the council must give back to the community.

6.4. Water Supply

Zimbabwe continues to face challenges in accessing clean, safe and potable water, despite it being a right that is vividly guaranteed by Section 77 of the Constitution. Water is needed to support life under the sun and is also a critical input used in industrial production. Further, water is a resource that facilitates the realization of other goals such as health. If people drink contaminated water, it exposes them to diseases like cholera.



Fig 15: Availability of clean, safe and portable water

The survey found that 71% of the 57 districts sampled are receiving water irregularly with only 24% receiving it regularly while 5% are not accessing clean and safe potable water at any interval. This shows that there is a lot to be done by the government before the water issue is resolved in Zimbabwe.

Case: Water challenge in Chiredzi

During a season highly characterized by farming and heavy rains, water provisions were once again under a microscope. With the province boasting high levels of water in Lake Mutirikwi, Tokwe Mukosi, and various other dams, one would hope for better water reticulation and provision, for both drinking and farming reasons. Tongaat Hullets has been solely responsible for water reticulation in the district, but water cuts have been experienced by residents from as early as 6 am to after midnight daily. Some areas do not get running tap water and that is a great cause for concern during this COVID-19 era.

Recently farmers in the region faced a water shortage after Manjerenji dam broke down. There was no water provision for most farmers in Mkwasine and it's appalling how there was no backup strategies in case of unforeseen contingencies. The livelihoods of most farmers will be hugely affected as a result of poor planning once again. Most of their crops will wilt in the Lowveld heat and that will lead to a loss in income for farmers across the region.

With the water reticulation all burdened on Tongaat Hullets, it would be better for the local authorities to divert some of their income to investing into systems that make water provision better, both drinking and farming during a vital farming period. Water should be prioritized amongst the residents of Chiredzi, who are also highly dependent on farming for their livelihoods. Therefore, local authorities have to pay better attention and increase their efforts for clean and safe drinking water as well as better structures to ensure the abundant farming water does not get wasted.

Case: Mutasa RDC to Prioritize service delivery

Residents in Mutasa district are calling on the Mutasa Rural District council to prioritize service delivery among other council businesses. Since September 21 residents are failing to access tapped water in their homes yet they are still paying water bills. This is a worrisome situation since water is a constitutional right for every Zimbabwean.

The worsening part of the situation is that residents in Penhalonga are now battling diarrhoea and of course fear is grappling of the current detected omicron variant. The situation has persisted for 3 months now, and no action has been taken by the MRDC and recently the Zimbabwe Republic Police had to intervene to stop the planned demonstration on right to water. The situation is getting worse as most

of the water in the local rivers is no longer safe to use due to effluents being disposed by illegal mining activities.

The situation is worsening by the day as the local clinic is overwhelmed by the cases of diarrhoea being recorded. The most painful scenario is Mutasa district has got plenty of water sources but the biggest challenge is that MRDC has not invested in infrastructure development so as to harness its water. It is disheartening that the district buys water from City of Mutare residents are reliably informed that there is a huge debt that needs to be settled before they receive water. To date there is no clear roadmap on how this will be solved and residents are praying for the rains so as to ease their situation. The community is divided due to this water crisis, others are calling for a dialogue and others want to take MRDC head on.

6.5. Road Networks in Local Communities

Economists generally agree that a road is an economy. This is so because good roads facilitate the movement of factors of production, people, and efficient distribution of final products. Also, good road linkages reduce segregation of communities and accelerate commerce. Consequently, maintaining road networks is crucial in the fight against poverty as it opens up areas providing people with easy access to employment places, health facilities, education services among other social developments.



Fig 16: State of Local Roads

However, a backlog in road maintenance being experienced by Zimbabwe is causing lasting damage to road networks which will take years to resolve. This is also inhibiting economic activity as most rural areas have poor road connections, the situation which gets worse during rainy seasons. Because of this, transport costs in Zimbabwe are one of the highest in the region.

The study found that 51% of local roads in the areas surveyed are poorly maintained, 39% are fairly maintained while 10% are well maintained and in good shape. This is, however, a slight improvement from findings in October which revealed that 58% of the roads are poor. The slight change is likely attributed to the government's efforts

to maintain damaged roads through the Emergency Road Rehabilitation Programme (ERRP). The government pledged over ZW\$30 billion for roads rehabilitation as it had earlier (February) declared all roads a state of disaster due to heavy rains received during the year. The 2022 national budget has also set aside over ZW\$300 billion for infrastructure including roads. The survey also found that 78% of the surveyed areas lack well-lit streets, a problem attributed to long hours of load shedding by ZESA and vandalism of street lights. More so, 51% of local roads do not have readable traffic signs and 84% are without visual and audio pedestrian crossings. This endangers the life of both motorists and pedestrians.

