



Social Development in Zimbabwe

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Introduction

Zimbabwe has in the past 10 years dominated international headlines for a number of reasons; the worsening conditions of poverty, a land reform programme that did not adhere to acceptable norms of transfer of property, contested elections and the general decline in the economy. Beginning in the late 1990s the country experienced an economic decline that has eroded livelihood capacities of both the urban and the rural population. Various analyses have discussed the nature of the crisis from various backgrounds with different emphasis and ideological leanings. Although there is some consensus on the nature and scope of the economic decline and its effects on social development there is no agreement amongst scholars and even policy practitioners on the causes of this crisis. The failure to comprehensively grasp the interrelated factors that led to what can be called 'Zimbabwe's tipping point' have also led to the formulation of inadequate policy interventions to respond to the 'crisis' that ensued.

There was a coincidence between the beginning of the new millennium and the beginning of what in journalistic terms is regarded as the 'Zimbabwe crisis'-this is shorthand for a very complex process of state failure. In fact what was referred to as the Zimbabwean was a three dimensional interrelated form of collapse which included the political crisis centered on increasing tendencies of authoritarianism on the part of the state and supporting structures. This was compounded by contestations around election results and the 'rule of law' in general. The other critical dimension to the crisis was the economic meltdown whose causes are multifaceted; ranging from economic mismanagement on the part of government to structural constraints within the local economy and also the international economic system. It is estimated that the economy has shrunk by over 30% since 2000 (Moyo and Yeros, 2007). Inflation accelerated through 2006, and by 2007 the country was officially experiencing hyperinflation, with prices rising more than 50% every month (Scoones, et al, 2010:26). This continued through 2007 and 2008 with inflation peaking at 231m% towards the end of 2008 (Chimhowu, 2009). Unemployment is said to be at 70%¹. The third dimension of the 'crisis' is the collapse of social service delivery (the subject of this paper).

Zimbabwe had by 1990 achieved impressive results in the area of primary health and education for all and had become the envy of many other post-colonial states. In the area of

¹ The methodology to measure unemployment is highly contested in Zimbabwe. Figures being released by different agencies do not include those in the informal sector and also rural farmers.

food security, the country had been assigned the responsibility of ensuring that there are enough food stocks within the sub-region by the SADC hence the term the ‘bread basket’² of the region. By the close of the 1990s studies of the outcomes of land reform carried out by the Zimbabwe Household Dynamics Study (ZRHDS), led by Bill Kinsey showed how resettled farmers’ real income had more than doubled over the period between 1982-83 and 1994-5 (Kinsey 1999). These positive trends in food security, health and education delivery were soon to disappear with the onset of the ‘crisis decade’.

The purpose of this paper is to provide a contextual overview of social development in Zimbabwe through an analysis of performance trends on the part of the state in ensuring the delivery of the 3Hs (health, housing and household food security) and education. Such a task is very unenviable to any researcher given the broad issues that have to be discussed compounded by the unavailability of reliable statistics and also the limited access to the relevant studies carried out by others. Whilst social development has been a favourite subject of international media, academic and editorial comment, there has been glaring and in most cases complete lack of empirical data. The scarcity of empirical evidence in the analyses tends to lead to the generation of generalisations which do not necessarily contribute towards comprehensive policy responses. The DFZ’s long term objectives in intervening in this sector as spelt out in the terms of reference for this paper and also in other documents need to be informed by rigorous research and this paper can only map the agenda for such research and dialogue. The paper is based on secondary data (including grey research papers), formal and informal interviews with government officials. It has also benefitted from the more than 5 years of research material gathered by the African Institute for Agrarian Studies who have generously allowed use of their resource center.

Background: Social Aspects of the Multifaceted Crisis

There is emerging a school of thought suggesting that we should ‘let bygones be bygones’ and work towards a new Zimbabwe. This is akin to the ‘reconciliation’ promoted by ZANU (PF) at independence with the oft quoted speech ‘...let us turn our swords into ploughshares and he who was my enemy is now my friend’. Whilst the intentions for such an approach are noble we risk developing amnesia. There is value in history especially at such a critical stage of optimism on the future of Zimbabwe. This paper takes its cue from the post-independence

² Many scholars of agrarian change including this author argue that Zimbabwe was never necessarily the breadbasket of the sub-region or did it ever achieve full household food security under the bi-modal structure. Areas with NRIII-V always suffered food shortages and had to rely on remittances or state based aid.

attempts at improving social delivery and also in the process identifies some of the challenges that affected social development then. It is also important to emphasise at this juncture that social development is connected or dependent upon economic development regardless of the nature of the state.

At independence the government inherited an economy that was not comparable to any other newly independent African country. In the years 1945 to 1975 it was one of the fastest growing economies in the world and the result of such sustained growth created an economic structure virtually unique in Africa except for South Africa (Gordon, 1984; Herbst, 1990). It was also characterised by high levels of inequality based on racial cleavages. The majority (83 percent) of the black population was resident in communal areas and had to contend with declining quality of land, diminishing land sizes, overpopulation and insecure usufruct to customary lands. The majority of those based in the urban areas lived in squalid conditions. The new government increased social expenditure, especially in the area of education, housing and health delivery. Primary health and education were offered for free and this led to a significant improvement in literacy levels and health standards. However these measures were not complemented by an increase in government revenues but were highly dependent on government (domestic and international) borrowing (Bond, 1998).

