

ZIMCODD

ZIMBABWE COALITION ON DEBT AND DEVELOPMENT

WEEKLY REVIEW

08 MARCH
2022

ABOUT ZIMCODD:

The Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZIMCODD) is a social and economic justice Coalition established in February 2000 to facilitate citizens' involvement in pro-people public policy. ZIMCODD views indebtedness, the unfair global trade regime and lack of democratic people-centred economic governance as the root causes of socio – economic crises in Zimbabwe and the world at large.

“Celebrating 20 years of People driven Social and Economic Justice in Zimbabwe”

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Weekly Dashboard

Forex Auction Weighted Rate

Week	Week
22.02.2022	01.03.2022
ZWL124.0189 per USD1	ZWL 127.4864 Per USD1

Consumer Price Index

January	February
4,189.97	4,483.06

Blended Consumer Price Index

January	February
138.02	142.28

Month on Month Inflation

January	February
5.34%	7.0%

Year on Year Inflation

January	February
60.61%	66.1%

Covid-19 Cases

Week	Week
(27.02.2022)	07.03.22
Positive cases 235 975	Positive cases 239 710
Recovered 226 069	Recovered 229 183
Deaths 5 394	Deaths 5 399

National Recovery Rate

Week	Week
(27.02. 22)	(07.03.22)
96%	96%

Contents

1. Is Zimbabwe the Sick-man of SADC?.....	1
2. Monetary Policy Flexibility Key to Economic Stability	2
3. Inclusion of Women in the Extractives Sector: A Pathway to a Sustainable Tomorrow.....	4
4. Zimbabwe Must Do More to Stop Mineral Revenue Leakages	6
5. The Private Voluntary Organisations Bill (PVO) Consultations	8

1. Is Zimbabwe the Sick-man of SADC?

A recent study by an American market research firm, Fitch Solutions, ranked Zimbabwe as a country that poses the highest political and economic risk in Southern Africa. This points to political and economic volatility, that characterises the Zimbabwean governance environment. The findings of the study, captures the reality on the ground as the pre-electoral political environment leading up to the 26th March by elections¹ is becoming increasingly violent. Politically motivated violence and attacks on members of the opposition that led to the death of one person leaving 17 badly injured is a case in point to the political instability hovering upon the nation of Zimbabwe².

Political instability also manifests through political repression, which has become the governments` modus operandi in dealing with the main opposition party. The arrest of five Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) activists and one pedestrian on the 29th of January attests to institutionalized brutality tailor-made to instil fear and silence voices critical to the incumbent. Political repression is a power retention method preferred mainly by authoritarian regimes. It forms the fundamental basis of totalitarianism and neglects the rudimentary principles of human rights such as the right to be affiliated with any political party. The arrest of the Activists attests to the fact that; in practice, the government`s retention of a “sophisticated” violent state machinery³is the biggest drawback to progressive legislative reform efforts to align legal frameworks with the nation`s rights protecting constitution. .

In addition, reports that the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) established a Committee to oversee local media contributes to increased political instability and makes the citizens skeptical about ZEC`s intentions. ZEC`s mandate is to oversee elections and not journalists and media. The monitoring of the media is nothing but a clampdown on the journalists covering elections ⁴.

On the economic front, inflation continues to increase with the February economic statistics released by the Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZimStat) showing that on a year-on-year basis (Feb 2021-Feb 2022), price inflation increased by 66.1% compared to an increase of 60.6% realized in the preceding month (Jan 2021-Jan 2022). This is the highest increase in annual terms since June 2021 when ZimStat recorded an inflation level of 106.64%. From a month-on-month

¹ [FACTSHEET: March 26 by-elections - ZimFact](#)

² [Kwekwe violence condemned - Bulawayo24 News](#)

³ [JUST IN: Five CCC supporters, One pedestrian arrested for wearing yellow t-shirts | My Zimbabwe News](#)

⁴ [Zec goes after media - NewsDay Zimbabwe](#)

(MoM) perspective, that is, from Jan 2022 to Feb 2022, prices mounted by 1.7 percentage points on 5.3% that was realized between Dec 2021-Jan 2022 to 7%. This February MoM inflation rate of 7% is the biggest monthly outturn in 18 months, that is, since August 2020 when the monthly outturn came in at 8.44%. Inflation is the biggest contributor to the harsh cost of living crisis which has entrenched extreme poverty and inequality affecting millions of poor and marginalised households.

