



Weekly Dashboard



RBZ Interbank Rate

Week	07.03.2023	14.03.2023
Per USD1	ZWL 907.9236	ZWL 912.5828



Consumer Price Index

Month	January	February
	278.12	273.65



Inflation

Month	January	February
M.O.M.	1.1%	-1.6%
Y.O.Y.	229.8%	92.3%

WEEKLY REVIEW

21 March 2023



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1. Performance Contract Review Must Be Centred On Viable Service Delivery

On the 10th of February 2022, cabinet ministers and heads of public institutions signed performance contracts which had their first evaluation, review, and assessment.¹ Performance contracts are part of Strategic Human Resource Management, tailor-made to ensure organizational optimum efficiency by evaluating one`s performance against the agreed milestones in his or her contract.

Ideally, performance contracts are a welcome development as they project government`s positive attitude towards improving accountability in public service delivery. However, in Zimbabwe the potential positive impact of performance contracts is undermined by an unchecked culture of impunity amongst political elites. In this regard, apprehensive commentators view the Contracts as an electoral “populism stance” aimed at recalibrating the regimes image with respect to public service delivery, accountability, and transparency. Only deep-seated reforms and tangible service delivery outcomes will make the electorate believe that the government is serious about getting senior public officials to deliver.

According to the performance assessments done, a total of nineteen out of twenty-one ministers were evaluated. Two of the ministers performed beyond expectation while the other two performed below set target. The remaining fifteen are said to have successfully met their target.

Juxtaposing the positive evaluation of Ministers` performance vis, a viz the quality of public service delivery across the country, indicates that, either public officials were given different milestones contrary to the improvement of service delivery or are being rewarded for failing dismally.

Service delivery across the country is in the doldrums coupled with decrepit and dilapidating infrastructure. A looming cholera outbreak in a context with low ambulance coverage, poor water reticulation, drug and hospital bed shortage is a pressing cause for concern at a time when the health service is already failing to cope. According to UNICEF, over 1.9 million people are in urgent need of safe drinking water, sanitation and good hygiene. The proposed Mass Public Transport System has failed to materialise under strain of inefficiencies at ZUPCO and a broken road and rail infrastructure.

1. <https://www.zimeye.net/2023/03/15/mnangagwa-in-window-dressing-move-to-assess-ministers-performance/>

At the same time, electrical outages have become the order of the day, with communities going for more than ten hours with electricity. A negative implication to the business fraternity as they rely much on electricity for the operation of their business. Water woes continues to grow, approximately, 60% of water sources in the country are unsafe, leaving most families at risk of diarrhoeal and disease outbreaks².

The Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Climate and Rural Development is one of the two Ministries that have surpassed set targets. The vision of the ministry is “A prosperous, inclusive, diverse, sustainable and competitive agricultural sector by 2030” and its mission is “to facilitate the growth of a modern, sustainable and viable climate smart agriculture sector”. There is however, no prosperous, sustainable and competitive agriculture sector as the sector is entrenched with trade injustices which have kept poor farmers poor and millions of Zimbabweans food insecure. In the tobacco, cotton and sugar industries, smallholder farmers are not given same opportunities as the Politically Exposed Persons and Corporates. Thus, they find it difficult to access lines of credit and fair remuneration for their produce. Currently there are about 3.8 million rural people and 1.6 million urban people are facing food insecurity. Approximately, 4.8 million children are suffering from Severe Acute Malnutrition a testament to inadequate food. Therefore, one wonders which job well done is the Minister of Agriculture being thanked for when there is evidence of growing food insecurity and low productivity amongst almost 70% of the Zimbabwean population who depend on agriculture for livelihoods.

Performance Management is an incremental paradigmatic shift from Result Based Management (RBM). Thus, results of performance assessments must reflect objective evaluation and assessment not political affiliation or propaganda tailor-made to entice the electorate into voting for incumbents. To this end, whatever measurement or standard used to assess the performance of ministers does not capture the reality on the ground. Zimbabweans must be given an opportunity to contribute to the performance measurement framework and offer recommendations towards the attainment of the objectives of the National Development Strategy (NDS).