In July 1990 the government released an economic policy statement, *Zimbabwe-A Framework for Economic Reform (1991-1995)*, in which it announced a major policy shift from state-led economic development towards a market based approach. The five year programme was premised on orthodox reform packages prescribed by the IMF, including public sector reform, trade liberalisation, deficit reduction and creation of a 'favourable climate' for economic growth, the target of which was five percent per annum (Sachikonye, 2003). The immediate social outcomes from the ESAP period were a decline in social service delivery due to the introduction of user fees at health centres and school fees in an environment of declining employment. Formal employment decreased from 1990 so that, by 1995, 20 000 workers had lost public sector jobs and 25 000 had lost jobs in the private sector (Murisa, 2004:23). The impact of adjustment on welfare is critical; by 1998, 60 percent of the population was earning less than US\$1 a day, and 80 percent of these lived in the rural areas (UNDP, HDR, 1999). The same 1999 report ranked Zimbabwe 130th out of 170 on the

Human Development Index.³ The burden of adjustment was borne by the ordinary working people based in the cities and countryside.

The Post 2000 Social Crisis

The economic meltdown that began in the late 1990s but increased in intensity in 2000 has also been associated with the shrinking of industrial activity, through the closure of many manufacturing concerns and downsizing of some, and consequent high unemployment rates (estimated to be in the range of 70 percent of the total labour force). The economic decline in turn affected the social reproduction capacities of both urban and rural households. Formal sector urban employment shrunk from 3.6 million in 2003 to 480 000 in 2008 (*Mail and Guardian, 18 January 2009*) and even those who managed to retain their jobs were in most cases receiving wages that are below the poverty datum line, mostly eroded by the hyperinflationary environment. The social dimensions of the crisis have been the most visible and the impact has been devastating on the majority of the ordinary working people. The social crisis is characterised by the decline or absolute collapse of social service delivery in housing, health and education, and the erosion of household incomes leading to an increase in cases of food insecurity and general vulnerability. The subsections below discuss how a country that was in the late 1980s close to food self-sufficiency, with the best literacy records on the subcontinent and closest to achieving the goal of health for all, had entered into a process of undoing some of the post-independence gains (World Bank, 2006).

Limited Access to Deteriorating Health Services

The user fees at health centres introduced during the height of economic reforms imposed a strain on a number of households and in the current period the capacity of these centres to effectively service communities was severely eroded. The past decade has been characterised by a widespread shortage of essential medical supplies such as drugs, gloves and qualified personnel (Human Rights Watch, 2003). There is evidence that many Zimbabwean women are opting to give birth at home despite the obvious dangers. Parallel to the collapse of social service delivery has been a brain drain of health and education professionals and it is estimated that more than 3.5 million people have left the country since 1997 (*Zimbabwe Independent, 19 December, 2004*). A report by the 2010 Portfolio Committee on Health and Child Welfare, states that the country only has 21 percent of the required medical

³ The Human Development Index measures quality of life using GDP per head, adult literacy rate and life expectancy.

practitioners amid other frightening statistics on the worsening health situation. there have been no significant improvements in health delivery services since the formation of the inclusive government in February last year, with statistics showing that vacancy levels stand at 80 percent for midwives, 62 percent for nursing tutors, 63 percent for medical school lecturers and over 50 percent for pharmacy, radiology and laboratory personnel. The child health status indicators have worsened; infant mortality and under-five mortality rose from 53 percent to 77 per 1 000 live births in 1994 to 67 and 94 per 1 000 live births respectively in 2009 (Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Health 2010). The report further stated that as a result of the serious shortage and disruption of transport and telecommunications, several programmes including patient transfers, malaria indoor residual spraying, drug distribution and supervision of districts and rural health centres has been compromised. HIV prevalence in Zimbabwe continues at an unacceptable high level of 13,7percent for the 15 to 49 year age group with only 180 000 out of an estimated 400 000 infected people on treatment. Recent statistics from the Ministry of Health indicate that Zimbabwe spends only nine dollars in health fees per person per year. The GoZ allocated US\$79 million (excluding salaries and expenditure) in the budget to the Health Ministry. This level of spending is inadequate and the country may not achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

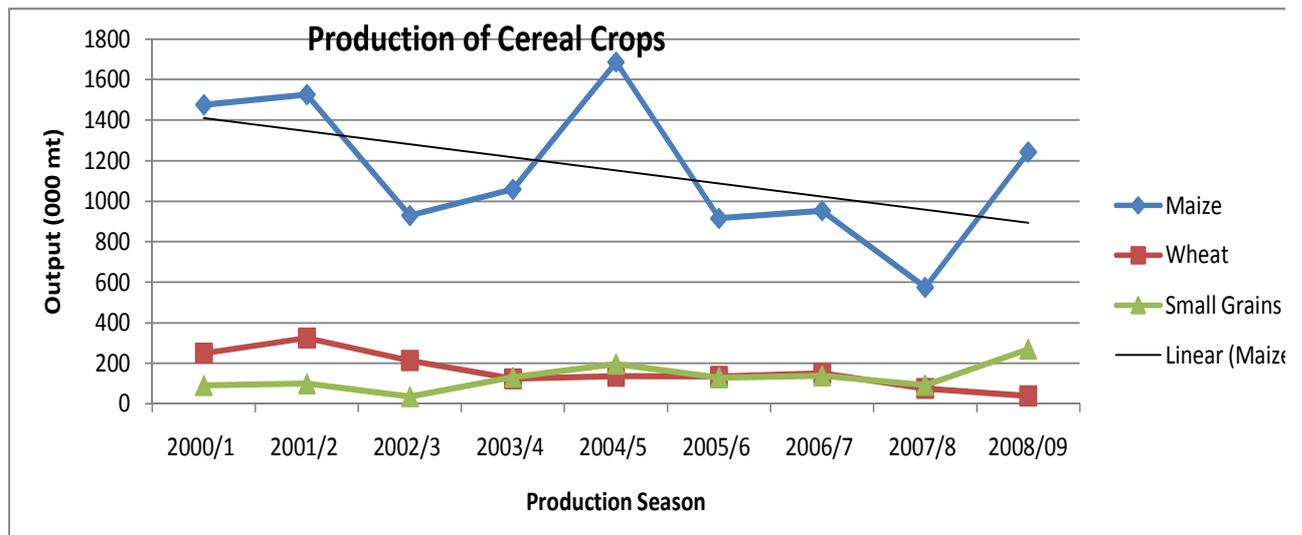
Increasing Poverty and Household Food Insecurity

