

Investing In People for Social and Economic Justice

Public Resources Management Situational Report February 2022



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PRM SitRep (February, 2022)

1. Introduction and Background

This Public Resource Management Situational Report (PRM SitRep) examines the utilisation of public resources across the country and it seeks to determine if the government is judiciously using the resources that are at its disposal. This is because the Zimbabwean public sector has become a haven of corruption, epidemic governance, patronage and tenderpreneurship which has escalated the abuse of public resources. The situation has been exacerbated by poor accountability and transparency which has been ignited by weak oversight institutions. Impunity has not made the situation better as the catch and release phenomena continues to encourage public officials to abuse and steal public resources as they are immune and untouchable. To generate comprehensive research, ZIMCODD carried out a survey in 56 districts across the country. The PRM SitRep concludes with actionable recommendations which; if adopted; will bring about transformation in the Zimbabwean community and lead to the realization of second-generation rights.

2. Purpose

The need for strong institutional and social accountability that promotes national development and growth accounts for this research. This is because the findings from this study will not only inform duty bearers and watchdog institutions on the state of public resources in Zimbabwe but will go further to inform citizens on how public finances are being utilised. This is critical in movement building which is essential for citizen agency. In tandem with the Strengthening Transparency and Accountability in Public Finance Management (STAP) project, ZIMCODD intends to ensure that public finance management issues find their way from the attentive public to the sub-government so as to influence the policy making machinery. Thus, the PRM SitRep intends to promote prudent public finance management.

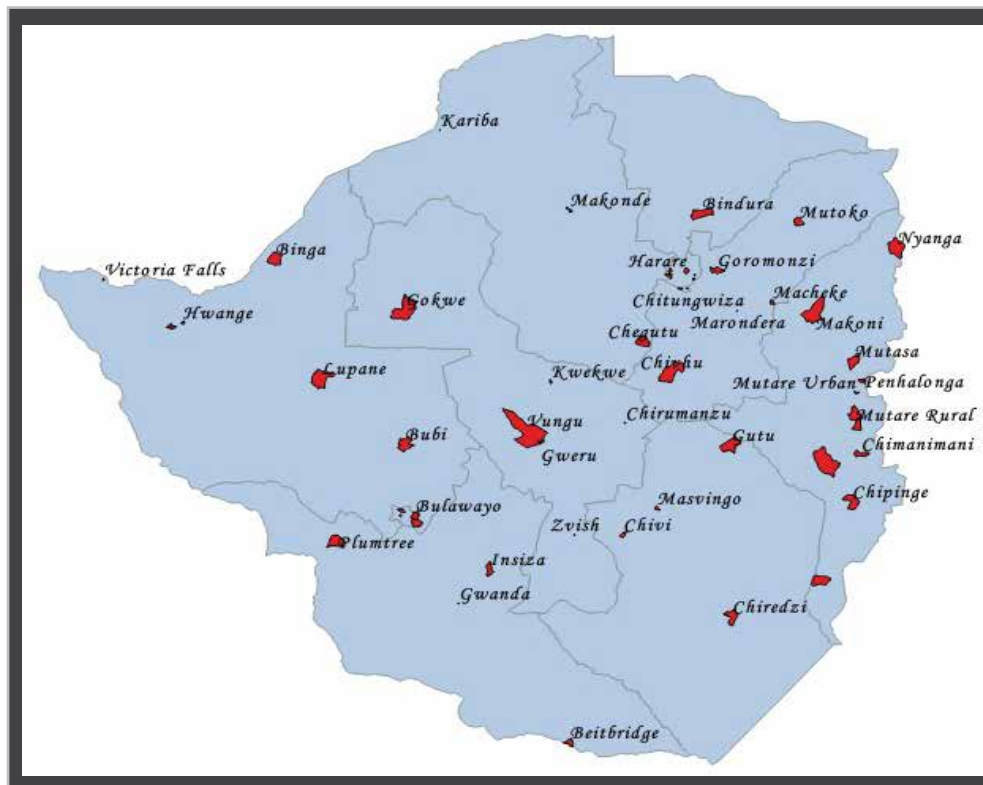
At the core of the PRM SitRep is the need to:

- i) To build citizen agency in public resource monitoring and in particular, COVID-19 resources; Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) and local authority budgets including devolution funds.
- ii) To promote participation in economic governance at the local level and national level.

3. Methodology

Utilising the mixed method research paradigm, the PRM SitRep presents an exploratory, explanatory and descriptive study that captures community voices and aspirations with respect to PRM utilisation. The public resource monitoring and gender responsive public services underpinned the research methodology. Qualitative and quantitative dimensions were tapped into to bring about a comprehensive and judicious baseline survey which was sufficient to inform an advocacy cause. This was reinforced by convenience and purposive sampling complemented by systematic and stratified random sampling. All these sampling techniques played an imperative role in 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. The study population comprised of 56 districts as illustrative in fig one below which shows study catchment area.

Fig 1: Study Catchment Area



Source: Primary Data Compiled by ZIMCODD

4. Public Resources Management Situational Context

Economic: The local currency continues to be under siege from the deflationary pressures associated with a weak foreign exchange market. The situation is further compounded by unsound fiscal and monetary frameworks which are responsible for distorting the pricing regime, increasing the parallel market premiums beyond the prescribed 20% benchmark and the resultant negative exchange rate. Collectively this undermines the confidence around the ZWL. Surprisingly, the Government is at the forefront of 'ditching' the ZWL, preferring USD payment for most public services such as passport fees, toll gate fees and taxes amongst many services. The ZWL has lost its lustre amongst businesses and Zimbabweans as the USD progressively pronounces its dominance as the currency of choice. Despite the waning use and preference of the ZWL, government has retorted that the economy will never revert to the USD given its negative effect on the competitiveness of exports. However, after succumbing to pressure from unions representing teachers, the government undertook to pay USD175 after increasing their ZWL salary by 20%. Despite the paltriness of the USD monthly award, the mere gesture of assenting to USD salaries is a definite sign of re-dollarization of the economy. The offer to pay USD175 per month comes post the pronouncement by the Treasury Chief inclined towards promoting the use of the ZWL. Despite the intention to resuscitate the transactive power of the ZWL, such a pronouncement has failed well before its implementation as the same government has moved in to prop the USD as a 'salarying' currency. The convulsions of policy inconsistency around currency reform continue to foment an unstable pricing regime, worsening the welfare for not only workers but Zimbabweans in general and an uncertain business environment. At this

juncture, it is commendable if government officializes the use of the USD instead of 'unofficially' paying salaries in USD whilst maintaining that the economy has not re-dollarized.

Administrative: On the 10th of February 2022, cabinet ministers and heads of public institutions signed performance contracts. Performance contracts are part of strategic human resource management and the signing of performance contracts is a welcome development as it projects government's attitude towards public service delivery. However, the sincerity of the government is questionable if one is to consider that in 2005 it introduced the Results Based Management Systems (RBM) to which up to date no evaluation results have been published and neither did the citizens witness any change. The goals of RBM were to promote the enhancement of efficiency, accountability and transparency and ensure the improvement of service delivery to meet developed targets. Various institutions were given key roles in implementing RBM. Nevertheless, RBM was either not implemented or followed religiously as evidenced by the decrepitude of service delivery across the entire public sector. Its failure to transmute service delivery attest to either incompetence or a lack of political will in holding public officials to account.

The fact that public sector management is already infused with performance management and that the OPC already has the Minister of State for Presidential Affairs in charge of implementation and monitoring makes one believe that this is a populist stance to make citizens believe that the government is committed to improving the state of public services. This is because there are already existing frameworks that can be used to assess the performance of public officials among them is the Auditor-General's Report. The Auditor-General Reports have been reporting on ministers and heads of public institutions' incompetence for quite some time but nothing has been done. This therefore leaves a lot of questions unanswered key among them being "what makes performance management contracts different from other related performance assessment frameworks? If the government has failed to produce a results-based management evaluation report of public officials since 2005 what will make it start now? Therefore, Zimbabwe does not need new performance assessment frameworks but the implementation of existing ones to the latter.

Political: Zimbabwe's public resource management has been politicized and this can be substantiated by the government's attitude towards the distribution of resources. Public resources are disbursed along partisan lines with the need to centralize power and strategically position the political incumbent by giving them a competitive advantage over the others.



