



PUBLIC RESOURCES MANAGEMENT SITUATIONAL REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2022



ZIMCODD
ZIMBABWE COALITION ON DEBT & DEVELOPMENT

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1. Introduction and Background

The September Public Resource Management Situational Report (PRM SitRep), seeks to examine the use of public resources across the country. Across the globe, public resources play a critical role in national development and growth. Public resources are integral in building state welfare which is prerequisite for an inclusive developmental state. Public resources in Zimbabwe entails minerals, water boards, roads, recreational facilities to mention but a few. However, over the years the abuse of public resources has been gaining traction with patronage, rent-seeking and economies of affection at the apex of the factors promoting resource abuse. Thus, in order to come up with an astute and comprehensive study, a survey was undertaken in 57 districts across the country and actionable recommendations were prescribed based on the findings raised.

2. Purpose

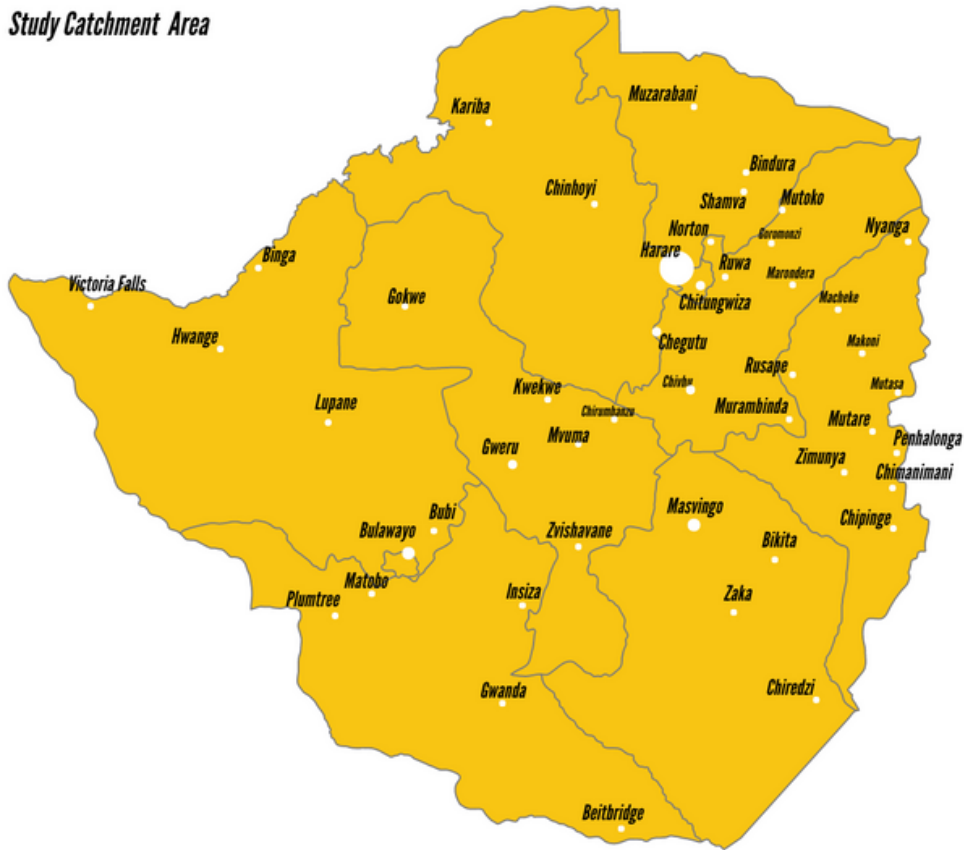
The PRM SitRep seeks to satisfy the following objectives:

- 1) To bring to light how public resources are utilised.
- 2) To present citizens' perspective on the utilisation of public resources through Human Interest Stories/cases.
- 3) To assess public service delivery under the prism of Gender Responsive Public Service Delivery (GRPSD).
- 4) To promote participation in economic governance from local to central government.
- 5) To proffer actionable recommendations that can promote national development and growth.

3. Methodological Framework

The PRM SitRep utilised mixed method research including a survey, observation, key informant interviews and focus group discussions to generate alternative policy recommendations informed by the findings, Human Interest Stories (HIS) were used to reinforce study findings. The research areas comprised of fifty-seven (57) districts as illustrative in Figure 1 below which shows study catchment area.

Study Catchment Area



Source: Primary Data Compiled by ZIMCODD



4. Public Resources Management Situational Context

Value for money audits are at the core of economic growth and development. They are a vital cog in the governance discourse. If implemented optimally, they have a potent to flush out all expenditure related corruption. The press statement by the Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Honourable Mthuli Ncube on the implementation of value for money audits in public procurement is a reactionary move that is meant to water down the citizens' concerns after Parliament attempted to purchase laptops at a unit cost of US\$ 9000 and desktops at a unit cost of US\$3000.¹ Abuse of public resources are not a new phenomenon in Zimbabwe as currently, the state and nature of the Beitbridge Boarder Post does not reflect the standard of the US\$300 million which is claimed to have been used.²

In a move aimed at boosting farmers' confidence, the government has securitised the 99-year leases. Previously, the 99-year leases were just offer letters but now they can be used as collateral to secure funding from financing institutions. According to the Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Water and Rural Resettlement, Honourable Anxious Masuka:

"We now have a securitised A2 offer letter. It was not a permit for you to operate, it was just a letter. All those who are being given land now will not be given this securitised permit. Those that already have offer letters will be requested to submit them in due course so that we give you securitised permits to remove crooks in the process,"

1. <https://newsday.co.zw/thestandard/local-news/article/200000672/parly-speaks-on-us9k-laptops>

2. <http://www.newsdezimbabwe.co.uk/2022/09/us300m-wasted-says-mliswa.html>

Although it took long for the government to collateralise and securitise the land, this is a welcome move and a step in the right direction in terms of property rights and security. It will also open avenues of investment.

Moreover, in a positive development, Zimbabwe continues to witness a moderation of ZWL depreciation in the parallel market resulting in disinflation for the past two (2) months. According to the latest Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) resolutions, this moderation is largely attributable to tightening of the monetary policy, favourable uptake of gold coins, enforcement of market discipline, the review and enhancement of government procurement processes and practices to ensure value for money.³ The gold coins were released in the market by RBZ on the 25th of July 2022 to help mop excess ZWL liquidity and provide a lucrative alternative investment asset of storing value thereby reducing excess demand for US dollars which was putting pressure on the ZWL. The MPC revealed that a cumulative 10 000 gold coins had been minted by Fidelity Gold Refinery as of 26 August 2022. Of this total, 6 799 coins were already being sold with 95% of these coins sold in local currency and 75% bought by corporates. To ensure a sustained ZWL and price stability, the MPC resolved to maintain a tight monetary policy stance and adequate support to the productive sectors of the economy.

