



PUBLIC RESOURCES MANAGEMENT SITUATIONAL REPORT

APRIL 2023



ZIMCodd
ZIMBABWE COALITION ON DEBT & DEVELOPMENT

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Methodology	2
3. Context	3
4. The State of Public Resource Management	5
4.1 Social Service Delivery	
4.2 Fiscal Transparency and Accountability	
4.3 Public Debt	
4.4 DRM and Mineral Resource Governance	
4.5 Climate Change	
4.6 Trade Justice and Livelihoods: Women in Informal Trade (Street Vending)	
4.7 Trade Highlights	
5. Conclusion	18
6. Recommendations	19

1. Introduction and Background

The utilization of public resources in Zimbabwe is examined in the April 2023 Public Resource Management Situational Report (PRM SitRep). The PRM SitRep evaluates how the government makes the best use of its resources to encourage the best service delivery. Fiscal accountability, public debt, domestic resource mobilization, public service delivery, engendering public service delivery, climate change, trade fairness, livelihoods, and trade highlights are just a few of the current concerns covered by the SitRep. The SitRep concludes with organic actionable recommendations derived from the 57 districts studied. At the centre of the PRM SitRep is the need to:

- To build citizen agency in public resource monitoring.
- To promote participation in economic governance from local to central government.
- To promote just trade policies.
- Sustainable Livelihoods
- To determine opportunities and challenges in Domestic Resource Mobilisation
- To assess public service delivery under the prism of Gender Responsive Public Service Delivery GRPSD.

2. Methodology

The study made use of qualitative and quantitative approach, a combined technique approach that was advantageous for the PRM SitRep. To this end, a study that captures the realities on the ground was produced using convenience and purposive sampling in conjunction with systematic and stratified random sampling. In order for the research to have an emic and etic viewpoint on the application of PRM, all of these sample strategies were crucial and complementary. The research was successfully brought to saturation by the use of qualitative sampling. While quantitative assisted in removing bias to improve research dependability, reliability, and credibility. To support the conclusions of the study, Human Interest Stories (HIS) were used generated by Community Resource Agents (CORA) in 57 districts across the country. The study population is captured in Fig 1 below which shows the study catchment area.

Study Catchment Area



Source: Primary Data Compiled by ZIMCODD



3. Context

During the month of April, 59 people were reported dead due to Malaria. Approximately, 4113 new cases were recorded across the country, about 564 of the cases are children under the age of 5 years.¹ Mashonaland Central Province and Manicaland Province had the highest numbers of the cases at 1084 and 1071 respectively. The national cumulative figure for Malaria was approximately 32 432. A figure which needs immediate redress if Zimbabwe is to attain the prescribed National Development Strategy 1 health targets. To this end, the health set targets in the NDS1 are of the rails unless immediate intervention is taken.

In the month under review, the government made positive strides towards unlocking the US\$ 12 billion mining industry. However, this will only be achieved if it follows to the later the proposals it has made or establish. A national mining audit was scheduled from the 10th of May to the 10th of June. The primary objective of the audit is to ensure that all mining operations are conducted in accordance with the country's laws. The audit was necessary especially after the Gold Mafia documentary which exposed looting and resource leakages in the mining sector costing the nation approximately two to three hundred kilograms of gold per week.

1. <https://www.newsday.co.zw/health/article/200009798/malaria-kills-59>

The audit team will comprise members from the following Ministries, Departments and Agencies: Mines and Mining Development; Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development; Local Government and Public Works; Energy and Power Development; Environment, Climate, Tourism and Hospitality Industry; Departments of Immigration; and Labour; the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority; the Environmental Management Agency; and the Zimbabwe Republic Police. However, while ZIMCODD welcomes this initiative, it calls upon the government to expedite the process and furnish the public with granular findings of the state of mineral resource governance in Zimbabwe and how illicit financial flows are still proliferating.

In addition, Zimbabwe's infrastructure gaps continue to undermine national growth and development. The ramifications of infrastructure gaps are visible in various sectors of the economy impeding national human capital development. This can be evidenced by, the health, education and transport sector. Zimbabwe's maternal mortality remains high and a cause of concern due to weak and dilapidating infrastructure. The findings of the 2022 Housing and Population Census shows that maternal mortality rate is at 363 per 100 000 live births. At the same time, the Infrastructure Development Bank of Zimbabwe (IDBZ) which is the custodian and primary financier of infrastructure projects in Zimbabwe is bankrupt and financially incapacitated to fulfil its mandate. Admitting to the financial incapacitation, IDBZ revealed that it was in need of US\$ 1.5 billion to optimally fund infrastructure project.² It is ironic that at a time the government is struggling to fund major infrastructure developments, Zimbabwe is losing a lot of gold (approximately 500 kg)³ to smuggling syndicates which seems to have a connection with the highest echelons of power.

The month of April also saw a study by the Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZimStat) which reveals that approximately 21.1% of the 4.5 million youth aged between 16-34 years do not have National Identification cards⁴. This means that one in every five young people does not have a National Identification card. A scenario that is very worrying with respect to the 2023 harmonised elections. The failure of the 21.1% of youth to secure National Identification means that they are already disfranchised. Their power to vote and decide for their own future has been taken away. To that end, ZIMCODD believes that it is noble and critical for the Department of Central Registry to fast-track the registry of the youth. This will enable them to vote and fulfill their social contract duty which is the foundation of any democratic nation.

