



PUBLIC RESOURCES MANAGEMENT SITUATIONAL REPORT

MAY 2022



ZIMCODD
ZIMBABWE COALITION ON DEBT & DEVELOPMENT

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1. Introduction and Background

The May Public Resource Management Situational Report (PRM SitRep), examines how the public resources are utilised across the country. Public resources remain the nerve-centre of national growth and development. However, all this largely depends on how the nation utilises its resources. If used judiciously, public resources can bring about positive transformation in the country. Public resources in Zimbabwe entail minerals, water boards, roads, recreational facilities to mention but a few. Therefore, in order to come up with a comprehensive study, a survey was undertaken in 57 districts across the country. Actionable recommendations were prescribed based on the findings raised.

2. Purpose

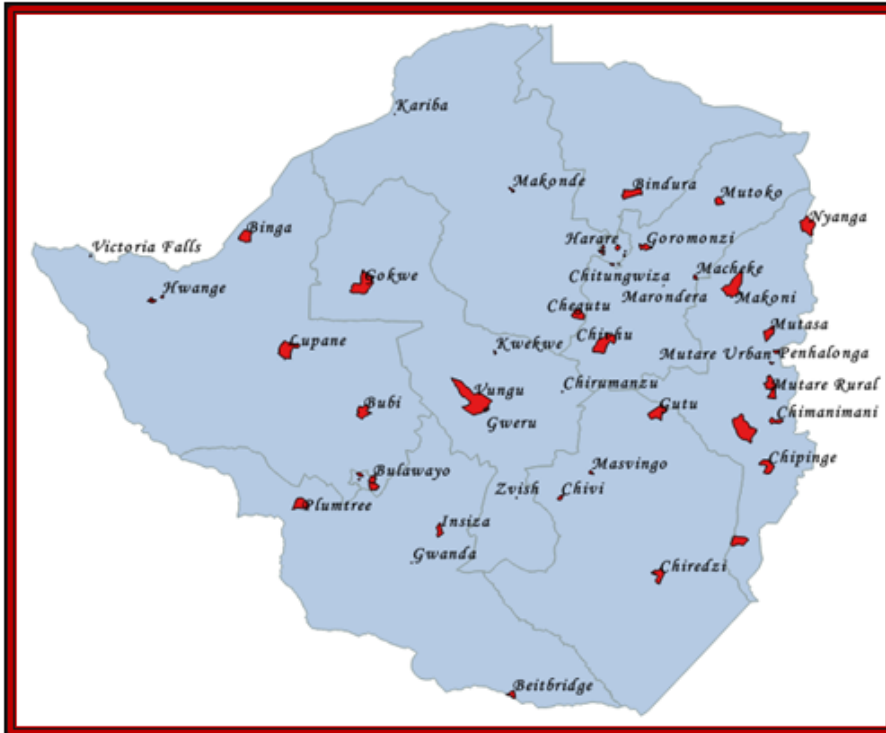
At the core of the PRM SitRep is the need to satisfy the following objectives:

1. To build citizen agency in public resource monitoring and in particular, COVID-19 resources; Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) and Devolution Funds.
2. To promote participation in economic governance from local to central government.
3. To assess public service delivery under the prism of Gender Responsive Public Service Delivery GRPSD.
4. To proffer actionable recommendations that can promote national development and growth.

3. Methodology

The PRM SitRep utilised mixed method research, for the attainment of an exploratory, explanatory and descriptive study that captures community voices and aspiration with respect to PRM. GRPSD and PRM lenses underpinned research methodology. Thus, qualitative and quantitative methods were used for a comprehensive and judicious baseline survey which was sufficient to inform an advocacy cause. This was reinforced by convenience and purposive sampling complemented by systematic and stratified random sampling. All these sampling techniques played an imperative and complimentary role in allowing the research to have an emic and etic perspective in the use of PRM. Qualitative sampling was effective in ensuring that the research reaches a saturation level. While quantitative helped in eliminating bias so as to infuse research reliability, dependability and trustworthiness. Human Interest Stories (HIS) were used to reinforce study findings. The study population comprised of 57 districts as illustrative in fig one below which shows study catchment area.

Fig 1: Study Catchment Area



Source: Primary Data Compiled by ZIMCODD

4. Public Resources Management Situational Context

Human Capital Development (HCD) is the process of improving citizens' performance, capabilities and resources in a country. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defined HCD as: the knowledge, skills, competencies and other attributes embodied in individuals or groups of individuals acquired during their life and used to produce goods, services or ideas in market circumstances. HCD is one of the integral variables of national development and growth that determines the course of any nation. Thus, for the attainment of national development, developing, developed and resource constrained countries must develop and harness the potential of their citizens.

In Zimbabwe, the government has seen the importance of human capital and this can be witnessed by the National Development Strategy (NDS) 1 priority seven which put emphasis on the importance of education. However, the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic increased the cost of living by ushering many global economies into recession for some-time in 2020 which was unprecedented and far greater than the World War II and Great Depression. The ramification of such did not omit Zimbabwe, as parents across the country failed to pay for their children's school fees leading to a mass dropout in the number of Zimbabwe School Examination Council's Examination (ZIMSEC) registration in 2021. A 2.03% decrease was witnessed with 49 128 candidates as compared to 50 287 in 2020. The reduction of the numbers of students who registered with ZIMSEC for Advanced level did not come as a surprise to ZIMCODD as one its weekly review in 2021 lamented how 30 000 students had failed to register.

This points to weak social protection policies with respect to education as the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) was not sufficient to cater for all students in need. Therefore, as of August 2021 the government had paid for 160 782 children for ZWL 432 834 468. Across the country only 2022 primary schools and 722 secondary schools received BEAM. From the 160 782 children, the government paid for approximately 51 221 boys and 51 390 girls from primary school at a total cost of ZWL 290 773 596 as well as 30 540 boys and 81 761 girls from secondary schools at a total cost of ZWL 142 060 872. Although government`s efforts are commendable, it is sad to note that approximately 4 million children are in need of BEAM but only 160 782 managed to receive government assistance pointing to the meagre spending towards HCD.

To redress this anomaly and offer organic policy alternatives, ZIMCODD in 2022 carried out a rapid survey that sought to determine if the government has increased BEAM uptake and if it is paying BEAM on time. The rapid survey covered the following areas: Lupane District, Gwanda District, Beitbridge District, Insiza District, Chiredzi District, Binga District, Epworth, Glen View, Masvingo Urban, Gutu District and Chitungwiza. The survey established that, while the government was paying BEAM, many schools had not received BEAM fees for the first term, although a few had with the last payment have been done in March. The survey also determined that, the number of children under BEAM has not reached a million. A clear indication of either government`s unwillingness to support the vulnerable children or resource constraints.

To this end, ZIMCODD calls on the Ministry of Education and Finance to prioritize education by rejuvenating BEAM and ensure that every vulnerable child gets an equal opportunity to learn. The socio-economic transformation that Zimbabwe requires is embedded in the youth who remain a conduit pipe of development if the government invest in them. The Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC) as a meta-governance institution which oversees policy formulation, implementation and evaluation must prioritize HCD if the nation is to witness the success of the NDS1 and attainment of an upper-middle income economy by 2030.

In addition, poor tender procurement procedures continue to undermine public service delivery. The City of Harare entered into an agreement with Geogenix BV which aims to turn waste to energy by generating 22 megawatts of electricity to be sold to Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA). The investment was given 'National Project Status' and will be headed by the company's Zimbabwean representative, Delish Nguwaya, infamous for his proximity to the first family, the controversial Drax Scandal as well as other corrupt dealings.

Public outcry is premised on the fact that the deal was reached without public consultation and without going through the correct public procurement processes.

It has not been subjected to any oversight by parliament and processes to solidify the deal were expedited without cause. Clauses in the Pomona Waste Management deal bring a lot of questions to mind as Harare City Council is scheduled to pay US\$40 per tonne of waste, with an estimated daily delivery of 550 tonnes. Should Harare fail to meet the minimum quantities, the city will still be invoiced as though it made the deliveries to meet the minimum annual guaranteed waste quantity. Should Harare fail to hand over the Pomona dumpsite by the due date, according to the agreement, Geogenix BV may choose to terminate the agreement and the council would be required to pay US\$3.5 million to cover all costs and expenses. One then wonders how such a deal is in the interests of the citizens' rights to public service delivery or environmental rights.

The contract creates considerable financial obligations for Harare City Council to pay Geogenix in foreign currency (US\$) for a period of thirty (30) years. This is ironic as Harare waste collection costs are in the local currency (RTGS) and there is a huge disparity and inconsistency in the exchange rates of the local currency and the United States dollar. In an application before the High Court, Allan Markham, Harare North MP, asserts that, "Harare City Council does not have capacity to meet this obligation without falling deep into an intractable debt trap or resorting to other developmental funds. The cost of the project is unsustainable." Harare City Council is likely to default on its contractual obligations as it is already failing to collect refuse.

The compensation of war veterans is another public resource topical issue for the month of May. It is critical to note that, ZIMCODD appreciates the effort and job that the war veterans did during the liberation struggle. It is through such efforts that led to the liberation of this great country. Thus, rationale and prudent compensation of the war veterans was necessary. Nevertheless, the number of war veterans keep increasing year after year casting a doubt on the truthfulness of the figures. It is such increase in the number of the war veterans that accounts for the need of an effective public finance management conceptual assessment that captures the principles of good public finance management and examines whether the compensation is being carried out judiciously.

Public Finance Management focuses on economic and governance reform programmes of developing and transitional economies, using principles of fiscal discipline, legitimacy, predictability, transparency and accountability to reform and strengthen public finances. Therefore, to give an astute and comprehensive analysis of the war veteran compensation, the aforementioned principles of public finance management will be utilised.

Fiscal Discipline: It denotes a balance between government expenditure and revenue in an economy. It is important to maintain this balance; else the expenditures may exceed the government receipts culminating in fiscal deficit. The ramification of such are detrimental to the economy as it will lead to the depreciation of currency. However, if maintained it can help infuse economic stability. Therefore, an examination of the 1997 war veterans' compensation reflects great signs of fiscal indiscipline as the government paid out Z\$50,000 (US\$4,300 at the time) unbudgeted gratuities and monthly pensions initially pegged at Z\$2,000 (about US\$174). This greatly undermined currency stability and various school of thought regards the period as the genesis of Zimbabwe's economic challenges as the country lost approximately 72% of its value against the USD. The period was later known as the black Friday. The 2022 war veteran compensations should not be examined out the fiscal discipline prism as the government has a history of disregarding fiscal discipline while embracing wholesome populist policies that are tailor-made to entice and snare the electorate. As the nation heads towards the 2023 elections, there is need to ensure that every government expenditure with respect to war veteran compensation is done within the specified budget.

Legitimacy: In Public Finance Management, legitimacy entails the ability of the government to undertake expenditures within the specified scope of the law. Thus, in Zimbabwe every expenditure by the government must be guided by the Constitution and supporting legal frameworks. The compensation of the 1997 war veterans was not done within scope of the law the war veterans were compensated without any supporting legal framework, a culture that was well nurtured and manifested during the Fast Track Land Reform Program where the land was taken and then the government later ratified and legitimize the process by enacting a legal instrument that speaks to the land question. However, although the 2022 war veteran compensation is being done within the scope of the law, the increase in the number of beneficiaries' throws a grey shed on the legitimacy of the compensation as it is also supposed to be hinged on transparency and accountability.