The foregoing policy actions being taken by authorities to clamp the ZWL exchange rate and price volatility are commendable although it remains to be seen if the authorities will manage to maintain consistency while gathering adequate political will to institute lasting solutions to Zimbabwe's decades-long structural imbalances. In the meantime, it is difficult for one to expect the current moderation of parallel market rate to be sustained. Why? Granular analysis shows that the balance of risks to ZWL and price inflation outlook is tilted to the downside. The nation is witnessing a massively shrinking civic space characterized by rising police brutality, arrests, and incarceration of human rights and political activists without trial. The likely passage of the poorly thought PVO Bill risk exacerbating the situation as it may scare away direly needed support from development partners in critical sectors like health, education, and climate financing. There is also a high likelihood of civil unrest, political violence, and policy slippages which are generally associated with the upcoming general elections. More so, shocks to global supply and distribution chains from the resurging COVID-19 pandemic and rising geopolitical risks attached to the Russia-Ukraine war may continue to fuel global inflation thus ravaging Zimbabwe's import-dependent economy.

In addition, Human Capital Development (HCD) continues to be under threat from a dysfunctional health care system owing to plethora of governance and structural anomalies that undermines the health sector. The Zimbabwean Health Sector is in ramshackle⁴ with Zimbabweans crossing borders to South Africa to seek medical attention.

3. https://www.rbz.co.zw/documents/mps/2022/MPC_Resolutions_-_26-8-2022.pdf

4. Zimbabwe health system is in intensive care: how it got there (thezimbabwean.co)

A scenario that has exerted pressure on the South African Health Service Delivery culminating into a health crisis. The remarks by the Limpopo Health Medical Executive Committee, that Zimbabweans seek medical attention in South Africa because its medical facilities have been run down by poor governance and corrupt public officials testifies to this verdict.⁵

Thus, the failure by the ruling government to prioritise health sector has affected HCD, the outbreak of measles,⁶ a medieval disease attesting to the incompetence of the government in safeguarding the welfare of the citizens. It is also a clear reflection of the infrastructural gaps and stagnation in the health sector. The medieval period is the time frame that spans from AD 476-1485. It is believed that it started around the fall of the Ancient Rome and ended with the European Renaissance.⁷ Therefore, the fact that Zimbabwe is still tormented by medieval diseases reflects on the state of her health care system and lack of urgency and commitment from the duty bearers. It is also a reflection on the backward state of the country. However, it is imperative to note that, the outbreak of measles has also worsened health inequalities. The most affected persons are from marginalised and vulnerable communities, a projection of the unfair distribution of the economic welfare.

Calls for Gender Responsive Public Service Delivery continues to grow as women lament over unpaid care⁸ work. Unpaid care refers to the domestic duties and responsibilities which are designated to women by a patriarchal society. These domestic responsibilities such as fetching of water, taking care of the sick and cooking are worsened by poor public service delivery. In an ideal environment where there is optimum service delivery women will not have to go and fetch water over a distance of 5 or more kilometres. To this end, ZIMCODD calls on the government to prioritise Gender Responsive Public Service Delivery so as to address the woes of women.

5. Public Resource Management Survey Findings

It is universally agreed that citizens are not passive users of public resources but are active holders of fundamental rights. Since human rights are guaranteed at law, states are the primary mechanism through which human rights are realised. To this end, the primary role of an accountable state is to create and sustain the material and social preconditions which guarantee that fundamental human rights are within the reach of its citizens, carried out in a progressive manner. This can only be achieved through prudent, responsible, transparent, accountable, equitable distribution and utilisation of available public resources, as articulated in section 298 of the supreme constitution. For social and economic rights, such as food, housing, social security, education, health, water among others, this is achieved through effective delivery of public services that address a set of basic human needs. This section assesses the management of public resources by the lower tiers of government in fulfilling fundamental human rights across fifty-seven districts in Zimbabwe.

5. Limpopo Health MEC defends her statement on Zimbabweans placing strain on healthcare system - SABC News - Breaking news, special reports, world, business, sport coverage of all South African current events. Africa's news leader.

6. Measles outbreak in Zimbabwe kills 157 unvaccinated children | CGTN Africa

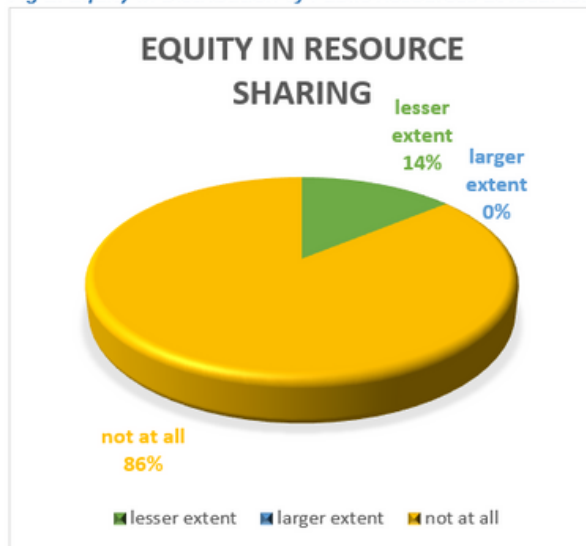
7. Medieval Timeline 476 AD - 1453 - Important Events of the Medieval Period (medievalchronicles.com)

8. Women cry foul over unpaid care work - Newsday Zimbabwe

5.1 Equitable distribution of public resources

Zimbabwe remains among the most unequal societies in the world with regard to income, gender, socio-economic status and the distribution of key social services. The Commitment to Reducing Inequality Index (CRI) Report produced by OXFAM and others (2020) placed Zimbabwe in the top 50 most unequal countries worldwide. Most of these inequalities can be attributed to the unequal distribution of public resources which systematically disadvantages certain groups of the society, and particularly the marginalised and vulnerable groups. Previous PRM Situational Reports have highlighted and raised concern about the substantial disparities in allocation of resources between districts and provinces. In spite of the efforts and rhetoric by the ruling government, to reduce inequalities by such mantras as “leaving no one and no place behind”, disparities with regards to public resource distribution have persisted resulting in continuous violation of social and economic rights and deepening poverty.

Fig 2: Equity in Distribution of Public Resources at local level



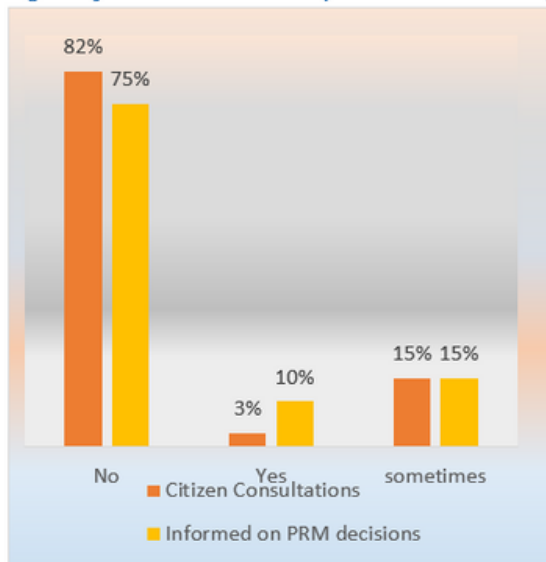
Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

An assessment of the distribution of public resources across the fifty-seven districts of Zimbabwe show that in 49 districts (or 86% of surveyed districts), public resources are not equitably distributed while in 8 districts (or 14%) public resources are equitably distributed, although to a lesser extent. However, the equitable distribution of public resources across sub-national governments is critical to redress inequities among different societal groups and this calls for reforms in resource allocation and distribution to ensure equitable resource distribution.

