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Preface

This research paper is a gender analysis of the local government sector's legislation, policies and budgets for four(4) Councils (Bulawayo, Zvishavane, Shurugwi Town, Tongogara RDC).

These are the for districts in which the Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network (ZWRCN) is currently implementing a project that focuses on gender responsive public service delivery. The local government in Zimbabwe and many other countries is responsible for the delivery of important basic services including water, electricity and sanitation. This makes the local government space an important avenue for civil society's advocacy work to improve the quality and quantity of service delivery to citizens. The paper seek to unveil the level at which the 4 districts mentioned above are practising gender responsive service delivery by analysing their legislation, policy frameworks as well as their local budgets.

ZWRCN embarked on the service delivery project to help strengthen accountability mechanisms and tools used by local authorities to enable gender responsive service delivery. In addition, the project seeks to increase participation, voice and power of women and their communities, to influence service delivery decisions and priorities. It is crucial to note that a growing number of civil society organizations are engaging in this space, with an increasing need to be able to understand and engage with local government budgets.

Using this report, individuals and civil society organisations can easily advocate for issue specific budgets for improved service delivery. Reading, understanding and analysing local government budgets in particular, can be challenging given that not all local authorities are prepared to share financial information with citizens.

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1.0 Introduction

This paper is a gender analysis of the local government sector's legislation, policies and budgets for four (4) Councils (Bulawayo, Zvishavane, Shurugwi Town, Tongogara RDC). The paper was commissioned by the Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network (ZWRCN) an organization that works to mainstream gender into local and national policies, laws and organizational practices under its Gender, Economic Policy and Public Finance (GEPPF) Programme. The specific project under which the paper falls is "Promoting Gender Responsive Local Governance to Deliver on Citizen's Social Rights". Under the project, ZWRCN focuses on institutionalization of gender responsive budgeting in local authorities. The work also seeks to strengthen accountability mechanisms and tools used by local authorities to enable gender responsive service delivery.

Supported Councils have progressively improved their planning and budgeting systems to prioritize community needs particularly those of women, other marginalized and socially excluded groups like young people, orphans, the disabled and chronically ill. At the same time accountability mechanisms and tools have been developed and implemented to amplify women and community voice in service delivery decision-making and implementation. ZWRCN has also made contributions to the capacities of policy makers (Councillors and Parliamentarians) ensuring their oversight role is gender-based and evidence-driven. The specific objectives of the gender analysis included:

- i. Analyzing the local government legislative framework, by-laws and policies;
- ii. Reviewing relevant documents and guidelines used in the budgetary process;
- iii. Conducting a gender analysis of the 2019 budgets for Bulawayo, Zvishavane, Shurugwi Town and Tongogara RDC
- iv. Providing ZWRCN with a relevant basis for identification and selection of key budget priorities and advocacy issues (for the 2020 budget cycle); and
- v. Creating an accurate pool of analyses (at ZWRCN) to track levels of gender sensitivity over the years¹.

Pursuant to the above objectives the paper discusses how the local government sector has institutionalized gender responsiveness through policies, budgets and other organizational practices. This is based on a critical analysis of the national local government policy and legislative framework as well as the experiences of the four study Councils. At Council level data were collected from Councilors and the Executive. This was complemented by an analysis of material gathered from the Ministry responsible for local government. Data for this analysis were gathered using i) desk review, and ii) analysis of council budget statements.

1.1 The Local Government Sector & System in Zimbabwe

The sector includes a Ministry responsible for local government, a parliamentary portfolio committee for local government, a provincial and metropolitan tier, urban and rural local

¹ Terms of Reference

authorities. The Ministry responsible for local government has officials at provincial and local level while 10 Ministers of State responsible for Provincial Affairs (Provincial Governors until the 2013 Constitution) also make up a visible cog at the provincial and metropolitan tier. Zimbabwe currently has 92 legally established Councils (32 urban and 60 rural). This number has been growing as rural local authorities are subdivided and planned urban settlements graduate along the seven-step hierarchy from i) business centre, ii) rural service centre, iii) district service centre, iv) Local Board Area, v) Town, vi) Municipality to vii) City.

Operationally, local government is a system, which includes traditional leadership structures, civil society and private sector organizations, knowledge institutions, relevant practitioner associations, allied public sector organizations including parastatals and Ministries responsible for sectors like agriculture, small to medium sized enterprises, women and youth affairs, water and the environment, infrastructure and energy. In this operational construction local government (or governance) becomes more complex as the performance of legislated functions and powers gets mediated by a myriad of direct and indirect actors.

The local government sector primarily exists to plan and manage developmental affairs of the areas for which they are established. This explains why Councils, as the forms of government closest to citizens are tasked with the delivery of basic services. The critical services they deliver include 'health and education, energy, water and sanitation, transport and communication, sporting and recreational facilities, information and registration (e.g. of births and deaths, land, vehicles...), housing, public safety and human security' (Chatiza 2012:42). Basic services 'support productive and reproductive societal activities...contribute to human dignity, quality of life and sustainable livelihoods... [are] material and non-material' (Ibid: 42). This explains why local government authorities are critical to public sector delivery on human rights to citizens. In essence, local authorities facilitate the realization of human rights at the local level directly and in concert with national government, the private sector and civil society organizations. Actual delivery is through a variety of institutional models that involve citizen input (direct and indirect), state and non-state agencies using equally diverse strategies depending on the policy, legislative and organizational arrangements in different jurisdictions. Zimbabwe's local government has had a longstanding tradition of service delivery that is unfortunately under stress (DEGI 2013).