Predictability: Predictability as a principle of Public Finance Management speaks to consistence in the utilisation of public funds. Thus, government expenditure must be consistence and mushrooming expenses should not be tolerated unless if it's an emergency (pandemic, endemic and natural disasters). Although the government announced the war veteran vetting process, it was also supposed to specific probably the number of war veterans it intends to compensate. This is because the timing of the compensation and the increase in the number which has more than quadrupled from 34 000 in 1997 to over 142 000 in 2022 borders around wholesome and populist policies. If the purpose and intention were pure, in the 2022 National Budget, the Minister of Finance should have stated clearly that a certain amount will be used for war veteran compensation in 2022.

Transparency and Accountability: The principle of transparency and accountability remains the nerve-centre of prudent public finance management. The war veteran compensation scheme since its inception has been done in an opaque manner in which the citizens are not furnished with the granular details of how the beneficiaries are selected. The selection model should never be done in secrecy and the Ministry of Defense should put on its website the list qualities that is used to select beneficiaries. This will also help in building public confidence and trust.

ZIMCodd Rapid Survey on the War Veteran Compensation

ZIMCodd carried out a rapid survey in Bulawayo, Harare, Mutare, Gweru and Masvingo on the war veteran compensation. The survey sought to get the views and aspirations of the citizens on the compensation. The survey noted that, although compensation of the war veteran is a welcome development, the continuous increase in the number of war veterans makes one wonder whether they are fighting their own liberation struggle different from the one that was fought in the 1970s. Thus, lack of transparency in the selection process remains a cause of concern. According to one key informant from Gweru, “the increase of the number defies logic as it reflects that more war veterans were born between 1997 to 2022 and glamorize wholesome and populist policies”. To this end, the politics of public resources was regarded as the epicenter of controversial increase pointing to the hegemony in the political economy of the country.

5. Public Resource Management Survey Findings

The May Situational Report assesses the state of public resource management mainly by sub-national governments in Zimbabwe. Given that the bigger chunk of public resources come from taxpayers’ money, it is prudent that government programmes both at central and local government seek to improve quality of life of citizens and support the most vulnerable members of the society. The Constitution in section 298 obligates those entrusted with public finances to exercise transparency, accountability and equity. This survey notes that the mismanagement, abuse and misappropriation of public funds continues at central and local governments and have monetary and non-monetary implications which has deepened the plight of Zimbabweans as authorities negate delivery of citizens’ fundamental rights as enshrined in Chapter 4 of the constitution. This section presents an overview of public resource management in 57 districts across all the 10 provinces.

5.1 Equal and equitable distribution of benefits of public resources

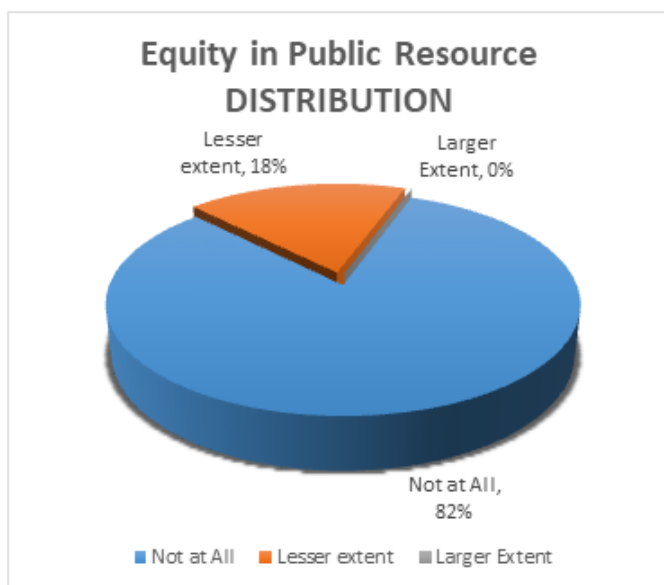


Fig 2: Distribution of benefits from Local Public Resources

The May sitrep establishes that that public resource benefits are not equitably distributed in Zimbabwe. Like the previous issue, 82% reported that public resources are not equally and equitably distributed while 18% reported equitable distribution of public resources though to a lesser extent. The case below is illustrative of how local authorities dominate and take an upper hand when it comes to public resource distribution while citizens are voiceless.

Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

Case: Matobo RDC to allocate residential stands

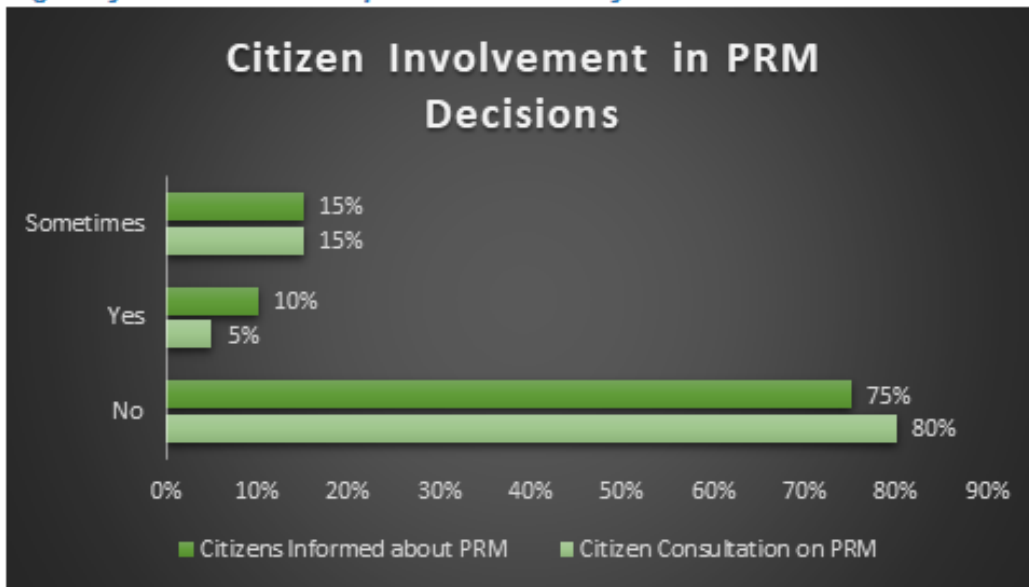
Residents in Maphisa in Matobo district have challenged the Rural District Council to use due diligence when allocating residential stands to avoid potential conflict. This follows after the RDC publicly informed the public that they will be issuing residential stands to 500 applicants amid more than 2500 applicants on the waiting list.

The Matobo RDC CEO Mr Elvis Sibanda spoke to Chronicle on 21 May 2022 that the plan was approved after the Ministry of Mines ascertained that there are gold deposits in the land earmarked for residential stands. One resident Mavuso Tshabalala said he welcomes the new development but the process of allocating stands should be done transparently. "We don't want a situation whereby residents will be at loggerheads with the authorities due to failure of accountability and lack of proper communication," said Tshabalala. He said development should prioritise locals so as to ensure that there's community by-in. "We've had a situation before where locals are overlooked when residential stands are allocated and this has a likelihood of causing conflict. As a result, we call upon the relevant authorities to prioritise locals so that this becomes a community driven initiative," Tshabalala said.

All eyes will be at the model that is going to be used to allocate stands since the previous allocations have been marred with corruption and nepotism. Maphisa Growth Points has in recent years seen a rapid growth with the hope that soon it will be given a municipality status. Another resident Blessed Moyo said they are hoping that the majority of stands will be allocated to the locals

5.2 Citizens Involvement in Decisions to do with Public Resources

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



Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

The survey found out that citizens are largely excluded from PRM decision making. The majority, 80% reported that they are not consulted while in 15% they are sometimes consulted and only in 5% citizens reported that they have been consulted when local authorities are making decisions about public resources. As with the March and April situational reports, the May Sitrep also records that in 75% of the sampled districts, citizens are not involved in PRM decisions while 15% are sometime involved and 10% are involved when PRM decisions are made at local government level. ZIMCODD therefore calls for a PRM reform which puts people at the centre of governance and which inculcates the concept of citizenship based on civic engagement and participation in social and economic developmental processes that affect them as prescribed in Section 13:2 of the Constitution which that "the state must involve people in the formulation and implementation of developmental plans and programmes that affect them."

Case: Concern over the proposed development of the Victoria Falls UNESCO heritage site as residents are not benefiting from what is currently obtaining.

There is growing concern among residents and conservationists across the globe over the proposed developmental projects earmarked for Victoria Falls UNESCO world heritage site. The projects are in line with the city's growth and expansion and the projects are set to affect both the Zimbabwean and the Zambian sides. There are plans to commercialize the Cataract Island and another island which is situated up the river. There are also plans to build a restaurant just 55 meters from the Rain Forest boundary.

Whilst the growth of the city is appreciated, the intrusion into the wild space spoils the natural beauty of the Victoria Falls which it is widely known for. There is general consensus that the city is already over commercialized and any further developments will result in further loss of biodiversity. The Victoria Falls is home to over 400 bird species and 103 mammal species. Any further commercialization will disrupt the natural habitats of these animals.

Furthermore, the proposed projects will result in the blockage of wildlife corridors which animals use to freely move between Zimbabwe and Zambia. The closure of the corridors will exacerbate the problem of human and wildlife conflict as animals will continue encroaching human settlement. At least 60 people have been killed by elephants in Zimbabwe since the beginning of the year. Further commercialization will reduce the amount of resources such as water and vegetation that is needed by both animals and human beings.

In a bid to stop these developments, the residents have joined hands with people across the globe in trying to halt the developments. Through a petition under the hashtag #keepvictoriafallswild, residents and wildlife enthusiasts are petitioning the Zimbabwean government, National Parks (ZPWMA) and the city council to stop the developments.

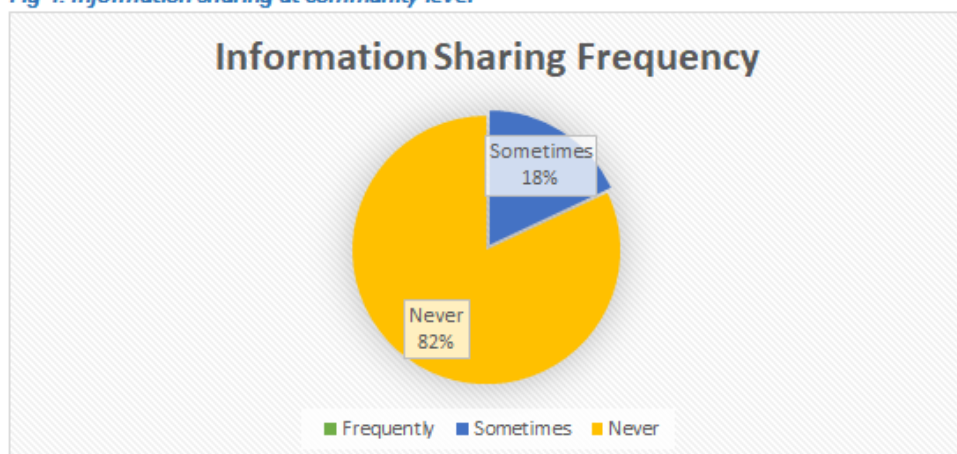
It is regrettable that the proposed expansion comes when residents have not been benefitting from the current operations. The more than 4000 population of Victoria Falls city directly and indirectly depends on tourism attracted by the Victoria Falls heritage world heritage site but there is little to show for it. Each year thousands of tourists' flock to the area but the city of Victoria Falls experiences inconsistent public service delivery. Water cuts, power cuts and inconsistent garbage collection are the order of the day. Most parts in the city do not have street lights and sewer services are unavailable in a part of Ward 11.