5.2 Citizens Involvement in Decisions to do with Public Resources

Citizen involvement and participation is embedded in the Constitution of Zimbabwe in section 13. The responsibility of operationalizing and implementing these provisions lies with both central and local government levels. Citizen participation is the process through which stakeholders input and share control over development initiatives, decisions and resources which affect them. Strengthening citizen participation is therefore a key focus of Zimbabwe's devolution agenda under the constitutional and legal framework. This ambitious devolution shifts some key decision making from central to local governments thereby creating a window of opportunity for more “bottom-up” engagement backed by a constitutional and legal framework which includes provisions for government to share information, consult the public and regularly gather citizen feedback. Although the country is mandated to facilitate public participation, the actualization and subsequent impact of this aspect of good governance on public resource management and service delivery has remained an issue of public debate.

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

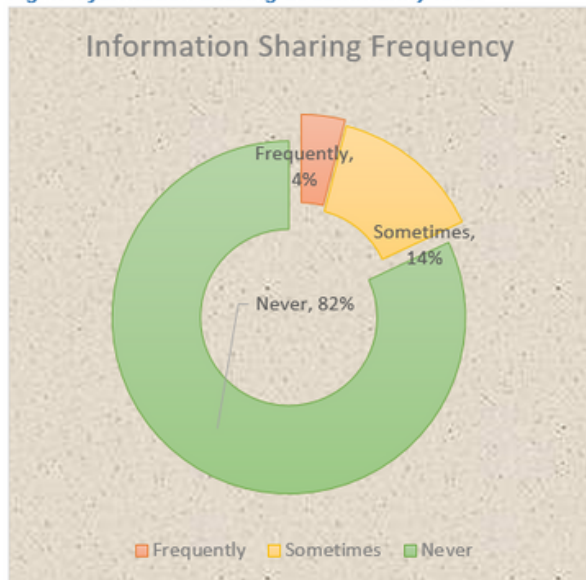


Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

As with the August SitRep, the September survey results show that in forty-seven out of fifty-seven districts (82%), citizens are not consulted while in 15% they are sometimes consulted and only in 3% of the sampled districts, citizens are consulted when public resources decisions are made. With regards to citizen involvement, in forty-three districts (75%) citizens are not involved in PRM decisions while in 15% of the districts, citizens are sometimes involved and in 10% of the districts, citizens reported that they are involved when PRM decisions are made at local government level.

5.3 Access to Information on Public Resources

Fig 4: Information sharing at community level



Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

While the right of access to information held by the state is a fundamental democratic right provided for in the Constitution of Zimbabwe, access to public resource management information at local authority level has remained a privilege for a few. The September survey results show that local authorities in 47 districts (82% of the 57 sampled districts), never freely share information on public resource management. Only in 8 districts (14%), local authorities sometimes share public resources information while in 2 districts (4%) local authorities are frequently sharing PRM information.

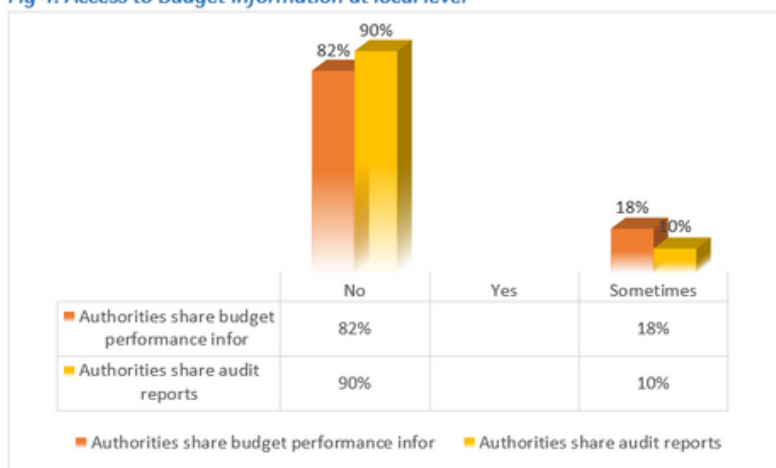
The September SitRep calls on the need for local governments to improve transparency and accountability in public resource management through providing access to information as this is critical for the National Development Strategy 1 and towards attainment of vision 2030. Access to information will enable the people of Zimbabwe to effectively play their social accountability role in bringing the government to account for its actions, thus building public trust in the ability of the government to deliver its mandate.

5.4 Access to Budget Information

Access to budget implementation information is the nerve-centre of public participation in economic governance in general and the budget cycle in particular.

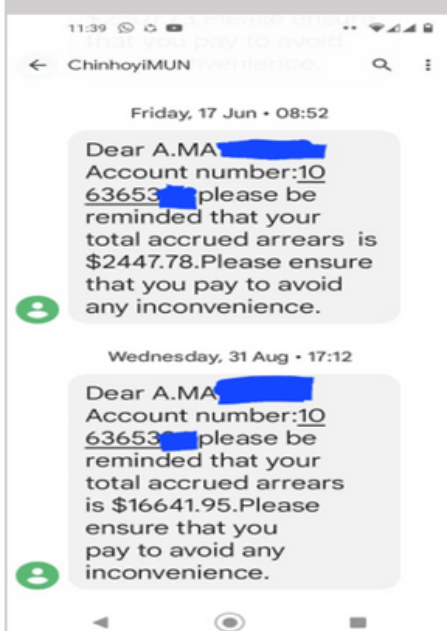
The accessibility of budget expenditure information is also essential in enforcing transparency and accountability in the utilisation of public resources as well as in the discharge of duties by public officials at the local authority level. There is therefore need for lobbying and advocacy regards accessing budget implementation information as the budget review process is still a privilege of the minority. In most local authorities in the 57 sampled districts, citizens bemoaned that at local level, once the budget has been enacted, authorities rarely engage with citizens. The September survey results show that, 82% of local authorities are not sharing budget performance reports and approximately 90% of local authorities are not sharing audit reports with residents. Only 18% and 10% local authorities are sometimes disclosing budget performance and audit reports respectively, as presented below;

Fig 4: Access to Budget Information at local level



Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

Case: Rebasing results in 300% rates hike for Chinhoyi Residents.



To the left is a photo taken on the SMS Bills platforms of the Municipality of Chinhoyi showing how much the bill of one ratepayer shot up between the months of June and August 2022. (Photo obtained with permission of the account holder)

The rebasing of water bills resulted in a rate shocker for Chinhoyi residents. Fares for high density households increased from an average of ZWL2500 to ZWL 13000 in August for high density areas

and ZWL 3500 to ZWL17000 for low density households. Upon inquiry by residents the council responded that it was not a hike but rather it rebased rates to the prevailing interbank rate as per the SI 118 of 2022. However, an analysis of the bills received by consumers show that rates have in actual fact been hiked by over 150% in USD terms.

The rebasing of bills has led to an increase of household obligations. The average household charge which was being paid in local currency was between USD8 and 12 per month. The rebasing of charges has made them hover between USD 21 and 29 at the prevailing interbank rate. Consequently, rebasing has resulted in the unilateral hiking of rates by the Municipality which is prejudicial to the ratepayers who are major stakeholders.

