

Investing In People for Social and Economic Justice

Public Resources Management Situational Report, March 2022



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1. Introduction and Background

This Public Resource Management Situational Report (PRM SitRep), examines the utilisation of public resources across the country. It seeks to determine if the government is judiciously using the resources at its disposal. This is because, the Zimbabwean public sector has become a haven of corruption, maladministration and illicit financial flows which have proliferated the abuse of public resources. The status quo has been exacerbated by poor accountability and transparency which has been ignited by weak oversight institutions. The failure by local authorities to neither address anomalies perennially unearthed by the Auditor General nor implement the recommendations prescribed to them by the Auditor-General has also further undermined public service delivery. To generate comprehensive research, ZIMCODD carried out a survey in 56 districts across the country. The PRM SitRep ends with actionable recommendations which; if adopted; will bring about transformation in the Zimbabwean PRM architecture and lead to the realisation of social and economic rights.

2. Purpose

The need for effective social accountability, strong institutions and citizen agency 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 resource management in Zimbabwe but will further inform citizens on how public finances are being utilised and what is expected of them. 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:

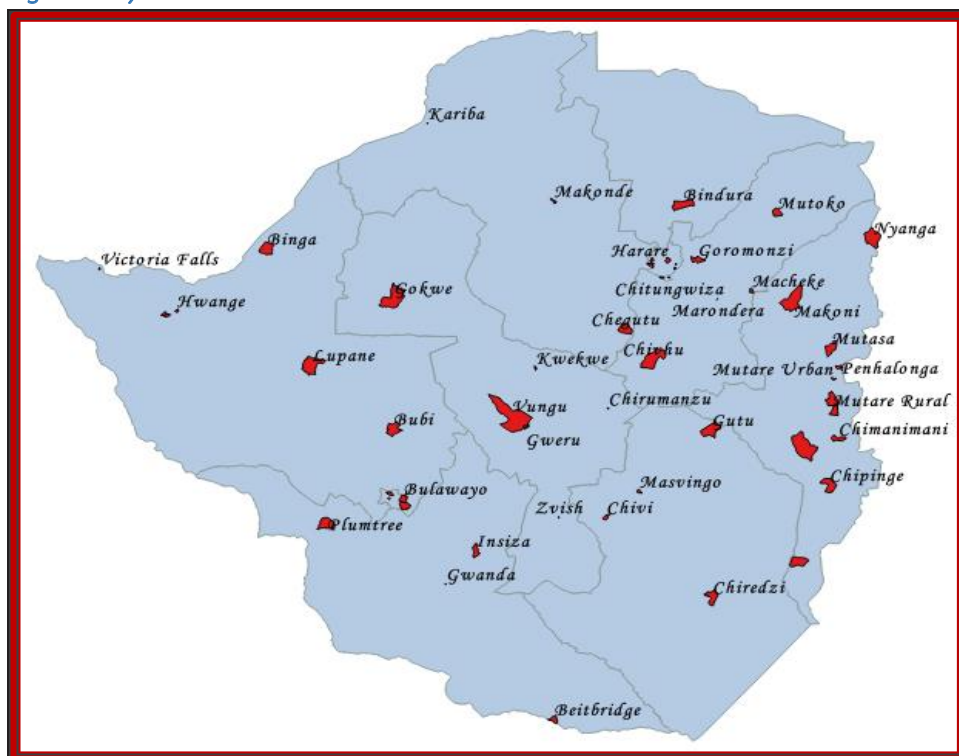
- i) To build citizen agency in public resource monitoring and in particular, COVID-19 resources; Special Drawing Rights (SDRs); local authority budgets and Devolution Funds.
- ii) To promote participation in economic governance at the local level.
- iii) To assess public service delivery under the prism of Gender Responsive Public Service Delivery.

3. Methodology

Mixed method research paradigm was utilised, in a bid to present an exploratory, explanatory and descriptive study that captures community voices and aspirations with respect to PRM utilisation. Gender Responsive Public Service Delivery (GRPSD) and PRM underpinned 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 and complimentary role in allowing the research to have an emic and etic perspective in the utilisation of public resources. 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 illustrated in figure one below which shows study catchment area.

Fig 1: Study Catchment Area



Source: Primary Data Compiled by ZIMCODD

4. Public Resources Management Situational Context

Poor public administration in Zimbabwe has undermined the operational capacity of local authorities across the country. There have been delays in processing bylaws by local authorities and this further impedes on good public service delivery and gives rise to corruption. Corruption in service delivery hinders the human right of equal access to public services and gives rise to inequalities that violate citizens access to services, affecting the most marginalised groups who are often also the most underrepresented. Corruption in Zimbabwe has led to breakdowns in the service delivery chain, and this has resulted in state institutions failing to meet their obligations in terms of service delivery. Inability or unwillingness to curb corruption demonstrates failure by government institutions to adequately provide for human rights as corruption in service delivery is an integral part of the human rights-based approach to development.

Corruption is rampant in Zimbabwe and has resulted in the perpetuation of human rights abuses through inefficient, inadequate and lacklustre public service delivery. The observance of human rights, including socio-economic rights, participation rights and non-discrimination rights, is critical to good governance. One notable gross human right violation currently permeating all regions of Zimbabwe, as a result of corruption, is the human right to water. Although rights cannot be categorised by importance, the right to water is of great significance as it is inextricably linked to many other rights such as the right to life, the right to dignity, the right to food and the right to healthcare among others. The right to water is a positive obligation meaning that it requires active intervention on the part of the state for its fulfilment.

Corruption thus prevents the fulfilment of such rights. Coupled with corruption, numerous factors have contributed to the country's water problems, including the economic decline, droughts affecting water sources, the lack of maintenance of the old water infrastructure, the inability to procure the necessary chemicals to treat water sources, political struggles between the central government and opposition-controlled city councils. Zimbabwe's water and sanitation crisis has been worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic which increased demand for access to clean water, while a nationwide lockdown was implemented, restricted movement and, in turn, access to water sources.

Many common water sources are often contaminated, giving rise to water borne diseases and outbreaks. In Zimbabwe, household access to safe, drinking water is a privilege. Not only is access to potable water a challenge, but there is no adequate waste and wastewater disposal services, which leads to further contamination of water sources, especially during the rainy season when waste gets washed away into rivers and dams. Currently, children are at risk of contracting bilharzia.

The Ministry of Health and Child Care sent out a message informing the public of free information and treatment against bilharzia at schools and clinics to children below the age of 15 years from the 4th to 9th April 2022. However, the messages were delivered telephonically days after the program started and close to the program end date, giving little time for the population to respond adequately. The water situation in Zimbabwe is worse than in 2008, when Zimbabwe experienced the most devastating cholera outbreak in Africa in 15 years. Zimbabwe is plagued by diseases such as bilharzia, cholera, typhoid and dysentery that are prone in poverty-stricken areas and have no place in the 21st century.

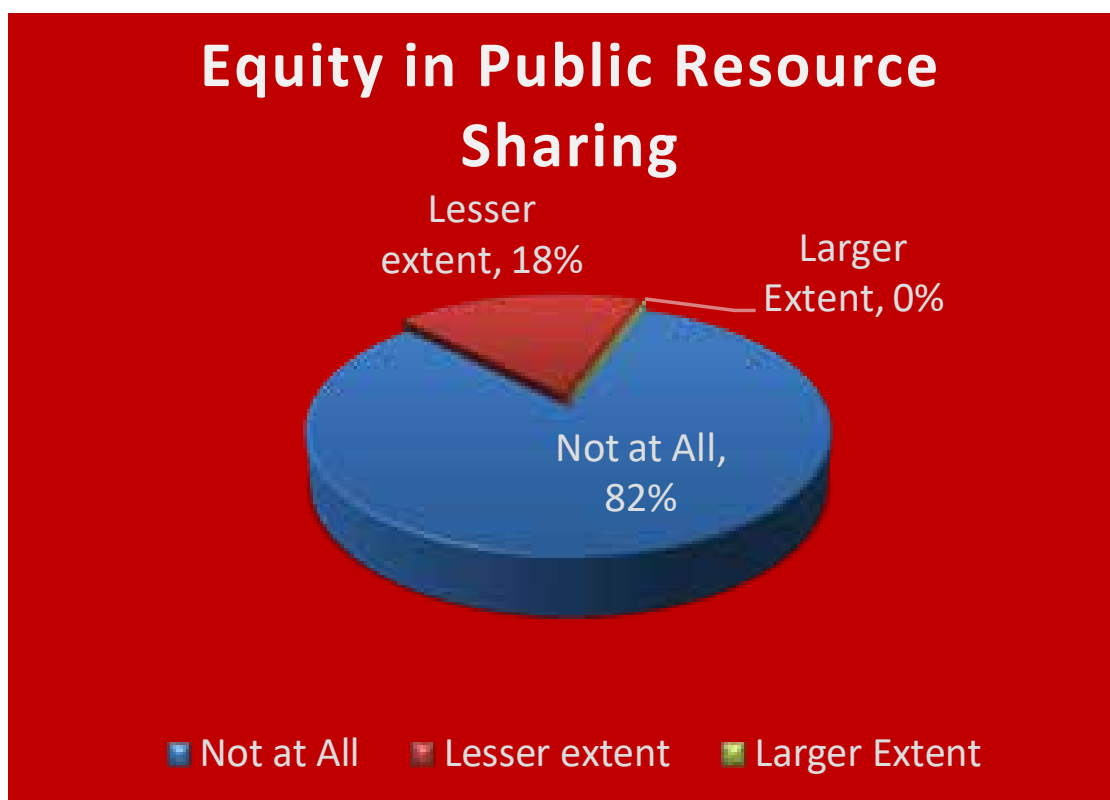
¹ This points to management and operations incapacity within its structure.