On Sunday the 13th of February 2022, two ZUPCO buses with one carrying the registration AFJ 8894 were deployed to carry ZANU PF supporters to Arcadia for a political rally that was being held to mobilise support for Loice Magweba who is campaigning for Member of Parliament for Harare Central. The buses arrived at 10am and spent the whole day parked only to leave at 4pm when the rally was over. A clear reflection of government's insensitivity in value for money assessment and less of care for its citizens as the buses could have been used to ease the transport crisis which has become the new norm in Harare Central Business. Thus, at a time when citizens are spending hours queuing for transport, buses are spending hours waiting for ZANU PF to finish their rally. Unequal distribution of public resource continues to manifest along partisan lines and perpetuates

inequality and unfair distribution of wealth projecting anomalies in social policies. To this end ZIMCODD condemns the abuse of public resources and calls on ZUPCO to publish the invoice if the buses were hired. Otherwise, the unavailability of the invoices attests to abuse of public resources.

Legal: The mining sector has remained one of the most corrupt and mismanaged sectors yet it has the capacity to transform the fortunes of the country if prudently handled. The attainment of the US\$12 billion mining vision remains a pie in the sky if bold steps are not taken to advocate and lobby for the fast-track of the Mines and Minerals Bill (MMB). The MMB was introduced in order to amend the Mines and Minerals Act (MMA: Chapter 21:05) which is now an outdated legislation. The MMA was crafted in a manner that safeguards the interests of the ruling class and elite. Thus, it has many loopholes that those connected to the upper echelons always manipulate to their own benefit. The recent allegations of mine grabs against the Minister of Mines and Mining Development, Winston Chitando are a cause for concern and a reflection of the abuse of power. Chitando is said to have grabbed eight gold mining claims that belonged to Yakub Ibrahim Mohamed and re-issued them under a special grant to Golden Reef Mining (Pvt) where he is a Director. Vested interests are projected in Chitando's decision as it is embedded with rent-seeking given his history with Yakub Ibrahim Mohamed who at one point engaged Chitando for a partnership before he was appointed Minister of Mines.

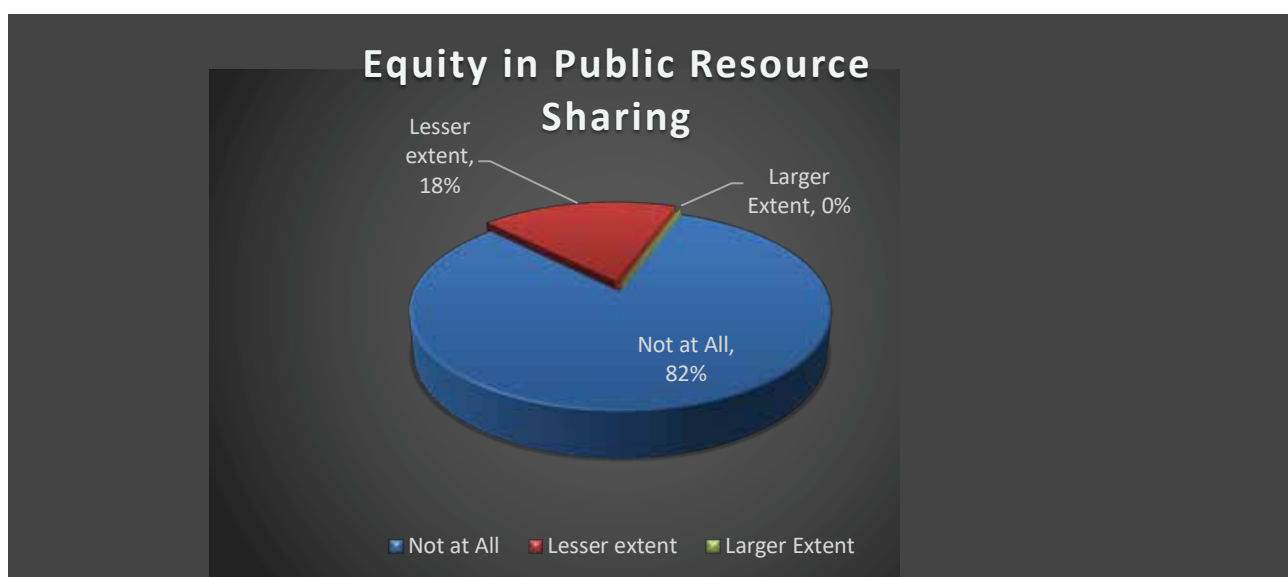
However, the minister might claim ignorance of the grab arguing that he was not aware. A common feature in mine allocation within the ministry which has led to double allocations and confusion among investors. Nevertheless, ZIMCODD believes that if the MMB is adopted the confusion and double allocations are likely to go away as it has provisions that are meant to promote transparency and accountability in the allocation of claims through a cadaster system.

5.0 Public Resource Management Survey Findings

If the challenge of poor public resource management is not addressed in Zimbabwe, it will continue to adversely impact on service delivery. Service delivery, poverty reduction, economic development and sustainability not only depend on the availability of resources but on the ability to use them effectively. Zimbabwe has put in place a range of policies and procedures to improve public resource management in the public sector. However, the limited success of these is illustrated in the findings of the yearly Auditor General's reports which continue to expose the rot in government ministries, agencies, departments, parastatals and local authorities. Such a status quo clearly illustrates that oversight and accountability bodies and institutional and legal frameworks that govern public resource management have been disregarded totally or partially. This section presents a synopsis of public resource management in the 56 districts across all the 10 provinces.

5.1 Equal and equitable distribution of benefits of public resources

Fig 2: Distribution of benefits from Local Public Resources

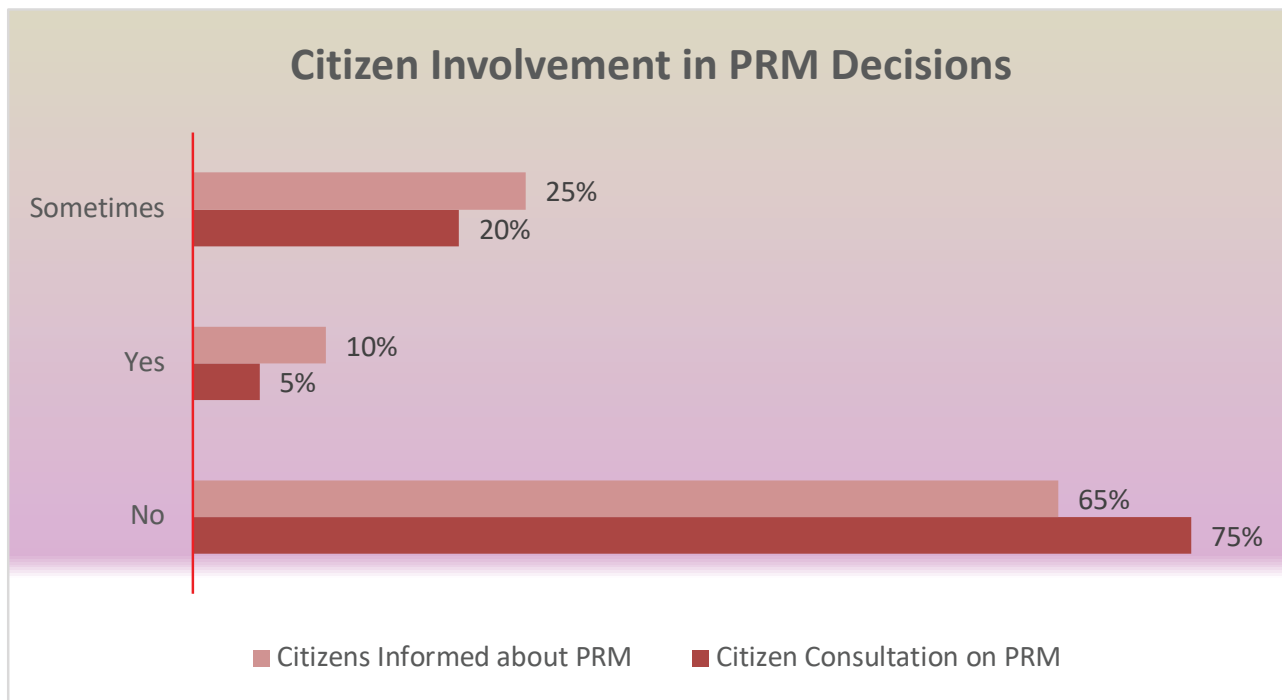


Source: Primary Data Compiled by ZIMCODD

Citizens continue to lament the unfair distribution of benefits of public resources in their communities. The majority of respondents i.e., 46 districts (82%) reported that public resources are not equitably distributed while 10 districts (18%) reported that there is some equity in distributing benefits of public resources, although to a lesser extent. None of the respondents (0%) felt that public resource benefits were equitably distributed.