On Friday the 14th of April, Al Jazeera released the fourth and final episode of The Gold Mafia – a documentary showing how gold is being smuggled and money laundered from Zimbabwe. This is being done with the aid of public institutions like the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe and facilitated by top government officials including the President.

2. <https://www.newsday.co.zw/business/article/200009673/idbz-seeks-us15bn-for-infrastructure-gaps>

3. [If one is to go by the Aljazeera Documentary](#)

4. <https://thenewshawks.com/elections-21-of-youths-have-no-ids/>

For instance, the final episode implicated First Lady Amai Mnangagwa as she appears advising Ambassador Ubert Angel (the front runner hosting Al Jazeera's undercover reporters wanting to conceal US\$1.2 billion of dirty money) to engage the President for clearance. The episode also revealed that potential investors are being charged staggering amounts to the tune of US\$200 000 as "appreciation fees" to secure a meeting with the President. A indication to government's insincerity to the "Zimbabwe is open for business" mantra. Such act of greed undermines investor confidence and makes Zimbabwe an undesirable investment destination.

The foregoing shows a deepening natural resource curse – a booming mining sector that is failing to uplift citizens' welfare due to elevated tax evasion through smuggling, transfer mispricing, and trade mis invoicing. Zimbabwe's ports of entry are too porous and security breaches are appalling due to outdated technologies and compromised procedures. The nation is too rich to be poor as it is losing at least US\$100 million per month from gold smuggling alone. This amount can be used to capacitate dilapidating health institutions without a single functional radiation therapy cancer machine, drill boreholes across the rural areas, and fund basic education as 4.6 million students are reportedly in need of assistance among other public demands. In response to the Al Jazeera Gold Mafia docuseries, ZIMCODD has and continues to call for the government to constitute an independent Special Commission of Inquiry to investigate these damning allegations implicating state institutions and public officials⁵. The Parliament has also promised to undertake investigations as soon it reconvenes on 9 May 2023.⁶

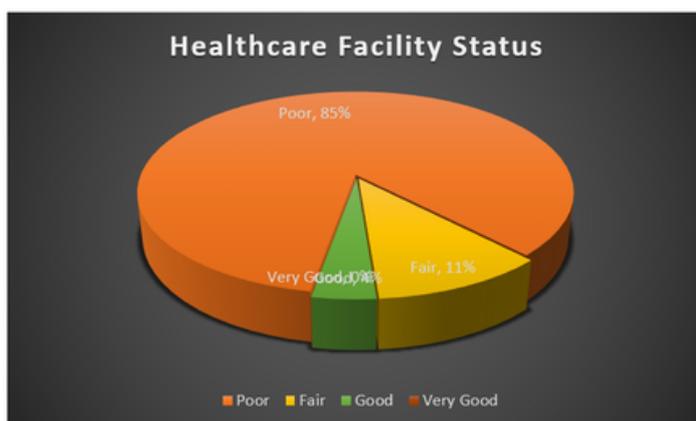
4. The State of Public Resource Management

4.1 Social Service Delivery

The state of public service delivery continues to deteriorate, and perhaps has become the best depiction of the country's economic fortunes.

4.1.1 Quality of Healthcare

The quality of health care including health facilities in Zimbabwe is significantly dilapidating over the years largely due to the lack of sufficient budget support to acquire medication and medical equipment. This is coupled with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, increased volatility of the local currency, and poor corporate governance.



5. https://zimcodd.org/?smd_process_download=1&download_id=6397

6. <https://www.newsday.co.zw/local-news/article/200010321/gold-mafia-mthuli-mangudya-to-face-parly-grilling>

ZIMCODD findings show that a paltry 4% of 57 districts surveyed have good healthcare facilities with the supermajority (85%) reporting poor health facilities. Poor infrastructure can demoralize healthcare professionals as they face difficulties in discharging their service to the nation. Also, the growing population particularly in urban areas is outpacing investment in new infrastructure like clinics thereby overwhelming existing health facilities.

4.1.2 Water Supply

Access to clean water remains a challenge in most communities, with this issue having a cascading and far-reaching effect across communities. Of particular concern is how the shortage of water continues to have an adverse impact on women, who unfortunately still bear the responsibility of harvesting water for families from far off sources. As there is very little economic value that comes with this, women and young girls bear the brunt, as they spend a lot of time in search of water instead of being productive at work or school.

While this was initially thought to be mainly rural problem in Zimbabwe, over the years it has become an urban headache, with areas like Bulawayo and Harare experiencing acute water shortages that have had a wide-reaching effect. Despite the promise of projects such as the Gwayi-Shangani construction, which is expected to alleviate such challenges particularly in the Matabeleland region, delays and failure to meet deadlines have meant that for now, it remains a pipe dream for most citizens in this area of the country.

Human Interest Story (HIS): Outcry as Shurugwi residents pay \$1 to fetch water

Zimbabwe constitution stipulates that everyone has the right to water but for Shurugwi residents these rights are being violated as residents are now paying \$1 USD per bucket to fetch water from other homesteads.

Asimo Simile who stays with a family of 10 in Shurugwi town highlighted that residents surrounding them are charging \$1 USD per bucket. "This is the third month without running water in the taps, so we end up buying water from areas that always receive water, imagine i have a family of 10 and where do we get the money," she said.