While ERRP's gradual progress is commendable, many road networks remain in a dire state and need a facelift. The following stories shows the predicament being faced by residents due to poor maintenance of roads:

Case: ERRP program to transform Tsvingwe Area

Earlier this year, the government declared the country's roads as a state of national disaster. In this regard, it announced the launch of Emergency Road Rehabilitation Programme 2 (ERRP2) targeting major feeder roads into towns and cities. The story below shows Tsvingwe suburb in Manicaland benefiting from the ERRP program. Residents of Tsvingwe high-density suburb have welcomed the rehabilitation of the road which links their area with the St Augustine's Road saying the development will ease the transport woes in the area.



This section of road in this area has been in a bad state for the past two decades, a situation that contributed to transport problems mainly during the rainy season. Traffic could not go up the steep slope after the Tsambe River Bridge. Residents said transport operators have been shunning their community when it rains as accessibility is difficult on slippery roads. ZUPCO buses and kombis would also withdraw their services due to the wet weather conditions. It was only left to the mushika shikas who would take the risk and ferry commuters at exorbitant bus fare rates inconveniencing both workers and school children.

Case: The need for a good road and bridge network in Nyanga to facilitate the movement of people and trade between communities

In Nyanga North, villagers are appealing to the government to release funding to repair bridges that were damaged by heavy rains that were received from last season as this is now resulting in villagers failing to access essential services. Some of these bridges were damaged in 2013, and it's almost 9 years without them being repaired. Two tropical storms, Chalane and Eloise, hit Manicaland Province resulting in massive destruction of infrastructure.



The Nyamatubu bridge in Ward 2 connects people to Avila High and Primary school, Avila hospital, Avila shopping center, and Chisero where most people are surviving through mining which is being done there. Around 2015-2016, Nyanga district brought 30 bags of cement for the repair of Nyamatubu bridge but they were all taken to private use by the authorities who were there that time. No one was reported or arrested for that. Villagers in Ward 1, ward 2, ward 5, ward 9, and ward 11 are the most affected ones with heavy rains destroying infrastructure. Rwenya bridge which is 800 meters, connects people from Nyanga district to Mudzi district in Mutoko, Mashonaland East province. These people trade together, but can no longer move freely with their goods because Rwenya bridge was badly damaged by floods in 2013. Transport services have been cut off. People have to travel long distances via Harare to get to Nyanga and Mudzi for business.

In 2018, the engineers valued the repair of the bridge at US\$4 million the figure that is now higher because of inflation and continued damages due to delayed repairs. During political campaigns, politicians promise to repair these bridges but when they get into power they relax, forgetting what they promised to the people. There are so many reports on people especially school children who died attempting to cross the flooded Nyamatubu and Rwenya rivers because their bridges were washed away in 2013. Nyanga north villagers are calling on ZINARA and the government to urgently repair these bridges because businesses are incurring huge losses while people are losing their lives in trying to cross flooded rivers and also are failing to access markets to get essential services.

6.6. Public Transportation

The provision of public transportation is also crucial in the context of rising economic instability. Transport costs are rising in line with general trends of prices (inflation) in Zimbabwe. This is also being fuelled by rising global prices of oil, of which Zimbabwe is a net importer of oil - it takes the price as given. The fuel prices are also affected by high import duty, excise, and carbon tax among other taxes that are levied by Treasury on all fuel being imported. Because of these factors, Zimbabwe has one of the highest fuel prices in the entire SADC region. Therefore, the only way to cushion the public and businesses is through the introduction of subsidies such as the ZUPCO subsidy facility.



Fig 17: Public Transport Services & Infrastructure for PWD

The survey results show that public transport is fairly affordable in 44% of the districts with a nadir 5% rated as good and the rest are poor (unaffordable). Also, 46% of districts agree that public transport is reliable while 38% were of the view that although affordable, it is not reliable. It is worrisome to note that the majority of areas (68%) surveyed rate public transport as insecure while 57% posits that it is not time conscious. The insecurity comes from the fact that most privately-owned buses that joined the ZUPCO franchise were not subjected to comprehensive inspection by the Vehicle Inspection Department (VID). Further, because of a limited fleet, ZUPCO is being overwhelmed by huge passenger traffic affecting its ability to be on time always. There is also nothing for the PWD community as well as the survey revealed that 97% and 90% of districts lack special transport and bus stops that are friendly to people with disabilities respectively.