The city only has one council run high school that is overwhelmed as residents cannot afford the smaller private schools. Victoria Falls also lacks specialist healthcare facilities with the nearest facility (Mpilo) being located over 400km away.

Authorities are encouraged to heed the plight and call of stakeholders and stop the commercialization of the heritage sight. Furthermore, it is imperative that the residents benefit from these natural resources.

5.3 Access to Information on Public Resources

Fig 4: Information sharing at community level

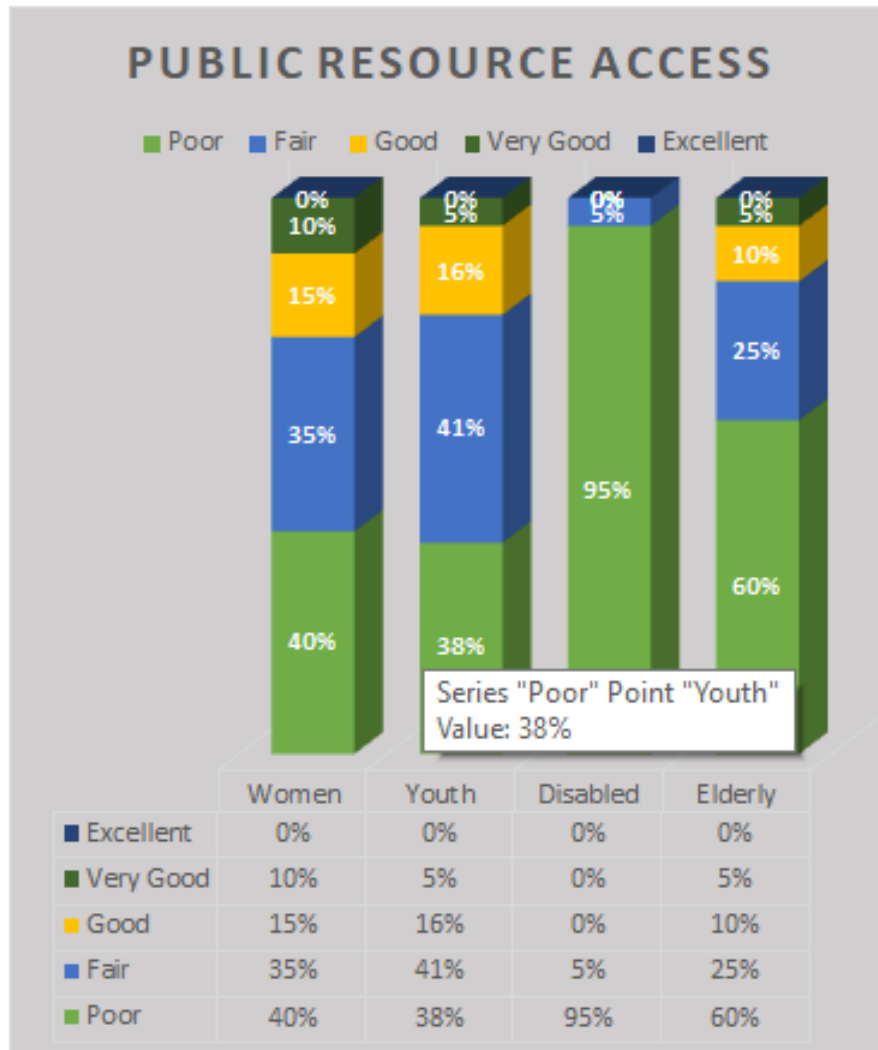


Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

The May Situational report found that in 82% of the sampled districts, residents reported that local authorities never freely share information regarding public resource management while in 18% of the districts, residents reported that information is sometimes shared.

Public Resources Access by Demographic Groups

Fig 5: Access to Public Resources by Demographic groups



Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

The survey found out that 95% of the sample reported that access to public resources by persons with disabilities is poor while only 5% regarded it as fair. The May findings on access to public resources are no different from the April sitrep as 60% of the sampled districts rated access to public resources by the elderly poor while 25% rated it fair. For women and youth, sampled districts maintained a 40% and 38% poor rating respectively. This situation is worrisome as access to public resources by vulnerable groups remains poor across the country.

The survey also assessed access to jobs for vulnerable groups. From the survey, Access to jobs for different vulnerable groups remains grim across the country. Of the 57 sampled districts, access to jobs for people with disabilities was rated 97% poor.

Access to jobs by the youth was rated 92% poor while access to employment for women was rated 50% poor. There is therefore need for the government to create productive employment opportunities, to improve social protection and to strengthen the informal economy.

5.4 Access to Budget Implementation Information

Access to budget and devolution implementation information remains a privilege for the few and such a status quo begs transparency and accountability questions and in some instances corruption allegations. The survey found out that in 51 districts (89%) there was knowledge about council projects while in 6 districts (11%) there was no knowledge of what council is doing with public funds. The survey also found out that those who have access to such information still lack the granular details of how much was used for each project for them to be able to assess value for money among other key variables. This disenfranchises the public in terms of monitoring budget implementation as they lack the necessary information. The case of Bikita below is a case in point for alleged corruption by rural district councils Below is an example of what citizen agency can achieve towards prudent PFM:

Case: Corruption Suspicion as Bikita RDC drills 4 boreholes at US\$9000 each, Masvingo

Corruption allegations are being levelled against Bikita Rural District Council (RDC) by villagers following the drilling of four boreholes in Bikita South Constituency at a cost of US\$9 000 each. The four boreholes were drilled in Bikita South's Wards 1, 2 and 3 using Pote Drilling Company.

Bikita RDC chairperson confirmed the drilling of the four boreholes (2 for community; one for crèche and one for a school). However; the chairperson said councillors were under fire from villagers because they suspect corruption as the cost of US\$9000 was too high compared to what many drilling companies in Masvingo Province are charging. The cost (US\$9000), is five times more than the average cost of US\$1500 being charged by drilling companies in the province.

"Yes, I can confirm that we drilled four boreholes in Wards 1, 2 and 3 in Bikita South. However, the villagers are hot on our heels as they demand explanations regarding the cost which was between US\$7000 and US\$9000. We are also perplexed because the cost is way too high; but we are going to ask the management to explain and account in our next meeting," said Council chairperson.

The borehole drilling prices were inflated by more than US6000; that is, about US\$24000 in total lost through this project. There perennial water woes in Bikita district with Bikita East and Bikita South Constituencies being the hardest hit areas. Villagers walk long distances of up to 2km to and from the nearest water source, of which some such as unprotected wells and rivers do not have safe water.



One of the boreholes drilled by Bikita RDC in Bikita South's Ward 1 recently at a cost of US\$9000

If the exaggerated US\$24000 was put into good use, about 12 more boreholes could have been drilled – a development that would have helped to solve the perennial water crisis in Bikita district. Instead of drilling boreholes in only three wards, Bikita RDC could have drilled in 12 more wards (borehole per ward) if the management did not inflate the prices and this means at least 15 wards could have benefited instead of only three. That's how corruption through inflating prices is depriving Bikita villagers' right to access clean and safe water as enshrined in the constitution. There have been cases of waterborne diseases such as typhoid in Bikita because residents are using unclean water for domestic purposes and there are in dire need of clean sources of water.

Action and Way Forward

The council chairperson said the issue will be on the agenda at their next meeting and that councillors will demand the management to account for the US\$36000 that is alleged to have been used to drill the four boreholes. Under normal circumstances, US\$36000 can be used to drill at least 20 boreholes and this could have gone a long way in solving the perennial water crisis in Bikita district.

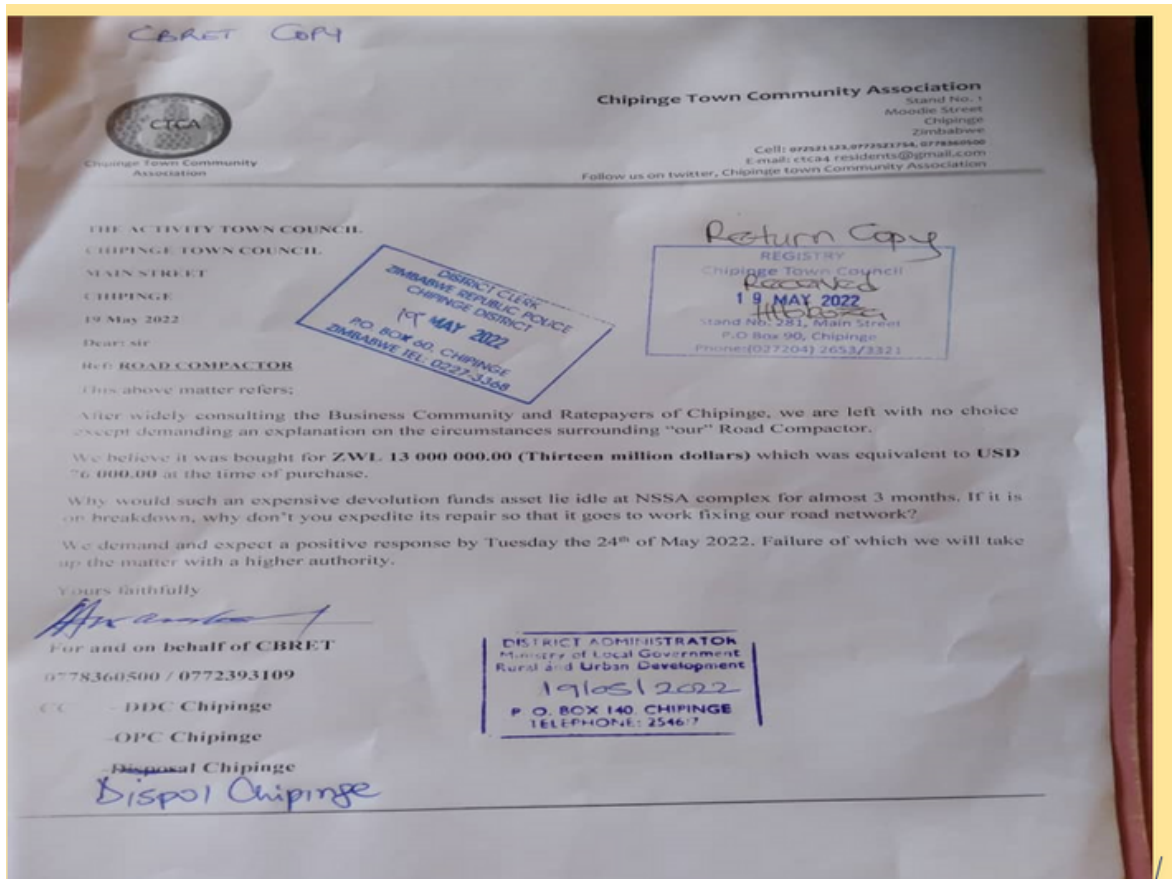
Bikita RDC is also involved in another corruption case where the council management allegedly bought Toyota GD6 vehicles and registered them under individual names instead of council name. The case is still pending as investigations are still being done. A follow up with the council chairperson will be done to find out the steps they are taking to make sure the management account for these and other corruption cases being levelled against them.