² Zimbabwe Events of 2021. Available at <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2022/country-chapters/zimbabwe> .

International human rights norms demand that priority be given to water and sanitation for vulnerable groups such as the very poor, displaced, disabled and elderly, and for women and children within all these groups. Section 77 of the Constitution provides that every person has the right to safe, clean, and potable water. The human right to water and sanitation reflects the growing recognition of the significance of social and economic rights in addressing poor urban and rural women's basic concerns as providers of food and care for young, sick and elderly family members. The full realization of the right to water has the potential to combat poverty, promote health and food security, and ease the caring and household burdens that hamper African women's enjoyment of a wide range of social and economic rights. In Zimbabwe, women, and school-age children, especially girls, spend long hours in line at crowded boreholes or narrow water wells to get water that may not be safe. Some are forced to risk their lives, in an attempt to secure water late at night or early hours of the morning before the boreholes get crowded. The response to the corruption crisis in Zimbabwe, affecting fundamental human rights, must respond adequately to the concerns and experiences of different social, cultural and economic contexts.

5.1 Equal and equitable distribution of benefits of public resources

Fig 2: Distribution of benefits from Local Public Resources



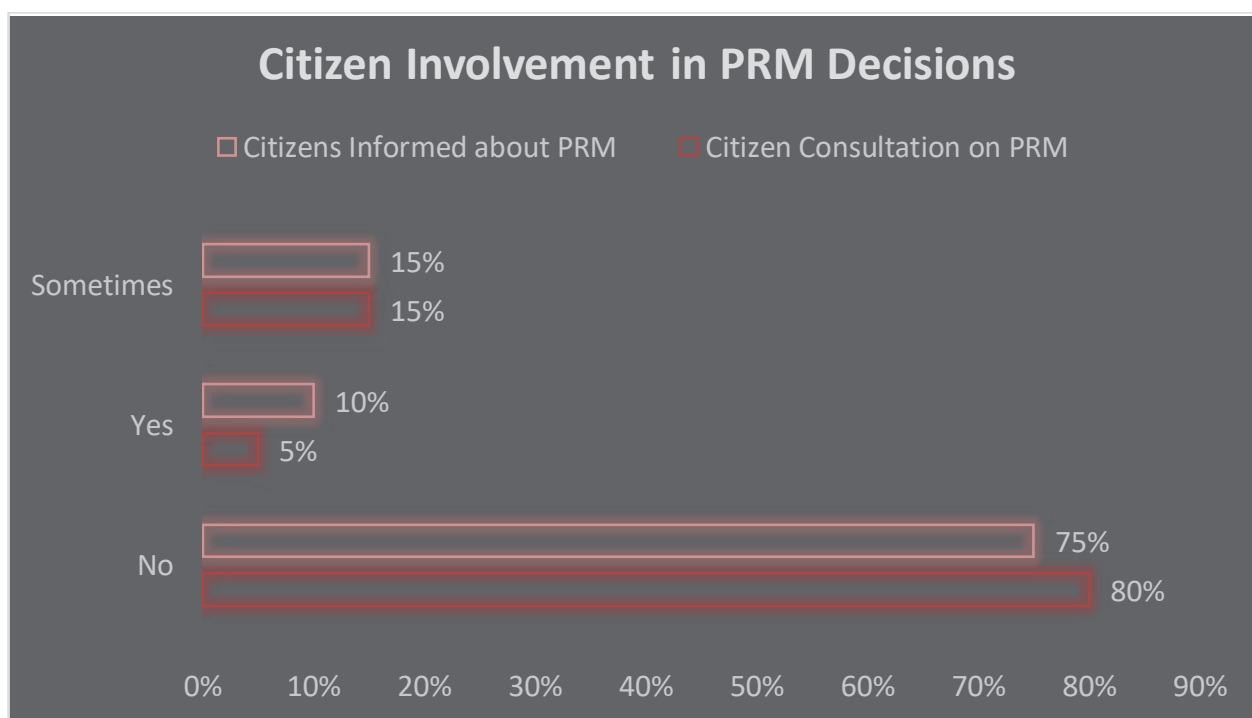
³ Hellum, A. Kameri- Mbote, P. et al Water is Life. Available at <http://www.searcwl.ac.zw/downloads/water-is-life.pdf>.

This SitRep has established that public resource benefits are not equitably distributed in Zimbabwe. As with the February SitRep, the survey found out that in 46 districts (82%) public resources were not equally and equitably distributed while in 10 districts (18%) there is some equity in distributing benefits of public resources, although to a lesser extent.

Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

5.2 Citizens Involvement in Decisions to do with Public Resources

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



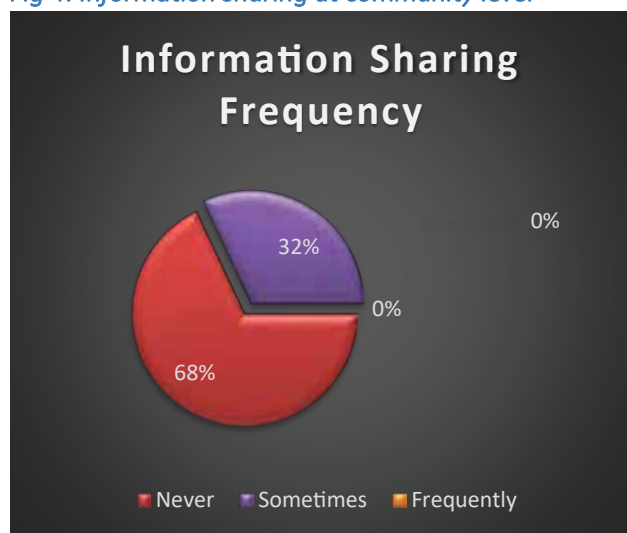
Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

Zimbabwe continues to witness the further shrinking of democratic space and the failure to uphold to constitutionalism, and in this case the right to participate in decisions that affect citizens at the subnational level has been violated. This is exacerbated by the continued centralization of power as opposed to devolution of power and weak independent oversight mechanisms. This crisis has negatively affected the capacity of local authorities and institutions by further deteriorating their ability to provide key social services. The March SitRep attests to continued marginalization and exclusion of communities in economic governance. To this end, the survey established that in 80% cases, citizens are not consulted while in 15% they are sometimes consulted and only in 5% citizens are consulted when public resources decisions

are made at their local authority level. Local authorities should employ mechanisms to ensure citizen participation in economic decisions that affect them.

5.3 Access to Information on Public Resources

Fig 4: Information sharing at community level



As with the February Sitrep, information sharing frequency has remained constantly low as no district indicated that information on public resources is frequently shared. In 38 districts (68%), citizens reported that local authorities never share public resource information while in 18 districts citizens indicated that local authorities sometimes share public resource information.

Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

5.4 Public Resources Access by Demographic Groups

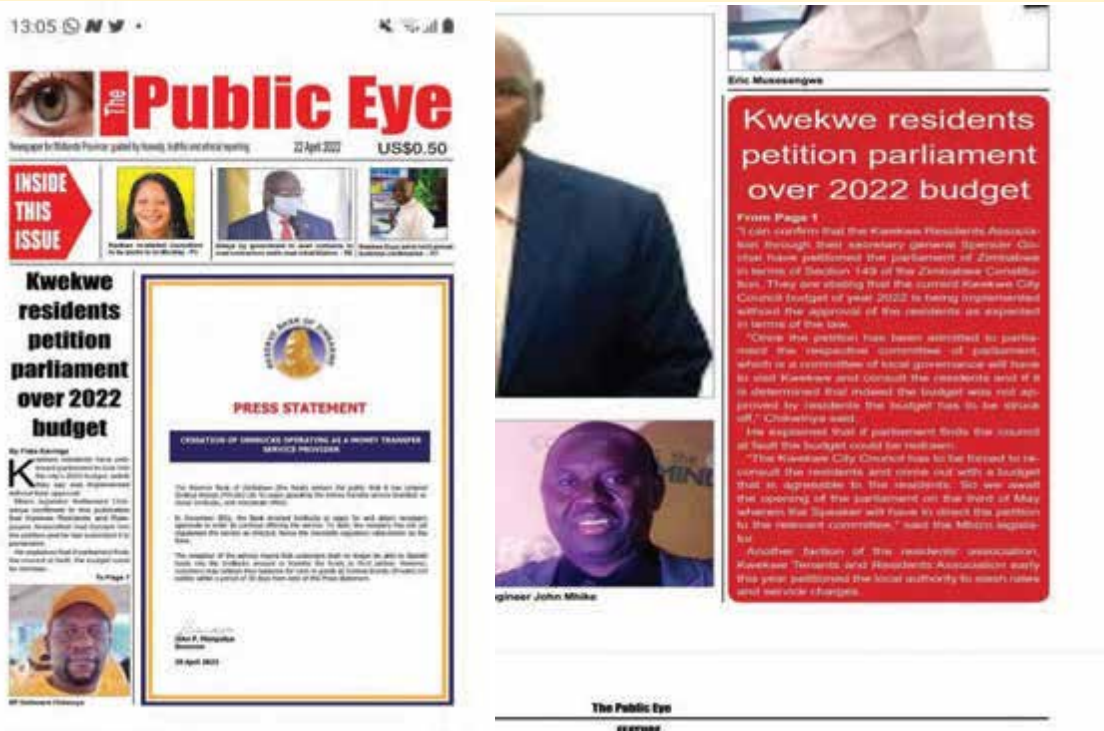
Access to public resources at the community level remained exclusive and not reducing poverty and widening socio-economic inequalities. Access to public resources by persons with disabilities remains the worst as districts rated it 95% poor and only 5% fair. Access to public resources by the elderly and women groups was rated 75% and 65% poor respectively of the districts respectively rated access to public resources as poor. Access to public resources by the youth was rated poor by 45% while 30% rated it fair and 15% of the districts rating it good and another 10% rating it very good. This SitRep and its previous issues illustrates the long trend of sustained exclusion when it comes to public resources access particularly for vulnerable groups.

5.5 Access to Budget Information

Citizens should critique council processes and participate in decisions that affect service delivery at the local authority level. This enables residents who are also ratepayers to understand how their councils mobilises, allocates and utilises its revenues. However, most residents have failed to attend council meetings and have largely been excluded in pre-budget meetings. Residents must therefore be included at every stage of the budget process as this enhances fiscal transparency at the local authority. On the contrary, the cases below are illustrative of the manner in which residents are side-lined in PRM decisions, how residents are finding alternatives to get their voice heard in economic decision making:

Case: Kwekwe Residents Petition Parliament concerning the City's 2022 Budget

The Kwekwe city has been receiving poor service delivery in the form of irregular refuse collection and water delivery against a backdrop of raised bills beyond the reach of the ordinary Citizen. Engagement with the Local Authority leadership were put on hold on account of the by-elections campaigns scheduled for March, 26 2022. In a bid to arrest the prevailing situation, Kwekwe residents organized by the Kwekwe CORA have merged all aspiring Residents Associations in Kwekwe so as to build a collective voice. The merger has enabled residents to produce a petition to Kwekwe City Council over raised tariffs against the people's will who had unanimously rejected the proposed budget which the City Fathers went on to submit to the Minister of Local Government. The petition which has been signed by over 200 people demanding immediate reduction of the Council rates that were issued without proper consultation, has been submitted to parliament by Hon. S. Chikwinya of Mbizo.



Case: Harare residents takes council to task to arrest its appetite for borrowing.

The month of March 2022 saw the City of Harare resolving to borrow up to ZWL\$1 361 080 800, with residents given until April 7 to make objections to the office of the acting town clerk. This is in terms of section 290 (3)(a) of the Urban Councils Act (Chapter 29:15) which empowers ratepayers or voters who wish to make objections to lodge them with the town clerk within such period, being not less than twenty-one days from the date of the last publication of the notice.

Currently Harare's billing system is in shambles and borrowing such an amount without addressing fundamentals for revenue collection is a recipe for disaster. The City has not been doing well in terms of the management and collection of revenue from rate payers as it is estimated that the rate payers owe ZWL17billion which could see the local authority address some of its service delivery needs without borrowing. It is not sustainable for the city to continue borrowing without addressing the reasons why residents are not paying their rates. Of the ZWL\$1 361 080 800 to be borrowed,

residents feel that the purpose of the borrowing does not prioritize their service delivery needs. According to the breakdown, the renovation of Rowan Martin building has been allocated ZWL\$120 000 000 while water provision was allocated just ZWL\$100 000 000; public lighting has the biggest allocation of ZWL\$322 400 000, waste management ZWL\$261 500 200, health ZWL\$163 500 000, service vehicles ZWL\$98 750 000 and traffic management ZWL\$73 400 000. Revenue collection was allocated ZWL\$70 000 000, emergency services ZWL\$68 980 000, ICT ZWL\$11 500 000 and corporate communication ZWL\$8 250 000.

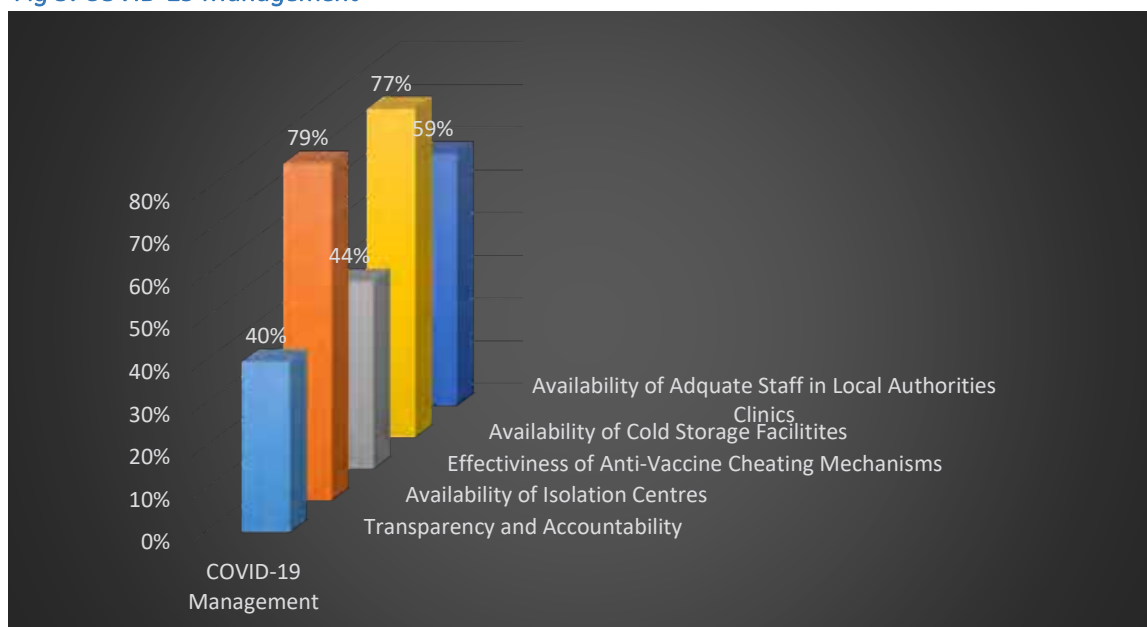
Borrowing therefore remains a contentious issue for Harare residents as history shows that City of Harare has had loans before but they have not achieved the intended outcomes. In 2011, the Zimbabwean Government signed a US\$144 million contract for a loan from the China Export-Import (Exim) Bank which was backed by a government guarantee. The loan was meant to resuscitate the Morton Jeffrey water works however the water situation has not improved in Harare to date as part of the funds were channelled towards purchasing 25 luxury cars for top management, which was contrary to what the funds were meant for. Under these circumstances, the council continues to borrow for the improvement of water supply. The impact of the loan is not being felt by residents. In this case it is clearer that this signals the decrease in wellbeing of Harare residents who are heavily taxed to pay off the principal and interest on the debt accrued. This burden can also be transferred to future generations who will bear the brunt of regressive taxation. Tax injustice, poor revenue management and debt collection strategies, corruption and diversion of funds are some of the reasons why Harare residents objected the proposed borrowing powers by the city of Harare. Citizens wait in anticipation for the outcome with the hope that the council do away with its unjustifiable appetite for borrowing and pursue domestic resource mobilization.