This implementation of rebasing was done without first consulting/notifying the residents. Consultations with all stakeholders is the cornerstone of prudent public finance management practice. In addition, the initial plan to rebase the rates, minutes of the Council's Finance Committee meeting held on 29 June 2022 prove that it was not aimed at domestic consumers but rather at shop licenses, commercial land sales and service providers who ordinarily charge in USD like fuel stations and the hospitality industry. It is shocking as to how residents ended up having their rates rebased, which are out of the majority's reach.



The Chairperson
Chinhoyi Residents Trust
P.O Box Q2e
Chinhoyi
29 August 2022
Municipality of Chinhoyi
Office of the Town Cleck
P O Box
Chinhoyi

Dear Town Cleck

Cc: Town Mayor

Re: Letter of complaint on Water charges increase

Reference is made to the above cited subject. Majority of the citizens of Chinhoyi from the Residents meeting they had with Chinhoyi Residents Trust are disturbed and highly affected by sharp random and uninformed sudden increase of water bills from August 2022.

We hearby by on behalf of the majority of the residents from ward 1 to 14 submit a complaint that charges be reduced to atmost USD\$10 prevailing interbank equivalent rate. We are bearing in mind that council has to be capacited for smooth provision of services with these bills.

We look forward for your response

Sibongile Mgjima
Chairperson- Chinhoyi Residents Trust (CRT)
0772 815 773

Above is a letter of complaint written by the Chinhoyi Residents Trust to Chinhoyi Municipality leadership.

Engagements with council by the Community Monitoring Resource Agent (CORA) for Makonde and the Chinhoyi Residents Trust has yielded little results as formal complaint written to the Mayor and Town Clerk have been referred to the Finance Committee for consideration meanwhile desperate residents continue to accumulate a debt which may become insurmountable and lead to water supplies being cut. In their correspondence with the local authority, residents understand the need for council to levy rates which enable it deliver services however such hikes must not be astronomical and must be done in consultation with stakeholders.

Case: Budget Consultative meetings a waste of time

The manner in which the City of Harare is conducting the 2023 budget consultative meetings leaves a lot to be desired. It seems these meetings are being conducted only as a requirement of the Urban Councils Act but not to consult residents on ways in which the city can appropriate revenue so as to deliver services to the residents. Residents feel that this soliciting of inputs is a window dressing exercise by council. The 2023 budget consultations are coming in a hybrid format. This is both physically and virtual. Physical meetings were last held in 2019 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Harare is failing to deliver services because most residents and ratepayers are not paying their bills. This is mainly due to poor engagement by the local authority. Most residents and ratepayers are not participating in these meetings because their inputs are not being taken seriously and no tangible projects are evident to what they are paying. The local authority is failing to publicise budget consultative meetings fully. The council is mostly using social media as their communication channel. Residents have for long asked Councillors and District Officers to constitute Ward Development Committees (WADCOs) as a way of creating residents' platforms which will champion active civic participation of residents.

At a budget consultative meeting held in Ward 32 at Sophie Hall, Glen View on the 28th of August, a total of 26 people attended the meeting. This figure is inclusive of the District Officer and his staff plus the Ward Councillor. Officials from the Finance department read out the budget performance report for 2022. Residents were ill equipped to discuss and input in the report since it was not circulated before. Most participants requested to have the document but to no avail. Over the years Council has failed to give residents appropriate information to enable them to participate in the process. Council expects residents to participate in these processes without information.

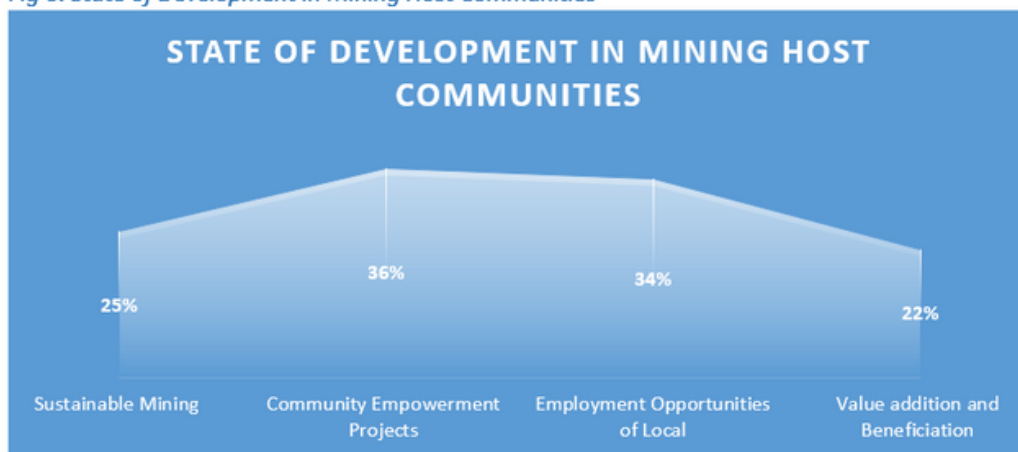
Every year Council comes to consult residents without providing key information such as how the previous budget has performed. Budgetary support such as loans needs to be known by residents in order for them to position themselves in the processes. The cosmetic approach to the whole process by Council has forced most residents to lose trust in both the Council and the process thereby boycotting these budget consultative meetings. Every Council budget comes with a theme for each year yet residents are not aware of the origins of these themes. There are no platforms where residents can give their inputs so as to influence the direction of the budget in terms of service provision.

Harare City Council needs to take serious steps and build the confidence of residents in their processes. Revenue collected from residents and ratepayers sustains the Council. Without the confidence of residents, the city will continue to face revenue challenge causing Council debts to balloon. As key stakeholders, residents need to be given space and own the Council processes. The HCC must ensure that they entrench and provide for residents to participate in the budget cycle not to run it as an event.

5.5 Natural Resource Governance Issues

A negative variance in value addition and beneficiation of 5% was recorded in September from the 27% recorded in August to 22% in September. Sustainable mining regressed from 30% in August to 25% signifying a down trend as it continues to regress from the 34% recorded in July. A situation that presents hopelessness for mining host communities who are being exposed to inimical mining practices. A decrease in employment opportunities of locals was witnessed from 45%, 41% and 38% recorded in June, July and August respectively to 34%. A testament to the exclusion and marginalisation of local people in employment in operations within their communities. A further 5% regression was witnessed on community empowerment projects. In August, community empowerment projects received 41% and in September it was rated 36%. A trend analysis of the regression pattern shows that, in June it was 46%. Given this regression rate in natural resource governance it is clear that the US\$ 12 billion mining vision is under threat.