In 2002 the Central Statistical Office (CSO) estimated that seventy percent of the population was living below the poverty datum line and this figure could only have moved upwards during the intervening period because, firstly, there had been a considerable increase in the price of food and other consumables due to inflation and, secondly, the plight of the poor was exacerbated by a substantial shortfall in maize production. Although Zimbabwe was the second most industrialised economy in the early 1990s, the majority of the livelihoods have always been agrarian based. The decline of manufacturing and other industrial activities in the aftermath of the SAP strategy has contributed to an increase in the number of households dependent on the rural economy. In 2005 the GoZ estimated that an extra 91 000 metric tonnes of maize would be required to meet the deficit. The 2005 Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZIMVAC)⁴ report estimated that 36 percent (2.9 million) of the rural

⁴ The Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZIMVAC) is a sub-committee of Poverty Eradication and Social Services Delivery Development Action Committee (PESSDDAC). This Committee is chaired by the

population would not be able to meet its household food requirements during the 2005/06 season. Up until the end of the 2008/09 agricultural season, where clear signs of recovery have been exhibited, production of major food crops have been on a downward trend. Despite the recovery, the country still faces a national deficit of 610,000 mt in cereal grains (GoZ, 2009). The figure below highlights the food production trends since 2000.

Fig 1-Trends in Production of Cereal Crops



Source: AIAS database

The Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) has led to radical changes in the size, composition and number of participants in agricultural production. Despite the overall increase in the number of farmers (landholders), there has been reduced food production due to declining support to agriculture from the fiscus, late and poor land preparation due to limited tillage capacity, unsustainable financing mechanism for the sector and the generally unfavourable macro-economic environment. As such, the main staple cereals (maize, wheat and sorghum) and the high nutritional value commodities (meat, milk, groundnuts, and soya beans) as well as oil seed derivatives have been in short supply. This, according to Mushita and Mpande (2006) has extended food insecurity beyond normal effects of drought and broadened the base of the food insecure and vulnerable.

The cyclical linkages of support and cooperation that have traditionally existed between the rural and urban households that involved cash remittances from urban to rural and grains

Food and Nutrition Council (FNC), which is part of the Scientific and Industrial Research and Development Centre (SIRDC) and is also composed of the UNWFP, FAO, UNICEF, OCHA, FEWSNET, SC (UK) and the University of Zimbabwe.

from the rural to the urban sector were under severe threat. The economic decline and high unemployment rates potentially contributed towards a shrinking of the level of urban to rural remittances required for the purchase of essential inputs and working capital (Chigumira and Matshe, 2004).

Furthermore the current institutional setup in Zimbabwe does not adequately promote human nutritional issues. For instance, nutrition is regarded as a health issue and not a food issue thereby weakening the link between food production and nutrition⁵. The parliamentary portfolio committee on health reported that the indicators of malnutrition among children are unacceptably high with stunting increases from 29, 4 in 1999 to 35 percent among the under-five-year children. A nutrition survey undertaken by the Central Statistical Office (CSO) in 2007 indicates that the nutritional gains of the early independence era (in terms of quality of diets consumed) have been eroded due to a decline in food security⁶. Pazvakavambwa (2009) notes that the Department of Nutrition in the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare has never gained prominence compared to other departments in the same ministry. It has remained small with limited personnel, budget and outreach capacity. As a result, nutrition promotion activities have remained marginalized and increasingly perceived more as health issues than food security issues.

Thus a major problem for the GoZ has been the failure to transform agriculture away from the colonial orientation, that is, commercial versus peasants. In the first twenty years of independence the post colonial state did not buy into the possibility of the viability of the smallholder sector as compared to the LSCF. Agricultural policy and resource allocation were heavily skewed towards promoting the LSCF sector. Though not explicitly stated in current policy there is an unfair prioritisation of the A2 sector and preoccupation with concepts of modernization of agriculture through expensive technological adaptation such as tractors, ploughs, fertilizers, modern seeds and changes in prevailing farming methods. Traditional technologies, farming systems and tenure arrangements continue to be seen as stumbling blocks to increased agricultural productivity and food security. There is no single comprehensive food security policy. Rather we have a number of policy strategies implemented by different government agencies.