Lilian Muchiuno who resides in Dark City narrated that the water which is being pumped in homes is brown in colour and not safe to drink. "Shurugwi town council is putting our health at risk because water is very dirty, besides that water comes very late and our girl child is not safe at all with the Artisanal miners," said Muchiuno.

Shurugwi Urban Councillor Alderman Mukorori highlighted that tanks are not being cleaned hence pumping dirty water and also the increase in population which exerting pressure on the available pipes.

"Council is not cleaning tanks so it takes about 3 weeks to clean the tanks, this town 's population has also increased so the available pipes can burst," he said.



Councillor for Shurugwi Urban Alderman Mukorori

4.1.3 Sewer Reticulation And Refuse Collection

As the country's economy continues to take a battering, the provision of such services as effective sewer reticulation and refuse collection have also continue to deteriorate. Burst sewers and uncollected refuse have become a common site around the country's urban cities, while in Bulawayo recently, it was reported that water mixed with sewage was now flowing from taps, putting residents' health at risk. In Cowdray Park, the largest suburb in the country's second largest city, as many as 9000 houses still use Blair toilets that are usually associated with rural areas. Below is a Human Interest Story (HIS) from Marondera and Chimanimani which depicts challenges in sewer system and refuse collection.

HIS: MARONDERA SEWER UPGRADE HALTED BECAUSE OF SHORTAGE OF FUNDS

The Municipality of Marondera resolved to shelve the sewer reticulation upgrading exercise citing that the disbursed devolution funds are not sufficient. According to Town Clerk Rinashe Nyamuzihwa's report, Marondera was allocated ZWL\$30m devolution funds which council channelled towards addressing sewer problems. The upgrade exercise was supposed to result in 12km of sewer pipe system being upgraded, that is from the CBD to Elmswood area. However, the evolution funds will only cover about 60m hence the need for more funds.

Speaking during a full council meeting, councillors said the devolution funds must instead be directed to other projects other that sewer reticulation upgrade. The councillors said if few metres are done, then the project will become irrelevant hence the need to source enough funds for the whole sewer project to be done at once.

Marondera has been struggling with sewer bursts both in the CBD and residential areas for a long time which poses a health threat to residents and vendors. The growing population in the town does not correspond with both aging water and sewer reticulation system and hence the need to upgrade. While the devolution funds are not sufficient the late disbursement does not help council to make sustainable plans too.



Image from Open Council Marondera Group

HIS: Poor Service Delivery in Chimanimani



The Chimanimani RDC is battling to collect refuse from its residents area culminating in the dumping of refuse in undesigned areas like open field, roadside and water drains, this poses a huge health hazard as used diapers, decomposing food leftovers and sanitary pads litter roadside and open fields.

The current schedule shows that the council collect refuse once a week from every residential area and maybe twice a week in the Central business centre, this is barely enough due to high volume of waste that is generated by households in the district, this leaves households especially in high density areas with no choice but to dispose the garbage under the cover of night as they have no sufficient area to keep it.

The Authority has only one tractor which serves the whole District, hence the council is often not able to stick to its collecting schedule, and this means when this tractor is not available due to break down, rubbish will not be collected leaving the residential areas unsaved. This uncollected rubbish dumped in undesigned areas is a huge health hazards as children play on it looking for anything they can use as toys, dogs on the other side scavenge these dumps for food .

This is a ticking time bomb and brings reminiscent of the 2009 cholera, this is also a potential cause of floods as it is dumped into storm water drains causing them to be blocked, in the rainy season rainwater flows over bridges damaging roads infrastructure.

4.1.4 The State Of Rural Settlements

Poor service delivery in the country has not only affected urban areas as the diffusion and osmosis of infrastructure gaps, governance epidemics, corruption and wholesome populist policies have undermined Rural District Councils operations. The state of roads, water, schools and clinics can be best understood as delapidating and decrepitude. A situation that threatens Zimbabwe`s aspiration of being an upper-middle class economy by 2030. The devolution funds earmarked for regional and community development and growth are not being disbursed on time exposing to funds to inflation. The Human-Interest Story below presents an organic views from one of the fifty-seven CORAs in the country.

HIS: Rural Settlements Still Lagging Behind In Terms Of Service Delivery



Above Pictures shows ward 32 Zimunya Township

Devolution is the transfer of power from central government to subnational. Our government disbursed devolution funds to all provinces for development of their constituencies. A visit to Mutare Rural District Council that is Zimunya/Marange saw that, they are still nagging behind in so many aspects despite the devolution funds being availed to provinces and local authorities. In Zimunya ward 32 of Mutare Rural District, people have a challenge of tape water in their houses. This is so due to lack of finances to upgrade the piping system since the old ones were put during the colonial era. They also face challenges when it comes to electricity as they normally lose supplies if there are rains and wind.

The other bad area are roads in some parts of Mutare Rural Districts. ZINARA has released the money meant for roads rehabilitation while the government have disbursed the devolution funds. Last year in 2022 Mutare Rural District Council received ZW\$ 93 million meant for devolution. There was not much progress when it comes to the rehabilitation of the roads. Mutare Rural CORA visited the Rural District Council and was told that they received ZW\$ 52,2 million in 2022 for Emergency Road Rehabilitation (ERR) from ZINARA and they rehabilitate the roads and this year 2023 they are aiming for better improvement of service delivery. Some of the roads that have been maintained are Marange Rural Service Centre, Ndorwe, Endrag, Tomhulley, Matura, Burma ,18 Miles Murare, Mt Shalom and others though you cannot see changes in some of the roads due to poor maintenance.