Until the 2013 Constitution local government authorities were established in terms of Acts of Parliament (the Urban Councils Act, 29:15 and Rural District Councils Act, 29:13) and their operations equally regulated by sector and allied legislation. Other relevant sector legislation include the Regional, Town and Country Planning Act, Traditional Leaders Act, Communal Lands Act, Provincial Councils and Administration Act while allied legislation includes mining, water, environment, forestry and related instruments.

The 2013 constitution provides for local government and defines a devolved governance framework. In Section 3 (2) (i) the constitution recognizes devolution and decentralization of

governmental power and functions as one of the principles of good governance while in Section 5c it defines the provincial and local authorities as a tier of government and states that Councils represent and manage affairs of the people. Section 8:1 defines the national vision of ‘...a sustainable, just, free and democratic society in which people enjoy prosperous, happy and fulfilling lives’, which shapes the focus of governance (Government of Zimbabwe 2013). The constitution also frames principles of public administration in Sections 194 through 198 for the three tiers of government that require extensive public sector reforms. These lay the foundation for Chapters 14 and 15 on provincial and local government as well as traditional leaders. Sections 274:1 and 275:1 confer on Councils the power to govern, on own initiative. This suggests an emphasis on citizen participation, open and transparent governance that the Constitution of Zimbabwe clearly provides for in Sections 3, 13:2, 17:1, 20:1b & 3, 21:2, 22:1 7 3d, 58, 59, 62:1, 67:1, 68 and among others, 80 all within the framework of an expanded set of citizens rights (Chapter 4).

1.2 Basis of Local Government's Gender Equity & Social Inclusion Remit

As a level/tier/sphere of government it follows that local authorities are bound by the Constitution of Zimbabwe to take all measures and implement activities pursuant to gender equity and social inclusion. The constitution places responsibility on the State to ensure citizen participation. In Section 13:2 it enjoins State institutions to ‘involve the people in the formulation and implementation of development plans and programmes that affect them’ (Ibid). It cites specific groups and categories in Sections 17:1 (gender balance and participation of women on the basis of equality with men), 20:1b and 3 (youth association, representation and participation in all spheres of life), 21:2a and d (participation by the elderly and fostering social organizations aimed at improving their quality of life) and 22:1 and 3d on treating people with physical and mental disabilities with respect and dignity.

By providing multiple spaces and mechanisms for sharing of power and responsibilities between the State and myriad citizen platforms that advance citizens’ freedom to associate and assemble (section 58), demonstrate and petition (section 59) and taking direct part in their development (section 13) the constitution sets a transformative framework for Zimbabwe’s governance. It further anchors this by providing in section 62:1 for citizens’ ‘...right of access to any information held by the State’ and providing in Sections 80 to 84 for the rights of women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities and veterans of the liberation struggle. These and other relevant provisions build on what the constitution highlights in the preamble regarding ‘...the need to entrench democracy, good, transparent and accountable governance...commitment to upholding and defending human rights and freedoms’ (Government of Zimbabwe 2013:19).

These are critical constitutional provisions to the extent that they present the reason for the devolved system of governance as relating to defining and pursuing interventions that focus on achieving the vision set out in Section 8:1.

As such, existing and emerging legislation guides execution of this responsibility. In recognition of local government's role the Ministry responsible for local government has issued guidance on how to entrench gender equity and social inclusion. The clearest of such guidance to local authorities is captured in a 2014 Circular No. 71 as follows:

'A number of key documents have emerged recently putting great pressure on local authorities to be more gender sensitive. The latest of these is the Constitution of Zimbabwe. It therefore goes without saying that local authorities are expected to make every effort to ensure that all clients within their areas of jurisdiction are served in an equitable manner and that gender issues are taken into consideration when decisions are made' (Government of Zimbabwe 2014a:1²).

The Circular made it a foregone conclusion that local authorities have an important role within their areas to serve residents in an equitable and gender sensitive manner. By making reference to the national Constitution the Ministry drew the attention of sector practitioners, policy makers and stakeholders to this national responsibility. In the same Circular the Ministry sought '...to put an end to the trivialization of gender issues and to put them squarely at the centre of service delivery' (Government of Zimbabwe 2014a:2). Citing that pursuance of gender equity is constitutional, government policy and that 'it is right' (Ibid) further clarified the basis for the institutionalization of gender responsiveness in local government.

The Circular highlighted six intervention areas for institutionalizing gender. These were i) including gender in Accounting Officers' (CEO's/Town Clerks or Secretaries) key result areas, ii) appointing Gender Focal Persons in each Council reporting directly to the Accounting Officer, making them a senior employee, iii) implementing gender-based budgeting in line with the Handbook, iv) gender training for Councilors and Senior Staff, v) facilitating participation of female appointed and elected officials in the Women in Local Government Forum, and vi) providing relevant gender reading materials (Government of Zimbabwe 2014a).