Poor public service delivery and cutbacks to basic services under harsh austerity measures continues to weigh heavily on the Zimbabwean population. Doctors, nurses and teachers have been on rolling strikes due to poor wages that are below the poverty datum line. While extreme poverty increased by 1.3 million from 6.6 million in 2021 leaving 7.9 million people in need of assistance⁵. Women and young people are disproportionately affected by the shifting of tax and care burdens onto the household economy without social protection and measures to insulate the vulnerable from recurrent economic and climatic shocks.

The political and economic challenges experienced by Zimbabwe thus raises several questions, chief among them being is Zimbabwe the “Sick man” of SADC?

2. Monetary Policy Flexibility Key to Economic Stability

In the week under review, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) deliberated on the monetary situation of the economy. The, MPC is primarily responsible for ensuring price stability in the economy. It mainly does this through fixing the benchmark policy (interest) rate for the central bank.

Addressing money supply growth

According to a statement released by the RBZ⁶, the MPC expressed concern over the continued increase in broad money (money supply) as this has negative implications on parallel market activities, inflation, and inflation expectations. The unsustainable growth in money supply which expanded by 132% (year-on-year) in December 2021 following another surge of 138% in the prior month remains a major concern for ZIMCODD.

Unsustainable money supply growth is fuelling inflation as too much money results in pursuing the same quantity of goods.

While the 7% increase in prices in February (month-on-month) was partly due to supply chain disruptions and increases in global and administration prices of oil, gas, and cooking crude oil. Domestic factors such as the continued deterioration of the exchange rate due to incessant money supply growth. This is also supported by the MPC which resolved to maintain policies espoused in the 2022 Monetary Policy like a high Bank policy rate of 60%, a high reserve requirement ratio of 10% on demand (call) deposits, and keeping a record low reserve money growth quarterly target of 7.5%. If religiously implemented, these measures have the effect of

⁵ [Taming inflation an arduous task - The Zimbabwe Independent \(theindependent.co.zw\)](https://www.theindependent.co.zw)

⁶ <https://www.rbz.co.zw/documents/press/2022/February/Press-Statement---MPC-Resolutions---25-2-2022.pdf>

reducing ZWL market liquidity thus dampening depreciation and pressures in the economy (see ZIMCODD’s analysis of the 2022 monetary policy⁷).