5.2 Citizens Involvement in Decisions to do with Public Resources

Fig 3: Informed about the Exploitation and Use of Public Resources



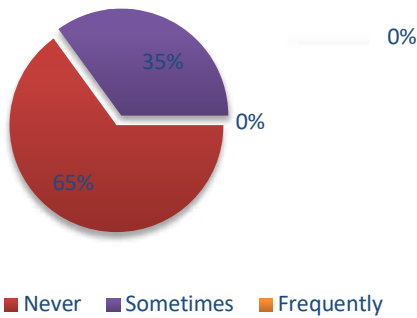
Source: Primary Data Compiled by ZIMCODD

While the devolution agenda was brought to the fore to facilitate inclusivity, decentralization, equitable participation and decision making at the lower echelons of the government in Zimbabwe, there continues to be existential marginalization of communities in PRM at the local authority level. The chart above shows percentage of districts where citizens are sometimes consulted on decisions to do with public resources against districts where citizens are informed or not informed when authorities make decisions on public resource use. As witnessed in 2021 PRM sitreps, marginalization and exclusion continue to be entrenched in local governance architecture. To this end, the survey established that in 42 districts (75%) citizens are not consulted while in 3 (5%) districts they are being consulted and in 11 districts (20%) citizens are sometimes consulted when PRM decisions are being made. The same depressing scenario was observed when citizens were asked if they were informed about PRM decisions. 65% are not informed while 10% are informed and 25% sometimes informed. ZIMCODD calls on local authorities to institute strategies and mechanisms that deliberately entrench accountability through citizen participation in economic decisions that affect them.

5.3 Access to Information on Public Resources

Fig 4: Information sharing at community level

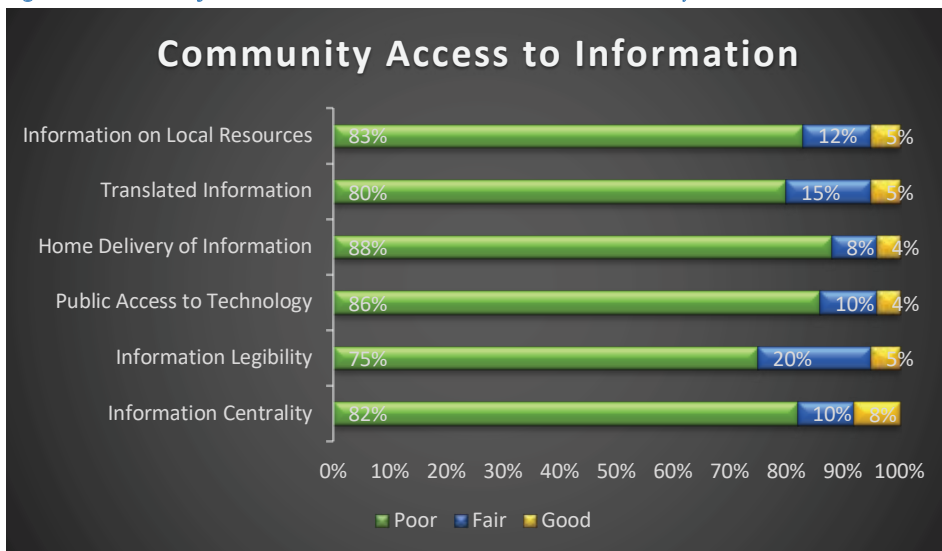
Information Sharing Frequency



As with the December 2021 SitRep, information sharing frequency has remained constantly low. In 36 districts (65%), respondents indicated that local authorities never share public resource information while 3 in 20 districts (35%) respondents indicated that local authorities sometimes share public resource information with none indicating that information on public resources is frequently shared.

Source: Primary Data Compiled by ZIMCODD

Fig 5: Access to Information on Public Resources at community level



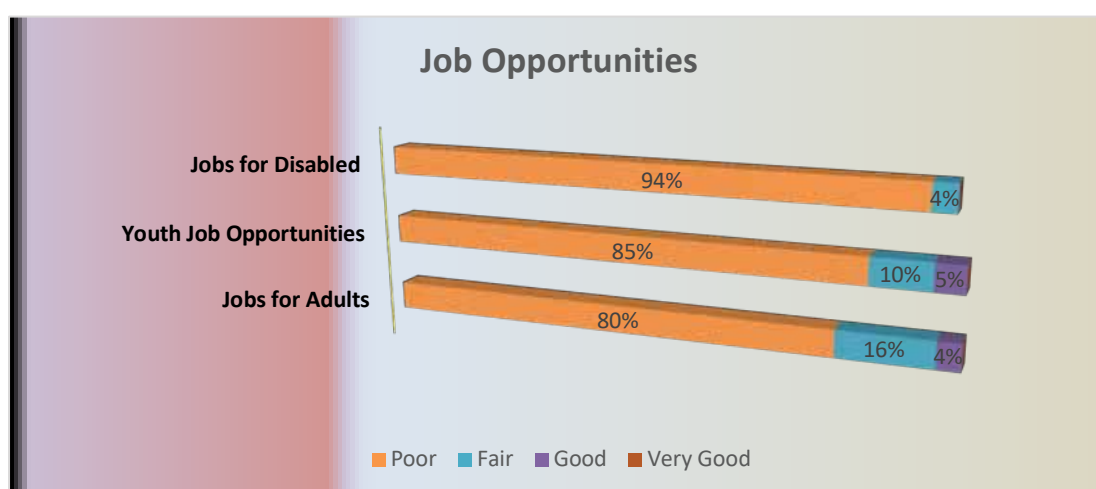
Source: Primary Data Compiled by ZIMCODD

Access to information continues on a downward trend with all variables mainly rated poor by respondents in all the 56 districts illustrating that local governments are not keen to give information. Community access to information in one central source was rated poor in 82% of the districts; information legibility i.e., clearly displayed and printed community information rated poor in 75% districts; free access to technology, computers and the internet in public places was rated poorly in 86% districts and access to home delivered information for people with difficulties in leaving their home was rated poor in 88% districts. Community information that is translated in different languages was rated poor in 80% districts while access to information on public resources such as minerals and wildlife was rated poor in 83% of the districts. Given this background, ZIMCODD calls on local authorities to provide PRM information as this promotes and facilitates community inclusion and meaningful participation in economic governance while it inculcates a culture of transparency and accountability. Thus, provision of access to information remains a vital cog for a transparent, accountable and responsive local government.

5.4 Public Resources Access by Demographic Groups

Access to public resources was also measured across different demographic groups comprising women, youth, people with disabilities and the elderly. As with the previous sitreps, access to public resources by persons with disabilities has continued to receive the worst rating with 93% of the districts rating it poor as compared to the elderly and women groups in which 75% and 65% of the districts respectively rated access to public resources as poor. Access to public resources by the youth was rated poor by 40% while 35% rated it fair and 15% of the districts rating it good and another 10% rating it very good. This shows that there continues to be unequal access to public resources and the situation is worse for vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities. The chart below presents survey findings on assessing access to jobs by demographic groups:

Fig 6: Access to Jobs by demographic groups



Source: Primary Data Compiled by ZIMCODD

Access to employment remains dire for vulnerable groups. From the survey, access to jobs for people with disabilities was rated poor in 53 districts (94%) and only fair in 3 districts (4%); access to jobs for young people was rated poor in 48 districts (85%), fair in 6 districts (7%) and good in 3 districts (5%) while access to jobs for adults was rated poor in 45 districts (80%), fair in 9 districts and good in 2 districts. Despite having laws and policies that aimed at emancipating youth, women and people with disabilities, the survey illustrates that these groups continue to be disadvantaged and vulnerable to entrenched poverty. The job market has nothing to offer while the informal sector was ravaged by COVID-19. This background serves to buttress the fact that at least 49% of Zimbabweans are living in extreme poverty (World Bank, 2021).