In most centres in Mutare Rural District their water sources are very far and the boreholes cannot meet the demand hence more resources need to be allocated so that all social amenities are upgraded.

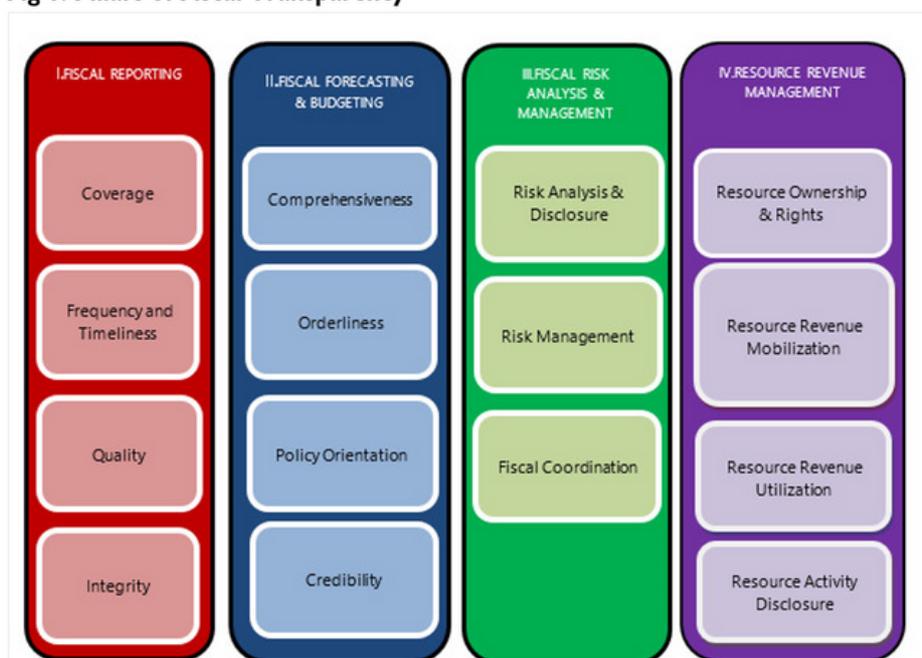
A closer look at most clinics they do not have enough medications and supporting staff. Many people now rely on traditional medicines since the clinics are farr and costly for a patient to hire a car to go to hospital. There is need to put more resources in the health sector and to account for the resources our Rural District Councils have received from local government meant for devolution and other sources.

4.2 Fiscal Transparency and Accountability

4.2.1 Overview

Fiscal transparency apprises citizens of how tax revenues are used by the government by providing them a window into Treasury budgets and in turn, those citizens will be able to hold their government accountable. Fiscal accountability entails complying with stipulated laws and regulations, consistency with suitable principles of accounting, accuracy, and fairness of financial statements, and enforcement of the legitimacy of fiscal expenditure. In other words, accountability is the acceptance of responsibility for honest and ethical conduct towards others.

Fig 1: Pillars of Fiscal Transparency



Given that government faces various competing priorities, it needs reliable financial and non-financial information to make informed, evidence-based decisions. Also, strong governance and robust public financial management (PFM) systems are key for the attainment of efficient and effective management of public resources. These enable tracking of resource utilization and optimal allocation of the same to meet set policy objectives. In the end, the government will be able to achieve the most with limited resources and maximize efficiency in delivering public services while minimizing losses emanating from waste, corruption, and fraud. So, to enhance the government's accountability for its decisions, high levels of transparency are required.

4.2.3 Principles of Fiscal Transparency

Efficient and effective PFM is the bedrock of the 2013 constitution as it sets out in section 298 the principles that must guide PFM in Zimbabwe. Southern African Development Community (SADC) has also developed a model law that outlines fundamental principles of PFM to be followed by member countries. These PFM principles (detailed in our January 2023 report) include among others:⁸

- Transparency,
- Accountability and Participation,
- Oversight,
- Responsibility,
- Sustainability, and
- Fiscal Equity.

4.2.3 Zimbabwe Status Quo

Zimbabwe is struggling with poor resource governance as shown by a poor score of 23/100 ranking it at 157/180 nations using the latest Transparency International (TI) 2022 corruption perception index (CPI). The CPI ranks 180 countries around the world by their perceived levels of public sector corruption, scoring on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean). The TI findings are evidenced by rising reports of illicit financial flows as was shown in the Al Jazeera Gold Mafia documentary, an exposé of a gold smuggling syndicate.⁹ Also, there is evidence of rampant corruption perpetrated by public officials, particularly through closed procurement systems (procedures, regulations, and institutional frameworks), uncompetitive tenders, bidding documents, contract documents, and evaluation reports. Some procurement scandals include the US\$3.5 billion Command Agriculture, Landela-ZUPCO bus saga, and the US\$60 million COVID-19 Drax Scandal.