Chipinge Town Council to be taken to court by residents over a brand-new Compactor lying idle for 3months.

Chipinge Town Council recently procured a Road compactor but it has been lying idle for almost three months. After consultation to the Business community and Rate Payers in Chipinge the residents are left with no option other than demanding for an explanation from the town council on the circumstances surrounding the Road compactor. It is believed that the compactor was bought for ZW\$ 13 000 000 which was equivalent to \$76 000usd at the time of purchase. The residents are wondering how such an expensive devolution fund asset lie idle at the NSSA complex for months after it broke down barely a week after it was bought.

The compactor was going to be useful because it was supposed to be used for road construction making it easier for pedestrians and motorists but as it stands now the situation has worsened because the roads are full of potholes and from burst pipes has formed gullies on the roads.

The residents have written a letter to the DDC, OPC and Dispol of Chipinge District to demand explanation on the circumstances surrounding the Road compactor. They demanded a positive response by Tuesday 24 May 2022 and failure to do so they would take the Local council to the higher authority (to court).



Case: The illusion of power. A look into devolution in Chiredzi

Devolution is the transfer of powers and funding to a lower level, particularly from central government to local authorities. Its importance lies in ensuring decisions are closer to the grassroots; local people, communities and businesses, mostly affected. Devolution provides local authorities with greater freedom and flexibility, allowing them to work more effectively in their bid to improve public service delivery, sustainable growth and better partnerships between private, public and community leaders.

Questions around the disbursement of devolution funds grew around the Chiredzi Town Council in July 2021 as the Rural Council had been blowing their own horn on accomplishments that resulted from their share of the funds. It was alleged that the delay was due to the town council being led by the opposition party. This was clear evidence that Central government still controlled the purse strings. In 2019, medical equipment donated to the Poly-Clinic, a town council run clinic, in a bid to improve the health care service offered were rejected by Chiredzi-west MP, allegedly with the help of state security apparatus. When approached for questioning, he then referred all questions back to council opposition chairman, Gibson Hwende.

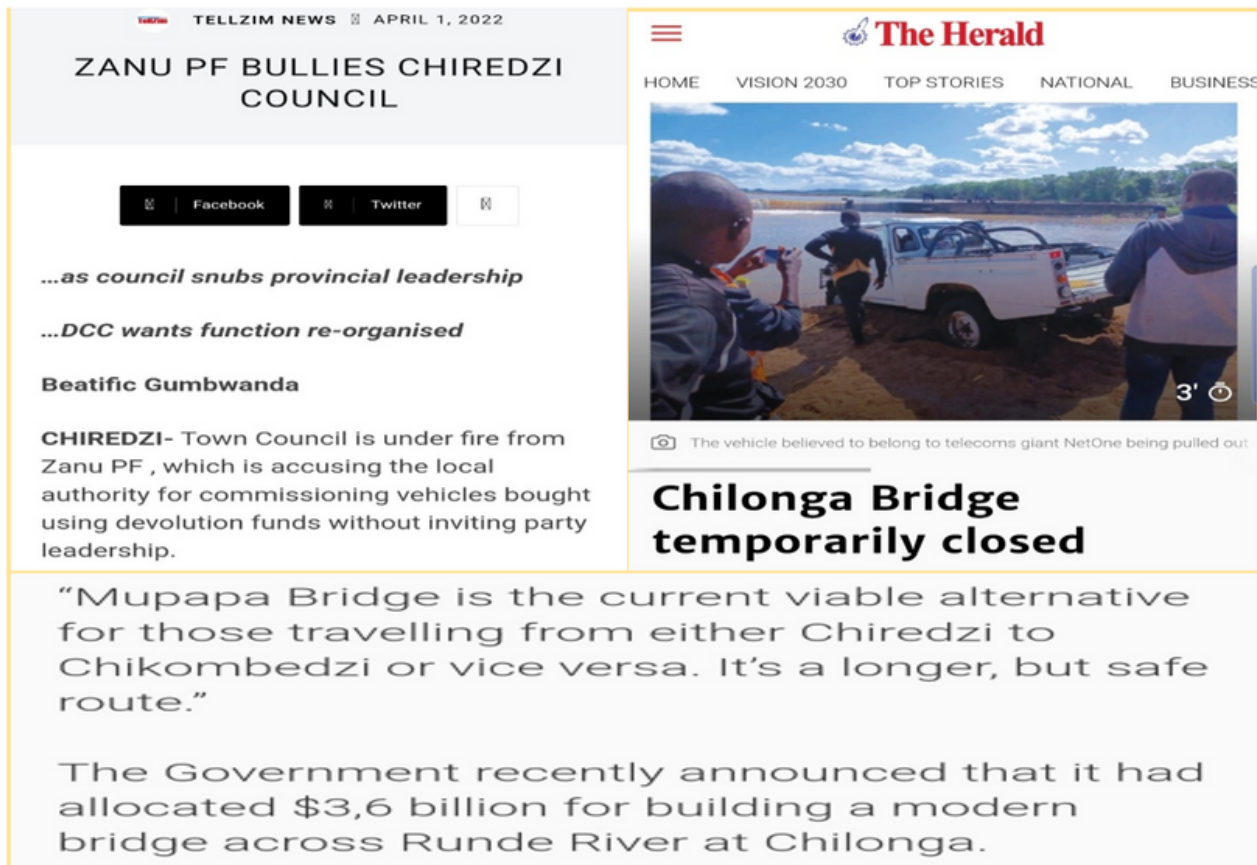
Local residents have long called for the upgrade of the Chilonga Bridge, with the issue being raised to all local leaders past and present. The poorly constructed bridge has become a safety hazard, claiming over eight lives since the start of 2022 alone. A figure around the RTGS3.6billion mark has been dangled to citizens as the amount that has been allocated by central government for building a modern bridge at the crossing, but yet again has not been disbursed. The bridge has since been temporarily closed, burdening residents with longer overall trips. The bridge has been of concern to residents since 2014 and 8 years on, no concrete action has been taken but waiting on central government.

In March 2022, the town and rural council commissioned vehicles and tractors purchased using the CDF in a move to improve service delivery. Despite a few concerns amongst some residents, there was a general sense of optimism. However, it all got eroded the moment the decision to commission the vehicles locally came under scrutiny by Zanu-PF big wigs in the provincial office who felt they should have been invited. Residents saw this as an attempt to use devolution projects to further campaigns by the ruling party. "Devolution funds and what they purchase are government controlled, locally through local government and to some extent central government", said Zanu-PF DCC S Mundungehema. This further highlighted just how much central government is still very much in control, despite the devolution front being paraded before our eyes.

It is clear that the assumed power that local authorities, residents, private and public leaders thought they had is all but an illusion, a figment of their imagination.

Late disbursements and high central government influence have been common not just in Chiredzi but across the country, further highlighting the discord between central government and local authority. "By union, the smallest states thrive. By discord the greatest are destroyed." Sallust.

Below are snippets from articles that show more of this discord:



TELLZIM NEWS APRIL 1, 2022

ZANU PF BULLIES CHIREDDI COUNCIL

Facebook Twitter

...as council snubs provincial leadership


...DCC wants function re-organised

Beatific Gumbwanda

CHIREDDI- Town Council is under fire from Zanu PF , which is accusing the local authority for commissioning vehicles bought using devolution funds without inviting party leadership.

The Herald

HOME VISION 2030 TOP STORIES NATIONAL BUSINESS



The vehicle believed to belong to telecoms giant NetOne being pulled out

Chilonga Bridge temporarily closed

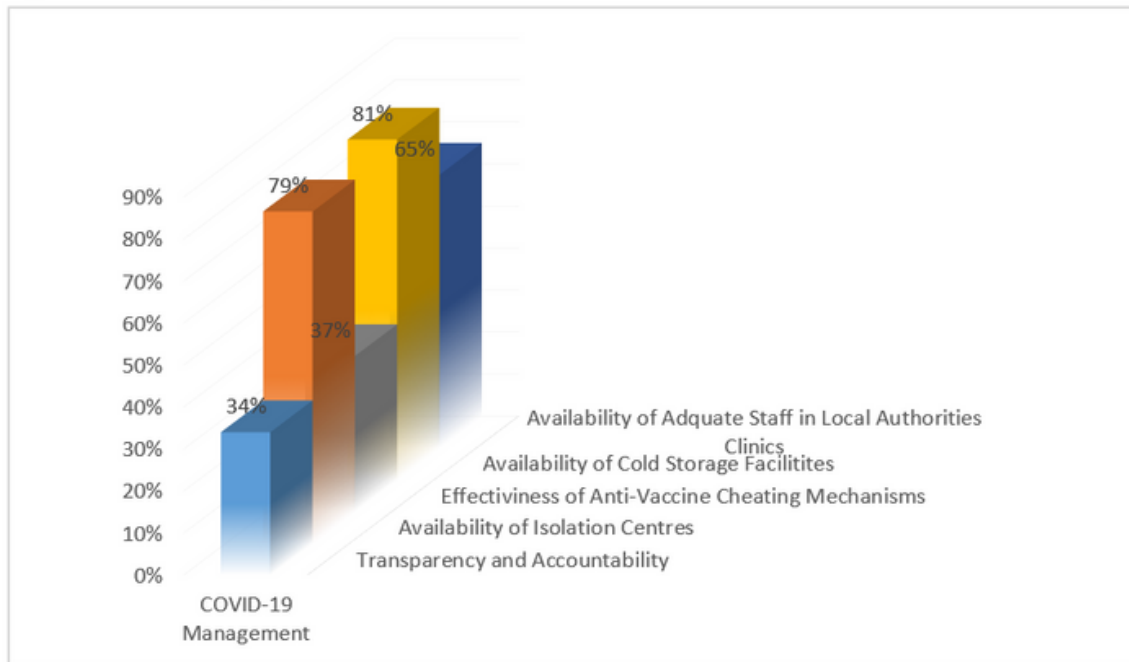
"Mupapa Bridge is the current viable alternative for those travelling from either Chiredzi to Chikombedzi or vice versa. It's a longer, but safe route."

The Government recently announced that it had allocated \$3,6 billion for building a modern bridge across Runde River at Chilonga.

5.5 COVID-19 Management and Key Issues

The survey discovered that, the government is still wanting with respect to transparency and accountability as it attained 34% a further decrease from the 37%, 40% and 45% attained in February, March and April respectively. While the effectiveness of anti-vaccine cheating mechanisms was rated 37% a decrease from the 39% and 44% attained in March and April respectively pointing to weak and porous anti-vaccine cheating strategies. A same rating was recorded in the availability of isolation centres which registered 79%. A positive improvement on cold storage facilities was witnessed as the rating increased from 77% to 81%. A same rating was attained for the availability of adequate staff in local authorities as the Month of April registered 65%. The figure below projects the research findings.