Fig 6: State of Development in Mining Host Communities



Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

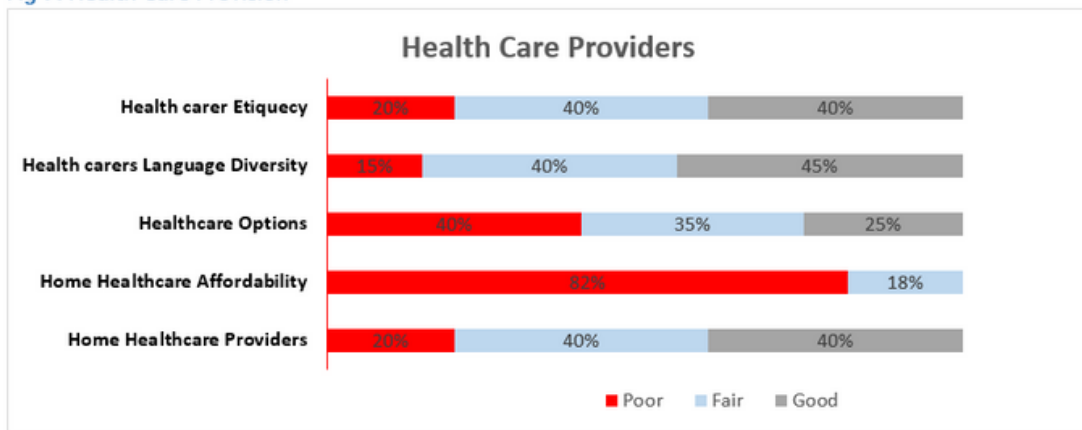
6. Social Service Delivery Findings

Public services form the bedrock for the survival of the poor majority who are living in excluded communities and are earning below the poverty datum line (PDL). This section presents the survey findings on the state of social service delivery in Zimbabwe.

6.1 Availability of Home Health Care Providers

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, home healthcare providers have become more crucial to decongest public institutions. Apart from the pandemic, quality and affordable home healthcare services offer citizens options to access tailored plans suiting their specific needs.

Fig 7: Health Care Provision



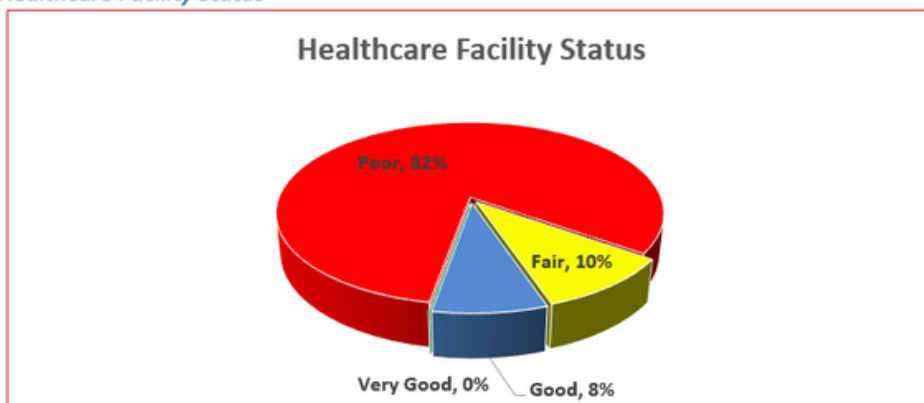
Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

The survey established that despite the importance of home health care, these services are out of touch for the majority. Although there was an improvement in home health care options, about 82% of the districts surveyed reported home health care as unaffordable. The services are being offered largely in foreign currency yet the majority are earning in local currency.

6.2 Quality of Health Care Facilities

In April 2001, member states of the African Union (AU) took a noble step towards addressing healthcare inequalities in Africa by pledging to spend at least 15% of their budgets on public healthcare. Barring corruption, governments will be able to deliver quality health care at the doorsteps of marginalized communities who are walking long distances to access the same.

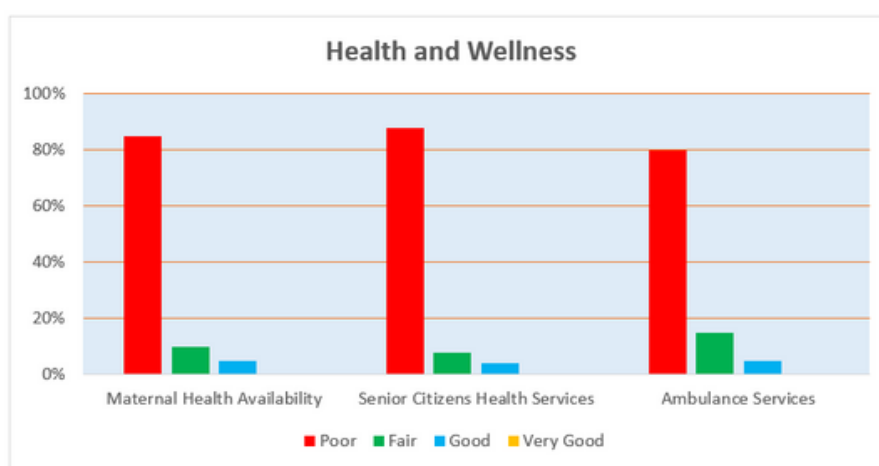
Fig 8: Healthcare Facility Status



Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

Zimbabwe is however failing to meet the 15% threshold as per the Abuja Declaration. Of the few public resources available, a large chunk is channelled toward recurrent expenditures. This is leading to severe deterioration of public health care institutions as established by the survey that 82% of surveyed districts reported poor public health care facilities.

Fig 9: Health and Wellness



Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

More so, Treasury continues to delay disbursements of budget votes to the Health Ministry. For instance, as of June 2022, the Ministry has utilized a paltry 27% of its ZWL117.7 billion provided in the initial 2022 budget.⁹ This, also helps to explain prevailing poor ambulance services, maternal and elderly health care.

HIS: Community Health Workers are always needed, but do not exist in Budiro

The Community of Budiro lacks a Community Health Care system. In the past years, there used to be Voluntary Community Health Workers (the Mbuya Utsananas) who would pass the health information and educate as well as help the community with home care services, amongst many other duties. Nowadays health attention is only found in clinics that are overwhelmed. However, the Community Health Care system is a necessity, to provide a service that helps the majority, especially senior citizens to find and access health as well as supportive services.

Community health workers help to promote life changes, inform people about the importance of medical treatment, for instance in this era of COVID-19, to promote the uptake of COVID-19 vaccines and spreading information on how to reduce the risk of contracting the disease, also the Do's and Don'ts when one is infected with the virus. This simultaneously promotes safe lifestyles. Complementing the monitoring process of Public Resources in the health sector is also another critical role they play. They also play a crucial role in advocating for better treatment for at-risk communities and can work alongside other neighborhood groups to discuss the emotional, physical, cultural, and social features of the city including housing, nutrition, and transportation.