5.5 Access to Budget Information

Devolution and citizen participation in economic governance is critical to achieving an Upper Middle-Income Economy by 2030. However, local authorities have been found wanting when it comes to genuine citizen engagement and participation in local authority level budget processes. This is illustrated in the cases below:

Case: Budget on Paper Vs Budget in Action, Harare

An overview of the Harare City Council's budget performance for the year 2021 leaves a lot to be desired as half, if not most, of the goals were not fulfilled. Despite having collected \$8, 788 billion in revenue, ZWL 1.095 billion of devolution funds and a considerable amount from the ZINARA funds, not much development has been witnessed. From the virtual budget consultations held, conversations centered on the need to improve service delivery in the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Roads and Health sectors. Stakeholders agreed that the City must ensure sustainable service delivery; both in terms of the quality and in terms of cost of the services.

One key informant, a Councillor at Harare City Council, blamed the council's poor performance in 2021 due to a plethora of issues ranging from inefficient internal systems, poor planning particularly in project management, enterprise resource planning platform, which is not fully integrated, a structure that is not responsive to programme based budgeting and low revenue collection efficiencies. The local authority keeps losing lots of money through corruption, mismanagement and diversion of resources and this remains a cause for concern as these are resources that could repair our roads and improve service delivery. However, it seems duty bearers only give tokenistic attention to these issues during budget consultations but never implements them. Through the virtual consultations, Harare residents expressed the need for them to be involved in the budget making process, approval, implementation and tracking for better service delivery and sustainable development.

The budget's main thrust should be to spur sustainable service delivery and improve the well-being of the residents of Harare and this is only achievable if the budget is participatory in nature and internal controls are followed to the letter. Drawn under the Theme: Building resilience: Towards Sustainable Service Delivery, Harare City Council presented a budget of \$41,8 billion for the year 2022. The local authority outlined its focus areas including Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), social services as well as public safety and security. Will this be achieved without genuine citizen engagement?

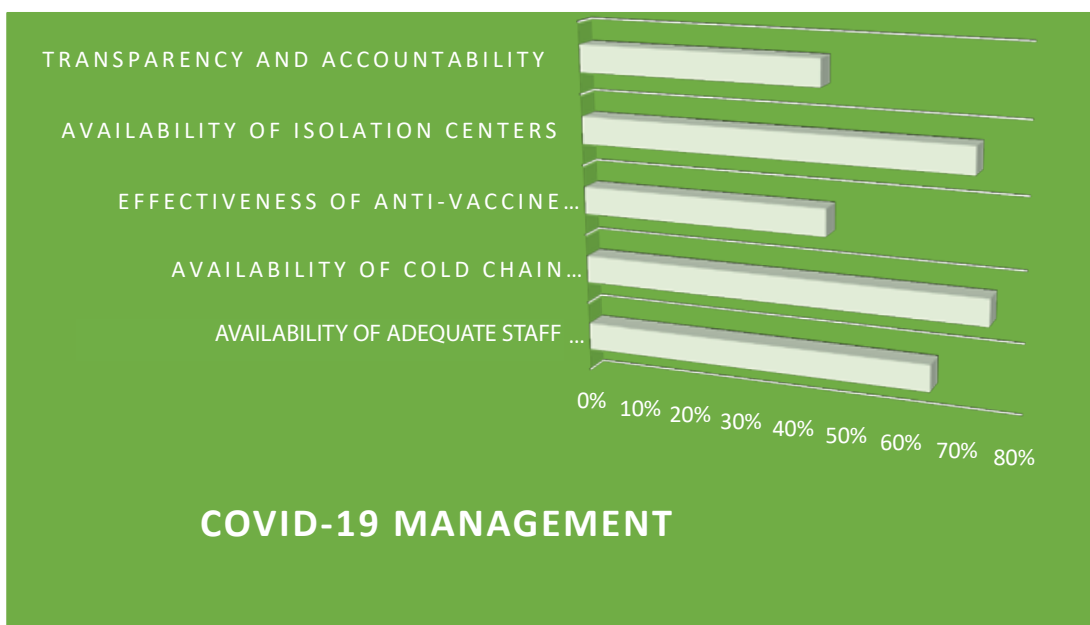
Case: Residents reject tariff hikes, Kwekwe

The month of February saw Kwekwe residents receiving council monthly statements with shocking figures ranging between ZW\$9000 and ZW\$13000. When converted to USD figures they are equivalent to U\$40-U\$80 which are amounts considered too exorbitant for the ordinary citizen. What is more disturbing is the fact that during the budget consultative meetings the residents unanimously rejected the proposed figures meaning council secretly approved them. The reasons cited were that people have been affected by COVID-19 lockdowns which meant limited economic activities resulting in loss of incomes. Another issue of concern raised was the uneven distribution of water as other areas always receive water while for others water only visits in the late hours of the day on selected days yet they receive the same bills. The residents were of the view that part of the devolution funds be channeled towards subsidizing water bills. Having realized that the local authority leadership had imposed tariffs on residents, the residents mobilized with the intention of expressing their displeasure over that incident. The residents met at the Kwekwe Civic Center to picket and sign a petition however, they were dispersed by the police because they were not represented by a Residents Association. Local journalists then provided a petition which was signed by the people present and presented to the City Council. Social and Economic Justice Ambassadors then engaged with the three Residents Associations and negotiated for a merger so that they could fight as a unified force under the Kwekwe Residents Agenda Trust.

5.6 COVID-19 Resources and Key Issues

Despite the decrease in COVID-19 cases across the country, the Zimbabwean populace has been left wondering on the exact funds and resources that the government used in managing the pandemic. Since the emergence of the pandemic, the government only announced the resources it had utilised twice, first the US\$100 million and the additional US\$ 40 million. However, since the decrease in the infection rate, the government has also gone silent on matters related to transparency and accountability. The demise of the pandemic, signified an epidemic in the management of COVID-19 resources. This is because, currently public attention on COVID-19 has been divided by the Ukrainian-Russian war, demise in infection rate and the upcoming March 26 by-elections. Thus, there is a possibility that there is a brewing corruption storm in the administration of COVID-19 resources. Fig 7 shows the survey findings on COVID-19 funds management.

Fig 7: COVID-19 Management



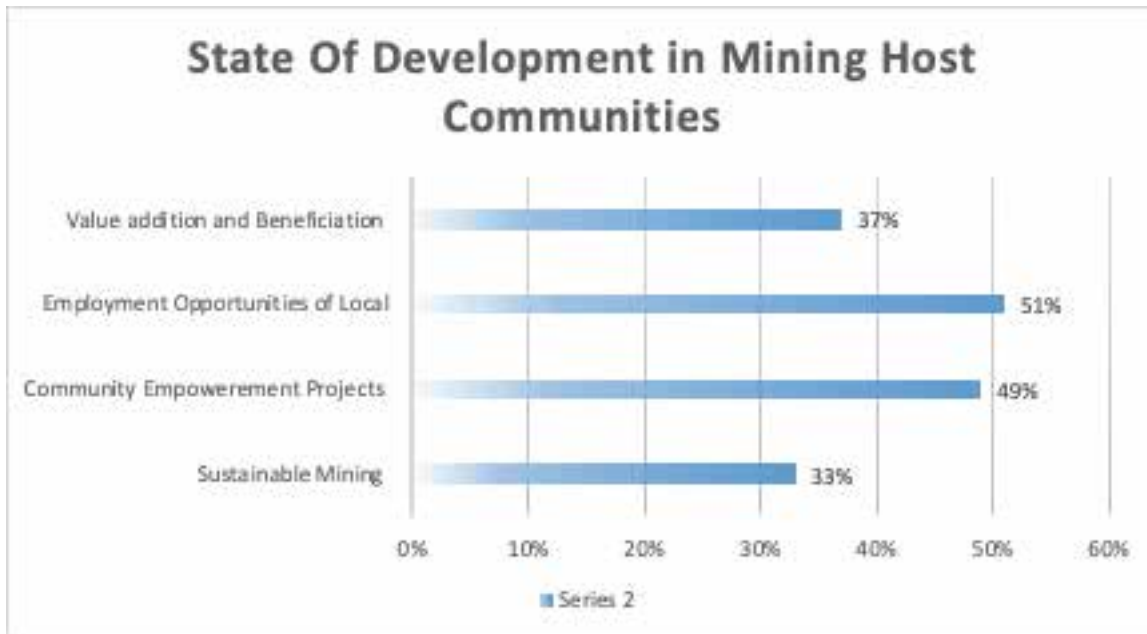
Source: Primary Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

The February survey indicated that transparency and accountability in the management of COVID-19 is at 45%, a clear indication that the citizens believe that the government is not being open in its expenditures. This is substantiated by the unavailability of expenditure granular data that infuses transparency and accountability. The availability of isolation centres was rated 72% a testimony of good strides in pandemic management, while the effectiveness of anti-vaccine cheating mechanisms was at 46% suggesting porous anti-vaccine cheating strategies. 75% rating was given to the availability of cold storage facilities and 65% for the availability of adequate staff in local authority clinics.