Fig 7: COVID-19 Management

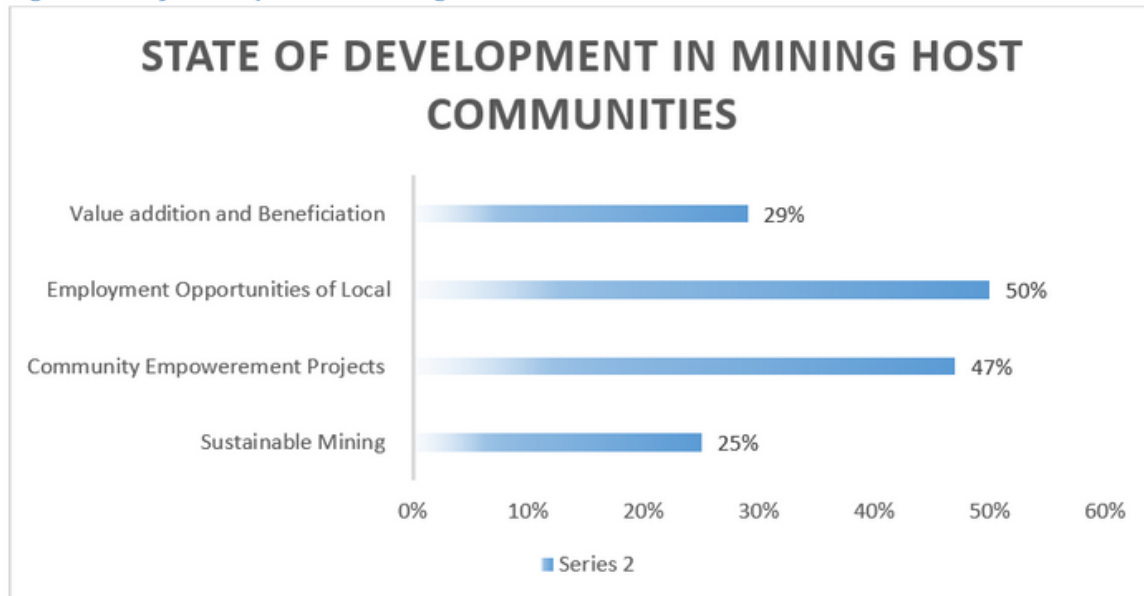


Source: Data Complied By ZIMCODD

5.6 Natural Resource Governance Issues

The findings from the survey discovered a further decrease in sustainable mining from 30% registered in March and 28% in April to 25% in May. Community empowerment projects received an increase in rating from 45% registered in April to 47% in May a positive stride with respect to empowering mining host communities. Employment opportunities of local was rated 50% a decrease from the 53% rating received from April. This can be attributed to the closure of the Great Dyke Investment. Lastly, value addition retained the same rating 29% clearly depicting the impossibility of attaining the US\$ 12 billion mining vision if the government doesn't change on its approach to mining. The figure below shows the state of development in mining host communities.

Fig 8: State of Development in Mining Host Communities



Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

Case: Plea for equitable distribution of natural resources in Goromonzi district, ward 13

Goromonzi District is well endowed with minerals e.g. Lithium, Gold, Quarry and many other untapped minerals. For Ward 13 in Goromonzi north Constituency for example, Zimbabwe is ranked number 6 Globally because of Lithium deposits that are found in this ward at the Arcadia Lithium Mining Project. So far there 66 mines in Goromonzi District all in all in 25 wards out of these mining companies only 25 companies only are paying tax to Goromonzi rural district council and as for corporate social responsibility nothing is being done to improve the community they are mining from in terms of service delivery.

In Ward 13 there are several mining claims almost close to 20 mines but the Road is in a bad state especially during rainy season the road is slippery so it's very difficult for motorists to use it, there is need to exercise extreme caution when driving. The Road connect from ward 16 through ward 13 via ward 12 where there is Kunzvi Dam, it was once a tarred road but now its history. Goromonzi RDC was allocated 44 million dollars for 2022 Emergency Road Rehabilitation program from Ministry of Transport but so far the road itself it's in a bad state and the bridge is difficult to pass through when it rains. There is need for the responsible authority to reconstruct the bridge as it was constructed before independence 42 years ago.

The road must be repaired so that motorists use it without experiencing difficulties. Another issue is siltation because of gradient water from both sides of the road flow towards the bridge end up being a shallow pool on top of the bridge and the bridge is almost 2metres in depth in terms of height the road itself is in bad shape so there is need for a tarred road like it was before to restore it back to its former state like now transport in ward 13 it's a challenge there is no ZUPCO bus to service that route, people rely on private cars which are expensive while most people are living below poverty datum line with some farm laborers earning US\$40 per month.

In terms of infrastructure development like housing so far most mining companies have not build proper houses for their workers to live in some are living in these houses which are built using tree logs and mud and as for ablution facilities they use makeshift toilets which end up affecting water sources. It's a squatter like setup settlement so there is need for GRDC to do proper housing planning since there is a hive of activity in ward 13. So far, the population has risen from 3000 people in 2015 according to Zimstat and has quadrupled because of the mining activities. GRDC should be involved in identification, design and implementation infrastructure projects since these investments may affect GRDC master plan and unforeseen future costs on the local authority.



Tree log houses built with mud



Shallow Bridge in ward 13

DIAMOND COMPANY RENOVATES DIPTANK IN CHIADZWA.



There was jubilation in Ward 30 Chiadzwa when the Agoni dip tank was finally commissioned for dipping livestock following renovation by the Zimbabwe Consolidated Diamond Company (ZCDC) on 3rd of May 2022. The dip caters for more than 1000 families who lives in and around Ward 30.

The work of the CORAs in Chiadzwa is gradually bearing fruits as some of the issues raised to both mining companies and Mutare Rural District Council are gradually bearing fruits. Following the outcry from community members who had lost significant amount of Livestock in early 2021, the CORA writing this article has highlighted in the previous articles that lack of veterinary services was one of the causes. Community of Ward 30 was struggling to have their cattle dip tank was previously destroyed due to mining activities. When it was finally out of the concession fence, the borehole was no longer working. This affected more than 50 families who had to carry water by head from the near river to fill the dip tank and this caused conflicts as some will not come to fetch the water. Others resorted to using water from the river Agoni near the borehole thereby exposing these families to water borne diseases.

However, this is now a thing of the past as Zimbabwe Consolidated Diamond Company (ZCDC) handed over the newly renovated dip tank to the community. The development welcome veterinary Doctor as she stated that this would make her job easier as it means consistent dipping of cattle.

Filling the dip tank will be now a thing of the past as the mining company installed pipes and taps that will be used to fill and empty the dip tank. The toilets are being built meaning the health of the people is being considered as well.

Livestock is the reliable bank for the communities as people benefit from selling the milk, meat and beasts for a living. ZCDC has now developed a Community Buying Framework in which it buys 95% of its food from the local community hence ensuring the livestock safety by renovating and providing the medication needed. Not only did it promote local development but a step in implementing National Development Strategy 1. According to the Veterinary officer, 25 dip tanks are being target for renovation under NDS1 out of 168 dip tanks targeted in Mutare Rural District Council.

This welcome development is also good news for Mutare Rural District Council who acknowledged that as a local authorities they are inundated with the task of renovating dip tanks. As indicated above, the target is renovating 25 dip tanks, however, the Council official hinted that they would need assistance in renovating the Arda Transau dip tank where community is also using their heads to fetch water to fill the dip tank, walking 2km to and from the nearest source of water.

While the help of mining companies is applauded, over dependence on mining companies is somehow hindering progress in implementing Ward development projects as the Local authorities are now seen to be hiding behind companies. The critical questions remains unanswered, such as, what was the urgency of renovating the 25 dip tanks as indicated by Veterinary department. How much has been used so far and where mining companies are coming in, will it not compromise the Council mandate in collecting levies from mining companies? The fear of many is that, the local authorities will renege on their duties expecting the mining companies to do it for them in the name of corporate social responsibility. Where Rural District Council is supposed to lobby for increase in tax being levied on mining companies for the amounts that are sufficient to implement sustainable local Ward development projects, they beg for CSR projects that do not have legal backing.

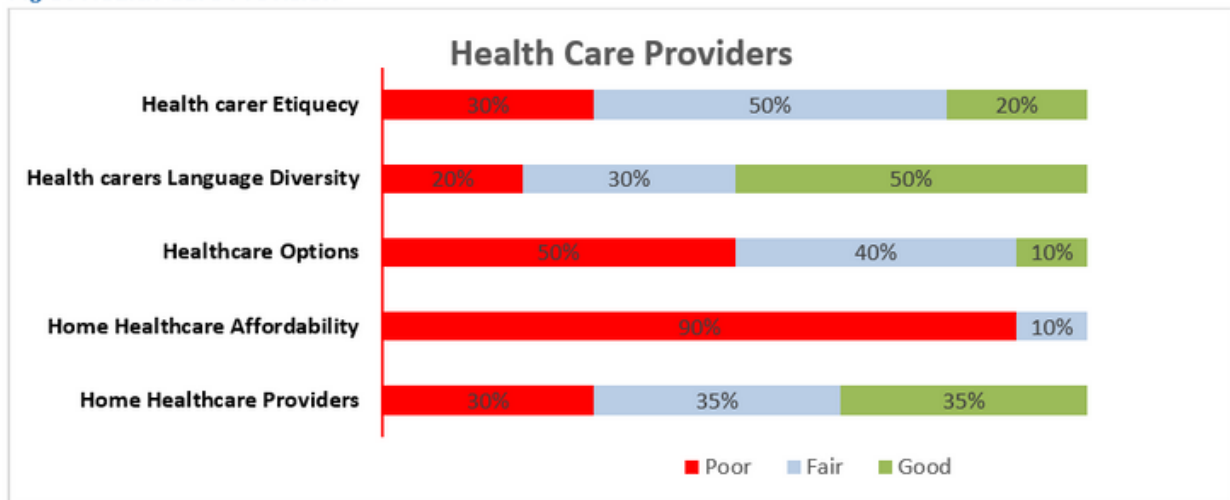
6. Social Service Delivery Findings

In a developing country set up like Zimbabwe, adequate and affordable social services play a very crucial role in the quest to attain inclusive and sustainable growth. This also augurs well with the government of the Second Republic's mantra of "living no place and no one behind" in the long journey toward Vision 2030 "becoming an Upper-Middle-Income Economy" with a per capita income of at least US\$3 500 by end of the year 2030. Furthermore, the status quo of a tightening macroeconomic environment calls for efficient delivery of public services to cushion the vulnerable groups. The perpetual depreciation of the local currency and the subsequent massive increase in prices since 2019 is severely eroding the value of earnings thereby making basic goods out of reach for the majority that is earning in Zimbabwe dollar (ZWL). Thus, thousands of households are being plunged into extreme poverty with various estimates pointing that at least 65% of the population is poverty-stricken. Recently, the International Monetary Fund projected that about a third of the population will be faced with food insecurity in 2022. As such, this section provides ZIMCODD May survey findings to unpack the state of public services in Zimbabwe.