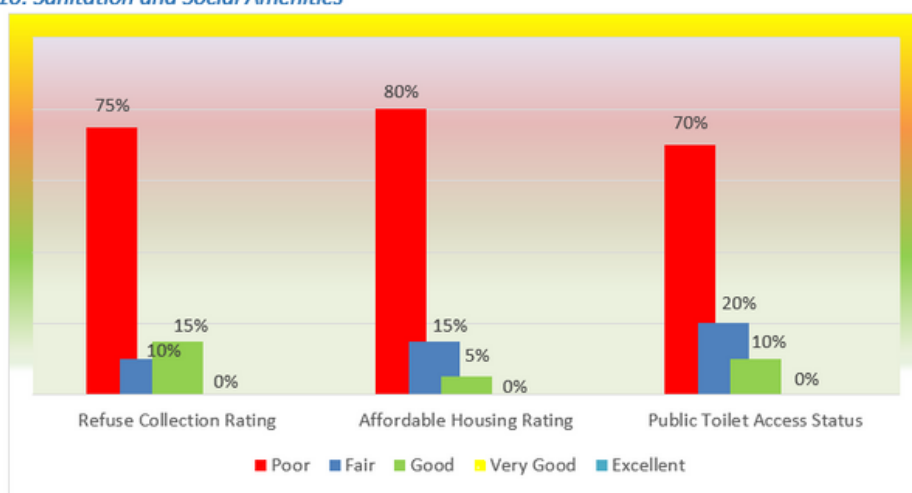
9. http://www.zimtreasury.gov.zw/?page_id=731

Currently, in Budiro, there are no ambulance services and none of the satellite clinics has an ambulance. Summing up, there is a huge health gap that needs to be addressed in the Budiro district and in many other communities which do not have Community Health Workers. It takes collective efforts between citizens and the health sector as well as the local authorities to organize an effective Community Health Care System. In the upcoming advocacies, the main thrust shall be on coming up with a sustainable Community Health Care System to promote and save lives.

6.3 Access to Safe Sanitation and Social Amenities

Safe sanitation is critical in the protection of both the environment and the general well-being of the populace. At the same time, social amenities are crucial in promoting societal harmony through sports and other forms of socialization.

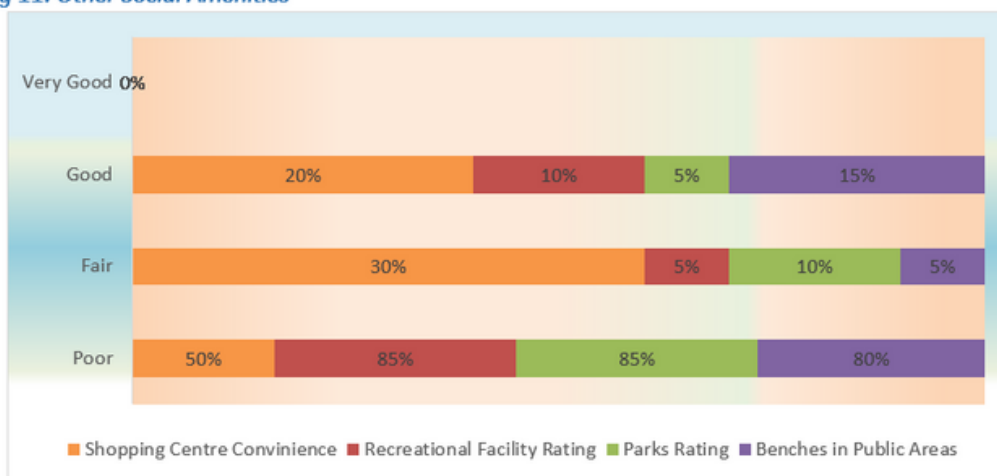
Fig 10: Sanitation and Social Amenities



Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

However, since the advent of ZIMCODD Public Resources Management Situational Reports, the surveys continue to unearth massive deterioration of sanitation services. As for September 2022, the survey found that 75%, 80%, and 70% of 57 districts lacked refuse collection, affordable housing, and public toilet access respectively.

Fig 11: Other Social Amenities



Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

The survey also established that social amenities are rapidly deteriorating. This is largely depicted at a national level where at one point the national football team was banned from competitive international matches due to poor stadia.¹⁰ Not only are poor social amenities inhibiting community socialization but are also having a huge toll on talented sportspersons.

HIS: Lack of ablution facilities haunt Bindura residents working daily within the business centre.

The lack of sufficient public restrooms within the Bindura Business Centre is a cause for concern among the locals. There is only one operational public restroom, and using it costs USD0.50 or an equivalent amount per session. When considering the health requirements set by the Ministry of Health and Child Care for running a public business, they demand the presence of ablutions. The fact that the council continues to offer licenses for businesses to operate while the only available public toilet in town can only accommodate 2 people, either male or female, per session, not meeting the demand for its use, is extremely upsetting. The town centre is overcrowded, especially around holidays, and the current bus terminal's public restrooms are inoperable. The facility is out of repair and overcrowded at the same time, so long lines have become the norm. Some members of the populace may find it challenging to urinate, so they opt to use the open spaces within the business centre.

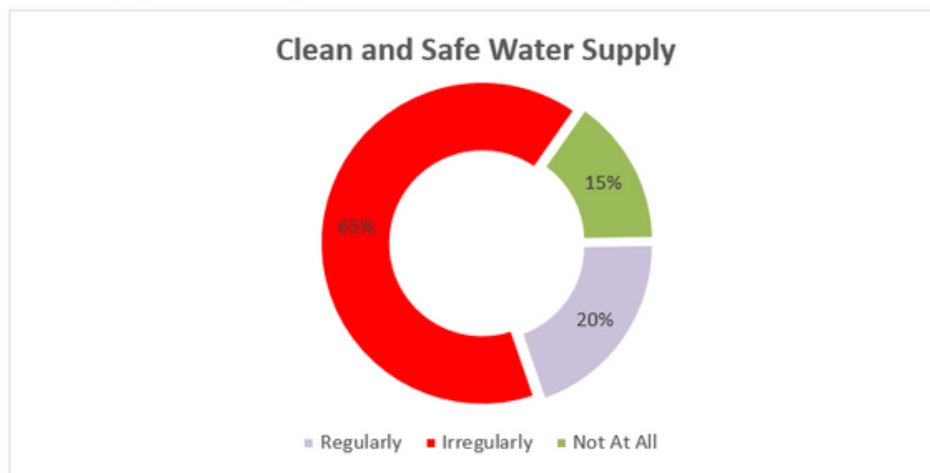


The effects of such a facility on People with Disability are inhumane. The only available toilet is not disability friendly – which affects People Living with Disability as they are unable to use the only available facility. Residents have demanded that the council explain why they have not been developing proper public ablutions to use. Commenting on the issue, Mr. Chingono of the Bindura Allied Residents Trust noted, “The Municipality Clerk and the Mayor told us that public toilets have been let out to private players who would operate and maintain them in return for a meagre payment from the public for their use. However, it seems the tenders have not been flighted yet since January 2022. Citizens worry that within the Business Centre, there is just one small public toilet, alternatively, people are using nearby bushes and abandoned office buildings”. There is a great injustice to the ratepayers who are constantly being affected despite constant follow-up of renewal of rates on businesses operating within Bindura Business Centre. Residents together with the Bindura Allied Residents Trust are putting pressure on the Town Clerk to respond urgently to this matter. Severe health effects are bound to arise, coupled with additional air and water pollution emanating from human waste.

6.4 Water Supply

The survey also examined the state of water supply across Zimbabwe because water is a critical resource needed to support life. As alluded to in ZIMCODD August 2022 report, water also helps in the realization of other human rights like the right to a clean and safe environment.

Fig 12: Availability of Clean and Safe Potable Water



Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

The survey established that 65% of the 57 districts surveyed received clean, safe, and portable water irregularly, 20% regularly whilst 15% did not receive it at all in September 2022.