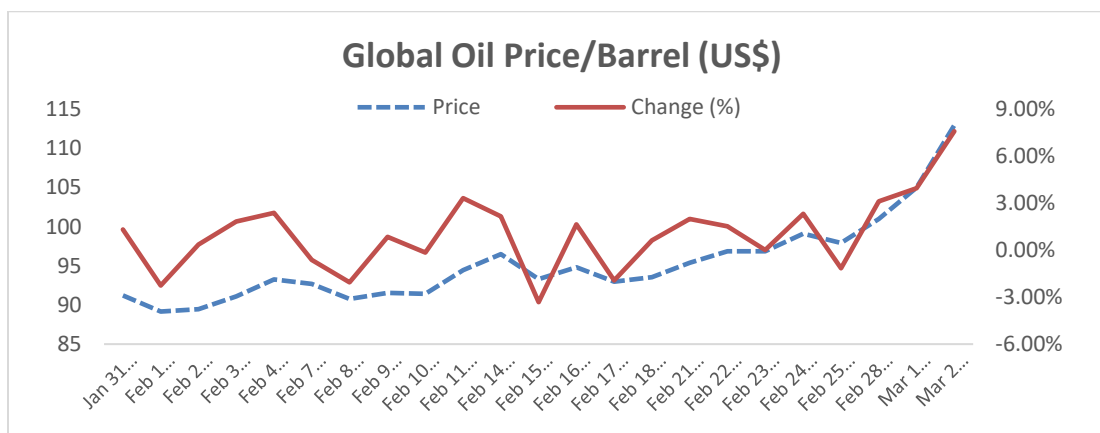
Foreign exchange auction market

The MPC urged the RBZ to clear the foreign currency allotment backlog on the auction by the end of March 2022 and ensure that going forward, allotted funds are always equal with forex available that is to say if RBZ has US\$20 million at hand for a particular week, it should not exceed this amount. This move by the MPC is a bold step that will fast-track the discovery of the true ZWL market price.

The MPC also encouraged synchronization of government payments and market liquidity positions to enable the management of reserve money growth and inflation expectations. More so, the Committee is gradually taking aggressive actions towards the liberalizing of the auction market as it has allowed commercial banks to start processing bona fide transactions below US\$1 000 to augment payments made through the bureaux de changes and the auction market system. It is the public’s view that a well-functioning auction market buttressed by sustainable fiscal spending, money supply growth, and industrial capacity utilization will help dampen ZWL depreciation pressure.

Insulating the Zim economy from exogenous shocks

However, the piecemeal approach to exchange rate determination the Bank is taking coupled with excessive money supply growth will fuel instability given the gravity of risks to the 2022 macroeconomic outlook. For instance, the current election season (that will end after the general elections slated for 2023) may derail RBZ’s monetary targeting. Historically, election seasons are associated with unsustainable fiscal spending which is highly inflationary. The prolonged dry spells being experienced will likely weigh down agricultural production, a development that will have a bearing on food prices. Also, the accelerated deterioration of global geopolitics due to the invasion of Ukraine by Russia is negatively affecting global energy prices. Russia is a major player in the global energy sector hence the imposition of embargoes on its oil and gas poses an unprecedented supply shock.



⁷ https://zimcodd.org/?smd_process_download=1&download_id=5280

Source: Investing.com

The figure above shows a steep increase in global prices since the escalation of the Russian conflict towards the end of February 2022 and Zimbabwe is a net importer of petroleum (a price taker). As such, the spike in crude oil prices has forced ZERA to review upwards the maximum pump prices of diesel and petrol from US\$1.44 to US\$1.51 per liter. Fuel is a key product that is needed to facilitate commerce, mass transit, and industrial production among other uses. The current global dynamics will trigger general domestic price increases through energy-induced imported inflation. Therefore, the government should cushion economic agents by reducing fuel levies like import and excise duty. Ceteris paribus, the government can also institute targeted fuel subsidies to support producers and the commuting public.

In conclusion, only through the implementation of prudent economic policies, can authorities reduce the weight of the current and future risks thus protecting citizens' welfare.

3. Inclusion of Women in the Extractives Sector: A Pathway to a Sustainable Tomorrow

This year, women's day (8th March 2022), is running under the theme, "**Gender Equality Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow**". With this in mind, it is critical to look at a sustainable tomorrow for women's participation in the extractives sector, as mineral resource extraction plays a dominant role in the economy of 81 countries that account for a quarter of global GDP, half of the world's population and almost 70% of the world's poor.⁸

In developing countries, such as Zimbabwe, the extractive sector has great potential to generate growth, support sustainable development, and reduce poverty. However, the real contribution of extractive industries to sustainable development in mineral resource rich countries has been hampered by financial, economic, governance, social and environmental concerns, resulting in the so-called resource curse or paradox of plenty.⁹

The extractive industry remains a male-dominated industry. Women have the same right to development as men, hence, limiting their access to economic and social growth violates this human right. Women are often the cornerstones of their communities, playing critical roles in ensuring the health, nutrition, education, and security of those around them. Investing in women and ensuring their participation is therefore critical not only for their own development, but also for the socioeconomic development of their families and communities.