Case: ZUPCO monopoly in Bindura leading to a serious shortage of public transport

The coming up of ZUPCO omnibuses monopoly that takes short routes within Bindura for routes such as Chiwaridzo -Town (now ZW\$70.00) and Town -Bindura Hospital (now ZW\$70.00) led to private operator's combis to stop operating. Within 3 months from June 2021 in operation, ZUPCO branded combis have suddenly disappeared. Residents who work in Bindura CBD and stay in areas such as Chipadze, Shashi, Bindura Hospital, Clever-hill, Garikari, Chiwaridzo Phase 2, Woodbrooke, and Brockdale equally face serious challenges hiking mushika-shika which costs US\$0.50 per route. This has made transport problems create serious security challenges for students who are made to hike private cars each morning to attend school. Mushika shikas are now ferrying people who want to get in and out of town and are always bribing the council and the ZRP police. The picture below is showing mushika-shika ferrying people at the poor mans' corner in Bindura



Bindura Municipality fails to properly construct a bus terminus, this is having a toll on the commuting public especially people with disabilities.

Bus terminus prevents passengers trying to board or alight in hazardous situations such as at intersections or where a bus turning and is not using the curb lane. The Bindura Municipality has failed to properly erect a convenient and safe bus stop for combis taking short routes. This comes after the council demolished the main bus stop that took passengers taking short routes within Bindura. Apart from serious life-threatening scenarios that lead to, the council has been losing a lot of money from operating combis. Despite having collected revenue tax and setting in place a ZWL2500 operating disk per week for every operating combi, there is little to show on the efforts to restore the old bus terminus. Mushika-shika came up with a place on their own just behind the TM supermarket in Bindura. The routes are Shamva- Bindura, and all local routes.



The above shows a self-imposed public bust terminus that is just behind TM shops in Bindura. The place is congested and poses serious threats for accidents as people are loaded in private cars along the road that links the intersection to the Central Business District.

7. CONCLUSION

The PRM SitRep continues to create a fertile ground for radical and incremental policy shifts as it continues to unpack the anomalies that are being encountered in public resource management. The November PRM Sit Rep concludes that, there is a lot that still need to be done if the government is to attain vision 2030 in as far as public resource utilisation is concerned. The study noted that, rent-seeking and corruption is still at the core of public resource management. This is further worsened by the fact that, the government continues to fail to provide wider and viable social protection services as evidenced by the rise in educational inequalities.

8. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

 Involve citizens in Public Resource Management - Communities are not being included in public resource governance. In most cases, residents are not being consulted in decisions made by their local authorities. Where consultations are done, they have become rituals as most of the demands by residents are ignored. This is usually revealed by anti-poor budgets that are being designed and approved by the government yearly. For example, the 2022 national budget is full of regressive taxes like the US\$50 cellular tax and the infamous 2% tax (intermediated mobile money transfer tax, IMMT) which affects poor citizens the most.

ZIMCODD believes that public consultations are key in the implementation of public policy as they allow for the building of an evidence base, engendering transparency in the process as well as cultivating ownership of the outcome by all the stakeholders. As such, authorities should strive for a maximum attendance of residents when undertaking these consultations. This can be achieved through increased public awareness through the use of local channels such as community radio stations, public notice boards, and billboards among others.

More so, authorities should seriously consider the public's concerns and demands. There is also a need for authorities to devise innovative ways that abolish the dominant ideology of patriarchy to encourage the participation of historically marginalized groups particularly young people and women who in turn constitute the majority of the total population (women 52% and youths 67%).

 Implement full devolution - ZIMCODD urges the government to uphold the concept and principle of devolution and participatory governance. Decentralisation of political power and spending responsibility to subnational governments remains key in deciding their own budgets and setting their own development priorities. This is critical to empower citizens to make locally based development choices and improve the delivery of public services.

Zimbabwe is urged to go back to constitutionalism as the supreme Constitution provides the framework for devolution of governmental powers and responsibilities in Section 264 with tiers of government outlined in Section 5. Sub-section 1 provides for devolution of governmental powers and responsibilities to provincial and metropolitan councils and local authorities. Section 301(3) of the Constitution further provides that a budget of at least 5% of the national revenues raised in any financial year should be allocated to the provinces and local authorities as their share in that fiscal year.