2. Democracy, Elections and Governance in Zimbabwe: How it ought to be.

2023 is the much-anticipated election year in Zimbabwe. Presently, a voter registration and education blitz is taking place and the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) has extended the blitz to 26th March 2023 to allow citizens to register to vote. Efforts by ZEC to educate and register voters are commendable. Pre-election processes such as voter registration are pivotal to the quality of a country’s governance and can either greatly advance or set back a country’s long-term democratic development.

Safeguarding the independence and transparency of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission is central to the achievement of a free and fair electoral process.

However, the integrity of the ZEC has been questioned following amongst other things, proof of an erroneous voters roll and more recently, unresolved concerns with the delimitation report recently published by ZEC.

Zimbabwe is signatory to the Instrument of Ratification of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. The objectives of the charter seek to Promote adherence, by each State Party, to the universal values and principles of democracy and respect for human rights. Zimbabwe's pre- and post-election period has a history of human rights abuses in the form of violence, arrests, intimidation and election rigging which undermines democracy by substituting freedom of choice with coercion and by deterring participation. The charter is an important instrument that seeks to promote and enhance adherence to the principle of the rule of law premised upon the respect for, and the supremacy of, the Constitution and constitutional order in the political arrangements of the State Parties. It remains to be seen how the government will uphold these objectives given its track record.

The Charter further seeks to promote the holding of regular free and fair elections to institutionalize legitimate authority of representative government as well as democratic change of governments and to promote best practices in the management of elections for purposes of political stability and good governance. This is particularly interesting, as there have been murmurs of persons with political interests seeking for elections to be postponed. Linked to this, the charter seeks to prohibit, reject and condemn unconstitutional change of government in any Member State as a serious threat to stability, peace, security and development. As this is Zimbabwe's first election after being signatory to the charter, it must be seen that the provisions of the charter are upheld.

By being signatory to the Charter, Zimbabwe is also expected to promote the fight against corruption in conformity with the provisions of the AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption adopted in Maputo, Mozambique in July 2003 as well as promote the establishment of the necessary conditions to foster citizen participation, transparency, access to information, freedom of the press and accountability in the management of public affairs. The fight for transparency and accountability in governance processes remains at the heart of ZIMCODD's work. Through the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance,³ Zimbabwe has committed to promote the universal values and principles of democracy, good governance, human rights and the right to development. This can be achieved through promoting and strengthening good governance through the institutionalization of transparency, accountability and participatory democracy.

Elections and other political processes are pivotal to the quality of a country's governance and can either greatly advance or set back a country's long-term democratic development.

3. http://archive.ipu.org/idd-E/afr_charter.pdf

. It is therefore important to prioritise independent electoral bodies that provides technical leadership and support on elections, political processes and democratic political transitions. It will be interesting to see how government will uphold the Charter and whether there will be significant changes in the fight against corruption and towards a people-led, transparent and accountable government.

3. Understanding The Importance of Corporate Social Responsibility

While there is no universal definition of corporate social responsibility, it generally refers to transparent business practices that are based on ethical values, compliance with legal requirements, and respect for people, communities, and the environment. Thus, beyond making profits, companies are responsible for the totality of their impact on people and the planet.⁴ Stakeholders expect that companies should be more environmentally and socially responsible in conducting their business.

In pursuit of sustainable development and environmental remediation, local communities must benefit from the proceeds of natural resource extraction which occurs in their locality. It is expected that mining companies play their role in corporate social responsibility. This is the idea that a company should play a positive role in the community and consider the environmental and social impact of business decisions. It is closely linked to sustainability by ensuring economic, social, and environmental value in the work the company is carrying out. This concept is closely linked to benefit sharing which is a notion found in the Convention on Biological Diversity to which Zimbabwe is signatory. Benefit-sharing refers to the way in which resources may be accessed, and how the benefits that result from their use are shared between the people or countries using the resources (users) and the people or countries that provide them (providers).⁵ Section 13 (4) of the Zimbabwean Constitution provides authority to support benefit sharing. It provides that, “the state must ensure local communities benefit from the resources in their areas”. It is therefore important to ensure that the benefits resulting from the use of natural resources are shared fairly and equitably between the community and entities exploiting them.