6.1 Availability of Home Health Care Providers

To attain an efficient and effective delivery of quality health care, health care providers must be well trained, adequately equipped, motivated (financially and non-monetarily), and respect the culture and language diversity of the communities they serve. These health care professionals are the cornerstone of health service delivery because they are the custodians and fountains of health knowledge. In the COVID-19 context, home health care providers are essential to decongest central hospitals. They also provide a high level of convenience as they are mostly situated closer to the communities.

Fig 9: Health Care Provision



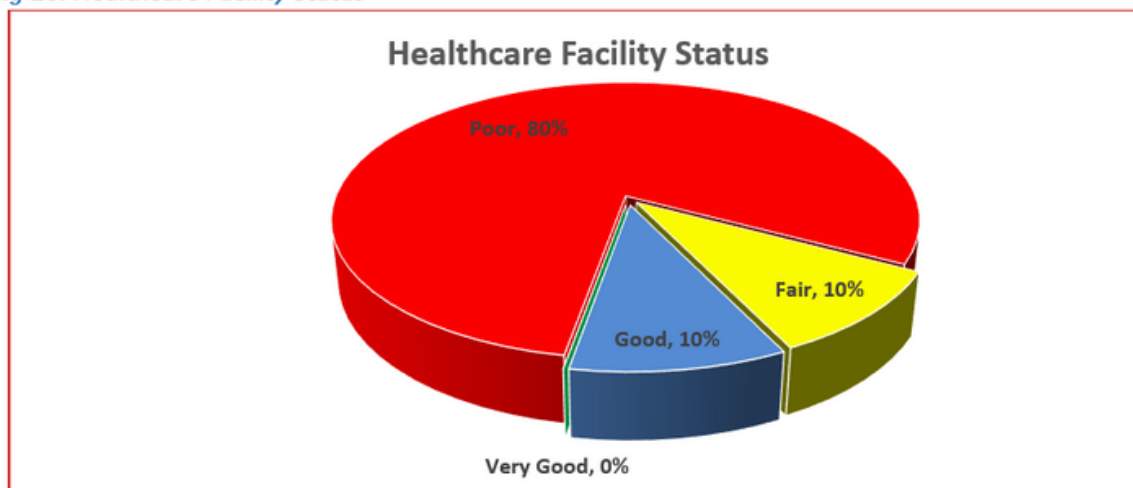
Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

The survey found that while home health care centers are providing relatively better services, their prices (user fees) are out of touch for the majority in 90% of the 57 districts surveyed. These high prices highly reflect a dollarizing economy yet the majority are still earning in the fragile ZWL. However, 70% of the respondents were satisfied with the language diversity of home health care professionals while in terms of the etiquette (respectful and helpful) of health carers, only 30% of districts were rated as poor.

6.2 Quality of Health Care Facilities

Ideally, the provision of private health care should be available for the citizens not as the only option but existing to augment public health care. However, this is the now case in Zimbabwe as the relatively expensive private health care has become the cornerstone of the health care system. The government is failing to adequately resource and maintain public health care facilities as shown by the total annual budget spending on health which continues to oscillate below 15%, a contravention of the Abuja Declaration.

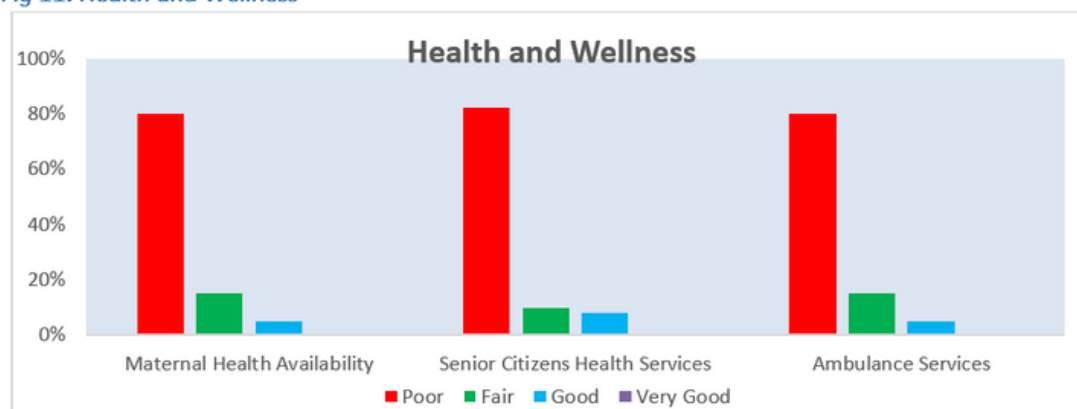
Fig 10: Healthcare Facility Status



Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

In line with the foregoing, the survey found that 80% of public healthcare facilities in 57 districts surveyed were poor, a 5% further deterioration from 75% that was reported in the April issue of the report. This has left the private health care market thriving, a market that is only for the rich who can afford exorbitant charges which are now largely in forex. This state constrains health care professionals in discharging their service to the nation.

Fig 11: Health and Wellness



Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

Apart from physical infrastructure, the survey found that 80% of health institutions have poor ambulance services. This is not surprising because the 2019 OAG audit report on local authorities revealed that the City of Mutare had one ambulance serving the entire city. Ambulance services are needed for prompt response to health emergencies like road accidents. The survey also established that of the 57 districts surveyed, 80% are providing poor maternal health services while 82% of the districts reported poor health care services for the elderly. This is worrisome given the paltry monthly pensions being given to the elderly (pensioners) by NSSA. These pensions are a mockery as the cost of health care continues to rise. While the gesture by the government that the elderly should not pay for user fees at public institutions is commendable, the acute shortages of medicines, medical equipment, and medical staff at these institutions defy the logic.

Case: Government neglects Ngomahuru Psychiatric Hospital (Masvingo)

Patients at Ngomahuru Psychiatric Hospital are still facing many problems including shortages of drugs for chronic illnesses, food, and bathing detergents. Ngomahuru Psychiatric Hospital is about 50km south of Masvingo town, a well-established and reputable mental health institution that is now a pale shadow of its former self. With a maximum capacity of three hundred (300) mental patients used to be comfortably accommodated and treated, there are just 130 mental patients left (21 females and 109 males), and yet the institution can hardly look after them. Basic needs such as medicines, food, linen, soap, and even water are now difficult to get and inmates have been reported to be going hungry most of the time.

The hospital has gone for years without receiving basic injections for psychiatric patients such as methimazole decomendy required once a month for each patient. The shocking state of Ngomahuru Psychiatric Hospital, one of the four psychiatric health institutions in the country, is a tip of an iceberg and illustrates the government's failure to sustain the country's health sector. The Ministry of Health is failing to supply the health institution with adequate drugs despite the ministry of finance reporting a surplus in the 2021 financial year. Due to a shortage of drugs and food, many patients suffer from malnutrition and pelagic which makes it difficult for them to recover.

In February 2021 the hospital also went for a month without running water where patients were risking their life bathing in a nearby river. The water shortage was caused by electricity problems at the ZINWA pump station. The two state-owned institutions who were responsible to rectify the problem (ZESA and ZINWA) were blaming each other without resolving the water problem. The water crisis was later resolved after a public outcry and urgent court application by the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights.

The state of Ngomahuru hospital is clear evidence that Zimbabwe's health sector has dilapidated without much recourse. Infrastructure gaps still exist in service delivery and availability, as well as the readiness of health facilities to provide basic health-care interventions in the country. To recover the sector, the government should curb grand corruption, illicit financial flows, and conflation of state and political party business on public debts among other issues.

Case: Installed solar panel system goes missing (Bubi).

Bubi Rural District is a community that consists of 12 health institutions; one (1) governmental district hospital, two (2) private clinics, and 9 public clinics. All these health care centers had been developed with the introduction of the newly installed solar system which was donated by the TURNKEY SUPPLIER.

The introduction of this solar system resulted in the great improvement of the livelihood of both health workers and the members of society. The health supplies such as vaccines, blood, and specimens were kept refrigerated and processed on time. However, some of the local health care centers have now gone back to dark times as their solar power was stolen. Raafs rural health clinic is one of the health care centers which has been left with only a solar stand with all the 20 solar panels gone missing as shown below.



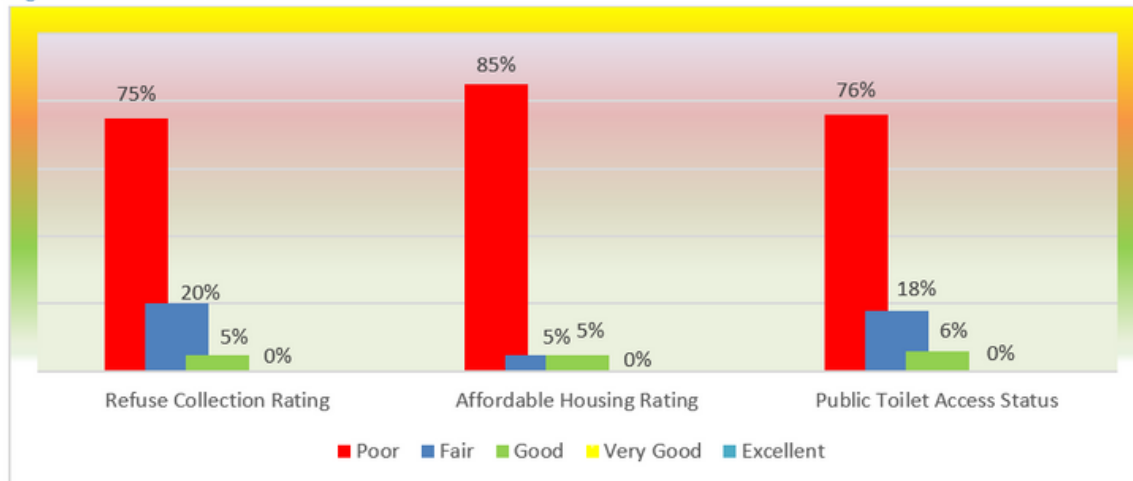
The solar panels are believed to have been stolen on the night of May 2nd. Investigations are still going on; however, no suspects have been brought forward so far. The local authorities and the community residents managed to reach a consensus on tightening security measures around the local clinic by hiring 2 more security guards to man the clinic during the night.

However, the Raafs Rural Clinic is not the only clinic that has experienced such a horrible event, Balanda rural clinic which is also in the Bubi district witnessed the same incident where they lost one of their solar panels and a battery that was installed by the same company. Therefore, such deeds act as hindrances to the process of development in communities. This disproportionately affects women and the girl child who frequently visit health institutions compared to their men counterparts. Therefore, the community should take care of all public resources as they are meant for their benefit.

6.3 Access to Safe Sanitation and Social Amenities

The availability of sanitation and social services contributes to the health and well-being of the nation. However, the country is facing poor sanitation, especially in high-density suburbs which are now characterized by garbage dumps and flowing sewers contaminating water and food sources.