Case: Dry water taps in Zimunya Community, Mutare district

More than 10 000 people in the Zimunya community are with dry taps as ZESA Holdings implements power load shedding over a debt of more than ZWL5 million. Switching of electricity has exposed residents to the risk of disease outbreaks such as cholera, diarrhoea, typhoid, and dysentery as they resorted to unsafe water sources. Residents who are drawing their water from shallow wells, streams, and borehole water for those who have them. Some unlucky residents have fallen sick after drinking water from these unsafe sources, but they don't have a choice. The local authority has however failed to give residents a clear answer on how the debt accrued to the extent of risking the lives of thousands of people.

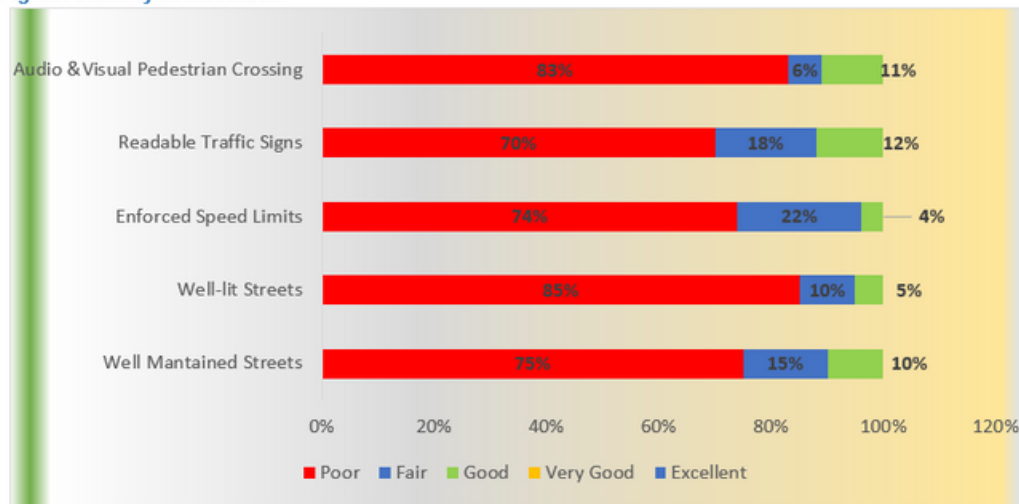
The shutting down of electricity has once again exposed the vulnerability of the Mutare rural district council which has some serious credibility issues related to transparency and accountability. Crippling debt, lack of transparency, and endemic corruption are sadly all too familiar stories in Zimbabwe. While it was Mutare rural council's obligation to pay its bills, ZESA being a public entity should avoid endangering people's lives through its moves. The national power utility and council are of strategic importance to the nation serving the taxpayers. Under section 77 of Zimbabwe's 2013 constitution, every person has the right to safe, clean, and potable water. The government is obligated to take reasonable legislative and other measures, within the limits of available recourses, to achieve the progressive realization of the right to water.

As a way forward, the government at the national and local levels should urgently act to ensure alternative sources of safe drinking water, such as safe boreholes and protected wells, for the entire population. Citizens are increasingly demanding more transparency from the local authority over its debt and public disclosure of how much exactly the rural council owes internal and external creditors.

6.5 Road Networks

Generally, to spur economic growth and development, a country requires state-of-the-art road infrastructure. This not only facilitates fast movement of factors of production but also contributes to the affordability of final products.

Fig 13: State of Local Roads



Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

Although the government is engaged in an emergency road rehabilitation programme (ERRP) since 2021, years of underfunding have left both local roads and highways in a deplorable state as illustrated in the figure above. The cash-strapped government reportedly requires about US\$40 billion to restore the quality of road infrastructure.¹¹

Case: Poor Road networks in Makoni district

Zimbabwe has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world and pregnant women have to gamble with their lives by opting for home births due to underfunded and under-resourced government hospitals or because they cannot afford the costs of care. In addition, the government has an obligation, under section 51 of the Constitution, to protect human dignity. Bad roads, shortage of fuel, and poor digital networks compound the delays. Maternity conditions are time-sensitive; thus, delays lead to excessive mortality. In Makoni district, there are 57 clinics, 4 mission hospitals, and one government hospital that is Rusape general hospital. In Matsika on 22 August 2022, a young woman died on her way to the hospital after being referred to Rusape general hospital. This was caused by poor road networks that failed to ferry her to the referral facility. She passed on her arrival at the hospital and they also failed to save the baby. Below is an image of the road on which she lost her life that leads to the clinic.

11. <https://newsday.co.zw/theindependent/tennis/article/15730/change-of-infrastructure-financing-model-needed#>

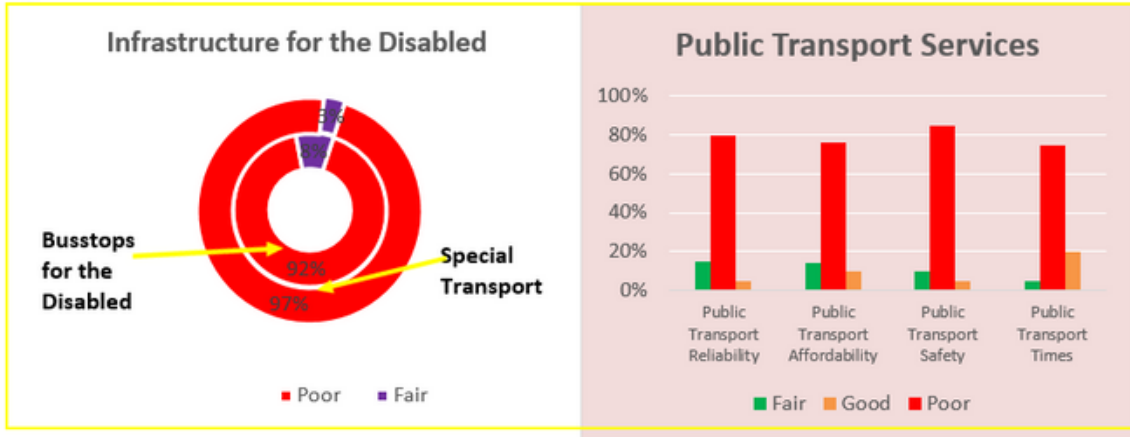


The Constitution of Zimbabwe states that the government must provide access to basic health care services to all citizens and residents. Further, section 76 (3) of the Constitution promulgates the government to ensure that no person is denied emergency medical treatment in any healthcare facility. Pregnant women in the Makoni district have to gamble with their lives to save their unborn babies and themselves in hospitals and clinics. Pregnant women and girls are at risk of childbirth-related injuries, and as a result, many reject public healthcare facilities in favour of home-based deliveries due to inadequate health infrastructure, cultural practices, and high hospital costs.

6.6 Public Transportation

An efficient mass transit system is vital in combating the existential threat of climate change and climate variability as well as improving air quality. Also, an affordable and efficient public transport system provides relief to the poor with overstretched budgets.