⁵ The custodian of nutrition issues in the country is the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare

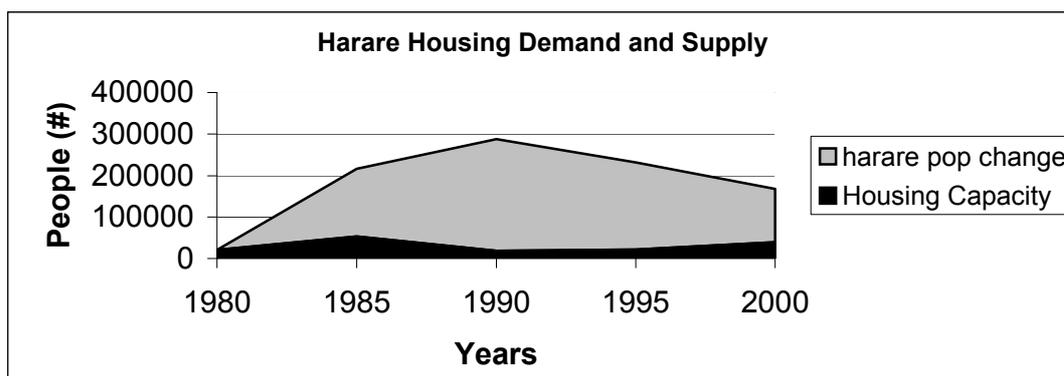
⁶ Malnutrition levels are slightly higher than previous in surveys although they remain below the 10% threshold for an emergency.

Urban Housing Challenges

Whilst rural land redistribution was the most critical redistribution issue confronting the country there has always been a growing concern with the urban land issue (Moyo, et al, 2005). Zimbabwe’s urban population is growing at least twice as fast the rural population. Between 1982 and 1992 the number of people living in the urban areas grew from just under 2 million to 3.2 million and by 2000 the number was at 4.8 million. The urban land question was therefore characterized by overcrowding, “squatting” (Shivji, et al, 1998), or “illegal” land occupations, and planning challenges (Butcher 1986, 1988, 1997), and competing land uses in the peripheries of the town or city boundaries and the attendant environmental challenges. The increase in population of urban dwellers placed considerable strain on the existing infrastructure; it increased the demand for land, housing and related services.

One estimate in 1995 suggested that there were over 110 000 people living in squatter settlements in the greater Harare region. The main settlements were identified in Dzivaresekwa, Hatcliffe, Porta and Churu farms, Korstein in Seke and Epworth. By 1998 Bulawayo had approximately 8 000 people living in camps at Killarney, Cowdray Park, Rangemore and other sites in Umguza district. Even small towns like Kariba had a growing squatter situation. The cramped conditions in which people were forced to live in led to a rapid rise in disease prevalence in these areas. According to Ministry of Health in Mbare T.B cases had risen to a density of 1,000 per 100 000 compared to a national average of 360 per 100 000.

Fig 2- Harare Housing Demand and Supply

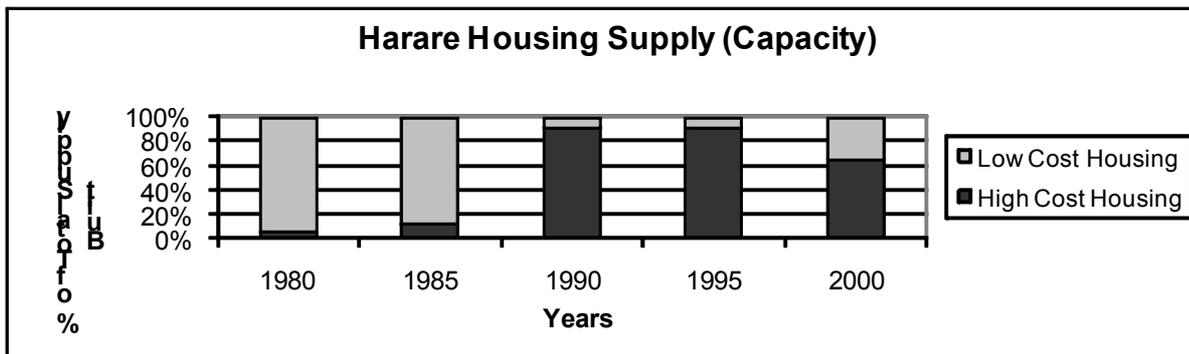


Source: AIAS Database (2005)

During the first decade of independence the GoZ working in partnership with international development agencies such as the World Bank and USAID built a number of low cost houses

for the working class. Two of the most significant programmes were The Urban Sector and Regional Development Project (Loan 3079-ZIM) also called Urban II run by the World Bank and the Private Sector Housing Programme (PSHP) run by USAID. There was a policy change in the aftermath of ESAP, rather than continue building full houses for the low income earners it was felt prudent to concentrate more on providing sites and services whilst other players comprising the beneficiaries and building brigades built the houses. Later in the mid-eighties, the concept of allowing cooperatives to develop housing for their members was also introduced. The introduction of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) had the effect of further reducing government's role in housing provision. Whilst demand for houses had always outstripped supply, the gap widened further as less and less stands were made available. Overall government spending on approved housing plans decreased heavily even as the demand grew leading to the dependence and creation of illegal structures. The figures below illustrate the declining supply of low cost housing in the major cities of Zimbabwe.