5.7 Natural Resource Governance Issues

Misery and unhappiness remain at the core of mining host communities as they are not benefiting much from the minerals within their jurisdiction. The findings of the survey below attest to the challenges and state of development in mining host communities:

Fig 8: State of Development in mining Host Communities



Source: Primary Data Compiled by ZIMCODD

Mining host communities are not benefiting much from the resources within their localities, as community empowerment projects were rated 49%, while value addition and beneficiation got 37%. The mining activities by mining companies and artisanal miners was rated 33% a clear indication of the unsustainable mining activities that are taking place. Desertification and environmental degradation are the signature of mining host communities. However, on employment opportunities, 51% of the respondents noted that they were getting employment opportunities. Nevertheless, one key informant was of the opinion that local people were only getting employment opportunities for positions of general hand and other low-level posts while key posts were a reserve for outsiders.

Case: Natural Resources Not Contributing to The Local Authority Purse Because of Policy

The governance of natural resources has become an issue in the city of Kings and Queens after the realization that Bulawayo has various tourist attraction sites+ and mining activities that are not contributing much to the city coffers. Some of the tourist sites are under the management of the government and these include the Bulawayo railway museum, and the Khami ruins, while other attractions are leased out to either individuals or companies with Nesbitt Castle and Hillside dams as examples.



Impressive architectural design – the Bulawayo Art Gallery

The governance of these entities is a concern as it has been established that though these are housed in the city, the council only gets rents and rates from them. There are no taxes or royalties that are received yet tourists are visiting them in numbers and paying in foreign currency. Essentially, this means the people of Bulawayo have no benefit from these resources.

An interrogation of the city governing laws has revealed that there is a fracture line in policy as there is no mandate for the body running operations to pay taxes or royalties. This has been the outcry with the extraction of minerals, particularly gold where mining companies are also operating under the same laws that exonerate them from the taxes. Bulawayo has numerous mining activities under companies like Newcrest Mining, Prospect Lithium Zimbabwe, Goldmore, Old Nick mine and Fideliquip among others.

This failure by the governing laws to provide for the payment of taxes and royalties becomes a burden to the citizens who end up having an increase in their taxes to try and raise enough funds to cater for the city's budget needs. In the recently approved budget, the total payments expected from the locals constitutes 66.87%. This means the residents are facing a 150% increase in rates. These unfortunate budget increases could be very much avoided if the operating entities were contributing to the city coffers



Nesbitt Castle, Bulawayo

One Councillor from the Bulawayo City Council made a response to the matter saying, “we have companies and individuals who are extracting granite and gold but they are currently not bound by law to pay anything in that regard and neither are they mandated to contribute anything towards Corporate Social Responsibility . This is something that we have noted and we are pushing for the amendment of the guiding laws”.

Another Councillor from ward 22 also confirmed the above and went on further to say that the city buildings themselves could bring in foreign currency as a tourist tour site due to its unique buildings. This is however not possible since most of the buildings are under private ownership. This shows another missed opportunity to bring financial relief to the citizens.

Most of the citizens who were asked for their opinion felt that the council was not exploring options that bring economic relief to the citizens and was opting for the easy way out, which is to constantly increase their taxes.

In the end, this boils down to the fact that Bulawayo has mineral resource deposits of value and attractions that bring in foreign currency. That can contribute to the local public purse and contribute to the betterment of the livelihoods of the locals but they are currently not beneficial as the law is not binding. It is recommended that the policies that are governing the city be revisited and be reformed to make them cater for the residents or the hosting community in terms of cash injections.

6. Social Service Delivery Findings

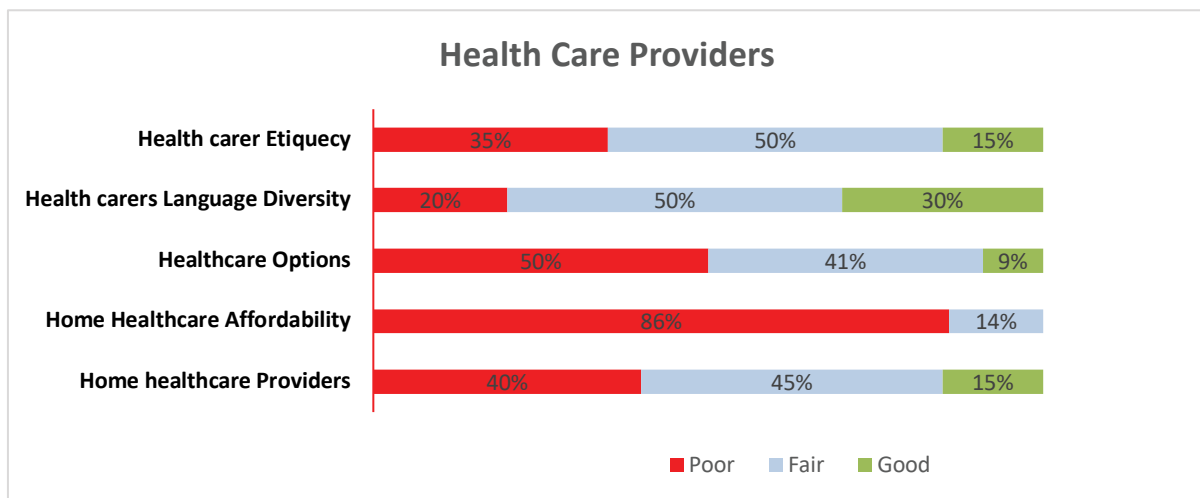
Social service delivery continues to deteriorate in Zimbabwe in line with the dismal performance of the economy. Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZimStat) statistics show that in February 2022 annual price inflation mounted by 66% while surging by 7% on a month-on-month perspective. The Zimbabwe dollar (ZWL) has plunged by a cumulative 7% and 9% in the official and black-market respectively. This unabated ZWL losing streak since 2019 coupled with delayed disbursement of public funds from the budget is affecting public service delivery as it makes procurement of key supplies difficult. As for local authorities, the budget and collections are largely in local currency. Therefore, by the time the year ends the value of the prepared budgets and collections would have been eroded by depreciation and inflation

This, coupled with institutionalized corruption, maximum political and central government interference are prejudicing residents' enjoyment of quality public services.

6.1 Availability of Home Health Care Providers

ZIMCODD's survey in the 56 districts across the country shows that while home health care providers are of better quality, the majority of citizens cannot afford their services. If there is a period that home health care providers have proved to be crucial, it is the current period of the COVID-19 pandemic. Home healthcare helps to decongest the patient population in central public hospitals thus minimizing the spread of the virus.

Fig 9: Health Care Provision



Source: Primary data compiled by ZIMCODD

The results from the survey show that 40% of home health care providers are poor, a 5-percentage point improvement from December 2021. This slight improvement is highly attributed to the economy which has been re-dollarizing gradually since the beginning of 2021. This ability to collect forex is allowing these institutions to improve on their service provision. However, the services have become unaffordable to many citizens who are largely earning in deteriorating local currency.

6.2 Quality of Health Care Facilities

As alluded to earlier, the public health care facilities have largely deteriorated due to a lack of maintenance. In November 2021, Treasury indicated that the Health Ministry had utilized only 47% of its total votes by September 2021. From an outsider's perspective, the slow utilization of budget votes shows that the government is facing a severely constrained fiscal space. As such, maintaining state-of-the-art health institutions has become a tall order.