The 2014 Circular consolidated advances made in Zimbabwe towards gender equality goals generally and the local government sector specifically since the turn of the century. National progress on gender issues has flowed from implementation of regional and international protocols³. Specific gains and milestones include the following:

- i) Establishment of the Women in Local Government Forum in 1999 and its recognition in local authority association (ZILGA) structures;
- ii) Capacity development support on gender and participatory budgeting delivered through different partnerships between the Ministry responsible for local government

² Gender and Local Authorities, Circular No. 71 Addendum A of February 10th 2014, Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing

³ CEDAW, AU Constitutive Act, Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, SADC Protocol on Gender and Development

and non-state development organizations⁴ resulting in the production of a corpus of materials like the Gender Budgeting Training Manual (Government of Zimbabwe 2011),

- iii) Progressive refinement of the service delivery agenda and its implementation in the sector (DEGI 2013);
- iv) Elaborate debate on local government reforms culminating in the constitutionalization of local Government;
- v) National policies like the Revised National Gender Policy (2017), ZIMASSET as well as the local government sector gender policy;
- vi) Establishment of the Zimbabwe Gender Commission (ZGC);
- vii) Development of the National and Monitoring and Evaluation framework for Gender Equality and Women Empowerment; and
- viii) Existence of a Cabinet Circular that directs Ministries to use gender responsive budgeting annually (Lowe-Morna et al 2014).

These eight examples or critical anchors for gender responsiveness exist in a socio-political and economic terrain which in theory is very appreciative of the developmental benefits of gender equality and social inclusion. Conceptual clarity now exists but is yet to be followed by real practical gains. It is therefore fair to suggest that national policy, law and societal expectations adequately provide for the pursuit of gender parity in and by Zimbabwean local authorities. As defined in the Constitution of Zimbabwe, local authority powers and functions provide scope for implementing interventions that address existing gender disparities.

Existing (Urban Councils and Rural District Councils) and emerging (Local Authorities Bill) legislation contain a list of functions that include democratic representation, making and effecting budgets, borrowing for capital projects, providing services, promoting health, providing housing and regulating private activities of residents in their areas to safeguard public health, safety and environmental amenity (Action Aid Denmark 2014). The Local Authorities Bill for instance provides a list of 57 areas where Councils exercise their power and functions in its Second Schedule (Government of Zimbabwe 2014b). It is therefore in the exercise of these powers and functions that Councils can lead delivery on gender equitable social services and simultaneously promote social inclusion.

The clarity on gender responsiveness appears to be at the levels of policy, the Constitution of Zimbabwe and administrative Circulars like the one cited above. However, there are gaps in local government law that show 'contradictions between political intention and political reality' (Action Aid Denmark, 2014:10) largely arising from entrenchment of central government control of the local tier (see CCDZ, 2014). The gaps manifest in both under-representation of women in local government and the resilience of male domination in decision making spaces including actual resource allocation models. One critical legislative

⁴ Examples include ZWRCN, Gender Links, WiPSU etc.

gap is the silence on a women's quota in local government for both elected and appointed officials, partly because electoral matters are regulated under the Electoral Act.

2.0 Gender Responsiveness: Status, Historical and Emerging Frameworks

2.1 Strategic numbers bely acceptance of Inclusion

As they say, numbers do not lie. In terms of Councillors the proportion of female representatives has been hovering under 20% in the last four (4) local government elections at 16% in 2005, 18% in 2008, 16% in 2013 and 18 % in 2018 (Lowe-Morna et al, 2014). There are also gaps in terms of women's representation amongst the executive within the Ministry and at local authority levels. For example, only seven (7) or 7.6% of the ninety-two (92) Accounting Officers (AOs) are females while eight (8) or 8.7% of the ninety-two Councils have female political leaders (Council Mayors or Chairpersons). Sector statistics are generally hard to come by but anecdotal evidence suggests an over-representation of females below the levels of Director at both the Ministry and within local authorities. Women are therefore grossly under-represented in senior and middle management positions in local government. This situation is consistent with the national picture where the share of women in senior and middle management is only 24% (ZIMSTAT, 2014).

Representation of women professionals and politicians in the sector provides critical insights into their decision-making power. This is because numbers are critical in light of i) constitutional provisions on gender parity, ii) the reality that Zimbabwe's population has females constituting more than half the population, iii) the reduced gender disparities in educational attainment, and iv) the reality that conversion of needs into development programmes that speak to women's lived experiences requires women's social, technical and political voices. As such, there is no shortage of qualified and competent women to take up strategic positions in local government. That local government is closest to citizens (whose majority is women and girls) makes the conversation on numbers and other practical and strategic aspects of social inclusion very critical. The section below attempts to explain (not excuse) the structural origins of disparity and exclusion.