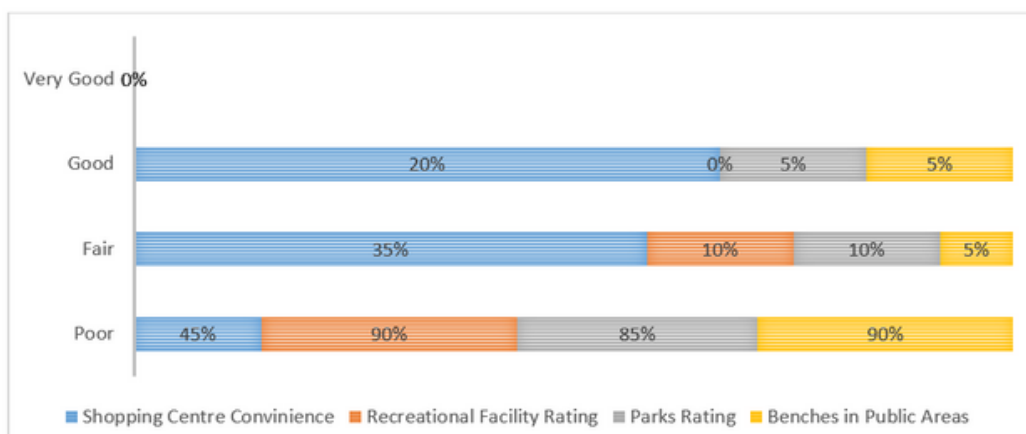
Fig 12: Sanitation and Social Amenities



Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

The survey results revealed that refuse collection is poor in 75% of the 57 districts surveyed while only 20% of districts ranked it as fair and 5% as good. This is largely attributed to poor management of public resources by local governments. For instance, the City of Harare paid for 50 refuse trucks in 2017 worth US\$1.8 million but the trucks are yet to be delivered to date¹. The survey also established that public housing is unaffordable in 85% of the districts surveyed, a result of a poor public housing system dominated by profit-oriented land barons and corrupt city council officials. Official statistics show that the housing backlog stands at over 1.5 million housing units and is leading to mushrooming illegal structures and squatter camps across the country.

Fig 13: Other Social Amenities



Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

1. <https://zwnews.com/harare-city-council-loses-over-us1-8-million-in-refuse-collection-trucks-deal/>

The ZIMCODD survey established that 45% of the districts are not enjoying shopping center convenience. However, this is an improvement compared to the previous months, and this was expected a priori as the rainy season that usually affects people in rural areas where roads and bridges are in a deplorable state has ended. It was also established that 90% of the districts have poor recreational facilities and benches in public spaces. Recreational and public parks are essential because participation in recreational groups and socially supported physical activities help in reducing stress, anxiety, and depression. Also, violent crime decreases significantly when participating in community activities by individuals increases.

Refuse piles up as Council blames PRAZ for bungling.

Since the beginning of the year, Mutare City Council is failing to collect refuse as expected thus shredding the dictates of section 73 of the Constitution which protects environmental rights: "Every person has a right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being."



Garbage piling up by ZAOGA church, ward 9, area 13 Dangamvura

Garbage dumps are now a common feature throughout the city which has made residents uneasy as they fear the outbreak of medieval diseases like cholera. It is now a question of when an outbreak will happen and the extent of the outbreak itself if the situation is not abated on time. The local authority claims that it had resorted to hiring trucks to do refuse collection but hiring is expensive since the trucks are not compactors. These hired trucks carry 4 times less refuse per trip relative to a refuse compactor.



A hired non-refuse compactor collecting refuse in Sakubva McGregors section.

According to the City of Mutare spokesperson, Mr. Mutiwi, “refuse collection schedule has been greatly affected by the breakdown of our refuse trucks. Currently, we have 3 three trucks when we are supposed to operate with an ideal complement of 14 trucks” To rid themselves of the blame for the refuse collection gaff, the Local Authority has thrown the Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe (PRAZ) under the bus. City of Mutare Acting Town Clerk Mr. Chafesuka had this to say about the blameworthiness of PRAZ, “We have been trying to procure new trucks since last year but tenders are failing. We are submitting a new request with PRAZ for approval of our third tender attempt to procure new refuse trucks and hopefully this time we will get approval”.

PRAZ is accused of bureaucratic bungling of tenders which frustrates many public entities. The city of Mutare revealed that it has the cash resources on hand ready for use in buying refuse trucks but the procurement process stands in the way. As the blame game antics continue, the refuse is piling up. Therefore, there is an urgent need to review procurement regulations so that they speak to the needs and demands of citizens rather than this bureaucratic fiasco. Residents need services, not bureaucracy.

6.4 Water Supply

Water is a key resource that is needed to support all forms of life -people, livestock, wildlife, aqua life, and vegetation. This is the reason the Constitution, through Section 77, identifies access to clean, safe and potable water as a human right.

Water is critical in the realization of other human rights like the right to a clean & safe environment as well as the right to health. However, access to clean and safe water is a burden for the majority of citizens in Zimbabwe.

Fig 14: Availability of Clean, Safe and Portable Water



Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

The survey revealed that 80% of 57 districts surveyed receive water irregularly with only 15% receiving it regularly while 5% are on the receiving end, without access to water at all. As pointed out in the April 2022 issue of this report, water supply in urban areas is being hindered by the growing population driven by rural-urban migration in search of greener pastures. The size of the population has outpaced the capacity of water treatment plants, some of which were built in pre-independent Zimbabwe.

Case: Gokwe vendors get solarized taps and ablution facilities

Over 300 agriculture farmers in Gokwe had lost hope as the market where they sold their produce was closed due to a cholera outbreak. Gokwe market popularly known as Mudurawall is where most farmers get money to take care of their families. The water crisis and also lack of ablution facilities also led to the closure of the popular market.

Luckily through the Radio Listening Clubs, a ZIMCODD initiative, Gokwe residents with the help of SEJAs approached Gokwe Sengwa constituency Member of Parliament Paul Mavhima to intervene. After the engagement, the MP said devolution funds will be channelled towards the water project and ablution. " This is the largest marketplace, and also a source of income for the farmers, World Vision will assist with these boreholes and also I'm pushing that devolution funds will be used also," said Hon. Mavhima.

Over 467 households have benefited through the public solar boreholes and it is now business as usual at the Gokwe market. One of the vendors applauded ZIMCODD for introducing radio listening clubs which have equipped them to demand and engage for transparency.

"I would like to applaud ZIMCODD because we are now aware of our rights even the constitution says we have a right to clean water and a healthy environment," said the vendor. Meanwhile, Gokwe vendors will also benefit from the proper market stalls promised the MP.

Borehole facility abused by Headman in Makoni

It is alleged that the government initiative to provide clean and safe water for the rural populace has turned out nasty in Ward 25 of the Matsika area. The community had suggested a borehole site that was central so that all members of the community could fairly access it. However, the borehole was then situated in favor of the headman as his yard was selected as the site for the facility. The yard is fenced which makes it difficult for community members to access the borehole all the time. Furthermore, the water facility has been located out of reach of many community members as some have to walk more than 4km to access the much sought-after commodity. This has forced many to use a well that is unsafe and uncovered despite a government initiative to provide clean and safe water.

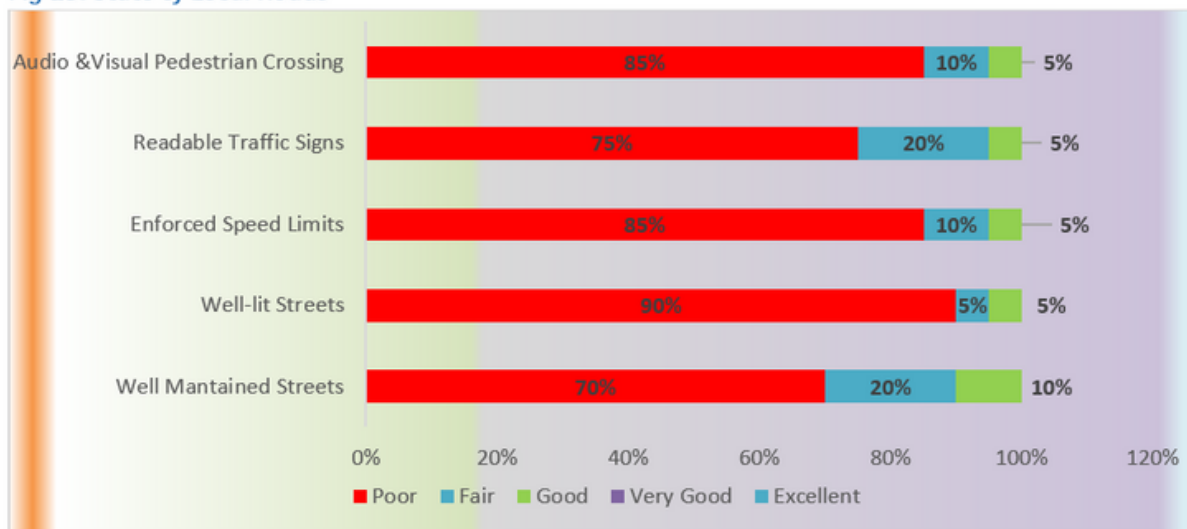


A person needs 50 to 100 litres of water per day to meet physiological and hygienic needs. As such, some members of the community are exposed to a high level of health risk. According to an anonymous villager, it is difficult for elderly women, pregnant women, nursing mothers, and disabled women to carry water for long distances. Therefore, as God had never intended one group of people to live in superfluous inordinate wealth while others live in deadening abject poverty, all members of the community should benefit from the national cake. This calls for another borehole to be situated at a central location that reduces the distance for everyone.

6.5 Road Networks

Generally, a good road network is needed to reduce fatal accidents thereby saving human life and lowering the cost of doing business. This leads to increased investment, commerce, job creation, ease of access to markets, and power robust and inclusive economic growth. Despite the ongoing Emergency Road Rehabilitation Programme (ERRP), decades of neglect had left many areas in Zimbabwe with poor roads, particularly those in rural areas where people are walking long distances to access a road network. These challenges are contributing to high transport costs.

Fig 15: State of Local Roads



Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

The survey found that 70% of the 57 districts surveyed had poorly maintained streets while 90% had poorly lit streets. The failure to maintain street lights by authorities is exposing the public to harmful incidents like night robberies. As such, to minimize road accidents traffic signs must be written clearly and speed limits must be enforced at all times. However, 75% of the districts had poor traffic signs and 85% are not enforcing road speed limits. More so, a majority of pedestrian crossings in Zimbabwe are poor as 85% of the districts surveyed reported poor audio and visual pedestrian crossings. This has a great disadvantage, particularly to vulnerable members of society like young children, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

Case: Completion of a road in Nyanga North

Every year, the Avila-Ruwangwe Road was exposed to heavy rains experienced in Nyanga. The community would maintain the road for themselves so that they can access markets. It was the local leaders like the village heads, councilors, and headmen who would organize people for the maintenance since the council was failing to undertake its duties as outlined in the constitution and the Urban Councils Act.



The construction of the road started in March 2022 and took about a month and a half to complete. Avila-Ruwangwe is a 15-kilometre dust road. As alluded earlier, the road was in a bad state to an extent that some in the transport sector were now evading using this route. Consequently, people would have to look for other routes which were a bit expensive as they prolonged a short journey. From the health care front, the community faced a big challenge as they were being charged a lot of money when they hire an ambulance passing this Avila-Ruwangwe Road.

Road infrastructure is a very important public asset. Society relies on a good road system as the basis to access workplaces, health care institutions, schools, and other social connections. It is a crucial element in the development of a community in particular and the growth of the national economy in general. After the completion of this road, there is now a smooth flow of different community activities.