Global evidence suggests that while the benefits of extractive industry projects are captured primarily by men, women often bear a disproportionate share of social, economic, and environmental risks. To eliminate inequities and ensure that the extractive sector is handled in the best interests of all citizens, promoting equal involvement in decision-making is vital. Governments and enterprises can guarantee that resources are handled more equitably by recognizing and promoting women's engagement in the extractive sector. Extractive industries, can provide prospects for a better living for women, such as higher employment, money, and

⁸ The World Bank (2020) Extractive Industries: Overview. Available at www.worldbank.org/en/topic/extractiveindustries/overview.

⁹ https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sg_policy_brief_extractives.pdf.

increased investment in the local community. In the extractives supply chain, women-led enterprises can thrive. Working with and investing in women makes good business sense - many companies, for example, are recruiting women to drive trucks and run machinery, as they have discovered that women employees have a better safety record and require less maintenance.¹⁰

All too often, these prospects do not materialize, and extractive businesses cause more harm than good to women in and around mining communities. Understanding and managing such risks is critical to realizing the development advantages that extractive industries promise, particularly for women. Ensuring that men and women have equitable access to the benefits of resource development, and that neither are disproportionately placed at risk, requires commitment to understanding and acting on the gender dimensions of the sector. Women must have equitable access to employment opportunities, education, and participation in decision making processes. They must be included in making the decisions that affect their lives in all sectors, including the male dominated sectors. This means including women in community-level project consultations, and national-level policy dialogues on extractive industries as gender-sensitive consultation is essential to ensure that analysis, training and policies in the extractive industries not only meet the needs of women, but enhance their well-being.

With the above in mind, ZIMCODD proffers the following recommendations to the government of Zimbabwe:

- Implement and apply detailed provisions for gender equality and develop policies to empower women in mining.
- Support gender equality in mining with appropriate legislation which provides punitive policy measures aimed at discouraging discrimination against women in the minerals sector. Empowerment charters for example the People's Charter in South Africa can be used to guide the women empowerment process in Zimbabwe and the SADC region.
- Adopt an affirmative action approach to encourage the enrolment of women in key professional disciplines for minerals development.
- Develop and employ education programmes to increase women's access and adaptability in the extractives sector while also broadening their skills. Communication and sensitization programmes will go a long way to eliminate resistance against women empowerment and to harness the removal of cultural barriers preventing women's participation and contribution to the sector. Such programmes must be aimed at both men and women to increase men's sensitivity to women issues and women's empowerment in all sectors of minerals development.
- Linked to the above, it is important to address social issues associated with women in mining effectively and involve women in the adoption of minerals policies that tackle human rights issues.
- Government must enable and support the creation of a women miner's network and connect these with rural women groups to facilitate the sharing of skills and experiences. Such associations and networks must be afforded the necessary resources.

¹⁰ UN Women Promoting Women's Participation in the Extractive Industries Sector: Examples of Emerging Good Practices. Available at <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/10/promoting-womens-participation-in-the-extractive-industries-sector> .

- Finally, the national women economic empowerment framework policies must be reviewed and strengthened to guide women's empowerment in the mining sector.

4. Zimbabwe Must Do More to Stop Mineral Revenue Leakages

While good mineral resource governance seeks to ensure the exploitation of mineral resources for the benefit of the economy, improvement of the quality of life and poverty reduction (Diallo, 2015), Zimbabwe like most African states presents a divergent picture¹¹ of what has been termed the natural resource curse phenomena. Evidence suggests that Zimbabwe continues to bleed in mineral revenue while citizens are disenfranchised, exposed to violence and health risks, and are deprived of economic gains.

According to a recent media article¹², Zimbabwe continues to export its major minerals in a raw or semi-processed form, resulting in the country losing billions of dollars in potential revenue. ZIMSTAT data (December 2021) revealed that Zimbabwe's main exports were semi-manufactured gold (42%), nickel mattes including platinum group of minerals (PGMs) (18%), nickel ores and concentrates (13%), tobacco (10%), ferro-chromium (3%), platinum unwrought or in powder form (3%), skins and hides¹³ (1.7%). Such revenue leakages due to lack of value addition and beneficiation militates against the attainment of the US\$12 billion mining vision. Corruption, state capture and illicit financial flows also play a major role in the proliferation of resources leakages.