2.2 Explaining Resilient Gender Disparity & Social Exclusion

Gender disparities and the local government sector's ineffectiveness to promote gender equality has historical connotations (see Chatiza, 2008; 2010, Makumbe, 1998, Matumbike, 2009). Zimbabwe's 125 year history of formal local government since the arrival of the British South Africa Company (BSAC) in 1890 has generally seen race and power struggles steeped in patriarchy, characterized by violence, exploitation and general subjugation of local government institutions by male-driven national and provincial institutions. Even pre-colonial local government was patriarchal and tended to be violent. Kingdoms fought others to sustain their socio-economic and political existence with limited visibility for women and girls in the public sphere except where they were spirit mediums. Women and girls were often taken as 'spoils of war'. Post-colonial Zimbabwean politics has also entrenched practices including

violence and gender-neutral service delivery that deny space for women as well as young people. Men have thus enjoyed and sustained the advantage of incumbency invariably professing to have better skills than women even where more competent women exist.

Salisbury Sanitary Board was the first formally established local authority in 1891 though the necessary law (Ordinance 2) was only enacted in 1894 followed by the first Municipal Law of 1897 (Chatiza 2010). For Hlatshwayo (1998) the time lag suggests grudging local government establishment. Hammar (2003) cites the Matabeleland Order in Council of 1894 under which Gwai and Shangani 'reserves' were created as the beginnings of colonial rural local government. Subsequent orders, legislation and commissions entrenched white expropriation of African lands till the 1930 Land Apportionment Act. A 1937 Act (Native Councils Act, amended in 1947 and enactment of the 1957 African Councils Act) gave further legal form and character to rural local government. Creation of Native (and later African) Councils was progressive with only 23 in 1940 and 220 by 1979 (Jordan 1984, Makumbe 1998). African Councils were chieftainship-aligned suggesting male-hereditary structures mainly presided over their governance with a remit over social service or welfare while infrastructural services were provided by the Department of African Agriculture and the African Development Fund⁵, both directly run from the District Commissioner's Office (Matumbike 2009). Such an approach reinforced direct white and male control of the main African economic levers. For urban areas pre-independence legislation included the Municipal Act in 1930 and the Urban Councils Act in 1973.

As such, race-based social and political inclusion and provision of services were defined within economic, spatial and institutional enclaves (Auret 1995, Yoshikuni 2006, Moyana 1984). Pre-independence local government developments were linked to the land and race questions with natives treated as 'child-like', taking part in centrally-defined programmes and any pretence at promoting African self-government being contradicted by white supremacist policies (see de Valk and Wekwete 1990) and thus leaving no space for citizen participation in local governance. Race-defined urban and rural development duality resulted in deep socio-political resentment of the relevant institutions. This shaped national contests for political power between Africans and white settlers as part of de-colonization with local government being seen as extensions of the central (white/colonial) state whose programmes (herd control, soil conservation/*nhamo yemakandiwa*⁶, land use planning and land tenure changes) being used to inspire resistance and thus the armed struggle (de Valk and Wekwete 1990). This explains the targeting of government facilities (schools, dip tanks, bridges and clinics) during the liberation struggle. As such, mainly men who fought in the struggle targeted facilities that women and young people depend on and would prioritize if they were in decision making majority. Grand ideas of big projects by and for big men that inspired the struggle nurtured a culture of promising politically, insulating big men (and the institutions

⁵ Current District Development Fund (DDF). ADF was mainly funded from levies on African crop produce (NAC 2002).

⁶ Conservation works included back-breaking preparation of contour ridges (*makandiwa*) in people's own fields which was seen as unjust/problematic (*nhamo*).

they run) from criticism and closing of strategic spaces to women, young people and other groups of vulnerable people.

Local government reforms after 1980 were inevitably led by a male-dominated movement around whose structures early local government institutions were modeled (Chatiza 2010). These included i) a single Local Government Ministry (for urban, commercial farming and former Tribal Trust Lands administering all sector legislation) ii) renaming Tribal Trust Lands Communal Lands, iii) amalgamating 220 African into 55 District Councils, iv) enacting new laws (District Councils and Urban Councils Acts) framed on the basis of universal adult suffrage, non-racialism and the one city concept, v) creating structures for public participation (a 1984 Prime Minister's Directive later enacted into the Provincial Councils and Administration Act of 1985), and vi) later amalgamating the 55 and 45 rural local governments for black and white areas respectively through a 1988 Rural District Councils (Amalgamation) Act. RDCs currently number 60 as a result of progressive subdivision of bigger ones.

From the 1990s two critical reform messages became louder. These were i) local government empowerment through constitutionalization as well as capacity building and ii) harmonization of traditional institutions and formal local government following early independence sidelining. The former (decentralization) culminated in reforms captured in the 13 Principles on Decentralization in 1996 and the latter through the Traditional Leaders Act of 2000. While the first of the principles highlighted citizen participation in governance and development, gender responsiveness was not made reference to. This gender neutral construction of policy, law and administrative guidelines was consistent with local government legislation up to the enactment of the Constitution in 2013. In fairness, Zimbabwe's constitution spells out a robust governance framework, which in the fullness of implementation guarantees gender equity and social inclusion.