Case: Roads Rehabilitation hits a brick wall in the Midlands

Under the Emergency Road Rehabilitation Program phase 2 (ERRP2) initiative by the government to rehabilitate roads countrywide, the nation was set to witness the major development of dilapidated and unsafe roads. Work began with various contractors being awarded contracts to develop roads that had become death traps.

In the Midlands Province, a major road that was to be attended to is the lower Gweru highway. After months of supposed development, the contractor awarded the contract achieved low standard results leading to the government terminating the agreement. During a ZIMCODD open discussion meeting held in Gweru on 10 May 2022, it emerged that there had been a new advertisement for the tender because the funds awarded to the winning contractor were not enough to finish the project. This comes after 8 April news in the Chronicle newspaper that the government had terminated six road contracts under the ERRP 2 in the Midlands Province.

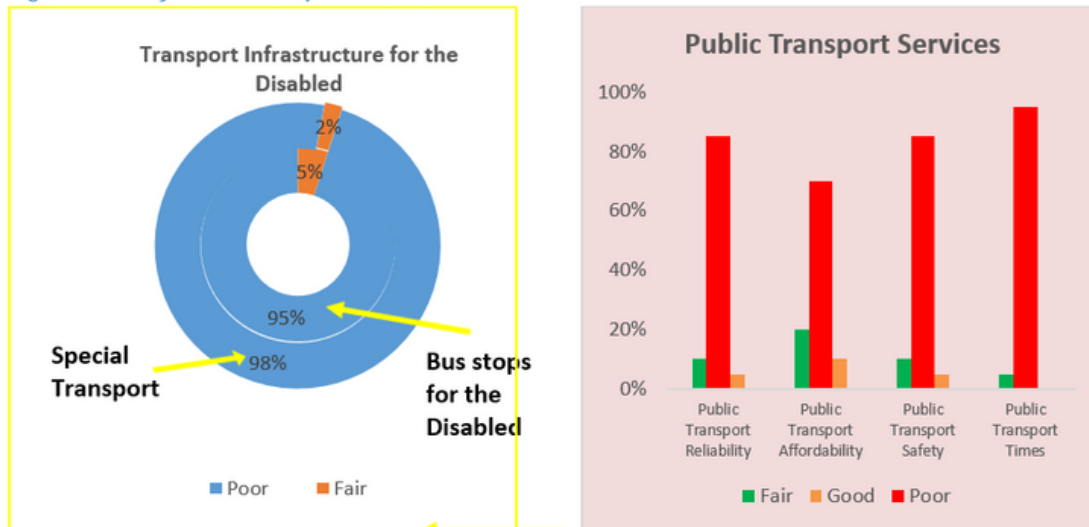


According to Hon B. Dube of Gweru urban constituency, “the contractor placed a lower bid to get the contract but they could not finish the job. They expected to get all the funds at once which did not happen and they also hired equipment to do the work showing that they had limited capacity to carry out the work. There should have been due diligence during contracting whereby the government needed to assess and ascertain the ability of the contractor to deliver.” This can also be viewed as a waste of taxpayers’ money because the progress that was made by the previous contractor has hit a brick wall and the road is now gradually falling apart again.

6.6 Public Transportation

ZIMCDD commends the government in its continued efforts to import buses to capacitate Zimbabwe United Passengers Company (ZUPCO) as this will go a long way in reducing transport mayhem being experienced by citizens. However, the pace of bus procurement displayed in the last 4 years is disheartening considering the status quo where the commuting public is spending long hours in queues before boarding a public bus. This is aggravated by the fact that the government has given a total monopoly to ZUPCO despite it having a depleted bus fleet. The available transport system is also creating a social status divide in the country because it is not inclusive especially relating to the PWD community.

Fig 16: State of Public Transport in Zimbabwe




Source: Data Compiled By ZIMCODD

The survey established that in 70% of the districts surveyed, public transport was viewed as unaffordable. This sharp increase is attributable to the recent increase in fuel prices largely driven by the Russia-Ukraine war which forces ZUPCO to frequently hike bus fares. Also, 85% of the respondents viewed public transport as unreliable and unsafe for commuting public. This highlights the life-threatening experiences being faced by the public in Zimbabwe daily: a combination of poorly maintained roads and poorly maintained public vehicles. More so, the public transportation system is not user-friendly for people with disabilities (PWD). About 95% of the districts lack safe public transportation stops or areas that are accessible to PWD while 98% had no special transportation services for PWD and older adults.

6.7 Engendering Public Service Delivery in Zimbabwe

This section sets out the gender dimensions of public service delivery. It outlines provisions on gender equality and natural resource management and highlights the key mandates for the integration of a gender perspective in public service delivery. In this section, the ways in which the law plays a crucial role in women's lives is explored, with a further look into the realities of women's lived experiences against what the law provides. This is important because although the law is universal and applies to everyone, it has different gendered outcomes. It is therefore important to interrogate the gender dimensions of public service delivery and whether such services are provided with the different gendered elements of service delivery in mind.

Many Zimbabwean women face resistance to their rights to own land. Legally, Zimbabwean women have equal rights as men when it comes to ownership of property, however in practice, women face resistance when it comes to exercising their property rights.



The lack of land ownership contributes to high rates of poverty among Zimbabwean women, who constitute 52% of the country's population. Lack of land ownership is a significant barrier to income in a country such as Zimbabwe where the economy thrives on agriculture. Zimbabwe, whose economy is agro-based, has 39.6 million hectares land area with very little of it owned by women.²

In Chimanimani, agriculture has a momentous role in contributing to rural economic growth and ensuring food security. The majority of households in the district generate their livelihoods from agriculture and agricultural related activities. Many women, through subsistence agriculture thrive to deliver food security to rural families through improved food supply to their families. In recent years, farming activities have declined at an increasing rate mainly due to climate change, a stressor that aggravates women's vulnerability. As a result, extreme weather events like floods, gradual increases in temperatures and increased variability in annual rainfall have negatively affected agricultural production. Poverty among Zimbabwean women is worse in rural communities because even though they make significant contributions to agriculture and are the mainstay of farm labour, yet, many of them own nothing nor earn anything from what they produce as they do not own land.

The Zimbabwe Consolidated Diamond Company (ZCDC) has made an effort to plough back to the community by building a two roomed house and a kitchen for one senior community member known as Gogo Manyere. 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. 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. 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.

2. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/zimbabwe-women-face-discrimination-in-land-ownership/1575249>

It is shocking to note that Victoria Falls, which was awarded city status in 2020, has one council run high school that is overpopulated as residents cannot afford to send their children to private schools which are charged in forex. Education attainment is particularly important for girls as studies have shown that an educated female population increases a country's productivity and fuels economic growth. While 'children' are afforded the right to a basic education in terms of the Constitution, all children are not guaranteed equal access to a basic education.

The gender inequalities in accessing education are acknowledged as the Constitution further provides that, "The State must take measures to ensure that girls are afforded the same opportunities as boys to obtain education at all levels". Given this, it is important to ensure that access to quality education is attainable for all. This means ensuring that girls have a fair chance of going to school, and that such schools are well equipped, functioning, and well-funded institutions that are sufficient in quantity for the population. Functional elements of education facilities should include buildings, sanitation facilities for both sexes, safe drinking water, trained teachers receiving domestically competitive salaries, teaching and library materials, and information technologies.

Access to water remains a huge challenge in Zimbabwe. In ward 6 Zengeza, Chitungwiza some houses have gone for over 5 years with no running water. Due to the politicization of water points some residents are forced to buy water at ZWL \$20- to ZWL \$ 30, which, is unsustainable for many, given the constant need for water but more importantly, a violation of the right to water as enshrined in the Constitution. As a result of rights consciousness and social accountability monitoring trainings coupled with conversations around tax justice issues, women in Chitungwiza were enlightened about the need to engage duty bearers around prudent management of public resources. The recognition for the need to dialogue is a critical tool in ensuring that women are heard, and that council is held to account in relation to provision of water services.

7. Conclusion

The state of public resource management continues to dilapidate with wholesome and populist policies being used to siphon national resources. Resource mismanagement has also undermined all efforts to provide basic service delivery. The situation is worsened by the fact that service delivery remains gender insensitive with the central and local government failing to provide for gender sensitive service delivery. Government performance in the mining sector remains a concern with mining host communities having little to show. The opaque and secrecy surrounding the compensation of war veterans cast a shadow of doubt on the sincerity of government when it says its intentions are to honour the efforts of war veterans and not political expediency.

The continuous dilapidation of public service delivery coupled with infrastructure gaps in areas such as road, health, water and sanitation, education and social amenities have worsened the cost of living for the citizens. Poor public finance management, lack of transparency and accountability in the administration of public resources perpetuates resource leakages, corruption and rent-seeking. The SitRep concludes that, Zimbabwe has weak GRPSD and this entrenches gender inequality as women needs are not considered or prioritised in the delivery of public services. However, possible actionable recommendations were prescribed to inform the policy making machinery on alternatives that can be implemented to ensure the attainability of prudent public resource management and viable service delivery.

Recommendations

- **Increase public health investment:** The current state of the health sector is wanting and in a deplorable state with dilapidating equipment and unavailability of critical health professionals. Thus, the government should increase investment in the health sector at least by meeting the 15% Abuja Declaration and ensure that the share of capital spending in this 15% is adequate to maintain and expand infrastructure. The treasury should also disburse funds on time to allow for the smooth provision of public services.
- **Road network:** The government should expedite the road rehabilitation process. In February 2020, the government declared a state of road emergency painting a bad picture of the safety of local roads and highways. While the Emergency Road Rehabilitation Programme (ERRP) has received allocations from the Treasury since then, the tortoise progress registered to date is disgusting. As such, prioritization of road rehabilitation is crucial in reducing road accidents, and facilitating the distribution of inputs to industry and finished goods to markets.
- **Water:** Many residential areas are experiencing water challenges, with people ending up using unsafe water sources such as effluent-infested river streams and dams. In some cases, this is caused by excessive leakages due to aging infrastructure like distribution pipes and treatment plants. To avert this problem, authorities should revamp existing water infrastructure and increase clean and safe water options by drilling boreholes.
- **Housing policy:** The survey has found that despite having a Housing Policy at a national level, many local authorities are operating without clear public housing policies and strategies. This has led to a massive growth of illegal structures across towns and cities thereby contributing to the spread of diseases. As such, the Ministry of Local Government should ensure that all local authorities have clear and inclusive housing policies. Also, the central government should not interfere in the daily affairs of local authorities as this is resulting in ruling party stalwarts allocating un-serviced residential stands to their supporters.

- There is an urgent need to engender public service delivery – The government need to maximise available public resources, notably tax revenues, to invest in gender responsive public services that will help to end gender inequalities and fulfil women’s human rights. In recognition of the role women play in agricultural production, gender mainstreaming in trainings and programmes will ensure that interventions advance women’s equal participation and their contribution to decision making processes including access to markets. Diversity and unconscious bias training must be undertaken to support cultural change and address the imbalance in representation of women.
- The Ministry of Defense must put on its website the selection criteria of the war veterans.
- The Procurement Regulatory Authority must nullify the Pomona deal as it undermines prudent public finance management and glamorise tenderpreneurship.
- The Ministry of Mines must see to it that mining operations in mining host communities benefits the communities.