Fig-3 Housing Supply in Harare Since 1980

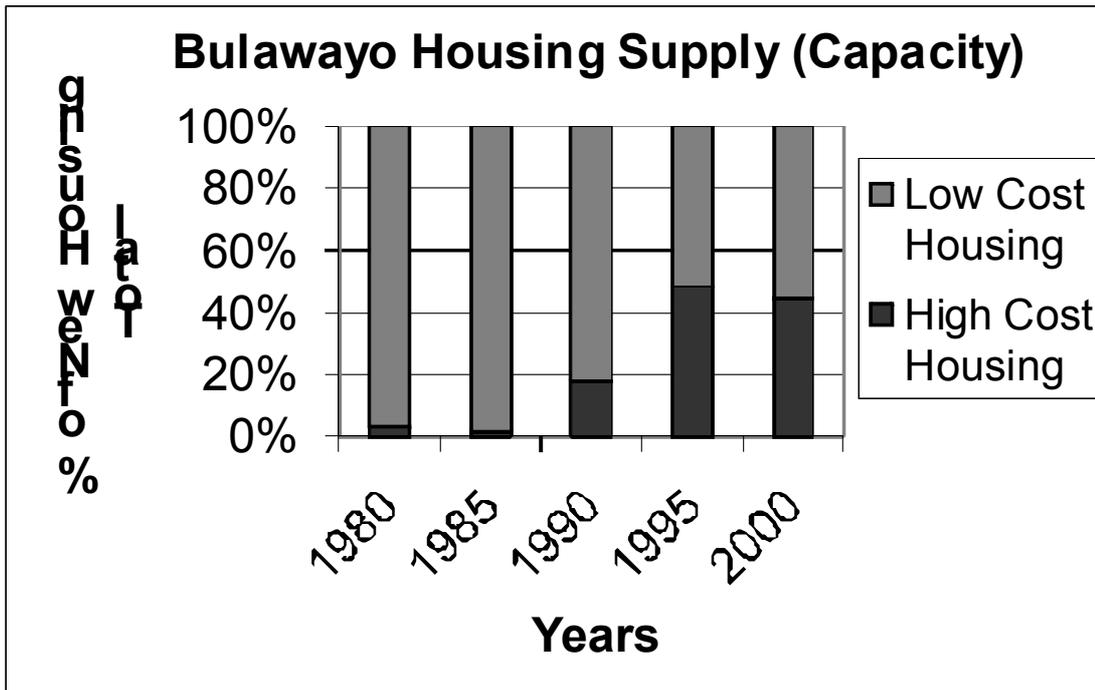


Low cost housing is a flat not costing more than \$100,000 2000 Z\$, or a separate house costing more than \$150,000 (2000Z\$)

High cost housing is all other housing

As a percent of all new housing built between the periods

Fig-4 Housing Supply in Bulawayo 1980-200



Low Cost Housing is a flat not costing more than \$100,000 2000 Zim Dollars, a semi-detached or separate house not costing more than \$150,000 (Z\$2000)

High Cost Housing is all other housing

As a percent of all new housing built between the periods

Furthermore Zimbabwe's building societies were hesitant to lend to formerly off-limit low-income households, when the societies themselves were reeling from the collapse of the segregated housing provision system, which had a greater portion of their mortgages allocated to high-income social groups. The perilous state of private housing finance in Zimbabwe is evident in the financial statements of the largest mortgage financier, the Central Africa Building Society (CABS). Of CABS' total assets in 2001, mortgage advances accounted for just 20 per cent, one-fifth of which were for low-income borrowers.

The failure to provide houses led to self-provisioning of residential sites with infrastructural 'inefficiencies' and deficiencies and problems of insecurity (physical and health), arising

from overloading, unserviceability and high cost service provision demands. The process of self provisioning increased in intensity during the period of rural land occupation; the homeless public, led by veterans of Zimbabwe's war of liberation, occupied farms on the urban fringes of most urban centres as part of the fast-track land reform programme (FTLRP) in 2000. In 2005 the GoZ implemented Operation Restore Order/Murambatsvina which entailed the demolition of illegal structures countrywide. The immediate outcome of the operation was the displacement of thousands from their dwellings and also the closure of many commercial premises leading to the erosion of incomes negatively impacting upon the livelihoods of small-scale informal traders. The operation also led to the deprivation from other essential services such as the displacement of children from schools and disruption of health delivery services especially for those receiving HIV/AIDS treatment. The operation created an unnecessary strain on the displaced and the welfarist focused NGOs, given the background of already threatened urban livelihoods. The GNU is yet to develop a coherent strategy of delivery of low cost houses for the more than 1million households on councils' waiting list. The GoZ in 2009 approved a housing project promoted by a consortium of Russian businessmen but the scheme will most likely benefit the middle income groups. Recently the GoZ released approximately 1000 low cost stands in the Ruwa area specifically earmarked for civil servants. These developments are not likely to have a huge impact on the housing situation prevailing in the country.

Deteriorating Standards of Education

Zimbabwe is a signatory to the Dakar Declaration which among other things commits African countries to the goal of achieving education for all by the year 2015. At independence the GoZ aggressively pursued an education for all policy. Education, like health delivery, was mostly financed from government income supplemented by large amounts of assistance from donor governments. Donor funds and loans were used for school and classroom construction to teacher training to curriculum development to administration. Most of this assistance was channelled through government. School fees, where they existed, were minimal and affordable for most, especially for primary school. Teacher training colleges were increased, to an extent that each province had at least two training colleges. Primary and secondary school teachers were part of the burgeoning middle class in the late 1980s and had higher salaries than their counterparts in the sub-region. By the late 80's,

however, the amounts that government was channelling to schools for operating costs was decreasing.