For Zimbabwe, mining is the epicentre of economic growth and development. As it is, mining sits at the top of revenue generation contributing approximately 70% of the country's foreign earnings¹⁴. The minerals sector is undoubtedly the major foreign currency earner with mineral export receipts expected to grow by 8% in 2022 and contributing to over 16% of the country's Gross Domestic Product.

The Zimbabwean President, H.E Mnangagwa launched a strategic roadmap in October 2019 which envisions a US\$12 billion mining industry by 2023 with the intention to harness and leverage the potential of the mining sector to generate much-needed foreign currency. It is critical to note that attaining a US\$12 billion mining industry will turn around Zimbabwe's economic fortunes and make Zimbabwe a competitive investment hub.

Mining has the opportunity to significantly reduce infrastructural and inequality gaps if natural resource proceeds are prudently managed. However, the contribution of mineral exploitation to the fiscus at both central and local government level remains a contentious issue as the country has not fully benefited from its mineral resources. Current levels of poverty, inequality, and vulnerability attest both to poor resource management through corruption, opaqueness around

¹¹ the country continues to reflect poor socio-economic indicators in terms of health care, unemployment levels, education, household income, poverty (Malinga, 2017).

¹² <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2022/02/zim-loses-billions-in-mineral-revenue/>

¹³ https://www.zimstat.co.zw/wp-content/uploads/publications/Income/Trade/MSE_12_2021.pdf

¹⁴ 2021 National Budget

disclosure of mineral revenue and illicit financial flows as well as to the lack of investment in value addition and beneficiation.

It is worthy to appreciate that Zimbabwe's mining sector is a key pillar for economic growth and has the potential to unlock wider economic opportunities if it is anchored on value addition and beneficiation, domestic local procurement, and indirect job creation along the value chain. With this realization, the government in June 2019 approved the Zimbabwe Local Content Strategy (ZLCS) whose aim is on promoting local value addition and linkages through utilization of domestic resources. In line with the Local Content Strategy¹⁵, Zimbabwe's natural resources including mineral resources should be harnessed for purposes of ensuring value addition and beneficiation of local resources, employment creation, economic empowerment, as well as trade and fiscal expansion.

Implementation of the Local Content Strategy provides a boost to industrial production and growing the economy through forward and backward linkages. It will also contribute to a reduction in import dependence and increase the volume and value of local exports. Mineral revenue indeed has the potential to spur the country's development trajectory. However, weaknesses inherent in the mineral fiscal system, stifle Zimbabwe's capacity to collect sufficient revenue and plug mining revenue leakages¹⁶.

The lack of diversified linkages with other sectors of the economy such as manufacturing spawn socio-economic stagnation with outcomes typical of the resource curse. Other countries in the region such as South Africa have enforced local content policies and have managed to drive economic growth by fostering local linkages in the mining sector. To this end, Zimbabwe's attainment of the US\$12 billion mining vision rests upon the extent to which industrial production and economic growth in the mining sector is boosted through forward and backward linkages. This is because local content is a key mechanism to enhance integrated development, and unlock socio-economic benefits at national and sub-national levels while leaving no one behind.

In order to curb further bleeding, strengthen the country's export earning capacity and promote socio-economic development, the government must:

- Implement the Local Content Strategy for broad based socio-economic growth at national and sub-national levels. The government should put forward policies that encourage or force businesses to add value and beneficiation of minerals to increase export earnings as well as employment of local people.
- Institute domestic value addition and beneficiation measures such as relaxing duty on mineral processing equipment for the current miners, reducing licence fees and increasing export incentives for companies that commit to undertake domestic mineral beneficiation.