5.6 COVID-19 Management and Key Issues

The government continues to make positive strides with respect to COVID-19 management. This can be reflected by the national recovery rate which has been fluctuating between 95% to 96% for the past two months. During the 6th post cabinet briefing on the 22nd of March, the Minister of Health noted that as at 21st March, 2022, the country's cumulative COVID-19 cases stood at 244 685, with 234 895 recoveries and 5 429 deaths. A 39% decrease was witnessed between the 15th – 22nd of March 2022 as COVID-19 cases decreased from 3 306 to 2004. Nevertheless, the decrease in COVID-19 cases might not be closely related to the government's pandemic management efforts but to the decrease of COVID-19 cases globally. There is also need for the government to publish the COVID-19 expenditures to enhance transparency and accountability.

The survey found out that, the government is still wanting with respect to transparency and accountability as it attained a 40% a decrease from 45% in February, while the effectiveness of anti-vaccine cheating mechanisms was rated 44% a decrease from 46% suggesting weak and porous anti-vaccine cheating strategies, an increase in the availability of isolation centres was registered at 79% from 72% in February, availability of cold storage facilities increased from 75% to 77% and a decline in the availability of adequate staff in local authorities was witnessed from 65% to 59%. The figure below projects the research findings.

Fig 5: COVID-19 Management



Source: Primary Data Compiled by ZIMCODD

5.7 Natural Resource Governance Issues

The Mines and Minerals Bill (MMB) which sailed through parliament was rejected by the President and is set to be re-tabled⁴ in the parliament. The President rejected the MMB stating that it was not in alignment with the Constitution. However, the President did not specify which section of the Bill was not in alignment with the constitution, thereby making the rejection ambiguous. Legally, the President is empowered to reject bills, through section 131(6)(b) of the Constitution which stipulates that, the only reason why a President may refuse to sign a bill into law is if he views it to be unconstitutional or in non-alignment with another piece of legislation. In that scenario, he would have to send the bill back to the national assembly for revision or Constitutional Court so that its constitutionality may be decided.

However, given the importance of the MMB in promoting transparency and accountability in the mining sector, ZIMCODD expresses concern over the rejection of the Bill. This is because an examination of the Bill by ZIMCODD in the January Policy Digest shows that it was in alignment with the Constitution except for a clause under the cadastre system which gives the Permanent Secretary too much power noting the same person is the chairperson of the Mining Affairs Board (MAB) as well as the registrar of the mining cadastre⁵. It is only this clause, that is against the principles of good public administration and also the Public Entities Corporate Governance Act [Chapter 10:31]. Therefore, this section must be aligned with

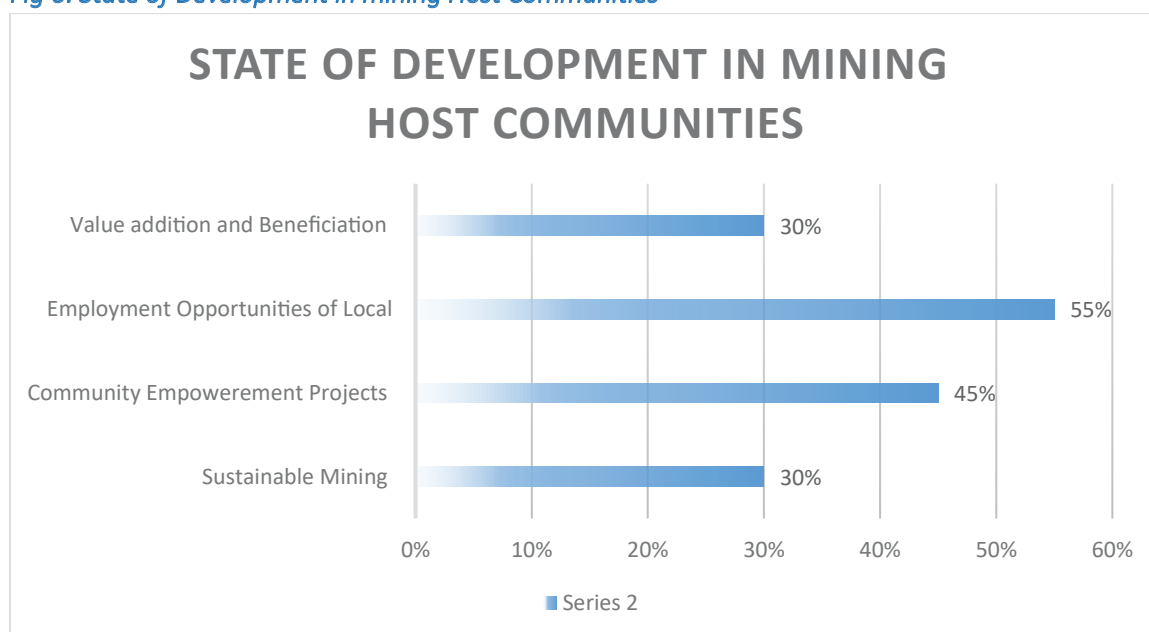
⁴ <https://www.herald.co.zw/president-rejects-bill-2/amp/#aoh=16490480658665&referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com&tf=From%20%251%24s>

⁵ https://zimcodd.org/sdm_downloads/zimcodd-weekly-review-5/

good governance principles. However, this must not take years to rectify as other sections of the bill are in alignment with the constitution.

The rejection of the MMB by the President further worsens the living conditions of Zimbabweans in mining host communities. The findings from the survey shows a gloomy picture about the mining sector and its benefit to the local communities. A decrease rating in sustainable mining was rated 30% from 33% in February, community empowerment projects were rated 45% from 49%, employment opportunities of local people received 55% from 51% and value addition registered 30% from 33%. The figure below shows the state of development in mining host communities.

Fig 6: State of Development in mining Host Communities



Source: Data Primary Compiled by ZIMCODD

The cases below are illustrative of the plight of Zimbabweans in mining host communities:

Case: The Adverse Impacts of Mining Operations in Residential Areas

It is trite that mining host communities ought to benefit from the minerals within their jurisdiction. However, the mining of quarry by Harare Quarry, a subsidiary of City of Harare, in Arcadia Community has brought nothing but misery and distress. Ward 2 residents of Arcadia suburb continue to be subjected to dust and noise pollution emanating from Harare Quarry's Crusher Plant blasting activities. Located along Airport Road in Graniteside, the local quarry miner boasts of a strategic location "not far from the city-center" and easily accessible.

However, its geographical placement, in specific relation to distance between the blasting site and residential houses, renders the mining company's activities in consistent conflict with the residential community. The mining activities of Harare Quarry continue to put residents at risk of inhaling dust, which is detrimental to their health and well-being. The residents have protested that the blasting activities carried out by Harare Quarry cause earth tremors which are damaging their houses through the emergence of cracks on the walls. Elderly residents have also protested that they are suffering shocks as a result of the tremors from the blasting.

In June 2021, Harare Quarry agreed to adopt dust suppression methods in order to mitigate the level of dust pollution and adopt the use of silent blasting technology to mitigate noise pollution after receiving a 7-day ultimatum issued by the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights on behalf of Arcadia residents.⁶ The company pledged to co-exist in harmony with residents of Arcadia suburb by not infringing on their right to a safe and healthy environment and undertook to utilize various water suppression methods to suppress dust emissions and resort to the use of shock tubes and auto stemming blasting to minimize noise and vibrations. However, the dust and noise pollution, together with



the thunderous tremors, continue to affect and torment the residents.

Noting that the local community is adversely affected by the mining activities taking place, the suburb remains insufficiently compensated for. The company's activities do not extend to philanthropic work nor do they reflect any initiatives resembling corporate social responsibility. While the City of Harare began to exploit the granite rock deposits in the 1940s, the Arcadia residential community has nothing to show for the extractive activity taking place in its community. One would be inclined to think that since Harare Quarry owns the Asphalt Plant, which is for the production of premix tar (bitumen and stone aggregate) used for road maintenance, e.g., pothole patching, sealing and surfacing, the roads networks in Arcadia would be well-maintained and roadworthy. In contrast, the roads are riddled with potholes.

It is recommended that City of Harare, together with Harare Quarry, stand by their previous commitments and take all reasonable and necessary measures to co-exist in harmony with residents of Arcadia suburb in a bid not to infringe on residents' right to a safe & healthy environment as enshrined in the Constitution.

⁶ <https://www.herald.co.zw/residents-protest-against-harare-quarry-dust-blasting-noise/>

Case: The Penhalonga Resource Curse

It is disheartening for the people of Penhalonga when their rich resource is being plundered yet failing to access basic service delivery and sustainable economic benefits. Corruption and gold smuggling among other issues have crippled the country's efforts to leverage on mineral resources to deliver basic services such as education, health and clean water.