Despite high corruption prevalence, the government has initially banned the disclosure of government procurement through a controversial decree, Statutory Instrument 635 (SI 635) dated 5 May 2023. Under this decree, procurement of construction equipment and materials, vehicles including ambulances, laboratory equipment, medicines and drugs (pharmaceuticals), hospital protective equipment, and biomedical and medical equipment was not allowed to be

8. https://zimcodd.org/?smd_process_download=1&download_id=6402

9. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/4/14/six-secrets-uncovered-by-al-jazeeras-gold-mafia-investigation>

publicly disclosed for the national interest. However, through a letter dated 10 May 2023, authorities later rescinded the decree after pressure from citizens, legal practitioners, media, and civil society among other pressure groups. ZIMCODD welcomed the rescission as stipulations of SI635 were an unprecedented attack on the public's right to information, a complete reversal of authorities' commitment to fighting corruption. Corruption undermines governments' ability to protect people and erodes public trust. It is also a violation of basic human rights as it impacts the enjoyment of such through poor public service delivery, poor health & hygiene, lack of justice, high unemployment, poverty, and low life expectancy.

4.3 Public Debt

4.3.1 Structured Dialogue Platform

Zimbabwe is expected to hold the next round of high-level debt forums in May 2023. The last high-level meeting was held in February 2023 and will be a follow-up to a March technical meeting which was attended by three (3) sector working groups: governance, macroeconomic growth and stability, and land tenure. Zimbabwe is engaging its creditors to clear its debt arrears which have grown unsustainably since the debt default of the 2000s. Statistics from the Public Debt Management Office (PDMO) show that of Zimbabwe's US\$13.2 billion external debt recorded as of September 2022, arrears & penalties alone account for 50% (US\$6.6 billion) of this total. Overall, total debt stock is at US\$17.6 billion as of the end of September 2022, which is roughly four (4) times the size of Zimbabwe's average national budget in the last decade.

The debt level is also breaching the stipulations of the Public Debt Management Act that debt-to-GDP must not exceed 70% and misses the Southern Africa Development Community's (SADC) debt-to-GDP target of 60% to attain convergence of the regional macroeconomy. As such, the ongoing structured debt dialogues show the government's commitment to permanently resolving the debt conundrum, cutting poverty & inequality, and preparing the economy for a stable, sustainable, and inclusive recovery and growth. These dialogues, however, must be buttressed by the increased political will to fully implement necessary and needed reforms – land tenure, governance, and economic reforms. These reforms ensure a thriving democracy, transparent & accountable public sector, ease of doing business, social fairness & inclusion, fair market competition, and increased innovation.

4.3.2 Impacts of High Indebtedness

Zimbabwe's high indebtedness is now leading to crowding out of public services and other development programs as more public funds are earmarked for debt repayments and token payments. A token payment is a partial payment made as a token of intention to pay the remainder of the debt later.

10. <https://zimfact.org/fact-check-mnangagwa-bans-public-disclosure-of-medical-drugs-equipment/>



It is the poor and vulnerable groups like children, youths, and women who are disproportionately affected by a lack of quality and affordable public services and strong safety nets. In other words, the government is handicapped as it is facing a very limited fiscal space and high corruption which is inhibiting its humanitarian response. More so, because of high arrears on its external debt, Zimbabwe can no longer access external concessionary credit lines to invest in long-term income-generating and jobs-creating national development projects. Consequently, the nation is now resorting to increased taxation which overburdens consumers. The obtaining regressive tax policies such as the infamous 2% tax in a hyperinflationary environment are widening societal inequalities and plunging the majority into extreme poverty. It is reported that authorities sometimes resort to collateralized borrowing commonly referred to as resource-backed loans (RBLs). These RBLs are fuelling illicit trading as well as unsustainable mineral resource extraction. This is damaging the environment, polluting water sources, and displacing families from communal land to pave the way for miners.

4.4. DRM and Mineral Resource Governance

Domestic resource mobilization refers to the process of raising money or resources within the nation to finance its development priorities, including public services like infrastructure, social welfare programs, health, education, and, at times, public services like health. Domestic resource mobilization is very key as it reduces a country's reliance on external sources of funding, such as foreign aid or debt, which can be unreliable or come with conditions that may not align with the country's priorities. DRM can help to build a sustainable and resilient economy by reducing poverty and inequality and strengthening the government's ability to provide essential services.

Mineral resources have become an important source of revenue for governments, and good management of these resources may aid in the mobilization of domestic resources. As a result, domestic resource mobilization (DRM) and mineral resource management are closely related concepts. With a combination of governance deficiencies and the limited capabilities of the African state, Africa has been slow to translate its natural resource riches into concrete development outcomes. To reduce injustice from resource exploitation and enhance beneficial development outcomes, the government and other relevant institutions must consider political will represented by strong, transparent, responsible, and development-oriented institutions.

Mining is the key to solving most Sub-Saharan countries including Zimbabwe's socioeconomic issues. Since most of the communities are involved in mining activities it is believed that for instance in Zimbabwe presently it is certain that mining will serve as one of the main foundations of its economic development,

and this is dependent on minerals like gold, platinum, and diamonds serving as the main pillars of the US\$12 billion mining industry by the end of 2023, among its 60 different mineral varieties.

Mineral resources can be important for the state and its communities. However, improper management of mineral resources can result in conflict, theft of funds, and corruption, all of which can be destructive to DRM efforts. Furthermore, whether natural resource richness serves as a blessing or a burden for inclusive and transformative growth, peace and security, deeper democracy, and environmental protection depends on the level of quality of institutions. The framework for resource rent-sharing and the environment in which these resources might be used for development is shaped by the level of competence of institutions overseeing revenue management.