- Intensify COVID-19 management including social protection Although the government's efforts to manage COVID-19 are commendable, ZIMCODD notes that COVID-19 is still a threat with possible emergence of new variances therefore the government should put strict measures with respect to pandemic monitoring and management. The government should also curb corruption in polyclinics so as to ensure optimum operation of vaccination process. The government must urgently institute an efficient, just and equitable social protection system to mitigate the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on poor and vulnerable groups including the informal sector which has become more vulnerable than ever.
- Fast-track the disbursement of ERRP funds to revamp Road Infrastructure A Road network is crucial in facilitating commerce and improving the livelihoods of citizens. As such, while the ERRP has managed to uplift some local roads, the pace of the programme is worrisome, a challenge being caused by slow disbursements of funds from the Treasury. These delayed disbursements are also affecting the cost of the programme as inflation erodes the value of the local currency.

Therefore, the government should ensure that budgeted funds are quickly disbursed to expedite socio-economic development. Also, road infrastructure programmes should be designed and targeted mostly at marginalized communities especially in the rural areas. Zimbabwe still has communities that are facing severe transport challenges because of poor road infrastructure whilst some are not road-linked at all. If not addressed, poor infrastructure will cost the country billions annually as the cost of doing business skyrockets driven by high transportation costs. Also, local firms will be rendered uncompetitive compared to their regional counterparts.

• Invest more in Public Transportation - The available mass transit systems are inadequate. The transport woes are exacerbated by the monopoly awarded to ZUPCO by the government. The gradual re-opening of the economy from stringent Level 4 lockdown to now Level 2 has increased the demand for local travel thus overwhelming the ZUPCO fleet as evidenced by winding queues at bus terminuses. This increases the risk of the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and is robbing citizens of their deserved resting time in the context of a deteriorating macroeconomic environment. The pace at which the government is capacitating the parastatal given the status quo is a cause for concern.

Since 2018, it has managed to increase the fleet from 77 to 789 and this translates to a meagre 15 buses per month in a population of approximately 16 million. Therefore, the state should invest more in mass transit systems to cushion the commuting public. In line with the general domestic price level and rising global prices of oil, ZERA is hiking prices of fuel almost monthly thereby affecting the transport cost. Further, the procurement of these buses should be done transparently to reduce the prejudice inflicted on the public by tenderpreneurship deals.

Increase Water and Sanitation spending - Zimbabwe is facing acute water shortages and poor sanitation in rural and urban areas alike. Where water is accessed regularly, it is not clean and safe as councils struggle with the importation of water chemicals amid a shortage of foreign currency. This is dangerous as it results in the outbreak of diseases such as cholera and typhoid.

Consequently, the government should accelerate the drilling and assembling of boreholes across the country to ensure every community has access to clean and safe potable water. Local authorities (LAs) should curb corruption to ensure that public funds are spent transparently and efficiently so that residents receive value for their money. This improves the administration of a social contract between the state and its citizens where the state collects taxes from citizens in return for providing better standards of living, for instance, the provision of clean, safe and potable water.

In addition to political interference, debtors of local authorities are burgeoning as many people and businesses no longer pay their dues resulting in poor service delivery. There is also a need to increase spending to revamp sanitation especially in urban areas where the population has ballooned overwhelming the existing infrastructure. • **Prioritize delivery of Health Care** - The provision of health care is fast approaching low levels last seen during the 2007/8 hyperinflation period where the system nearly collapsed with an acute shortage of medication, medical equipment, and health professionals. Given how important health and well-being are to children, the elderly, and the productivity of a country' s workforce, the government should prioritize health spending.

This can be achieved through consistently committing at least 20% of the government budget to health. The existing setup which is over-relying on donor funding is not sustainable especially in the current context where the government is cracking down hard on non-governmental organizations through the gazetting of amendments to the PVO Act - these amendments are expected to be rubber-stamped by the Legislature.

There is also a need for the government to intentionally target rural areas where people are facing greater challenges in accessing clinics and hospitals. In most cases, these clinics are understaffed and are without common medical drugs and basic pieces of medical equipment. Also, the 2022 national budget has revealed that it is not only the shortage of funds that is crippling the delivery of public health care but also the delays in disbursing budgeted funds by the Treasury coupled with rampant corruption by public officials. Therefore, Treasury should ensure that funds are availed to respective ministries way on time.



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