The Penhalonga resource curse is a cause for concern where the community is under developed for many years despite the rich gold deposits dotted around the area. The renewal of Betterbrands mining Company contract in Penhalonga came as a surprise to many residents as well as the workers, since the mining company previously failed to respect the environmental rights of the community. The current open cast mining is hazardous to the environment as well as to livestock. The company is using dangerous chemicals which sometimes flows into the river and also leaving open pits all over the area. These negative impacts of mining destroyed community livelihood projects; most women used to water their gardens using the river water but because the water is polluted, they no longer use the water source.

The Penhalonga community which is characterized by poverty, high unemployment and inequality, has failed to realize mineral benefits due to gold smuggling and corruption. Mutasa Rural District Council has also acknowledged that it is not receiving any taxes from the mining happening in Penhalonga and this has got a bearing in providing good service delivery.

Case: Plough back to communities, mining companies told

Bocha Community is endowed with vast diamonds and the world at large has benefited through different companies such as Angine and Mbada diamonds. A decade of mining in Marange should have changed the whole community and poverty should have been a thing of the past. However, since the establishment of these companies to mine and control diamonds, the community has not benefited from the mining operations. General standards of living for the locals continues on a downward trend while infrastructure continues to deteriorate. The Bocha community keeps asking #HowFar with cooperate social responsibility?

Had the government been holistic in ensuring community beneficiation as envisaged by section 13(4) of the Constitution, the Zimunya Marange Community Share Ownership Trust would be receiving funds on behalf of the community but since the funds were misappropriated in 2018 no funds were received. The inequality gap is increasing as a few elites continue to benefit from the diamonds while the whole community of Marange continue wallowing in poverty. Against this background, Marange community is asking #HowFar with Community Beneficiation?

6. Social Service Delivery Findings

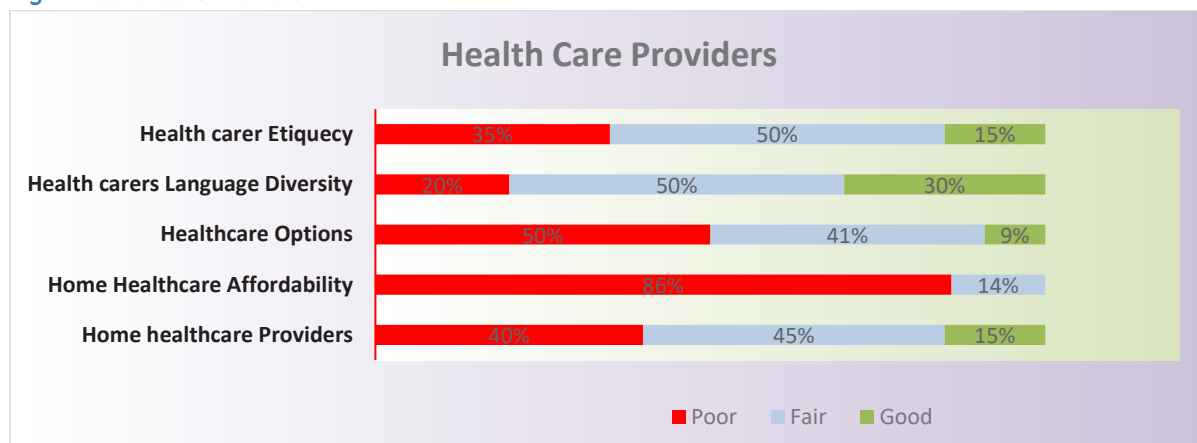
The provision of quality and affordable social services is one of the best weapons a developing country like Zimbabwe can use to fight poverty and reduce inequality. These social services include public education, health care, housing, water and sanitation among others. With the macroeconomic environment tightening as the local currency tumbles, price inflation skyrockets and the future path of the pandemic remains unpredictable, there is a need for government to increase its attention on social service delivery. This is so because inaction

risks plunging a greater proportion of the total population into abject poverty as estimates from the World Bank already show that in 2021 alone, nearly half of the population was swimming in extreme poverty exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, this section analyses the state of public service delivery in Zimbabwe based on primary data collected by the Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development in 56 districts across Zimbabwe.

6.1 Availability of Home Health Care Providers

As highlighted in the previous issue of this Public Resource Management Situational report (PRM SitRep), home health care service is crucial as it helps reduce overpopulation in central hospitals. A higher doctor or nurse-patient ratio is detrimental to the work morale of health care professionals. Home healthcare providers help to decongest the patient population in central public hospitals thus minimizing the spread of the virus.

Fig 7: HealthCare Provision



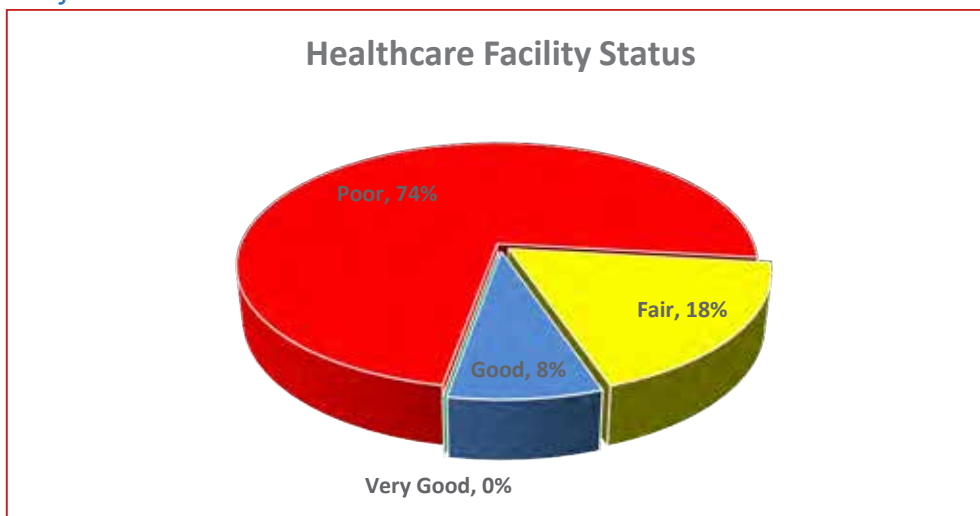
Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

The results show that 40% of home health care providers in the 56 districts surveyed in March 2022 were poorly maintained, unchanged from February 2022 findings. In terms of affordability, the survey found that home health care provision was expensive in 86% of districts surveyed. This is in line with the general macro economy where the local currency is plummeting and many services are sold in foreign currency.

6.2 Quality of Health Care Facilities

For a long time now, the government has failed to meet the Abuja Declaration on public health spending that states that 15% of the national budget should be earmarked for the health sector. Of the amount spent annually over these years, the bulk was consumed by recurrent expenditures (salary bill) with little resources left for capital expenditures. As such, the quality of health care facilities has significantly diminished.

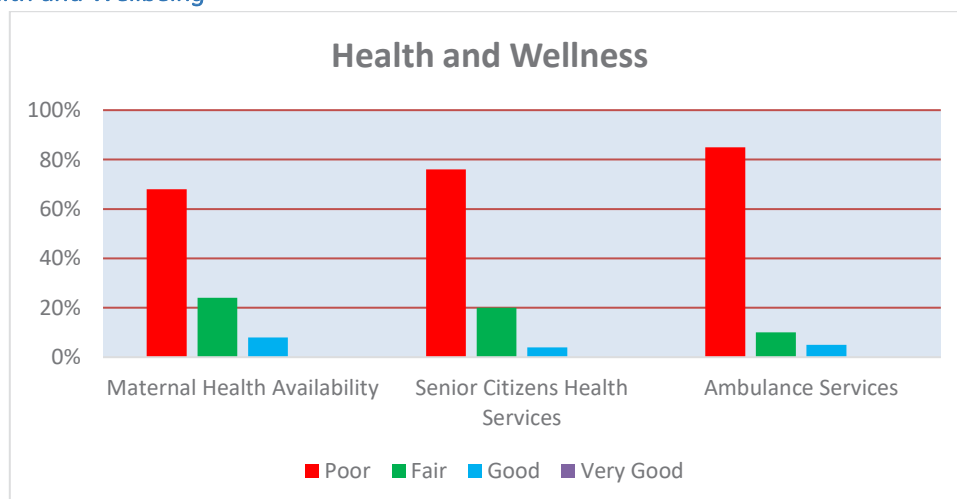
Fig 8: Status of Healthcare Facilities



Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

Analysis of primary data shows that 74% of districts surveyed had poor health care facilities, 18% were fairly maintained while only 8% were ranked as good. This is a cause for concern in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, rising urban population, and changing climatic conditions which are associated with deadly natural disasters.