One of the obstacles to effective resource governance in Africa is ownership rights to natural resources. The public sector holds ownership rights in trust for the community in several nations. The political elite, however, uses this ownership structure as a tool of control, and the administration of resources is generally obscure. The executive has substantial authority over resources, which weakens legislative scrutiny both in theory and in practice. As a result, many countries suffer from unaccountable resource revenue utilization, lax budgetary control, and low transparency.

4.5. Climate Change

Climate change has become a huge threat against humanity. The detrimental effects of climate change such as environmental degradation, natural disasters, food and water insecurity, economic disruption, conflicts, displacements and forced migration have not spared Zimbabwe. The 2021 German Watch's Global Climate Risk Index ranked Zimbabwe as the 2nd most affected country in the world in 2019. Ironically, Zimbabwe is on number 108th with respect to climate financing received. This has been exacerbated by the fact that, according to the Climate Vulnerability and Debt Risk Zimbabwe is ranked 23rd and highlighted as in debt distress utilising approximately 4.1% of the budget for debt repayment.¹¹ Below is an example of how human induced climate change through mining activities has affected Hwange.

HIS: Mining Activities Fuel Climate Change in Hwange

Hwange is a town commonly known for its black diamond, coal which has been in existence for a century. In Hwange mining of coal started in 1904 when the first mine was established in the extraction of coal. It was by then when mining of coal was solely granted to Wankie Colliery Company then Hwange Colliery Company Limited Company. The coal concession where pegged and granted so that mining activities in Hwange can be controlled and rehabilitation was key in venturing into new mining concessions when mining activities were done. Hwange had underground mining and opencast mining which contributed to the economy of the country and the region at large.

The first miners were prioritising the welfare of the people, at this time, service delivery was key in improving the lives of the people. Hwange was endowed with recreational facilities from boxing, athletics, bowling, tennis, soccer, netball among others and in each and every ward or village there was a sports centre and a welfare room for women who can do knitting, cooking amongst the many fields. All these came from the profits which was made from coal production and sales which came from coal by products.

On sanitation, Hwange had recycled water which was used for watering the flowers and lawn in public spaces like soccer fields, golf course, and the town in general, replanting of trees was a culture which was well done in areas where coal was mined. Hwange was a green town. At the turn of the millennium, environmentally friendly practices were no longer being followed. Mining activities were done in a way of observing the environmental laws and policies in place. Pollution like dust, was suppressed by that recycled water and bulk clean water was dedicated for domestic use. Awareness in environmentally friendly practices was key and mining activities were not conducted with blatant disregard for the environment or the community. Due to the progression in mining activities, sustainable mining needs to be undertaken. There has been a creation of advocacy platforms to curb climate change, environmental degradation, pollution and among others.

The lives of people in Hwange have been affected by pollution, climate change and environmental degradation. Laws and policies to safeguard the same are ignored as extractivism continues. While mining activities have brought employment and economic activities to our communities, lack of infrastructure development has led to underdeveloped of the town. More than 12 mining and power generation initiatives have emerged and close to 10 000 people have been employed, however, there has not been sufficient initiatives towards environmental awareness, sustainable mining and curbing climate change. Some of the claims or grants have occupied special areas like national parks, residential areas, shrines, even disturbing the wildlife and peace within communities. Environmental policies and laws are ignored, and the environment is under threat from mining activities. Biodiversity has been compromised and human - wildlife conflict has increased. The change in weather patterns can also be attributed to climate change induced by human activities as Hwange now faces induced drought and increase in temperatures among the many other effects of climate change.

Climate change does not only pose risks on the environment but poses risk to the health and safety of the community. Workers in informal employment for example, who seek casual or long-term employment in mines experience frequent workplace exposure to a range of occupational health and safety risks. They are often forced to bear full responsibility for addressing these risks in their workplaces, even though they usually lack access to health care and face profound income insecurity. The climate crisis poses an additional, existential threat to workers, with catastrophic impacts on workers' health and livelihoods. Despite being agents of environmental sustainability, for example by reducing greenhouse gases through inclusive recycling, workers are becoming increasingly vulnerable to climate and health risks.

Extreme heat forces street vendors to work in the burning sun without shade and home-based workers to work indoors without adequate ventilation and air conditioning. Due to water scarcity, domestic workers have to travel further from their employers' homes to seek water, and waste pickers face the dangers of floods at their landfills¹². Policy and governance arrangements play a significant role in combating climate change. It is important to provide workers and mining host communities with toilets and infrastructure, promote green jobs and support workers' local reforestation efforts. This is because communities' vulnerability and exposure to climate change is influenced by a multitude of factors, such as land-use planning, access to education and health services, quality and location of infrastructure, and disaster preparedness, targeting the most vulnerable communities and developing policies that address the root causes of their vulnerability, to build resilience against future loss and damage.