However, concerns have been raised about risks arising from a deeply entrenched culture of mis governance whose cleansing may require trans-generational dialogue as well as firm yet patient reforms. Further, Paradza and Matovu (2002) observe that there are no legal barriers to women's participation in public and political life. Rather socialization (by both patriarchs and matriarchs) and other soft and seemingly innocuous yet deeply entrenched barriers play a part. As noted in relation to Nigeria by Agbalajobi (2008) societal systems encourage male dominance, subjugate women and make women appendages to men leading to women facing disparities in governance.

2.3 Addressing Disparities: Whether Emerging Laws and Local Budgets Help

In sub-section 1.2 above, the paper presents the progressive policy and legislative framework for enhancing gender equity and social inclusion moving forward, while section 2.2 suggests why local government has retained resilient disparities. Two points were made as follows; i) that real sector transformation remains outstanding and ii) the constitution provides a sound

framework for such reforms. As a process, transformation will perhaps take longer than establishment of legislation aligned with the constitution. In terms of the latter, the Government of Zimbabwe has steered local government law making with a Draft Local Authorities Bill in place. Section 228 of the Bill provides as follows:

- (1) Before the expiry of any financial year the finance committee shall draw up and present for the approval of the local authority estimates in such detail as the local authority may require of the income and expenditure on revenue and capital accounts of the local authority for the next succeeding financial year.
- (2) When the estimates presented in terms of subsection (1) have been adopted by the local authority and signed by the mayor or chairperson of the local authority, as the case may be, the local authority shall ensure that:
 - (a) copies of the estimates are forthwith made available for inspection by the public; and
 - (b) three copies of the estimates are forwarded two months, before the end of the current financial year, to the Minister for approval.

The draft provisions capture existing budget formulation processes (Sections 288 of the Urban Councils Act and 121 of the Rural District Councils Act). Both the previous and proposed laws insufficiently open up space for the participation of citizens. While consistent with what has been in place the draft provisions do not i) create space for a review of the previous budget in an open manner, ii) reinforce a focus on clear plans and results around which a Council formulates the budget, iii) clarify the overlapping and distinctive competences of Council and the Ministry responsible for local government (Minister) in terms of Council budget approval, and iv) is silent on public participation in post-approval budget performance management. In essence provisions on budget preparation and financial management fall short on entrenching gender equity and social inclusion that the constitution (for instance Section 298:1), the Public Finance Management Act (22:17) and other relevant policies (including Circular No. 71) espouse. This weakness is critical because Zimbabwe's public administration system has remained legalistic to the extent that laws have to be clearer to provide a firm basis for instructions, guidelines and localized policies, which are always prefixed by citation of relevant sections of appropriate Acts of Parliament.

Apart from budget-related provisions in the Draft Local Authorities Bill there are only two other references to gender in Sections 65 (on election of Mayor or Chairperson) and 74 (regarding composition of the Local Government Board). The latter section even provides that the Board Chair and Vice Chair shall be of opposite sexes (Government of Zimbabwe 2014b). Citizen participation is also not provided for in the draft law. It is emerging that proposed local government laws seem not to adequately ground gender equity and social inclusion making them somewhat inconsistent with the constitution (Chatiza, 2015). In this context it becomes critical to observe that local government law making including interpretation of relevant constitutional provisions remains an area requiring focused attention. Ongoing debate provides hope but requires sustained and inclusive engagement

considering that laws alone cannot fix local government challenges without meaningful transformation of social, economic and political relations necessary for the rule of law to subsist.

3.0 Councils' Policy and Practical Experiences

The four (4) Councils covered in this analysis have had a long history of working on gender equity and social inclusion in their budgeting, policy making and overall service delivery systems. For example, Bulawayo was part of a pilot implemented by the Zimbabwe Women Resources Center and Network (ZWRCN). Key findings of the ZWRCN (2009) baseline confirmed, among others, i) general budget planning and awareness amongst Councillors and officials, ii) variable implementation of participatory budgeting, iii) inadequate training of Council staff, iv) low and undifferentiated citizen participation with marginalized groups almost invisible, and v) a plethora of budget formulation constraints. The constraints included non-budgeting for consultations, lack of budget audits, short budgeting timeframes, politicization of budget planning and meetings, weak capacity to facilitate participatory budgeting and low civic awareness of importance of participating in budgeting (Ibid).

3.1 Bulawayo City Council (BCC)

The City of Bulawayo has an explicit gender policy. Reading the gender policy, one would appreciate the council's commitment to ensure gender equality from a perspective. The City of Bulawayo acknowledges gender equality as an essential part of good local governance where women and men have equal access to decision making, equal access to services and equal treatment in the delivery of services. It has become council's conviction after recognizing that gender mainstreaming in all areas of policy-making and management is the most effective way of ensuring gender equality⁷. The City of Bulawayo recognizes that every policy action affects women and men differently. In order to ensure that the impact of all policy decisions addresses the specific interests and needs of women and men, the policy requires the Council to assess how every policy decision affects women and men and explore ways that promote gender equity. The City's gender policy highlights major service areas to which gender sensitive decision making will be applied. These include:

- **Land-use planning:** ensuring that councils' planning processes including preparation of Master, Local and other council plans are done in a participatory manner to make sure the concerns of both men and women are taken into account;
- **Allocation of Resources:** this include gender budgeting, gender training and promotion in all strategic business units of the City;
- **Economic empowerment:** planning and implementing formal and informal economic activities and home industry activities are in a gender sensitive manner which seeks to achieve gender equity;
- **Poverty reduction:** considering the gender dimensions of the economically disadvantaged and undertaking poverty reduction programmes in a sustainable and gender

⁷ City of Bulawayo Gender Policy

sensitive manner. This will include allocating informal trading facilities to women and men, able bodied and disabled;

- **Water and Sanitation:** ensuring men, women, boys and girls are consulted and involved in water and sanitation service delivery issues and decisions;
- **Stakeholder participation:** In conducting stakeholder participation, Council seeks to include women and men, youths and people living with disabilities in stakeholder consultations to ensure that the outcome of the consultative process reflects the concerns and needs of all key stakeholders;
- **Service delivery:** Council will ensure that service delivery and all operations of Council are carried out in a manner which takes into account the concerns of both women and men including persons with disabilities in a gender sensitive manner;
- **Representation:** Council shall ensure gender balance in council structures including council committees, management positions, workforce and other establishments directly or indirectly under its jurisdiction;

The City's 2019 budget consultations report covering the City's 29 wards, suggest a fair representation of women in budget policy-making. However, the numbers of participants are not reflective or representative of the population in a single ward (see table 1 for some of the wards consulted during the 2019 budget process).

Table 1: BCC's 2019 budget consultation

Ward	Male	Female	Total
1	29	12	41
2	24	35	59
3	26	34	60
4	7	12	19
5	12	7	19
6	8	15	23

Source: Extract from BCC's 2019 budget

Budget consultations were held in the City's 29 wards, including sessions with women and youth only. This might have offered women and opportunity to raise concerns with regards to their needs.

3.1.1 Women representation in council decision making structures

In Bulawayo City Council, there are 29 councillors, of which only 8 are female (28%). Table 2 below summarizes leadership positions in the City's different committees.

Table 2: Leadership positions in council committees

Council Committee	Leadership
1. Town Lands and planning	Chairperson: Male, Deputy Chairperson: Female
2. Health, Housing and Education Services	Chairperson: Female , Deputy Chairperson: Female
3. Finance & Development	Chairperson: Male, Deputy Chairperson: Female
4. Environmental Management & Engineering	Chairperson: Male, Deputy Chairperson: Male
5. Water & Future Supplies	Chairperson: Male, Deputy Chairperson: Female

6. Audit

Chairperson: Male, Deputy Chairperson: **Female**

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

In BCC, only one committee (Health, Housing and Education services) is headed by a female councilor. The General Purposes Committee is composed of all Council Chairperson as well as the Mayor & Deputy Mayor. As a result since there is only one female chairpersons the majority of the members are males. Five (5) out of 6 committees are deputized by female Councillors. The fact that majority of the council committees are headed by male councilors may create gaps in terms of bring up women specific issues in the governance process. The female deputy chairperson may not have strong strategic positions when it comes to setting the policy direction in the City.

There is also gross underrepresentation of women in the City's management structure, with only the Chamber Secretary and Deputy being Female. All the Other 6 Departments out 7 are headed and deputized by males. This is contrary to the City's focus on promoting inclusive representation in the Local Authority's decision making structures as enshrined in its 2017 Gender Policy.

3.2 Tongogara Rural District Council (TRDC)

From a policy perspective, the budget process of TRDC reflect the council's commitment to promote gender equality in service delivery. The 2019 budget speech makes it clear that the 2019 budget is gender sensitive as evidenced by its thrust on health services delivery, water and sanitation. The following evidence demonstrate transformation in the RDC's governance and service delivery processes:

1. A collective approach to budgeting both at the level of staff and in terms of Council-staff collaboration on budget issues. Both the executive and policy-making side of Council have open communication with residents. The 2019 budget process involved consultations in all the twenty-four (24) wards, whose outcomes have informed the council's budget. During the consultations, Council staff explained to residents clearly factors contributing to underperformance in service delivery;
2. Adoption of a bottom up approach to development, in which communities can initiate their own projects and seek assistance from council;
3. Prioritization of services that meet residents' practical needs with examples being establishment of mother's waiting shelter in ward 3 and 6; collaborative construction of clinics for the safety of women and children, paying fees for vulnerable children (social protection). However, there are also serious concerns on water and sanitation, which affect women and men differently. Some communities raise concerns on the council's inability to address critical water problems;
4. Adoption of the one third plough back in the wards to implement community projects in the wards such as construction of mothers' waiting shelter;
5. Institutionalization of gender responsive budgeting including appointment of a gender focal person;
6. Prioritization of capital projects such as improvement of water and sanitation systems, construction of clinics,

3.3 Shurugwi Town Council

3.4 Zvishavane Town Council

4.0 Budget Analysis: Trends, Lessons And Sector Implications

This section presents an analysis of the 4 local authorities' budgets from a gender responsive perspective. The analysis is based on the available 2019 budget information, drawing on the council's service delivery mandates.