However these gains were not necessarily inclusive of the whole population. The GoZ did not aggressively build schools in the former large scale commercial farms (LSCF). A study carried out by the FCTZ shows that only 12.9 percent of children under the age of six were benefitting from early childhood education and care programmes (Ibid). The farm schools that had been established prior to resettlement were largely not registered with government and often provided sub-standard schools (Human Rights Watch 2003:18) and the average distance to the nearest primary school was 14.3 km (FCTZ, 2003). A study by UNICEF found out that most of the schools lack basic water and sanitation, health facilities and equipment like desks, chairs and books (UNICEF, 2004). Furthermore the study found that 33% of the teachers were untrained compared to a national average of only 8%. The increase of the school going population in the former LSCF has contributed towards the stretching of this situation and there has not been any notable improvement, given government's preoccupation in the past 8 years with improving on-farm productivity, and also the state of the economy.

The economic meltdown (discussed above) led to high prices of consumer good amidst low wages which eventually put the education sector under severe stress more so in a context where the GoZ was incapable of revising the salaries of teachers upwards in tandem with inflation pressures. There has been an increased exodus of trained teachers into the sub-region. In 2009 South Africa openly recruited Mathematics and Science teachers from Zimbabwe in violation of the SADC protocol which seeks to limit the movement of professionals within the sub-region.

The issues affecting the 8 state universities are aptly summarised by the CARA/IOM (2010), Zimbabwe Higher Education Initiative's Report on Findings from consultations held at the beginning of this year in Zimbabwe, South Africa and the United Kingdom. The report identified the following factors as the main constraints to the recovery of tertiary education in Zimbabwe:

- The heightened fees for both tuition and accommodation, to be paid in US Dollars. Following the new fees and currency regime, the 2009 first school term and academic year saw huge dropouts and students forced to defer. Tuition fees ranged from

between US\$400 to US\$1,200 per semester while the average salary in Zimbabwe is set at US\$100 per month. During June 2010, hundreds of students were prohibited from sitting exams after failing to pay tuition fees.

- Gross underfunding of institutions by the government since the 1990s. Institutions were receiving funds from research, research partnerships with businesses, organisations and the donor community, but such support has dried up. This lack of funding has severely affected the quality of education: there are insufficient funds to buy up-to date teaching and learning materials, equipment and resources, to update technology and curricula.
- The majority of infrastructure, facilities and equipment are dilapidated, and the limited resources have pushed any repairs or maintenance down in the priority list⁶.
- Zimbabwe's higher education sector has been hard hit by the "brain drain" of the past decade. The exodus of highly skilled and experienced professionals left Zimbabwe's Universities, Colleges and schools facing severe shortages in manpower and resources

In addition to the above has been the impact of sanctions, for instance the Financial Gazette (3 December 2010) reported that a 15 million Euro tranche recently approved by the Germany government to finance the recovery of Zimbabwe's education sector has been stuck in Berlin since October after a key Germany ally rejected the release of the money though the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The article alleges that the UNICEF funders are divided over Zimbabwe's diplomatic relations with the European Union.

Mapping Innovations for Social Development

The discussion above has shown that Zimbabwe faces a real and significant crisis of social development whose roots is multifaceted but can be traced to the process of decolonization, the economic liberalization programme and economic mismanagement on the part of government. Another important realization is the fact that the GNU or election into power of a new political party will not necessarily resolve these issues overnight but that should not be a permit for government to abdicate responsibility in resolving the identified issues. In this section the paper will attempt to identify some of the cross-cutting measures/models that can be adopted in order to improve prospects for enhanced social reproduction and will then follow up by recommending measures for each specific social sector.

Forging Progressive Social Development Partnerships

NGO and the State

It is important to note at this juncture that most of the celebrated cases of social delivery in the first decade of independence were achieved in a context of partnership between the government and ‘socially thick’ local and international NGOs that were engaged in community development programmes that cut across health, education and income generating projects. NGOs and church related organisations were at the forefront of rolling out primary health care and education in rural areas. During that period NGOs became involved in a fluctuating combination of drought relief and development work, notably in the communal and resettlement areas (Helliker, 2008:241). There was very limited overt advocacy with the intent to influence state policy.

However during the mid to late 1990s (emergence of the governance discourse) relations between the GoZ, NGOs and donors became tenuous and were characterised by mistrust. NGOs began to complain about the centralist thrust of state policy (or state centered development) and about the inaccessibility of policy decisions (Kerkhoven, 1992:22, Helliker 2008).

The period from the late 1990s also saw a shift within the donor community towards human rights and these were often restrictively defined to emphasise first generation rights – the political and civil rights - and tended in most cases to exclude second and third order social and economic rights. The manner in which the land reform programme was implemented contributed towards a total break-down of relations. A number of NGOs emerged within the policy advocacy landscape in the late 1990s and shifted the discourse towards political and civil rights without a complementary discourse on social and economic rights (Masunungure 2008:64) under the assumption that restoration of ‘good governance’ will lead to socio-economic development. In the face of a crisis of livelihood emerging from ESAP and with autonomous opposition to the ruling party emerging in the early 1990s, NGOs were ‘increasingly demanding involvement’ in the policy formulation process that went beyond provincial level (Sibanda 1994:3). Eventually civil society’s struggle had taken the form of the Polish and Latin America model of civil society as ‘society against the state’ and capital was no longer the enemy (Masunungure, 2008:61). Since the late 1990s NGOs and other agents of development such as churches have become ‘socially thin’ and disengaged in community development focused programmes except for those engaged in relief aid.

