ZIMBABWE **Capital : Harare**

Area :390 760 sqkm
Population : 13 010 000 inhabts
Density : 33,3ctzns/km2
Average growth: 0,7%

FOCUS

In 1980, immediately after Independence, the government declared its intention to promote decentralization, and supported this by a series of institutional innovations. African Councils were abolished and 55 District Councils established in their place. The dualistic nature of local government in rural areas continued until 1995 when District Councils and Rural Councils were amalgamated to form 58 Rural District Councils. The strongest commitment to decentralization by the government after the 1985 Act was the promulgation of the 1988 Rural District Act. However, a four-year delay in its implementation reflected the difficulties foreseen in making it operational. Limited attention had been paid to controversial issues like the role of the chief executive vis-à-vis that of the District Administrators (DAs); resource mobilization and utilization in the newly formed councils; and voting by farm workers in council elections.

GENERAL INDICATORS

Human Development	HDI	0,491	
	Total GDP (millions $US)	27,085	
	GDP/per capita (units of $ US)	2 309	
	Annual Growth	- 4,08	
	Life Expectancy	37,2	
	Literacy (%)	Men	93,8
		Women	86,3
	Access Internet/1000 ctzn)	42,98	
Decentralization	Communalized Population		
	Average Communal area		
	Urban Population	34,9	
	Number and Tiers of local governments	Provinces	10
		Urban Town and City Council	40
		Local Municipality(Cat. B)	72

I- The decentralisation policy

Evaluation:

The Local governance system is under development as consistent legislation is awaited. The administrative and territorial arrangements are consistent with the objective of decentralisation.

Indicators:

1.1. *Establishment of the LG system :* Ÿ
1.2. *Consistency of the legal framework:* Ÿ
1.3. *Consistency of administrative arrangements:* Ÿ

The establishment of the local government system

With law, Zimbabwe is constantly looking for ways of enhancing and developing the system. Cabinet approved the Local Authorities Revitalisation Policy in 2005. This policy sets out the framework for improving local authorities and enabling them to provide the services expected of them.

Legal framework for decentralisation

- The District Councils Act 1980 (amended in 1981 and 1982)
- The Chiefs and Headmen Act No 29 of 1982 amended
- The Prime Minister's Directive on Decentralization (1984 & 1985),
- The Provincial Councils and Administration Act of 1985.
- The Rural District Councils Act 1988

The Administrative Organisation

Zimbabwe has ten administrative provinces; Bulawayo Metropolitan, Harare Metropolitan, Manicaland, Mashonaland Central, East and West, Masvingo, Matebeleland North and South and Midlands. It has also local government wich current structures are:

Urban councils

There are twenty-eight Urban Councils which have been established throughout the country as provided for in the Urban Councils Act [Chapter 29:15]. While these are established under the same Act, the urban councils have been accorded different status.

Local Boards

The lowest on the hierarchy of urban councils are local boards established in settlements that have very small populations but have a potential to grow into big urban centres. Local Boards are also established where a centre has peculiar circumstances and where they would require Government assistance to sustain themselves There are four such local boards established at Hwange, Ruwa, Epworth and Chirundu.

Town Councils

The second on the hierarchy are town councils which are 8 in number namely Karoi, Norton, Shurugwi, Zvishavane, Rusape , Chipinge, Plumtree and Chiredzi. These are centres that have grown from service centres in the rural areas to a size sufficient for them to stand alone.

Municipal Councils

There are ten municipal councils which occupy the third position in the hierarchy of local authorities. These include, Bindura, Chegutu, Chinhoyi, Chitungwiza, Gwanda, Kariba, Marauders, Masvingo, Redcliff and Victoria Falls.

City Councils

The councils with the highest status in the country are the city councils established in Harare, Bulawayo, Gerri, Mutare, Kwekwe and Kadoma

Table 1: Administrative and territorial organisation

Territorial Division		Local Govt	Constituency	Executive Organ
Name.	No			
Provinces	10	No	yes	Provincial governor
Urban council	28	yes	No	
Municipal council	10	yes	No	

(Cat. B)				
Town council	06	yes	No	
City council	06	yes	No	
Local boards	04	yes	No	
Rural district council	58	yes	No	Chief executive officer

II- The implementation strategy

Evaluation:

There is no visible strategy explicitly geared towards achieving decentralisation. Little responsibilities have been transferred. The spatial planning policy is monopolised by central government. Support from central government is very insufficient to produce impact.