4.6. Trade Justice and Livelihoods: Women in Informal Trade (Street Vending)

Due to emigration, a collapsing economy and other factors, many households are headed by women as the primary caregivers. In many areas across the country, particularly high density areas, countless elderly widows, are left with no option but to thrive and ensure food security for their families. Many children who have studied till tertiary level are still dependent on their parents or grandparents due to the high rate of unemployment coupled with the high cost of living. The young, graduated adults increasingly engage in drugs and alcohol use on a daily basis. Their mothers and/or grandmothers resort to street vending as a way of trying to fend and provide for their families and dependants. While trying to earn an honest living, they remain victims of violence, theft and abuse (verbal, emotional, physical and sexual abuse). Many women, young and elderly can be seen hurriedly packing their wares and running in a desperate attempt to evade confiscation of their goods. Some of these women, have children strapped to their backs and in some instances their wares are grabbed violently as they accuse the police of using the confiscated goods for their own benefit. Women's rights to dignity, freedom of profession and trade are violated as the municipality police haul the women forcefully into the back of their trucks against their will. Often these women are abused, harassed and threatened with arrest or even assaulted by the police who demand hefty bribes from them for operating in undesignated areas. Female vendors are usually targeted by police as they are unable to put up as much of a fight as their male counterparts.

Although less favourable, the informal sector provides women with an opportunity to earn livelihoods while trying to balance their triple roles; reproductive, productive and community roles.

12. https://www.wiego.org/blog/climate-crisis-health-and-informality-building-movement-across-borders?utm_source=WIEGO&utm_campaign=27ec6bfe4b-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_ENG+March+2023&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8ef746a546-27ec6bfe4b-454420711

These roles are largely characterized by unpaid care work. While some activities offer sustainable livelihoods and incomes, most people with low literacy levels involved in informal economic activities are exposed to unsatisfactory and hazardous working conditions. Those in the informal sector have lower, irregular incomes and are plagued by long working hours, an absence of collective bargaining as well as representation of their rights. Women's work in the informal sector is excluded from labour regulations which protect pregnant women, offer social security schemes, offer time off work and regulates health and safety of the worker.

The Government of Zimbabwe ratified international and regional instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) that support women's empowerment. The Constitution of Zimbabwe also attests to gender and women empowerment commitment. Despite a progressive Constitution, existing policy provisions on gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as efforts by development partners to address gender gaps, improving the social, political and economic status of women in Zimbabwe has remained low. Women often bear a disproportionate share of social, economic, and environmental risks connected to the informal sector. To eliminate inequities and ensure that the informal sector is handled in the best interests of all citizens, promoting equal involvement in decision-making is vital. Governments and enterprises can guarantee that resources are handled more equitably by recognizing and promoting women's engagement in the informal sector as informal industries can provide prospects for a better living for women, such as employment, money, and increased investment in the local community.

4.7. Trade Highlights

Zimbabwe has targeted an ambitious fifty tonnes gold output for the year of 2023. This is a significant expectation since the country only received 35.38 tonnes last year. In any other country, the realisation of this dream would mean better livelihoods and living conditions for mining towns and other citizens alike. However, in a country like Zimbabwe ravaged by corruption, misallocation of productive resources, inflation amongst others, this is but a conversation reserved only to a few elites in the country. The countries main exports include gold, platinum, chrome, tobacco, and cotton. However, exports continue to lag behind imports leading to trade deficits. Below are the major trade:

- Exports in Zimbabwe increased to 515.30 USD Million in March from 435.90 USD Million in February of 2023.
- Zimbabwe recorded a trade deficit of 229.20 USD Million in March of 2023
- Zimbabwe's main exports are tobacco (23% of total exports) and nickel (20%).
- Imports in Zimbabwe increased to 744.50 USD Million in March from 621.40 USD Million in February of 2023.

- Minerals account for the bulk of the exports which include: diamonds, platinum, ferrochrome, and gold
- Top destinations for Zimbabwe's exports are South Africa, China, Congo and Botswana.
- Zimbabwe main imports are: motor vehicles and machinery, fuel and foodstuffs
- Zimbabwe received the bulk of its imports from South Africa and China.

While Zimbabwe might be Africa's sixth largest gold exporter, the majority of the proceeds of this trade continue to be enjoyed by the wealthy and politically exposed persons. The recent Gold Mafia expose revealed that Zimbabwe loses an estimated 100 million United States Dollars through illicit gold trade. The expose revealed how gold mined in Zimbabwe is illegally moved through the countries porous borders to countries such as the United Arab Emirates amongst others. While this four-part documentary gave ample evidence of the deep-rooted nature of corruption. Corruption therefore continues to be the biggest obstacle towards ordinary citizens in Zimbabwe having an equitable share to the country's vast mineral resources. It also has helped continue the poverty cycle in Zimbabwe with statistics from the World Bank showing that over half of the country's population lives in extreme poverty. According to research by ZIMCODD there are over 4 million children in Zimbabwe who are in need of education assistance with regards to their school fees.¹³

The constitution of Zimbabwe states that everyone has a right to a dignified life, the reality on the ground is that millions of Zimbabwe are far from that. Consequently, for the millions of Zimbabwe's who might have been provided sufficient entertainment in the episodes of the Gold Mafia, the truth is for the poor and middle-class Zimbabwean, the joke is on us!

5. Conclusion

The utilisation of public resources remains wanting in Zimbabwe with corruption, resource smuggling and leakages being institutionalised. Public institutions which have an ombudsman mandate are caught wanting and in collaboration with gold smugglers. The Al Jazeera Gold Mafia documentary presents scintillating revelations of corruption and how high ranking public officials and diplomats are facilitating national looting. This is being done at a time when infrastructure gaps are more visible than ever coupled with poor service delivery. The health sector is now in doldrums and ramshackle undermining human capital development. To that end, Zimbabwe's aspirations of an upper middle class economy by 2030 remains elusive unless the following proposed recommendations are implemented religiously.