¹⁵ The Zimbabwe Local Content Strategy was derived from the Zimbabwe National Industrialisation Development Policy

¹⁶ <http://www.zeparu.co.zw/sites/default/files/2019-11/mining%20revenue.pdf>

- Amend the archaic Mines and Minerals Act in line with international best practices as provided for in the 2022 budget. The act does not capture international standards and is not in alignment with the constitution on transparency, accountability and stakeholder inclusion. Furthermore, it is oriented towards extraction of mineral resources rather than their sustainable use. Finalise the Mines and Minerals Bill.
- Publicly disclose all mining sector performance across all the revenue heads and revenue performance of strategic minerals like diamonds, platinum, gold, coal and chrome disclosed in line with principles of PFM outlined in section 298 of the Constitution.
- Reform the mining fiscal regime to afford citizens the right to know mineral revenues from mineral sales, revenues forgone on mining incentives, costs incurred in the mineral value chain and how the mineral revenues are being used. The cost of mining revenue forgone to lure foreign direct investments in mining should be presented in parliament in the budget statements and should be incorporated in ZIMRA quarterly and yearly reports so that mining incentives can be publicly monitored and accounted for to get rid of retrogressive mining deals.
- Fully implement the devolution agenda in line with provisions of section 264 of the constitution. Capacitate local communities to meaningfully participate in mineral resources governance.

5. The Private Voluntary Organisations Bill (PVO) Consultations

The Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare conducted public consultations across the country on the Private Voluntary Organisations (PVO) Bill. The Bill was gazetted by government on the 5th of November 2021 and like any other civil society organisation, ZIMCODD's endeavour towards fighting for social and economic justice is equally affected if the bill becomes law.

On part of government, the major reason for amending the Bill is to comply with the Financial Action Taskforce (FATF) recommendations particularly Recommendation 8, whose objective is to ensure that NGOs/PVOs are not misused by terrorist organisations.

Having capacitated the citizens under the banner of constituency indabas, ZIMCODD saw the need to mobilize its membership to enable them to input and contribute their key demands to the Bill highlighting its implications on the exercise of civic rights and freedom and ultimately citizens oversight in public finance management related matters. This article chronicles the proceedings of the hearings that took place in Bulawayo, Gwanda, Tsholotsho, Chinhoyi, Kariba, Zhombe, Lupane, Mutoko, Rusape and Gutu where ZIMCODD mobilized and conducted a monitoring process of the public consultations by parliament.

Areas Covered by Parliament

One of the most important Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency (GIFT) principles for public participation in fiscal policies and governance is accessibility. As was noted by ZIMCODD across the recently conducted consultations, Parliament did not do justice in terms of ensuring decentralisation of venues so that they are accessible to every constituent. For example, hearings

in the Midlands province were only conducted in Zhombe meaning that citizens from as far as Gweru town, Zvishavane and Gokwe South for example had to abandon the hearing due to transport costs which were beyond their reach. Physical hearings were only conducted in Emakhandeni and Selbourne (Bulawayo) Gwanda (Matabeleland South), Thotsholo (Matabeleland North), Guruve (Mashonaland Central) Zhombe (Midlands), Gwanda (Matabeleland South), Highfields (Harare), Rusape (Manicaland), Gutu (Masvingo) Mutoko (Mashonaland East) and Chinhoyi and Kariba (Mashonaland West).

Some hearings were conducted virtually thus limiting citizens from rural areas a chance to participate in the process.

ZIMCODD Participation in the PVO Hearings

Ahead of the consultations, ZIMCODD conducted sensitization meetings in Harare, Bulawayo, Mutare, Gweru and Gokwe to raise awareness on the bill and its implications on the exercise of civic rights and ultimately citizens oversight in public finance management related matters if it is passed into law. ZIMCODD bridged the knowledge gap, which the Ministry of Labor and Social welfare failed to do and raised awareness on the proposed amendments so that during the consultations citizens are capacitated to say NO from an informed position.

ZIMCODD leveraged on its strong membership through the Social and Economic Justice Ambassadors (SEJA) and Community Resource Monitoring Agents (CORAs) who are spread across the 57 districts. They were not only ZIMCODD's eyes and ears during the public hearings, but also contributed to mobilization of communities to attend the hearings. ZIMCODD also made deliberate efforts to ensure that women and youth are represented in the public hearings giving them equal opportunity to shape the development trajectory and influence policy change through effective participation.