Fig 9: Health and Wellbeing



Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

The survey also established that 68% of the surveyed districts have poor public maternal health care. While it is the government's position that maternal care is free in all public institutions, the maternal wards are poorly equipped and patients forced to outsource prescriptions from private pharmacies. The situation is also dire for the elderly whose

retirement pensions from NSSA have been decimated by inflation yet 76% of elderly health services surveyed by ZIMCODD across the country were deemed poor. A supermajority of districts surveyed had also poor ambulance services although this is expected to improve as Treasury has announced purchases of new ambulances from its Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) allocation.

Case: Bindura Public Hospital Inadequacy of Essentials Cause deaths

Bindura Hospital, the only major government hospital in Bindura, has inadequate technical equipment and necessary protective clothing and linen to ensure proper illness detection and treatment. The hospital carries out a lot of services such as Covid-19 testing, screening and vaccination, post-natal services, HIV/AIDS testing, vaccination, Cancer Screening and attend to people with various ailments.

The number of pregnant women who lost babies and eventually died is alarming. Averagely, pregnant women who seek services from the hospital are at 200 per month and the services are free of charge as compared to the private hospital like Shashi Hospital which is better equipped. The hospital is hit by a shortage of resources such as beds, delivery packs, lack of uninterrupted water supply, and linen among others.



Bindura Hospital Old Linen and a fractured wheel chair used at the Hospital.

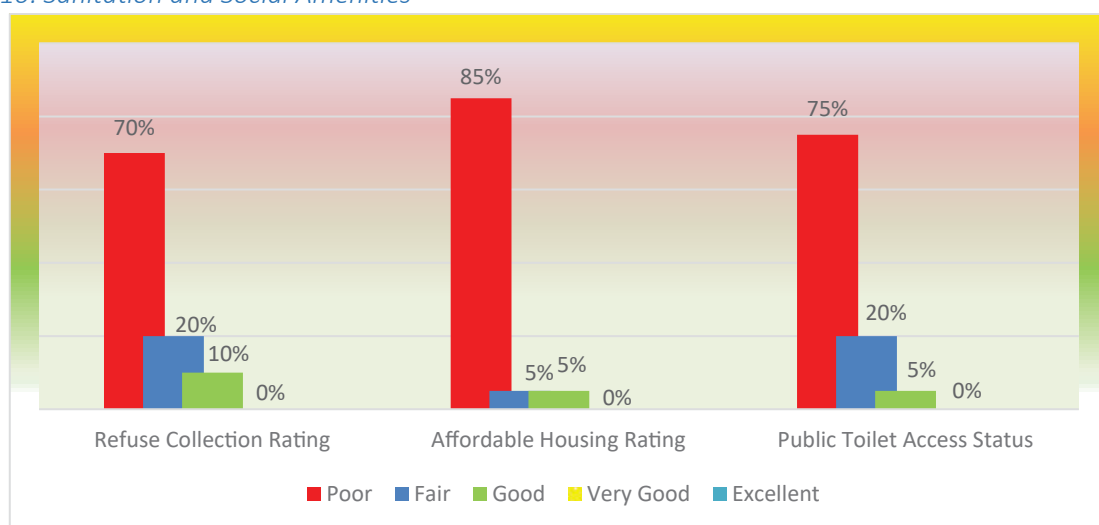
The impacts of these challenges on pregnant women are so detrimental. It also does not conduct rhesonativ immunization in women with negative red blood cells different to their babies in which 1 out of 2 women have potential miscarriages on their next pregnancy. The hospital is incapacitated to conduct these blood tests on all women they offer anti natal service to. Therefore, there is need for

citizens to engage local authorities and demand for serious revamping of the maternal care wards to ensure the public have access to these services in full on a public government hospital.

6.3 Access to Safe Sanitation and Social Amenities

The provision of safe sanitation is crucial as it reduces the overcrowding of the health sector due to the outbreak of diseases like cholera and typhoid. Many urban residential areas particularly the overpopulated high-density suburbs experience frequent outbreaks of these diseases as refuse and blocked sewer pipes go for weeks without being collected and replaced respectively.

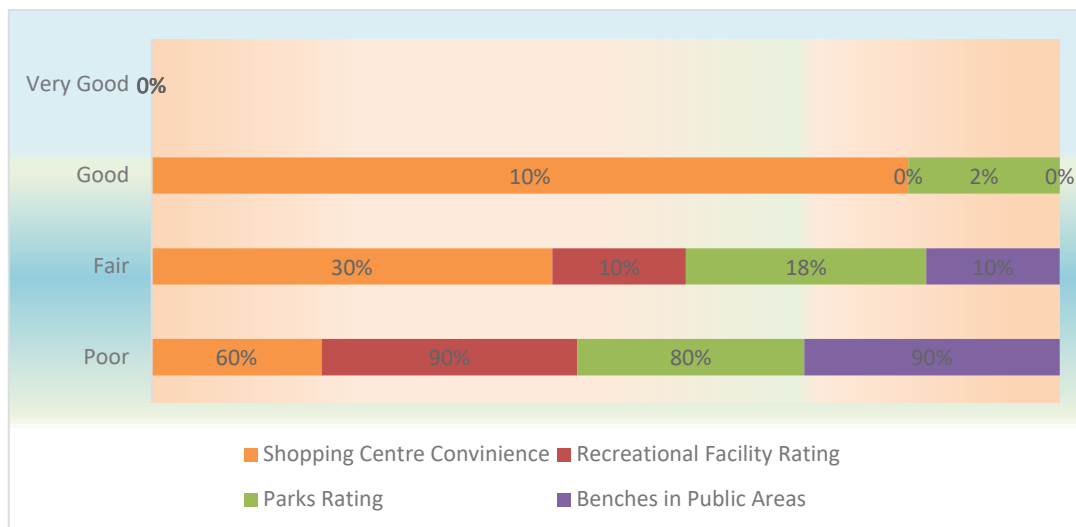
Fig 10: Sanitation and Social Amenities



Source: Primary data compiled by ZIMCODD

The survey results show that many districts are now characterized by refuse dumps in residential areas as local authorities (LAs) fail to fulfil their mandate. This is highly attributable to the fact that LAs collect ZWL\$ revenues yet fuel is largely sold in US dollars. This, coupled with non-paying residents who are being suffocated by rising inflation which makes it difficult for authorities to acquire adequate fuel to power refuse trucks and compactors. The survey also found that 75% of public toilets are inaccessible.

Fig 11: Other Social Amenities



Source: Primary data compiled by ZIMCODD

From the social amenities front, the ZIMCODD survey found that 60% of the districts were experiencing shopping center inconvenience in March 2022. This is, however, a 5-percentage points improvement from the previous month, a development attributed to increased dry spells during the month. The survey also found that 90% of recreational facilities have deteriorated owing to poor maintenance as LAs face limited fiscal space against a plethora of expected public services.

Case: Poor Public Toilets in Bubi District

Bubi District is a district that comprise of many different ethnic groups which are migrating from all parts of the country. This is due to huge gold mining activities that are carried out in Bubi. The increase of population of people has resulted in the excessive use of public toilets by the masses living the lives of people in the danger of causing cholera and typhoid. In most central business centres in Bubi district for instances places like Badala Business which is located along Bubi-Nkayi road have few public toilets that are excessively used by the publics. These public rest rooms are not taken care of as they have been abandoned by the Bubi Rural District Council.



Without being given proper cleaning services. This environment poses serious risk to people contaminating diseases such as diarrhea, typhoid, and cholera. Therefore, the local authority should maintain these public toilets.

Case: Rusape Town Council Buys Refuse Collector

Citizen's participation is one of the key tenets of democracy at local level that enables local citizens to exercise their rights and responsibilities and access the basic services they are entitled to. This enables sustainable local governance as it improves information flow, accountability, enhances transparency. In Rusape, citizens participation has encouraged citizen focused service delivery and improved credibility among citizen development. There was a problem with refuse collection in Rusape. After citizens complained it forced the local authority to quick start engagements with citizens, a new garbage vehicle was bought. Below are pictures of the new vehicle.