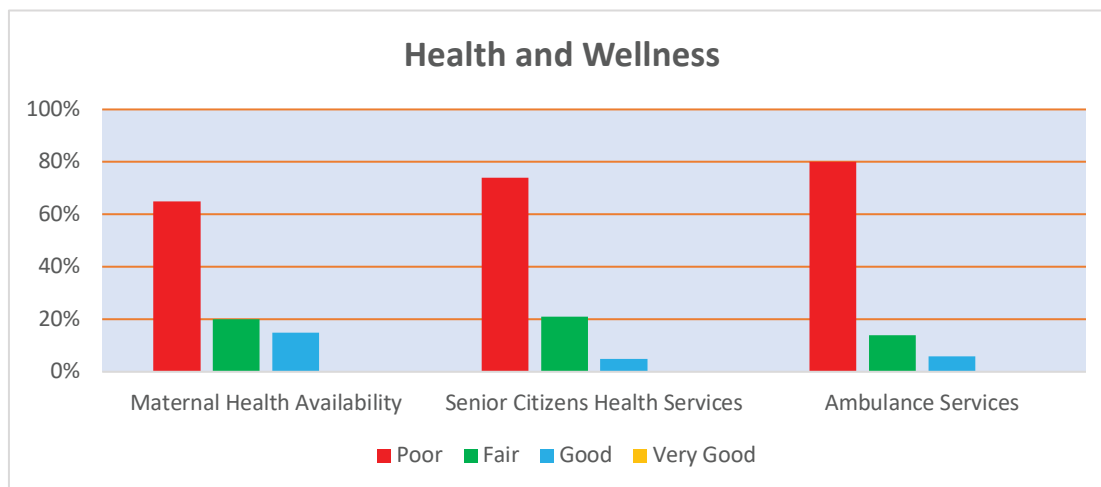
Fig 10: Health Care Facility Status



Source: Primary Data Compiled by ZIMCODD

The survey established that about 75% of public healthcare facilities are poor, a downward trend since ZIMCODD started the PRM Situational Report in April 2021. Only 10% of the facilities have been reported as good while 15% were fairly maintained.

Fig 11: Health and Wellness



Source: Primary Data Compiled by ZIMCODD

ZIMCODD February 2022 SitRep found that 65% of available public maternal health care is poor in 56 districts surveyed while only 15% of districts reported good maternal care. As for health care for senior citizens, 74% of the districts reported poor care for the elderly with 5% reporting good elderly care. Also, a supermajority of districts has poor ambulance services with only 6% having good ambulance services.

Case: Hunyani clinic remains idle 8 months after the official opening, Chinhoyi

In June 2021, the Chinhoyi Municipality announced that they had completed the conversion of Hunyani Beerhall into Hunyani Clinic. The mayor and other council officials opened the clinic amid much pomp and funfair and assured residents that the clinic was ready to serve them. But eight months down the line, the clinic resembles a white elephant.



The grounds of the new Hunyani Clinic choking with overgrown grass.

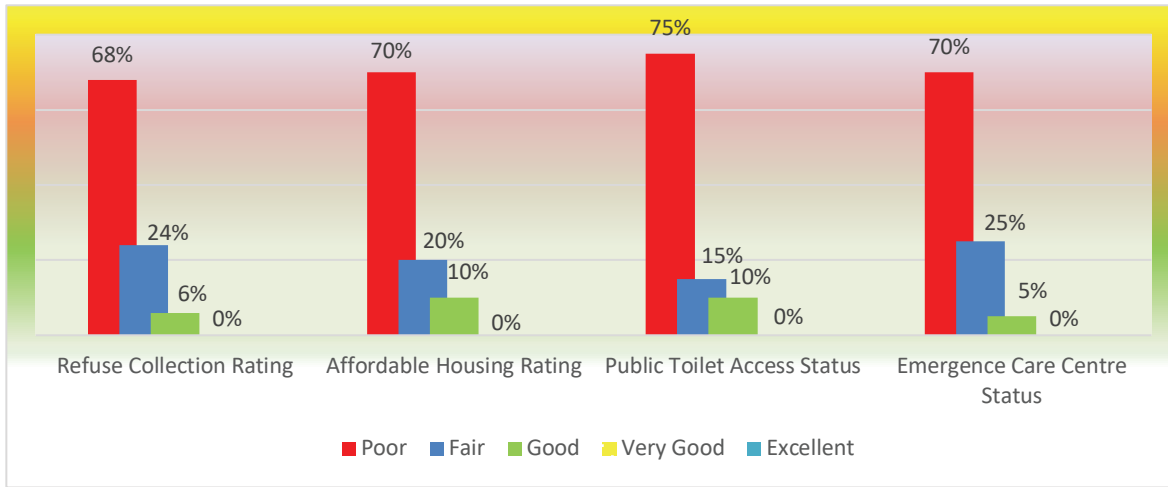
The clinic was renovated using a £10 000 grant extended by the British Council. The grant was meant to cater to the physical renovation of the building as well as buying state-of-the-art medical equipment for the health facility. However, this has not come to fruition. The only renovations done to date include tiling, painting, and minor roof repairs. By the time of writing the article, medical equipment was yet to be delivered. One would wonder if the renovations undertaken had exhausted a £10 000 grant.

The clinic was meant to serve the residents of Hunyani Section (ward 4) and Brundish (ward 13). However, this has remained a pipe dream. The clinic's doors are still shut and this means expecting and nursing mothers and children needing health-care have to make a 3-kilometer journey on foot to the overcrowded Chinhoyi Rank clinic at the bus terminus. This clinic already services 4 wards making it understaffed and under-equipped. In the same vein, social distancing becomes impossible in this covid era. The neglect of this facility which is supposed to be saving lives by the Municipality is a sad occurrence and shows misplaced priorities. This may also lead to the council losing the goodwill of donors if perceptions of misappropriation of donated funds arise

6.3 Access to Safe Sanitation and Social Amenities

Zimbabwe remains a major country in the SADC region that struggles with the outbreak of medieval diseases like cholera and typhoid, an exception for the 21st century. These are results of poor sanitation services as infrastructure is being overwhelmed by the rising urban population as citizens continue to flock from rural areas to seek greener pastures. Social amenities like public sporting grounds are in a deplorable state. For instance, at a national level, soccer stadiums were declared unfit to hold competitive international matches.

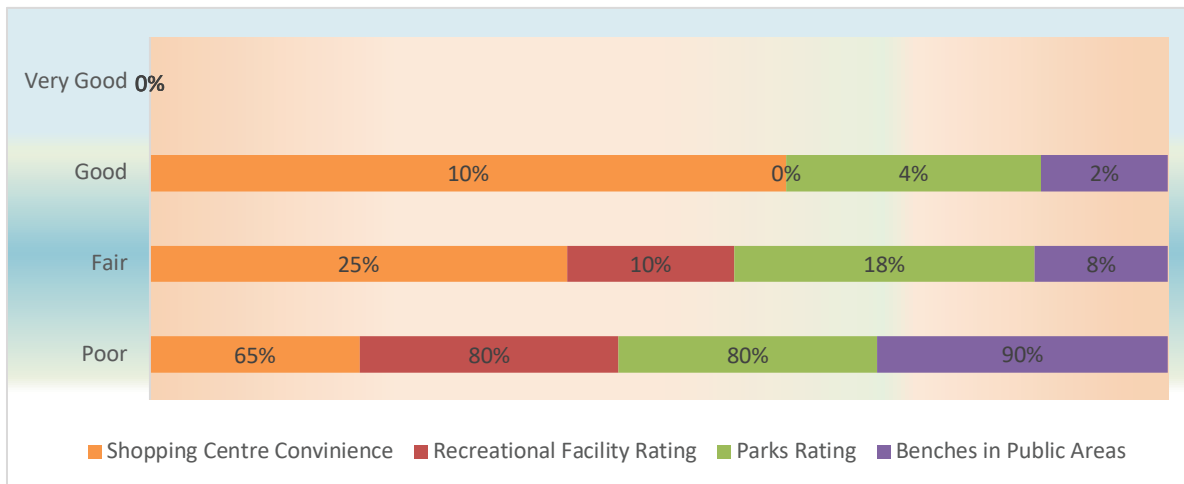
Fig 12: Sanitation and Social Amenities



Source: Primary Data Compiled by ZIMCODD

The survey found that 68% of the districts surveyed had poor refuse collection systems with only 24% rated as fair. As for housing, the survey results showed that 70% of the districts have unaffordable housing. This is in line with tightening economic performance where prices have risen by an annual rate of 66% in February 2022. More so, the survey established that 75% and 70% of public toilets and emergency care centers in the 56 districts respectively were poor. Many local authorities are failing to deliver essential public services due to bad public resource governance which is confirmed yearly by the OAG reports.

Fig 13: Other Social Amenities



Source: Primary Data Compiled by ZIMCODD

ZIMCODD found out that 65% of the districts were experiencing shopping centre inconvenience. Additionally, 80% of the parks and other recreational facilities have deteriorated owing to the rain season.

Case: Abandoned market turned into a bush in Mutasa District

The Tsvingwe Vending market in Mutasa District has been in existence for about 40 years but has been abandoned by the Council since early 2000. The market was home to more than 100 vendors with women constituting a bigger proportion. These vendors were legally registered and also contributed to the revenue collection of Mutasa Rural District Council. However, deserting the market (lack of maintenance) led to the collapse of the roof in 2010.