▲ Fig 14: State of Public Transport in Zimbabwe



Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

The survey findings show that although there is an improvement from the August 2022 report, public transport remains highly unaffordable. About 76% of the districts rated public transport as poor, 75% rated it as not time conscious while a supermajority views it as not safe for the passengers. Also, the survey has shown that Zimbabwe’s mass transit system is unfriendly to people with disabilities thus crushing the social integrity of the nation.

6.7 Engendering Public Service Delivery in Zimbabwe

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 on service delivery, the gendered aspect remains ignored. One such example is the case of water and sanitation and closely linked to it is that of the provision and availability of public ablution facilities. The unavailability of public ablution facilities especially in marketplaces is a grave cause for concern. Many women occupy space in the informal economy and sell their wares at marketplaces, however the unavailability of ablution facilities has led to the dehumanizing spectra of resorting to open, public defecation. Negligence by councils to maintain sewer and water systems including poor drainage systems has led to sewage pools in the streets and marketplaces where children are found playing, where women sell their wares and also being daily routes for many people.

Case: In Gwanda ward 4, Jahunda location was established during the colonial era and was the first location for black people. Jahunda has two communal toilets that are shared by over 100 families. Not only residents of this location share the toilets but these toilets are also of use to passers-by. With no visible labels on walls, men frequent women’s toilets and this poses a great risk to women’s safety, security, privacy and dignity. The design of these communal toilets makes it difficult for people with disabilities to access the toilets especially those who are physically impaired. There are no wheelchair ramps on both entrances. Of late, mugging and thievery has been rampant in Gwanda and this is especially concerning at night when women need to use the ablution facilities. It is worrying that in the previous council budgets, there was no revenue allocation to the sprucing up of ward 4 ablution facilities even though there is a dire need.

Most of the residents in ward 4 are elderly people who barely attend council budget consultation meetings hence there is need for the ward councilor and residents' associations to raise such issues on behalf of the elderly people.

The failure by the urban councils to collect refuse is a human right violation as it exposes citizens to health risks and deprives residents of their access to a clean and healthy environment. Most local authorities in the country have been struggling with refuse management. More and more dumpsites are sprouting in residential areas. These sites are not in compliance with the environmental management legislation. Such environments lead to the contamination of water sources resulting in disease outbreaks such as cholera, dysentery, typhoid. These affect women and children the most and can be life threatening. The failure to collect refuse affects women the most as they require safe disposal methods of sanitary wear and diapers. Women are also the primary caregivers and this means that time is taken away from their productivity time to nurse the sick should disease outbreaks occur. It is important to create an enabling environment that is healthy for women and children to live, work and play.

Access to health care services is critical to good health, yet challenges continue to persist despite the fact that section 76 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe guarantees citizens the right to basic healthcare services. Such services must be accessible and available to all who need them. Provision 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.

Case: *The rural residents of Mutasa District face a variety of challenges in accessing healthcare services. Mutasa district has got 44 public clinics and one public hospital which serves all the 31 administrative wards. Residents often face barriers in accessing public health centers due to long distances between the health facility and residents. Residents in Murara village in Honde valley walk for 10km to access the nearest public health center at Zindi Growth point. This is especially burdensome for expecting mothers who travel long distances by foot enduring the mountainous terrain because there are no accessible roads for motorists. Many expectant mothers fail to make it to the health centre and this has resulted in maternal mortality and/or death of the newborn babies. The villagers in the area have resorted to using the traditional herbs to cure some of the diseases. In most of the public health facilities there is shortage of qualified staff members and also the non-availability of essential drugs. The health inequality gap continues to widen as those in rural areas have no other option to better facilities as compared to their urban counterparts.*

While recognizing the importance of benefit sharing, it is crucial that the differential impacts and needs of men and women from mining communities are addressed. Mining activities in Zimbabwe have resulted in environmental degradation which reduces the productivity of ecosystems, and by extension, the goods and services that can be provided. Women and men interact with their natural environment daily for their sustenance and livelihoods.

Yet, pervasive gender inequalities limit women's opportunities, rights and benefits linked to environmental management, which in turn influence their needs, priorities, roles, responsibilities and decision-making power with respect to the use and conservation of natural resource management. As a result, women are affected differently than men by biodiversity degradation and loss.¹² Consideration of the gender dimensions of natural resource management involves understanding women's and men's use of natural resources; identifying the institutions – both formal (e.g. policies, laws etc.) and informal (e.g. customs, values, norms etc.) – that influence women's and men's use, management and conservation of natural resources impact women and men differently.¹³

Gender-responsive sustainable management therefore requires that laws, policies, programmes and public services take into account existing structures of gender inequality and proactively aim to overcome and remove those inequalities in order to contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and women's enjoyment of their human rights.

7. Conclusion

The negative regression that the state of development in mining host communities continues to get is a cause of concern and a threat to the US\$ 12 billion mining vision. It exposes mining governance anomalies as communities continue to be disadvantaged and marginalised. At the same time, the state and nature of public resource management in Zimbabwe is worrisome with the plunder of resources continue to pick up steam. On the other hand, infrastructural gaps across the entire public sector undermines service delivery. The effects of poor service delivery have impacted differently on males and females as highlighted in the report. The situation in the health sector shows disregard of the right to life and makes one wonder government's sincerity with vision 2030.

Recommendations

- **Quality control:** While it is commendable that the government is undertaking road resuscitation projects across the nation, though at a slow pace, there are concerns about the quality of some of the roads that have already deteriorated. As such, there is a need for quality assurance in all public projects to reduce the wastage of resources. The Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe must conduct robust value for money audits and quality control to safe guard public funds.
- **Reduce political interference:** Increased political interference in the day-to-day running of local authorities such as continued recall of councillors and ministerially imposed procurement is negatively affecting service delivery. As such, there is a need for full devolution and decentralization of power (administrative, political, and fiscal) to increase the independence of LAs in their decision-making.

12. <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/34b8/2445/f3c7ee9df40a841577c51638/cop-14-inf-21-en.pdf>

13. <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/34b8/2445/f3c7ee9df40a841577c51638/cop-14-inf-21-en.pdf>

- **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** The urban population has ballooned over the years as a result of tightening lives and livelihoods in rural areas which led to increased rural-to-urban migration. This overwhelmed existing housing, water treatment plants, and water distribution infrastructure. To cope with rising demand, authorities should find innovative ways such as strengthening Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) to raise funds and deliver on their constitutional mandates.
- **Actualize the devolution agenda:** There is need for an act of Parliament to operationalize devolution. The central government must be involved in issues to do with the overall policy, setting standards and oversight including auditing of public funds while local government focuses on infrastructural development and service delivery. The country needs a devolution framework which further separates and clarifies division of tasks, functions and responsibilities between the line ministry and the local authorities to facilitate smooth implementation. Central government must also enhance autonomy and revenue generation capacity of local government including measures to optimise collection of revenue by local authorities to support devolution programs.
- **Engender public service delivery through:**
 1. Government providing resources such as new and durable water pipes which can sustain the pressure of supplying the whole suburb and make sure people get access to clean water in their homes. The government should also provide alternative sources of safe drinking water.
 2. The government ensuring that the budget is gender responsive and addresses the needs of women and the greater burden of care work that is placed on women in society.
 3. Maximising available public resources, notably tax revenues, to invest in gender responsive public services that will help to end gender inequality and fulfil women's human rights.