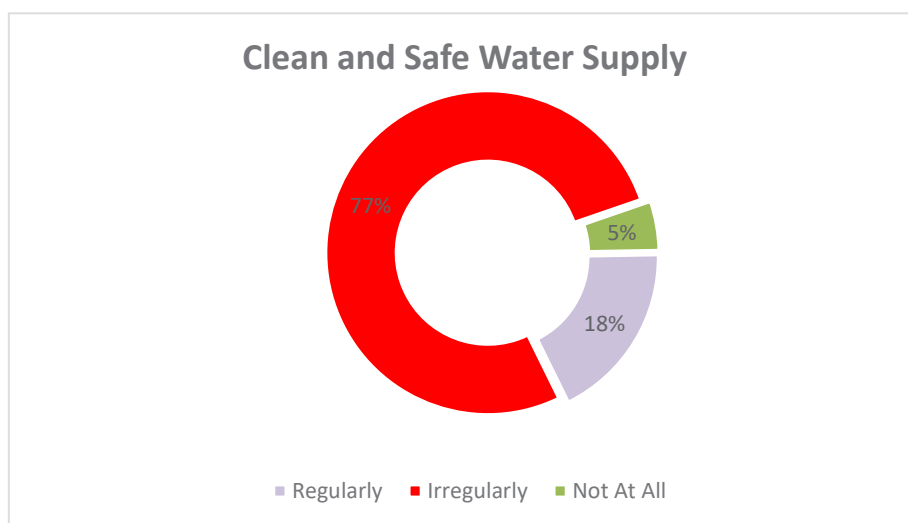


In conclusion, citizen participation has enhanced service delivery and also improved decision making process done by municipal officials. Credit should also be given to ZIMCODD for making this possible through engaging and capacitating citizens at the local level.

6.4 Water Supply

The provision and ensuring the proximity to clean, safe, and potable water continue to be a challenge for local authorities. Many urban areas particularly in Harare and Bulawayo, the country's two (2) largest cities by population, are going for weeks without running tap water while many rural communities are walking long distances to access a borehole or a spring. This is against the dictates of the constitution which makes access to clean, safe, and potable water a citizen's right.

Fig 12: Availability of Clean and Safe Portable Water



Source: Primary Data Compiled by ZIMCODD

The survey results show that 77% of districts surveyed are accessing water irregularly while 18% are accessing it regularly with 5% not accessing clean water at all. In urban areas, water supply is being hindered by the growing population being caused by rural-urban migration in search of greener pastures. The size of the population has outpaced the capacity of water treatment plants, many of which were built in pre-independent Zimbabwe. For instance, Harare's Morton Jeffrey Water Works has a capacity for half a million people yet it is now required to supply water to over 5 million in Harare, Norton, Chitungwiza, and Ruwa.

Case: Infrastructure lies idle as water crisis persists

Residents of Mahwemasimike, a suburb in Penhalonga established by a property developer, Destiny of Africa, have expressed concern over persistent water problems that has gone for years unresolved despite three reservoirs with a capacity of one hundred thousand (100,000) litres lying idle in the township.



The reservoirs installed by the Mutare Rural Council when it established Tsvingwe township in 1977 were utilized for supplying water to the residents. However, when Mutasa Rural District Council took over authority of running the township after the amalgamation of rural and district councils, these water reservoirs were abandoned. New reservoirs were constructed at the Umtali Water Works. With the current expansion of the township and the increased population, these new water storage tanks can no longer meet the households demand for water.

The situation has forced many residents to turn to unprotected water sources exposing them to water borne diseases as some of the areas on higher ground have gone for months without council supplied water. The resuscitation of the old reservoirs could increase water storage capacity and thus supplement the volumes currently delivered by the main water pipeline. Residents wake up around midnight in search of water. School children have to run around to look for water to bath before attending lessons thus affecting their schooling hours.

6.5 Road Networks

The government's Emergency Road Rehabilitation Programme (ERRP) which is now in the second phase has earmarked significant resources for road maintenance. This has helped to reconstruct some key roads and bridges that were affected by heavy rains received in 2021. While this is commendable, the state of roads in many localities especially rural areas remains a death trap for the commuting public. Local authorities are also failing to complement central government efforts by repairing pot-holed roads in their jurisdictions.

Fig 13: State of Local Roads



Source: Primary data compiled by ZIMCODD

The survey established that streets are not well maintained in 65% of districts surveyed as authorities lament the impact of ZWL\$ deterioration on the funds set aside for road works. The survey also found that 85% of streets are not well-lit as broken streetlights are not replaced while electricity supply from the national grid has been intermittent due to increased electricity rationing schedules. More so, the survey established that audio and visual pedestrian crossing were poor in 80% of the 56 districts surveyed.

Case: Gweru benefits from ERRP

The Gweru City Council (GCC) has embarked on a road rehabilitation programme using funds from the second phase of the Emergency Road Rehabilitation Programme (ERRP2). This is set to bring relief to motorists as the roads were no longer functional. The GCC was allocated ZW\$196 million from the government under the ERRP2 programme to rehabilitate the country’s road network. Roads from the city centre were now in a deplorable state after being damaged by the heavy rains received in the previous rain season. In high density suburbs, safety of the kids is at risk due to poor roads as many motorists have resorted to using the sideways avoiding big road potholes.



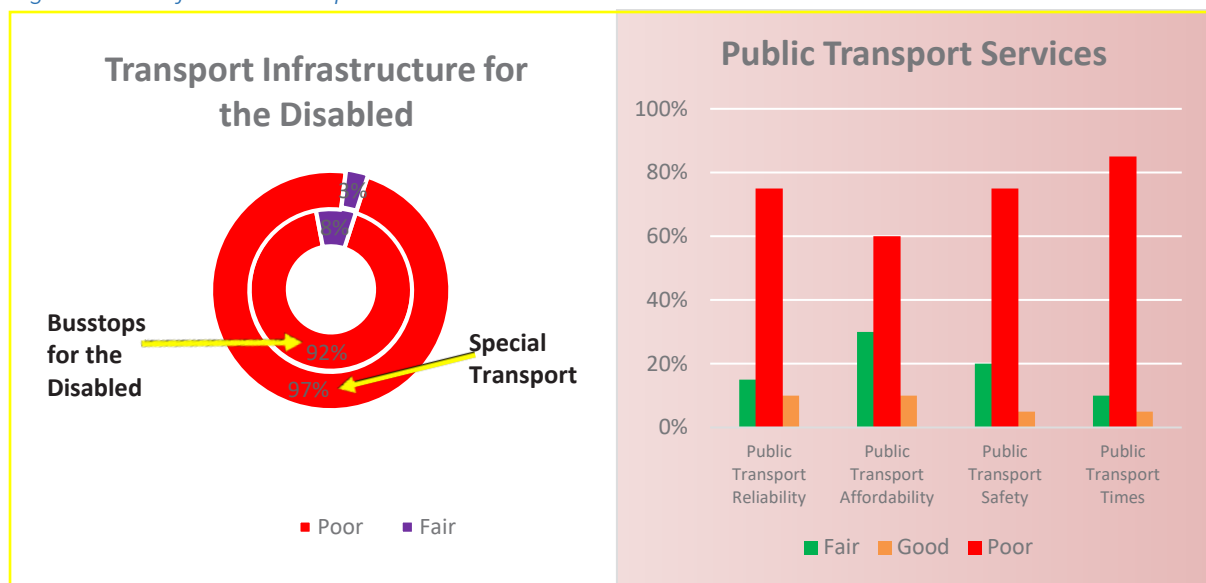
Road Rehabilitation under ERRP2 in the City of Gweru

In Gweru roads earmarked for ERRP2 are Simon Mazorodze, Coventry, Matobo and Mkoba (Bristol) road up to Village 4. GCC Director of Roads, Engineer Melsem Masukume, said their aim is to provide safety for the motorists. "The rehabilitation is going well our aim is to provide user friendly roads for the motorists to avoid accidents and also avoid damaging their cars," said Masukume. A motorist from Mambo commended Government for availing roads rehabilitation funds to GCC. "With the rehabilitation of roads, as motorists we are happy that the roads will be trafficable. At the same time, we will be assured that the potholes will be rehabilitated meaning our cars will have a long-life span as we will be driving them on good roads," he said. Commuter Omnibus drivers have also welcomed this move as they are going to be relieved from high car maintenance costs.

6.6 Public Transportation

Zimbabwe lacks an efficient mass transit system yet mass transit like road and rail networks are the only affordable means for the poor majority. However, the 2020 Auditor-General's audit report shows that National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ) and Zimbabwe United Passengers Company (ZUPCO); the two (2) key parastatals responsible for public transportation; are insolvent with liabilities exceeding assets. Hence, their going concern status is in jeopardy. This explains the poor provision of public transportation in Zimbabwe.

Fig 14: State of Public Transport in Zimbabwe



Source: Primary data compiled by ZIMCODD

The findings for March 2022 were unchanged from the prior month as respondents indicated that special transport services and bus stops for the disabled were poor in 97% and 92% of the districts surveyed respectively. ZIMCODD also found out that of the 56 districts surveyed, 75% are of the view that public transport is unreliable and unsafe while 60% are of the view that public transport is unaffordable. The unaffordability of transport is linked to rising fuel prices exacerbated by the Russia-Ukraine war which forced ZUPCO to review its tariffs upwards.