While recognizing the importance of benefit sharing, it is crucial that the differential impacts and needs of men and women from mining activities 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.⁶

4. https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pnada498.pdf

5. <https://www.cbd.int/abs/infokit/brochure-en.pdf>

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

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.⁷ 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.

- There is need for a comprehensive legal instrument that is effective, with clear procedures of enforcement and implementation, compelling mining companies to ensure they share the proceeds with the communities.
- Stakeholders at community level but be involved in decision making processes to ensure that local community members benefit from the resources within their locality.
- Policy measures undertaken must ensure that they address the differential needs and gendered impacts of men and women from mining activities.

4. Zimbabwe`s government not learning from neoliberal historical failures

This article evaluates the major impacts of neoliberal health, education and economic growth policies on poor and marginalized people in Zimbabwe. It argues that poor and marginalized people especially women and the youth have been disproportionately impacted by the imposition of neo-liberal policies. At the same time, the article outlines, how neo-liberal policies have disproportionately benefitted political and economic elites, resulting in the expansion of structural inequalities and the extension of generational cycles of poverty.

President Mnangagwa's "prosperity through austerity," reinstates the neo-liberal policy in Zimbabwe's development landscape through budget limitations to health education and public service delivery. For example, in 2022 education received 13.1% and health received 14.9% of the total budget. The reinstated neoliberal policies have negative impacts on the development of Zimbabwe including but not limited to the marginalization of the poor in the distribution of educational and health benefits, inflationary pressures, and reduction in employment.

Globalization on its own is unsympathetically affecting the economy of Zimbabwe through brain drain. Globalization has caused the labour market to be competitive or open to the extent that countries that have not contributed to Zimbabwe`s human capital growth are now seeking to profit out of it. Developed countries such as UK Canada and Australia are under pressure to recruit manpower from Africa particularly in the education and health sector and unfortunately Zimbabwe is one of the top targeted countries in Africa which includes South Africa and Nigeria.

For example, in February 2023 Zimbabwe joined a select group of nations and territories whose educators are eligible to get Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) which allows them to work long-term as teachers in the UK. Also, after or during the covid-19 era Zimbabwe lost more than 4,000 nurses and doctors to European countries. This has negatively impacted the economic growth of Zimbabwe as human capital is essential to the development of a country

The privatization of healthcare has diminished the overall quality of healthcare in Zimbabwe and further brought healthcare beyond the reach of the majority. Hospital services are now pro-rich and anti-poor as the privatization of healthcare makes health services more unaffordable and less available to the poor who need it the most. Pregnant women are now required to bring their own cotton swab, gloves, scissors and clamp forceps just to mention a few, in order for them to give birth and this is because of shortages of medical supplies in public hospitals caused by governments reduced budget allocations towards the health sector. Furthermore, doctors and nurses have been on a series of strike since 2019 over their low pay due to the government limiting payments of public employees' basic salaries. The strikes have increased rates of medical error and caused preventable patient deaths within the country. Moreover, it can be argued that good health contributes to development. This is supported by Mushkin's health-led growth hypothesis which argues that health in itself is a form of capital, and investment in healthcare can boost human capital, providing a catalytic effect to overall economic growth. Thus, neoliberal policies in Zimbabwe have not only diminished the idea of healthcare as a universal human right but also violated section 76 of the constitution of Zimbabwe.

Privatization of education has made educational services to be pro-rich and anti-poor as accessibility to quality education is now determined by people's financial capability. School fees in almost all private schools in Zimbabwe is now more than 400USD, and with 73% of the population earning not more than US\$100 according to the 2022 FinScope Consumer Survey, three quarters of people in Zimbabwe cannot afford to send their children to private schools where they can receive quality education. Hence, this has magnified inequalities within the country.

Based on the above argument it is fair to conclude that for Zimbabwe to develop as a nation, the government of Zimbabwe should follow pro-poor developmental path that is based on the principle that human capital is the nation's most precious asset. This is because development is a process that creates growth, progress, "positive change" or addition of physical, economic environmental, social and demographic components, and neoliberalism as a development strategy in Zimbabwe has failed to establish positive change in the country.