Indicators:

2.1. Implementation planning :

2.2. Transfer of competencies and sector-based policies:

2.3. Structuring of decentralization and spatial planning:

2.4. Technical support and M&E of the process:

The decentralisation implementation planning

1984- Prime Minister's directive established coordinating structures at provincial, district, ward and village levels – development committees

1985 **-** Provincial Councils Act established provincial councils

1988 - Rural District Councils Act

The main objective of the national decentralisation policy is to effect the legislated transfer of functions from central government to local authorities and in the process redefine the role of central government in the provision and administration of services and infrastructure at provincial, local authority and community level. The policy is administered by the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing. Six pillars of decentralisation were developed in this new thrust.

i) Re-alignment of the centre – changing the role of the centre away from implementation to facilitator through provision of policy direction and capacity building.

ii) Empowerment of local governments – as the appropriate level to plan and deliver services in consultation with citizens and other sectors. Challenge is in developing a comprehensive and dynamic institutional framework

iii) Empowerment of whole communities – to participate in their own development including the marginalized and poorer groups - to ensure planning and decision-making processes that are inclusive and avoid elite capture.

iv) Capacity building – build institutional capacities for service delivery and responsiveness to demands from communities.

v) Enhance Accountability and Transparency – provide downward accountability to users of primary services.

vi) National direction and Coordination – through ensuring that national priority issues are addressed in a correct political context, e.g. land reform, poverty and HIV/AID.

Institutions in charge of technical support and monitoring

The ministry of local government, public works and urban development is the institution in charge of technical support and monitoring. The role of the Government is one of facilitation. The facilitation is undertaken in a number of ways:

a. Policy and Legislation Guidelines - outlines the framework for the delivery of housing.
b. The provision of land for urban development
c. The National Housing Fund

Government's housing delivery strategy is clearly spelt out in the National Housing Delivery Programme.

Transfer of competencies and sector based policies

Little power has actually been decentralised, leading to confusion at local level. Attempts at decentralisation in Zimbabwe display a common characteristic: a gap between rhetoric and reality. The reluctance of national institutions to give up power means that little has been devolved. Where it has, and where funds have been allocated to support the process, efforts have been piecemeal. Most citizens have yet to benefit from improved public services and do not feel motivated to participate in local government.

Decentralisation and spatial planning

Massive demolitions of informal housing and informal sector sites, including markets and production areas, were carried out at the direction of the government of Zimbabwe in all urban areas of the country under the code names “Operation Murambatsvina” (“throw out the trash”) and “Operation Restore Order”. It is estimated that close to a million people were seriously affected with many rendered destitute overnight. They were left without shelter and sources of income. The capital city of Harare, perceived by many to have been the real target of this operation, was hardest hit. Thousands of those displaced are presently in a holding camp at Caledonia Farm; some are in overcrowded prisons; others have shifted to rural areas; while still many others are staying out in the open near rivers or streams. A fortunate few have found shelter with friends and relatives or have been squeezed into institutional housing. It is estimated that over 700 000 people have lost their homes and sources of livelihood as a result of the operation. Most affected are women and girls, including households with orphans, chronically ill persons, female-headed households, and elderly headed households.

The combination of economic decline, rapid urbanization, and poverty growth was also evident in the housing sector. Serious shortfalls in housing delivery were recognised by the National Housing Delivery Policy of 2000 which acknowledged a cumulative backlog of over 1 million housing units. It further recognised the need to adopt a more flexible approach to housing delivery and the lack of security of tenure as a causal factor of the housing crisis in Zimbabwe.

A subsequent policy document – the National Housing Programme of 2003 further acknowledged the inability of Government to provide decent and affordable housing. It noted that Government plans for housing fell far short of the annual target of 162,000 units between 1985 and 2000 with actual production ranging between 15,000 and 20,000 units per annum. It further noted that the formal sector housing production rate was decreasing and that by 2002 only 5,500 plots were serviced in eight major urban areas compared to an estimated annual demand of 250,000 units. Government reiterated the need for a broader response, including incremental housing production as a means of responding to demand which was not foreseen in the law.

The Government did not, however, reform the colonial-era Regional Town and Country Planning Act or the Housing Standard Act.

III- The local government structures and management

Evaluation :

Local organs are functioning under a very strong control from the central government. The quality of local staff is a matter of great concern.

Indicators:

3.1. Functioning of the political organs :

3.2. Quality of the technical organs:

3.3. The level of the State control:

The political and the technical organs organs Local Boards and Town Councils employ Town Secretaries to head their administrations while the Municipal and City Councils' are headed by Town Clerks. Different heads of departments deputise the head of administration. The executive are responsible for the implementation of Council decisions and for the day to day running of Council affairs.

While cities and municipalities are larger and have more complex systems of management with full time Executive Mayors and Town Clerks, Town Councils are smaller with part time Chairpersons and Town Secretaries to manage them. Furthermore, while cities and municipalities are responsible for the administration of all – except 10% - of the (state) land within their area of jurisdiction, the State continues to administer land in Town Councils and Local Boards. This has tended to impact on a Council's potential to raise revenue.

The District Public Works Officer is responsible for carrying out the operations of the Department of Public Works at District level.