4.1 Bulawayo City Council (BCC)

BCC's corporate vision is "Bulawayo, City of Kings, and Leader in Local Governance Excellence, with a vibrant economy. Its mission is "Bulawayo City of Kings, Committed to the people-Focused Quality Services in an Environmentally Friendly and Vibrant Economy, to the satisfaction of all stakeholders". Bulawayo City Council has a Citizen's charter which further affirms the City's commitment to provide quality, affordable, efficient and accessible services with full participation of all stakeholders. The City of Bulawayo is Zimbabwe's second largest, a cosmopolitan metropolis with an intriguing development history spanning over a century. It has an estimated population of 1.5 million⁸. The total budget for the City of Bulawayo is \$116, 599, 243 (broken down per programme as indicated in table 3).

Table 3: City of Bulawayo's 2019 Budget broken down by programme

Programmes	Amount (US)	% of the total budget
1. Governance & administration	28,270, 462	24.2%
2. Water, sanitation & Hygiene (WASH)	40,910,516	35.1%
3. Social services	32,548,488	27.9%
4. Roads	6,742,203	5.8%
5. Public safety and security services	7,238,969	6.2%
6. Natural Resources Conservation & Management	836,105	0.7%
Total	116,599,243	100%

Source: City of Bulawayo 2019 Budget

As indicated in table 3, the City of Bulawayo allocated a significant proportion of its 2019 budget to service delivery areas (WASH and social services). What remains unclear is how much of its allocation is directed towards the needs of different social groups including women, youth, and the disabled and vulnerable children.

The City of Bulawayo has taken steps to operationalize the provisions in its Gender Policy through making deliberate policy proposals in the 2019 budget. For instance, a review of the Shop licencing schedule in the budget demonstrates commitment from the City to promote

⁸ City of Bulawayo Strategic Plan (2014-2018)

women and youth participation in the urban economy. The City proposed no increase for in shop licence fees for Women's Clubs and Youth Centres (see table 4).

Table 4: Promotion of women and youth participation in economic activities

Name of Centre	Market rates	Proposed increase
1. Inyathi Youth Center	13.52	0.00
2. Lobengula Homecraft Centres	20.80	0.00
3. All other Centres	11.23	0.00
4. Hawkers licence	26.00	0.00

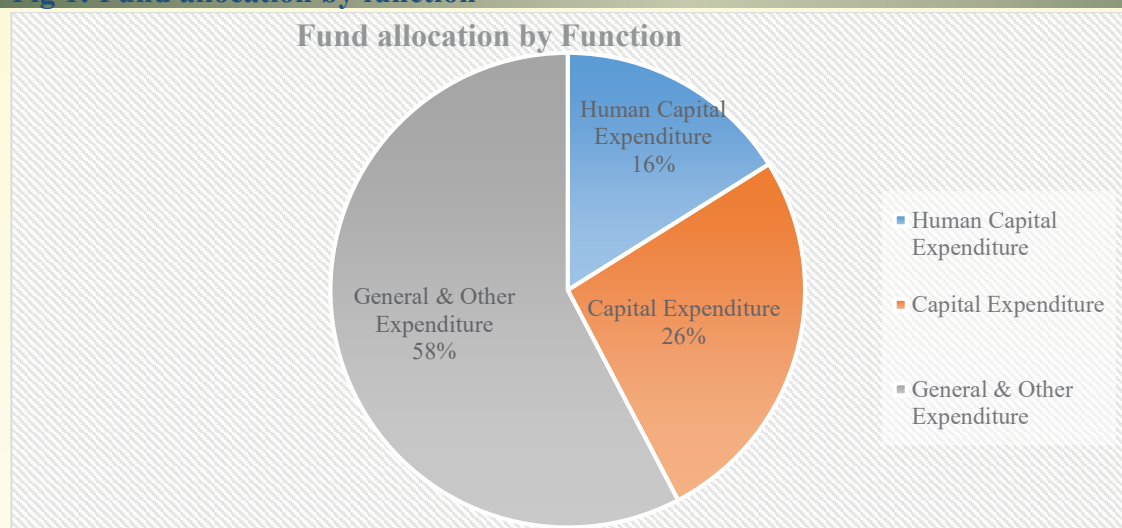
Source: City of Bulawayo 2019 Budget statistics

The focus on BCC is on gender assessment of all projects being budgeted, incorporating gender perspective at all levels of the budget process and restructuring revenues and expenditures to promote gender equality. However, the ability of the budget to perform and be responsive to the needs to different social groups is constrained by an environment characterized by reduced capacity utilization, low productivity and high levels of unemployment resulting in increased vulnerable community.

4.2 Shurugwi Town Council (STC)

The vision of STC is “A vibrant, diverse and beautiful town with unique neighbourhoods, multiple urban villages and full of opportunity for everyone”. Its mission is “*To promote the provision of efficient and effective services through proper management of financial, human and material resources.*” The 2019 budget for STC is \$6, 215, 383.99. The percentage allocations by function are depicted in fig 1.

Fig 1: Fund allocation by function



Source: Shurugwi Town Council 2019 Budget statistics

Shurugwi Town Council also uses programme based budgeting (see table 5 for the different programme allocations).