There is a remnant of organisations however that is still focused on community development but these are a minority not only in numbers but even in the actual resources devoted to them. The current environment offers opportunities for both meaningful engagement and also the danger of cooptation to the state agenda-thus the need for a comprehensive caucusing on how civil society actors (within Zimbabwe and outside) should engage the state.

Currently poverty reduction approaches are donor driven and dependent and there is a need to re-inculcate values of self and community agency. The organisations that emerged in the period soon after independence such as ORAP with its Vuk'uzenzele (rise and do) philosophy are a close approximation of what rural and even urban Zimbabwe needs in the current struggle against poverty. Existing urban based intermediary NGOs (local and international) have literally re-organised themselves according to the logic of donor capital and in the process potentially misdirect their activities. One observer argued that such NGOs 'think for their intended beneficiaries' and their approaches created a 'dependence syndrome' rather than economic self reliance (Helliker, 2008:241). Initiatives led by the DFZ need to be alert to these contradictions within NGOs and should attempt to ensure that direct beneficiaries of programmes/projects are engaged from the beginning.

However it is also important to acknowledge the fact that most of the policy and development expertise is now resident within civil society organisations (local and international) given the fact that the sector was at one time the most lucrative to work for. Government needs to be alerted to this reality and there is need to find ways in which it can tap into this expertise from a policy/development strategy formulation and implementation perspective. The current consultations between government and civil society are 'token' in form. Best practice from elsewhere (Ghana, Tanzania and Malawi) has shown how proactive partnerships between government and civil society can improve policy formulation and implementation. However the starting point should focus on establishing the principles of engagement amongst the partners. Some of the salient principles of a successful engagement include the following:

- multi-stakeholder approach and social inclusion
- Respect and dignity of parties- also respect different collective identities.
- Opening of space- dialogue, especially if structured, should create safe space, for open, interactive, creative talking aimed and active listening aimed at trust and confidence re-building.

- Complex societal challenges should be addressed since one particular sector of CSO's on its own may not be able to tackle complex issues.

Various procedures are critical for effective dialogue. These include:

- Evidence based position papers
- Information sharing among the parties;
- Credible, highly participatory consultations- these can be informal and formal (institutionalized or not) and can have a legal framework;
- Round table dialogues to generate ideas and questions for popular consultations on contentious issues.
- Joint problem solving-consensus building on key national issues.

Mobilising Private Sector Participation

Experiences from elsewhere (India, Bangladesh and Indonesia) have shown that social services such as dental and optical care, financing for agricultural activities can be rolled out by for-profit organisations. There is emerging a form of thinking within Development and Business studies that rather than look at the rural and urban poor as candidates for aid (charity) but rather view them as a market segment with capacity to consume and produce. Scholars such as Prahalad (2005), using case studies of companies operating within the bottom of the pyramid markets in India, Mexico and Brazil, have shown that what has historically been regarded as an unviable market segment is actually a very lucrative one but needs careful understanding in terms of its consumption and purchasing patterns.

Business practice in Zimbabwe is yet to embrace this new thinking (Chikweche, 2009). The rural sector remains largely neglected by the private sector and new companies within the urban areas are focused on the shrinking or non-existent middle class. Private sector companies can profitably contribute to social development in Zimbabwe by designing low cost products in (i) housing-materials, innovative financing and ordering of goods, (ii) household food security-through the establishment of low cost agro-dealer networks and value addition centers and (iii) health-through low cost medical aid schemes for informal traders and rural producers (annual payments). There are numerous possibilities for private sector organisations in the education sector and they include:

- Adoption of a school/college/university (based on alumni round tables)

- Contributing towards a skills retention fund
- Contributing towards the permanent/temporary repatriation of skills (including health personnel)

Government's 2010 mid-term fiscal review identifies e-learning as a crucial aspect of today's education curriculum. However the GoZ does not have sufficient capacity to mobilise sufficient resources for such a noble venture. The starting point should be in improving bandwidth capacity; currently there is very limited connectivity and this has contributed towards very expensive internet access. For e-learning to succeed diaspora based and local companies need to take an active role in improving bandwidth capacity and also in introducing new low cost technologies.

Credible Baseline Research on Social Development

Although there are numerous reports, news paper op-eds and consultancy documents which offer opinions on the state of social service delivery in the country most of them lack empirical data and end up being very anecdotal. The recommendations that arise from such analyses tend to be equally inadequate. This paper has attempted in a hastily fashion to map the different challenges within each sub-sector but there is still need for comprehensive research on the actual (quantitative) issues, state and non-state based responses to the challenges confronting the social sector, analysis of the adequacy of the responses. There are areas however where there is reliable data such as the food security sub-sector; the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZIMVAC) a sub-committee of Poverty Eradication and Social Services Delivery Development Action Committee (PESSDDAC). This Committee is chaired by the Food and Nutrition Council (FNC), which is part of the Scientific and Industrial Research and Development Centre (SIRDC) and is also composed of the UNWFP, FAO, UNICEF, OCHA, FEWSNET, SC (UK) and the University of Zimbabwe. It has produced field based analyses in the past years. However there is need to synthesise this data in order to determine the trends of food production over a long period and also to determine the necessary policy based interventions. The DFZ does not necessarily need to carry out research but can work in partnership with sector based expertise within and outside Zimbabwe. The initial task in this regard will be to identify specific organisations (including universities) with adequate capacity to carry out research.