6.7 Engendering Public Service Delivery in Zimbabwe

Gender, governance and the provision of public services are inextricably interlinked. This section presents findings of the March SitRep, by assessing public service delivery through a gendered lens. It is evident from the findings that the current governance reforms are not gender-responsive and neither are they gender-neutral. While public service delivery is for all, there is little evidence to show that public service delivery is gender-sensitive or focuses directly on the access or delivery of basic services to women even though the needs of men, women, boys and girls are different. It is therefore important to interrogate the gender dimensions of public service delivery and whether such services are provided with the different gendered elements of service delivery.

The state of gender responsive public service delivery remains unchanged. As evidenced above, public service delivery in Zimbabwe is generally poor. As such, it is evident that Zimbabwe has a long way to go in the fulfilment of women's rights especially where public service delivery is concerned. While it is commendable that some city councils have taken actionable steps to improve service delivery, the gendered aspects remain ignored. One such example is the widespread road rehabilitation programme which has to take into consideration that road networks do not only encompass major roads. Road networks

rehabilitation must also benefit the most rural and marginalised communities, including routes that are not used by motor vehicles such as foot bridges, pathways and routes created for scotch carts. This facilitates easy mobility and ensures the safety of women as they move about from place to place performing their various societal roles and responsibilities. Furthermore, the rehabilitation of roads must be durable and sustainable, in that, road rehabilitation should surpass the rain seasons.

In Mutare, the road rehabilitation project along Jelf road to Hobhouse was completed and the road has been reopened since Friday 18 March 2022, after road closure for about two months while authorities were working on tarring the road. Community members in the area expressed their disappointment when the road was reopened because the tar is substandard and it has begun to wash away despite road works having been concluded recently.

The survey revealed that one of the main challenges being faced by women in various communities is the issue of access to water. Water and sanitation remain a crisis in Zimbabwe with women bearing the brunt of this crisis as they are the primary end users of water. Women perform most household duties that require water including cooking, cleaning, and washing and subsistence farming. In surveyed districts across the country, there is a general absence of public ablution facilities, and this remains a cause for concern. One of the contributing factors is the lack of access to water, coupled by poor infrastructure particularly in communal spaces such as public markets and shopping centres. Negligence by local authorities to maintain sewer and water systems including poor drainage systems has led to sewage pools in streets where children are found playing or where women sell their wares. Poor water governance in Zimbabwe has resulted in many deaths due to water borne diseases such as cholera, diarrhoea, bilharzia, typhoid and dysentery and currently, young children are at risk of contracting bilharzia. From time to time, the government embarks on free vaccination and treatment strategies. However, such strategies are heavily dependent on donor funding leaving the Zimbabwean population at the mercy of donors.

Access to healthcare services has remained in a dire state. At Mkoba Poly Clinic in Gweru, nursing mothers have had to resort to paying fees at private clinics in order to have their children immunised as council clinics have run dry on vaccines. These challenges continue to persist despite the fact that section 76 of the Zimbabwean Constitution guarantees citizens the right to basic healthcare services. Such services must be accessible and available to all who need them. Provisions of healthcare services is of utmost importance to women as they seek maternal healthcare services, services for their children and as the primary caregivers in their homes. It is also important that these services address the needs of other marginalized groups such as persons with disabilities and those with HIV/AIDS.

The study revealed that in Zimbabwe, many public buildings including hospitals and clinics remain inaccessible over and above the challenges of inadequate staff, shortage of medication and hospital equipment. In the most remote areas, such clinics and hospitals are inaccessible due to poor road networks and distance as well as unfriendly infrastructure towards persons with disabilities.

According to the survey, it is evident that many constituencies around the country have very few women representatives in the form of Councillors and MPs. With women making up approximately 61%-63% of the population, this means that women all over the country are underrepresented. Women inclusion in politics and decision-making processes is of paramount importance as it challenges both the power structures and relations that undermine the consideration of women's needs and interest in policymaking. However, from the survey and the overall state of gender responsive public service delivery, mechanisms for their participation and information indicators are absent. The inclusion of women in decision-making is democratic in nature and breaks male dominance in politics. It is important that women participate in the policy formulation and implementation. Their voices in decision making and the demand for accountability are essential. The differential needs of women must be evident in political decision making, guide program designs and implementation, and be accounted for in monitoring and evaluation.

7. Conclusion

The continuous dilapidation of public service delivery coupled with infrastructure gaps in areas such as roads, health, water and sanitation, education and social amenities have worsened the cost of living for the citizens. Poor public resource management, lack of transparency and accountability in the administration of public resources perpetuates resource leakages, corruption and rent-seeking. ZACC's inability to present its books for auditing presents a gloomy picture of the status and state of watchdog and ombudsmen institutions. It creates a hopeless situation for checks and balances in the utilisation of public resources. The SitRep concludes 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. However, possible 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

- **Devolution Funds**

The government started setting aside and distributing devolution funds to local authorities in 2019. This was a right chord as these fiscal transfers are significantly helping marginalized communities with little business activity for local governments to collect revenue. However, the delayed disbursements of these devolution funds in a highly inflationary environment are tantamount to waste of public funds. Local governments source key supplies and materials from the private sector, a sector that charges Zimbabwe dollar prices benchmarked at the parallel market rate despite them accessing foreign currency from government at an official rate. Therefore, ZIMCODD urges the Treasury to disburse large chunk of fiscal transfers to local governments on time before the value is erased by ravaging inflation.

- **Debt Recovery Strategies**

Every year, the Office of the Auditor-General (OAG) finds that many local governments have poor debt recovery strategies. In some instances, local authorities are paying for goods and services that are not delivered while in some instances they are failing to keep asset registers and undertake proper property valuations. It is reported that local authorities such as the Harare City Council are being owed billions of ZW\$ by their clients. One can safely conclude that the recurrence of poor debt recovery cases in the OAG audit reports on local authorities shows lack of capacity to recover by these LAs. Therefore, by capacitating them to develop strong debt recovery policies and internal controls among other policies, revenue coffers of many local governments will improve significantly. Absent corruption and waste, social service delivery will improve.

- **Gender Mainstreaming**

In order to achieve sustainable, people-centred development and the fulfilment of socio-economic rights, women must be fairly represented and accounted for. There must be equitable representation of men and women in all decision-making processes in order to protect the interests of all citizens. Gender responsiveness, particularly in the context socio-economic rights, is a precondition for sustainable development. This can be achieved through gender-mainstreaming in policies and strategies. It is therefore imperative that government undertakes to narrow gender gaps and ensure that strategies are put in place to guarantee gender considerations in the formulation and implementation of policies where public service delivery is concerned.

- **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)**

The urban population has ballooned over the years as a result of worsening conditions of living and livelihoods in rural areas which led to increased rural to urban migration. This has overwhelmed water treatment plants and water distribution infrastructure. To cope with rising demand, authorities should find innovative ways such as strengthening Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and to raise revenue to invest heavily in water infrastructure.

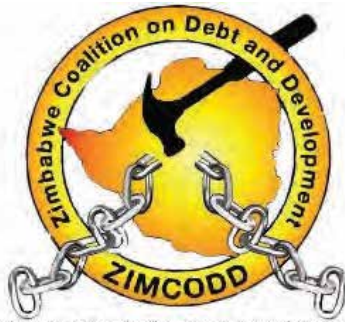
- **Embrace Renewable Energy**

Poor social service delivery is also being linked to erratic power supply. The sole supplier of electricity through the national grid, ZESA, has been implementing long load shedding schedules across the country to ration the scarce electricity. This is affecting hospitals, water and sewer treatment plants among other key centres. To solve this problem, central and local governments should embrace and install cheap renewable energy at all strategic institutions like clinics, hospitals, water pumps and treatment plants.

- **Inculcate a culture of accountability, responsiveness and beneficiation in Zimbabwe's PRM landscape**

- The principle of meta-governance which entails "governance of the governance" should be used by other watchdog institutions such as the Parliament and Office of President and Cabinet to monitor the operations of ZACC which have eroded public trust with respect to public resource management.

- The Ministry of Finance and Health should religiously publicise all COVID-19 related expenditures to ensure transparency and accountability in the management of public funds.
- The Ministry of Mines should see to it that, local communities benefit from resources within their jurisdiction.
- The Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Mines should put measures and mechanisms that fast-track the re-tabling processes of the Mines and Minerals Bill.



Investing In People for Social and Economic Justice

CONTACT US

HARARE OFFICE

9 Bargate Road,

Mt Pleasant, Harare

Tel: +263 242 776830

Email: zimcodd@zimcodd.co.zw

www.zimcodd.org