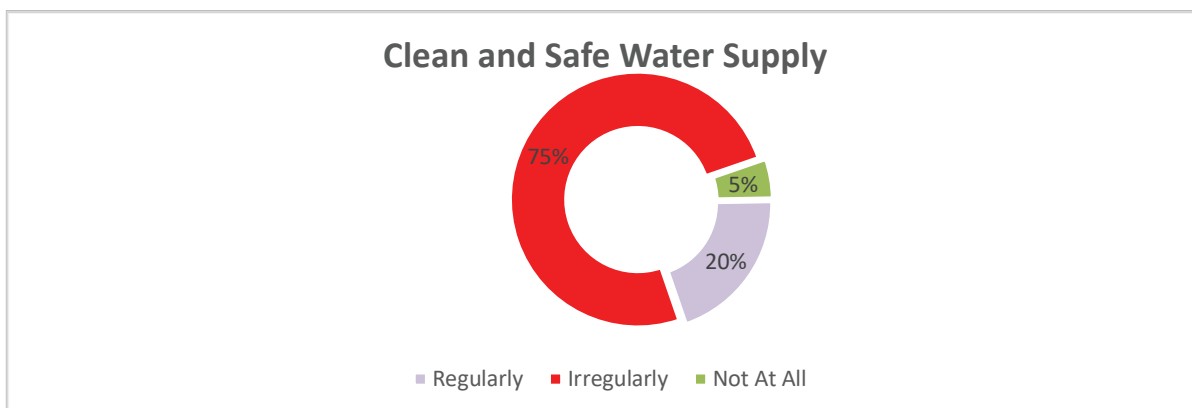
Figure: Abandoned Tsvingwe Vending Market

The situation compelled vendors to sell their wares in the streets at various points with the construction of makeshift structures which is a detriment to revenue collection of MRDC. "Past Member of Parliament and Local Government councillors have been promising to put a state-of-the-art vending market but we are yet to see that materialize. This market is used as a political campaign tool" said a resident vendor in Tsvingwe. With the current increase in population in Tsvingwe's high-density suburb, most families are surviving on vending and informal trading. As such MRDC should quickly revive the vending market to help families put food on their tables.

6.4 Water Supply

Water is a key resource that is key to life on earth. To show its importance, the constitution makes access to clean, safe, and potable water a right for every Zimbabwean. As such, failure by authorities to provide clean water is a clear disregard of the supreme law of the land. With more than 40 years into independence there are many communities; urban and rural alike; without access to clean water

Fig 14: Availability of Clean and Safe Portable Water



Source: Primary Data Compiled by ZIMCODD

The survey established that 75% of the 56 districts surveyed were not accessing safe and clean water regularly. Some urban districts in the southern residential suburbs of Harare Metropolitan like Budiriro reported receiving running tap water from the council once a week. In rural areas, women and young girls are walking long distances for them to access a source of safe and clean water.

Case: Chitungwiza Water Woes Continue



Zengeza 2 Chitungwiza water point

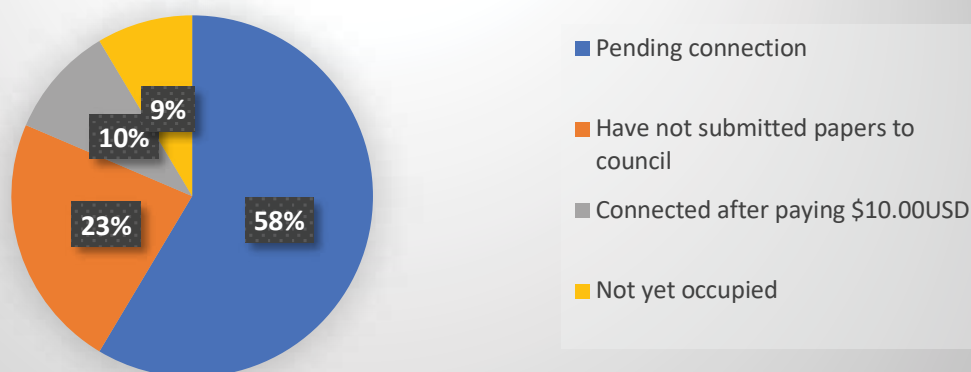
Chitungwiza continues to face acute water shortages. Most women and girls are being constantly exposed to the COVID-19 pandemic, abuse and harassment at water points. Some violent incidences have been reported while several of them have not as women fear to report borehole marshals. With by-elections coming up other water points are being politicized which is also contributing to increased violence incidences.

There is therefore a need to train members of the community who will be responsible for ensuring the safety of women and girls at water points. Women also reported that sometimes borehole access is given depending on which party one affiliates with. There is also a need to prioritise the training of community water champions on gender responsive public services. This will help them monitor the operations at water points and ensure that pregnant women, the elderly and young girls access water with urgency and report any cases of abuse to the police to maintain peace and order in the communities.

Case: Bindura Municipality Bureaucratic Systems Stifle Access to Clean Water

The Bindura Municipality; which bought 2 Hybrid water pumps using devolution funds; has failed to make access to clean water easier for residents. Bindura has internal administrative problems that delay new connections of water. These problems have resulted in the access to clean water being much more irregular despite the acquisition of the 2 hybrid water pumps. There is also some level of corrupt activity for one to get council water formally connected. Residents of Brockdale, a residential area with 200 household units, have complained of the process describing it as “arduous and strenuous”. This has seen residents being made to pay a USD\$10 bribe to be given first preference for a water connection. The effects of waiting for long periods to access water have strong implications in the rise in diseases.

Fig 15: Brockdale Household Units with access to council water

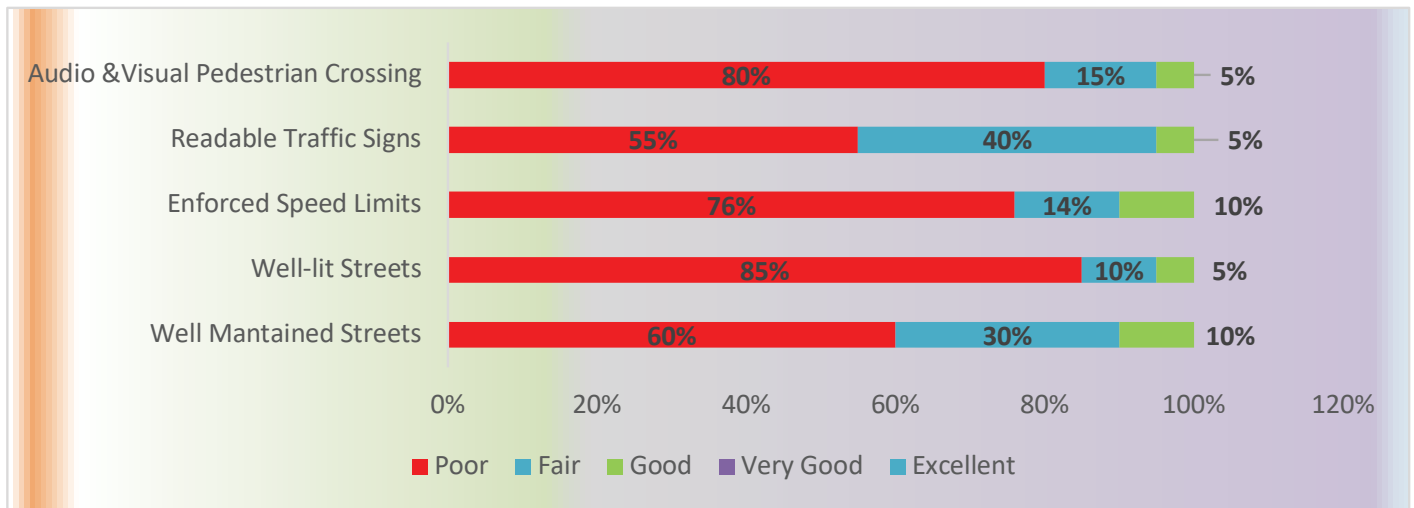


Data collected from the Brockdale WhatsApp Group Survey results indicate a high number (59%) have waited for over 2 months to get a water connection, while 23% have not yet submitted papers to the council for connection and creation of their accounts and 10% who bribed local council plumbers to be connected even when their accounts are not yet out. This is contributing to a marginal loss in revenue. Despite the engagements with council by residents over the issue there is no effective response, with residents being forced to pay administration fees and to join the waiting list.