Key Highlights from the Public Hearings across the country

1. Level of Participation

There was high attendance of women and youths during the hearings with youth constituting nearly 80% of the total participants. There was active participation from all the groups, and through their submissions, there was a clear indication of a fair appreciation of the bill. One of ZIMCODD SEJAs from Gokwe South managed to handover a written submission with over 1500 signatures to the Chairperson of the team. Openness is one of the important principles in public participation. The committee was open about its mission and citizens were invited to air out their concerns using language of their own choice. An email address clerk@parlzim.gov.zw for written submissions was also shared.

2. Parliament Neutrality and knowledge of the bill

Parliamentarians frequently demonstrated partisan understanding and interpretations of the Bill. At other points Parliamentarians struggled to fully elaborate the Bill's provisions. For example, during the Emakhandeni and Chinhoyi hearings, the Chairperson steering the hearing failed to adequately and eloquently unpack the contents of the bill only to refer

participants to read on the Veritas website. The Chairperson who steered the Zhombe hearing also did not give a satisfactory explanation in terms of unpacking the contents of the Bill and he was biased and attempted to arm-twist participants towards endorsing the Bill. However, as a result of the robust sensitization by ZIMCODD and other CSOs coordinated efforts, participants demonstrated in-depth knowledge in terms of articulating the effects of the Bill and saying NO to it.

Parliament's facilitation in selecting participants was at times biased. For instance, in Zhombe, the committee failed to stick to stipulated time on the itinerary despite the fact that participants still had contributions to make. The hearing kickstarted at 10.10 am and ended at exactly 11.45 am thus denying many attendees an opportunity to contribute. To many observers, this seemed to indicate that they were not comfortable with the feedback coming from citizens who were saying NO to the bill.

3. Areas affected by violence & disruptive behavior of Participants

It was unfortunate that public hearings in Gutu and Rusape were marred by violence with alleged certain political parties deploying rogue youths who employed hate speech to disrupt the consultations and forcing citizens to endorse the Bill.

ZIMCODD notes with concern the use of verbal violence and intimidation that took place in Bulawayo and Kariba particularly in a bid to disrupt participants from making their submissions. While clapping and booing was clearly condemned, mobilized participants endorsing the bill would use these gestures to disrupt participants who were making submissions against the amendment¹⁷. Of importance to note was the Kariba case, where the chairperson who was steering the hearing deliberately turned a blind eye and ignored the disruptions leaving many participants to believe that it was a strategy used by the ruling party to intimidate participants to endorse the Bill. As a result of the chaos and disruptions, some participants failed to freely express themselves. In another case of Emakhandeni, the meeting was dismissed an hour early, also statements which were pregnant with political connotations were chanted for example in Chinhoyi one participant said that “*nyika inotongwa nevene vayo*” translated to English “a country is ruled by its own people” a ZANU PF campaigning signature.

Way Forward and Recommendations

To Parliament

1. For future consultations, there is need for the government to provide security during the hearings to ensure the safety of participants and to control rowdy elements.
2. Going forward the committee and other civil society organisations could share fact sheets in simplified versions explaining the major highlights of the Bill prior to the consultations aimed at raising awareness on the Private Voluntary Organisations Bill and its implications on citizen participation in public finance management (PFM) related issues.
3. There is need to strengthen the capacity of the committee conducting public hearings so that they can clearly articulate to participants what the bill entails.

¹⁷ [Mat Forum condemns escalating political violence - #Asakhe - CITE](#)

4. The relevant committees must conduct outreaches before the actual hearings commence. Conducting comprehensive outreaches and educational programs to raise awareness among marginalised people in hard-to-reach areas is critical to bridge the information gap.
5. There is need for Parliament to improve on punctuality. The Emakhandeni and Jotsholo consultations commenced way after the time that was communicated. While the hearing was supposed to start at 1400 hours, the committee showed up at 1449hours. The case of Tshotsholo was extreme, while the hearings were supposed to commence at 1400 hours, the hearing started at 1735hours putting the lives of participants at risk as they walk back to their home-steads way after sunset.