13. <https://zimcodd.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/ZIMCODD-April-Policy-Digest.pdf>

8. <https://equinetfrica.org/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/EQ%20Diss124%20Health%20fin%20%20and%20COVID%20%20Jan2022.pdf>

6. Recommendations

Fiscal Transparency, Accountability and Public Debt

- Independent Debt Audit(s)

There is a need to undertake an independent public debt audit that will inform the scale and nature of the country's debts, which are often not transparently publicized. An audit will also become a building block to popularise discussion about the legitimacy of certain debts and whether they should be repaid.

- Revamp Debt Management Strategy

Authorities must revamp the public debt management strategy. This will help ensure that the government's financing needs and its payment obligations are met at the lowest possible cost and consistent with a prudent degree of risk such as interest rate and currency risks.

- Capacity Building

Oversight and accountability institutions such as Parliament, OAG, NPA, and ZACC must be capacitated and given maximum autonomy to discharge their mandates.

- Adopt Accruals Accounting

Accrual accounting goes beyond reporting cash coming in and going out as it also looks at assets and liabilities and provides a complete and more accurate picture of the financial position of the government. This informs fiscal and budgetary decision-making to avoid misallocation, increase financial resilience, reduce financial risk, and increase transparency.

- Pro-active Information Disclosures

Proactive disclosure of the information is faster, gets the information out to everyone, and demonstrates that government welcomes oversight. Also, to ensure that there is ongoing public scrutiny of the financial position of governments, full financial statements (based on the accruals concept) should be regularly published in line with the dictates of the law.

- Utilize A Whole Systems Approach

A whole systems approach is a PFM model that ensures that the elements of a PFM system operate in a consistent and mutually-reinforcing way. As such, it brings together all the key elements into a single framework to ensure that it functions effectively and coherently.

- Proper Planning for Reforms

Reforms such as PFM systems must be properly planned to ensure that government has available needed resources. This reduces challenges such as the need to update existing laws & regulations, identify and value assets & liabilities, and develop IT systems.

Domestic Resource Mobilisation and Mineral Governance

To effectively manage natural resources, it is necessary to make sure that the resource extraction and sale process is open, accountable, fair, and equitable, along with ensuring money is appropriately collected and distributed to support public spending priorities. Providing the necessary institutional and legal frameworks for collecting and managing resource revenues may help increase the level of domestic resources available to governments and decrease their reliance on external funding. Against this backdrop, we ought to examine factors that can be considered to ensure that mineral resource governance can contribute to DRM efforts.

- **Legal and regulatory framework:** The state and its citizens can benefit from mineral resources if there is a clear, open, and consistent legal and regulatory framework for mining and resource management. These laws and rules cover taxation, revenue sharing, mineral rights distribution, and environmental protection.
- **Capacity building:** Governments need to have the capacity to effectively manage mineral resources. This includes having skilled personnel in the relevant ministries, agencies, and regulatory bodies and access to technical expertise and tools for monitoring and managing mineral extraction and revenue flows. This can help to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of mineral resource management and enhance the capacity of the government to monitor and regulate the sector.
- **Transparency and accountability:** Ensuring transparency and accountability in mineral resource management is crucial to prevent corruption and ensure that revenues are collected and used for the public good. This can be achieved through mechanisms such as public reporting of revenues and expenditures, independent audits, and civil society oversight.
- **Local content and value addition:** It is essential to fully capitalize on the benefits of mineral resources for the domestic economy by promoting local content and value addition. This can be accomplished by mandating that businesses purchase their goods and services locally, encouraging the growth of local supply networks, and facilitating the development of secondary sectors that can process and add value to mineral products.
- **Sustainable development:** Mineral extraction can have significant environmental and social impacts, and it is important to ensure that these impacts are minimized and that the benefits of mineral resources are sustainable over the long term. This can be achieved through measures such as environmental impact assessments, community engagement and consultation, and the implementation of social and environmental safeguards.
- **Improved Data Collection and Analysis:** Improving data collection and analysis capabilities, can provide a better understanding of the sources of revenue and the potential for mobilizing additional resources. This can help to identify areas of the economy that are under-taxed or under-regulated and can inform policy decisions aimed at increasing revenue mobilization.

For instance, in Penhalonga most of the mining activities taking place do not pay tax and this has been retrogressing to the development of the community.

Public Service Delivery

- **Improve Water System:** The central government, ZINWA and Local Authorities must strive to ensure that urban and rural areas have access to clean, safe and portable water.
- **Health Care:** The Ministry of Health and Ministry of Finance must spearhead infrastructure rejuvenation programs across the health sector. They must also ensure the availability of life saving drugs.
- **Refuse Collection:** Local Authorities must collect refuse at least twice a week.

Climate Change

For lasting, sustainable solutions, emphasis must be placed on building socio-economic agency in coping with climate change impacts and providing mitigation strategies. The following recommendation are therefore proffered:

- Strengthening dialogue, coordination, coherence and synergies amongst relevant stakeholders and enhancing action and support, including finance, technology and capacity building to combat the economic and non-economic effects of climate change.
- Advocacy efforts towards progressive rehabilitation of land, reforestation, conservation and sustainable use of natural resources for a sustainable tomorrow.