6.5 Road Networks in Local Communities

The state of roads in many local communities has deteriorated since the start of the 2021/22 rain season. This is because many formerly tarred roads in urban areas have several big potholes while in the rural areas the roads are neither tarred nor maintained.

Fig 16: State of Local Roads



Source: Primary Data Compiled by ZIMCODD

Primary data shows that 60% of the districts surveyed have poorly maintained streets. The survey results also found out that 85% of the districts have well-lit streets while 55% have readable traffic signs. In addition, ZIMCODD’s survey unearthed that 80% of the districts lack functional audio and visual pedestrian crossings. This has a great disadvantage, particularly to vulnerable members of society like young children and people with disabilities (PWDs). As such, the lack of action by authorities is endangering the lives of the vulnerable.

Case: Garikai Narrow Bridge - A death trap

Garikai Residents have increased pressure on Bindura local council to deal with the Garikai narrow footbridge after three young children slipped and nearly drowned while crossing the bridge. The narrow bridge poses a great threat to human life as the flowing water often rises to the bridge’s height during the rainy season. The bridge is used to access nearby service points that is Remnant Private Hospital and Progress Supermarkets.



Garikai footbridge that connects residents to a nearby hospital and supermarket

Due to the delayed disbursement of devolution funds, the outlook of the Garikai Main bridge construction project is negative as the project is running behind schedule. Garikai footbridge is the only alternative connecting the community to basic services like health care, education and food. It is concerning to note that women and young children frequently use this dilapidated bridge which poses a threat to their lives.

Case: Road construction work has resumed in Kariba.

The Jenpick contractor has resumed the construction of Nyamhunga road which had been on halt since August 2021. The state of the road had dilapidated considerably despite it linking residents to essential services like schools, the police station, clinics and the shopping center. The road paused challenges to pregnant women's access to the clinic in the area as they were forced to take a longer route thus endangering their lives as they were exposed to possible encounters with wild animals.



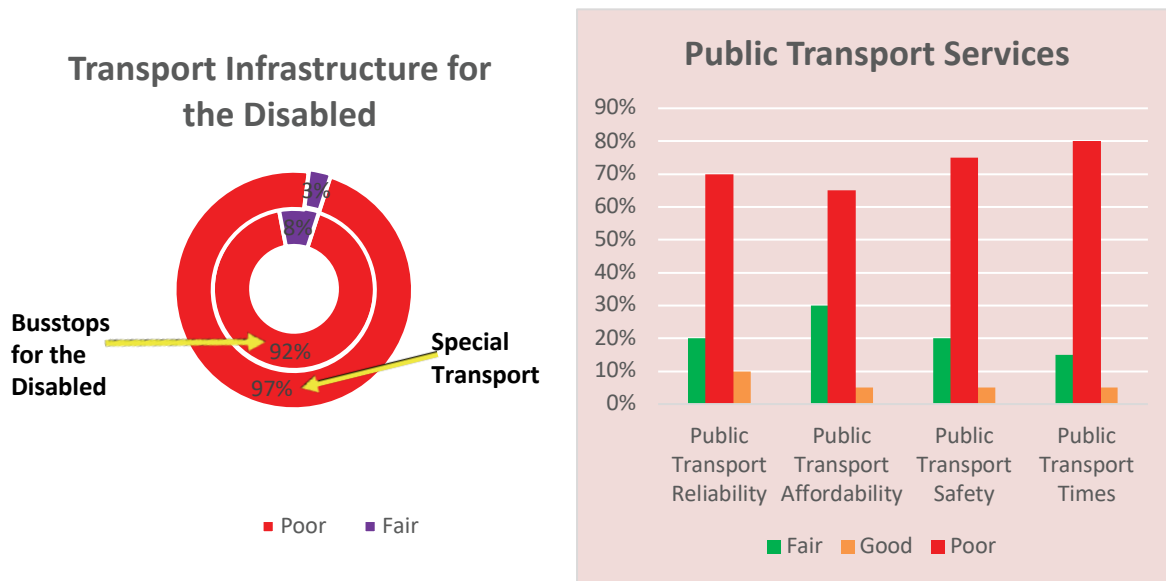
Resuming construction of Nyamhunga road in Kariba

The construction was halted in 2021 following council's failure to pay the road contractor hence the need for the latter to focus on contracts elsewhere. Thankfully, road works resumed on the 25th of February 2022. If completed, this will bring relief to the Nyamhunga community as it will reduce transportation costs.

6.6 Public Transportation

Since the economy started faltering heavily in 2019 to date, the country is facing acute transport challenges. The excessive ZWL depreciation and the subsequent price inflation saw prices of fuel going up thus affecting bus fares. The situation will likely continue powered by the Russia-Ukraine war that has astronomically increased global oil prices. Although the global crude oil market will eventually balance the demand for and supply of crude oil, it will likely continue to push prices in the volatile region until the conflict is settled.

Fig 17: State of Public Transport in Zimbabwe



Source: Primary Data Compiled by ZIMCODD

Results from the survey showed that 97% and 92% of districts surveyed had poor special public transport and bus stops for the PWD community. The survey also found that public transport is not reliable in 75% of districts while 65% of the respondents reported it as unaffordable. More so, the public reported that 75% of public transport is unsafe and a danger to human life. This is largely linked to the rushed approval of private transporters to join the public (ZUPCO) franchise without proper checks on the road worthiness of the buses.

7. Conclusion

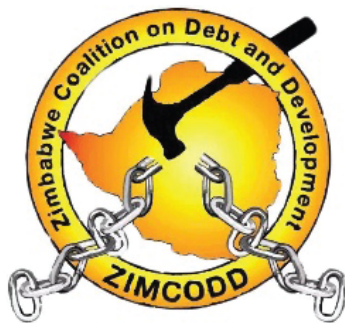
The February PRM SitRep, notes with great concern the continuous dilapidation of public service delivery coupled with poor public finance management. Lack of transparency and accountability in the administration of public resources perpetuates poor resource mismanagement, corruption and economies of affection. The SitRep also noted that, Zimbabwe has weak gender responsive public service delivery and this entrenches gender inequality as women's needs are not considered or prioritised in the delivery of public services. Nevertheless, possible remedial actions and actionable recommendations were prescribed to inform the policy making on alternatives that can be implemented to ensure the attainability of prudent public resource management and viable service delivery.

8. Recommendations

- **Implement OAG Recommendations** - The Auditor-General's audit reports show yearly cases of bad governance by local authorities in contravention of the Constitution and available statutes like the Urban Councils Act. Implementing the AG recommendations will help to strengthen public resource management systems in order to curb leakages and improve public service delivery.

- **Minimize central government interference** - For effective decision-making and efficient public service delivery by local authorities, there is a need for minimal interference by the central government. In the context of depreciating local currency and rising inflation, lack of autonomy for local authorities affects the procurement of services as value is eroded.

- **Minimize political interference** - While the constitution allows for the recall of MPs and councillors, the clause is now being abused and used for political gamesmanship. This is being done at the expense of service delivery yet residents continue to pay high taxes and rates. There is a need for stakeholder engagement to find legal means to make recalls harder by prolonging the process a political party should take to initiate a recall of its member. The government through the Ministry of Transport; should see to it that, ZUPCO buses are not allocated to political parties for partisan activities at the expense of national service delivery.
- **Parliamentary oversight** - For budget transparency, Parliament should be allowed to scrutinize and oversee the actions of the Executive. This oversight is key as it helps to flag irregularities before a huge financial injury is sustained. With parliamentary oversight, the Executive becomes accountable thereby leading to improved public service delivery.
- **Political will** - There is a need for political will from the Executive to allow for the implementation of bold economic reforms especially in the extractives sector. This sector is shrouded in secrecy in the awarding of mining contracts, mining rights and claims, private mining investment deals and flow of mining revenues among others. The Ministry of Mines should see to it that value addition and beneficiation mechanisms are enforced so as to ensure the benefit of mining host communities for national development. The Ministry of Justice should put in place measures and mechanisms that fast-track the ascension of the Mines and Minerals Bill.
- **Inculcate a culture of accountability on COVID-19 expenditure** - The Ministries of Finance and Health should religiously publicise all COVID-19 related expenditures to insulate COVID-19 resources against the scourge of corruption and to ensure transparency and accountability in the management of public funds.



Investing In People for Social and Economic Justice

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