Sector Based Recommendations

Improving Health Delivery

The following initiatives may potentially contribute towards improved health service delivery

- Establish a campaign for the return of health professionals
- Lobby nations that employ Zimbabwean health professionals to set aside a fund for the training of health professionals in Zimbabwe
- Mobilise for donations of drugs and other supplies through existing DFZ based networks
- Lobby the GoZ's Ministry of Health for flexi-contracts that allow specialized skills to work temporarily in Zimbabwe
- Mobilise private sector to partner with Ministry of Health in paying for medical professionals willing to work in Zimbabwe

Household Food Security

Zimbabwe's is predominantly an agrarian society (65% is based in the rural areas) and food security is based on primary production on the land. The recent fast track land reform programme transformed the agrarian landscape in a significant way. Current debates dominating discourses in the food and agriculture sector dwell on the causes and remedies of such food insecurity. Quite a number of questions can be asked which the new Inclusive Government and stakeholders in the food and agricultural sector should strive to find solutions to. These include investigating how the new agrarian landscape can improve food production, the role of the state in agriculture and how the markets can play a role in agriculture. Another and yet very critical question is whether there is enough confidence within both government and non-state actors in the ability of smallholders (who now dominate agriculture) to generate alternative trajectories of economic development (and food security) and accumulation from below (Cousins, 2010). Zimbabwe has had two agricultural revolutions to date one in the late 1950s associated with the boom of tobacco which led to the development of industry and another one in the early 1980s (aka the maize miracle) led by smallholders within the communal areas-is it possible to have another one on the basis of the transformed agrarian landscape?

There has been much heated debate on the relationship between land reform and livelihoods (see for instance, Moyo et al, 2008, Scoones et al 2010, Murisa, 2009 for a detailed

discussion on this) but the focus of this paper is to define strategies of enhancing food security in Zimbabwe. Beyond the already mentioned specific interventions discussed under private sector engagement this paper recommends the following:

- Develop a coherent food security policy in partnership with the GoZ. The proposed policy should ensure that the ‘right to food’ is embedded within the laws of Zimbabwe and also ensure accountability of the state to anti-famine (hunger) social contract
- Actively participate in the forthcoming land audit to determine who got land under fast track but also ensure that the audit is broadened to study the socio-economic categories of people who got land and the specific challenges that they face
- Encourage private sector investment in alternative micro-financing arrangements that take cognizance of rural production constraints
- Increased investment in the marketing of Zimbabwe’s organic produce in export markets

Housing

The housing challenge is not necessarily due to the fact that low income earners cannot pay but rather it is a mindset issue which for long has engaged with them from a welfarist perspective. The welfare model although noble tends to eventually collapse and creates an entitlement mentality especially in case where is no adequate and sustainable supply of funds. The current bottlenecks to low cost housing supply derive from a rigid mindset on the part of government and local councils that they are the only ones capable of delivering low cost housing. Experiences elsewhere have shown that a regulated private sector (mostly in partnership with the local councils) can deliver low cost housing at a faster and a more efficient pace than governments. Currently housing investments are focused on servicing the upper middle class and the elites given the cash based transactions prevailing in Zimbabwe.

The RBZ led Home-Link was potentially one of the credible solutions to the housing problems in Zimbabwe but it did not receive adequate support for a variety of reasons. There is need to establish a similar mechanism/fund for low cost housing. However this will need to be led by a purely private sector company (Building Society) that will then mobilise diaspora investment through the disposal of shares.

There is also a need to identify ways to tap into the organic non-state based forms of organisation around housing supply. A study by Mubvumbi and Kamete 1999, found that there were a total of 154 housing cooperatives in the 10 major urban centers in Zimbabwe. Of these 123 were in Harare, 4 in Bulawayo, and Mutare and 3 in Gweru. By 1999 housing cooperatives had constructed 1.6% of the total housing supply in the major urban centers of Zimbabwe. There is potential for the resuscitation of these cooperatives to work in partnership with international NGOs such as Habitat International in the supply low cost housing.

Conclusion

The discussion above is not necessarily exhaustive but it potentially provides scope for debate on what needs to be done and how. The current relatively incoherent economic policy framework needs to be dramatically adjusted to address more effectively the key social problems affecting Zimbabwe. The experience since the late 1990s has been that a big bang neo-liberal economic structural adjustment and liberalization framework cannot be a viable alternative framework. It is in this context that there is need for rethinking of the ideology underpinning the policies being implemented. It is also important to recognise that even though economic mismanagement within government exists, Zimbabwe like many other African countries remains a post-colonial state unfairly inserted within global capitalism. Recently the Minister of Finance announced that the government had for the first time in years achieved a budget surplus but forgot to mention that this was on the back of insufficient allocations to all social sectors and depressed wages within the civil service-but this was good news to the IMF and the World Bank. Policies (including budgets) remain focused on satisfying donor conditions. A new domestic consensus deal over a pragmatic and transitional macro-economic policy framework is required. This should entail a 'balanced' re-engagement with the international financial community, regional institutions (within SADC) and mobilisation of Zimbabwe's diaspora. The objectives, strategies and programme elements of this economic and social policy framework can only be elaborated on the basis of substantial investments in appropriate domestic policy expertise, balanced international advice and other resources required for a thorough-going consultative process.

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