Table 5: STC programme based budget allocations for 2019

Programmes	Amount (US)	% of total budget
1. Governance & Administration	1,393,531.87	22.4%
2. Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH)	2,611,506.38	42%
3. Social Services	779,097.77	12.5%
4. Roads	1,255,404.52	20.2%
5. Public safety & security services	175,843.46	2.8%
6. Natural Resources Conservation	-	
Total	6,215,383.99	100%

Source: Shurugwi Town Council 2019 budget statistics

The above statistics indicate the Council's commitment to improving Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) service delivery. A large portion of the council's programme budget is allocated towards improving access to water, sanitation, hygiene and solid waste management services. The normative explanation is that an improvement in WASH services will likely benefit disadvantaged community groups including women. The programme objective under WASH is *"to improve the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all"*. Under social services the objective is "improved social services within housing, education and health". The challenge in the budget is that there is no indication of how much is allocated for different social groups.

4.3 Tongogara Rural District Council (TRDC)

The vision of Tongogara RDC is *"to be a leader in the provision of quality essential services and spearhead local socio-economic development by 2020"*. Its mission is *"to provide and maintain high quality essential services and spearhead socio-economic development to the people in the District"*.

The RDC uses programme based budgeting. The total budget for 2019 is \$ 4 925 543.44. For its 2019 budget, the council has five (5) main programmes namely governance and administration, water, sanitation and hygiene, social services, roads and natural resources conservation and management. Table 6 shows a breakdown of the budget as per the different programmes.

Table 6: TRDC's 2019 Budget broken down by programme

Programme	Expenditure Totals	% of the total budget
7. Governance & administration	1, 289,867.98	26.2 %
8. Water, sanitation & Hygiene	822, 136.00	16.7%
9. Social services	556, 133.50	11.3%
10. Roads	2, 194, 059.04	44.5%
11. Natural Resources Conservation	63,346.92	1.3%
Total	4, 925, 543.44	100%

Source: Tongogara RDC 2019 budget

Though TRDC has made provisions for key service delivery areas such as water and sanitation and social services, the allocations are not disaggregated by social groups. It is difficult to deduce how gender responsive these budget allocations are since they are disaggregated based on the different social groupings.

The responsiveness of the budgets is likely to be affected by cumulative deficits in service delivery including issues of poor water and sanitation in the District. TRDC faces significant capacity constraints to implement its budget policy proposals, including a repressive economic environment.

4.4 Zvishavane Town Council (ZTC)

Zvishavane Town Council is a local authority with the mandate to provide housing, water, sewerage, refuse services, social and health services to the residents of Zvishavane Town. The total budget for Zvishavane Town Council is \$8,352,345.04 (broken down per programme as follows)

Table 7: Breakdown of Zvishavane Town Council budget by programme

Programme	Amount (US)	% of the total budget
4 Governance & administration	2,396,370.60	28.7%
5 Water, sanitation & Hygiene	2,922,542.02	35%
6 Social services	1,089,723.83	13%
7 Roads	1,379,004.00	16.5%
8 Public safety & security services	512,259.59	6.1%
9 Natural Resources Conservation	52,445.00	0.6%
Total	8,352,345.04	100%

Source: Zvishavane Town Council 2019 budget

Statistics in table indicates that the council allocated a large proportion of its budget to improving WASH services. The objectives set out under social services include *“improving the standard of living of the community by providing quality and adequate housing, education, health, social amenities and community services”*.

4.5 Trends, Lessons and Sector Implications

The budget analyses presented above reflect Councils that are generally clear of the need to focus their work on providing services and adopting transparent and accountable public administration. However, there is evident resource stress with budgets not performing as expected. Budgets are failing due to structural issues of i) national economic challenges, ii) lack of capital budget support, iii) constrained local fiscal space, and iv) high growth in demand for services. Bulawayo City Council has a specific Gender Policy. Other internal policies and practices appear to have been progressively adapted to ensure that Council operations are gender responsive and socially inclusive. The policies combine adaptations of national frameworks and Council Resolutions. Further, they are expressed through service delivery responses and citizen engagement processes. A corpus of administrative practice remains somewhat un-codified. All the four (4) Councils have structures for engaging or working with citizens that are flexible and open. Critically, capacity development and community engagement partnerships involving civil society organizations like ZWRCN seem

beneficial in terms of creating safe spaces for social learning relevant to gender responsiveness and social inclusion in local governance.

5.0 Conclusion: ZWRCN's Future Work

This paper has discussed the national and local policy and legislative framework for gender responsiveness and inclusive development. Critical constitutional anchors for advancing the agenda were cited while also drawing on what the Government of Zimbabwe and civil society organizations like ZWRCN have done for more than half a generation. This macro-level analysis is then combined with local authority level analyses using the cases of Bulawayo, Shurugwi, Tongogara and Zvishavane. The message emerging from this analysis is that policy and legislative anchors are in the main established although emerging local government laws do not sufficiently build-in relevant gains. Further, the emerging laws may not sufficiently guarantee continuance of gender responsiveness and social inclusion methodologies in local authorities without clear champions. Structural considerations particularly depressing local authority budget performance were also discussed.

Inclusive local governance can be driven through gender responsive budgeting. What underpins its success seems to include i) a clear legal system and its effective implementation especially in terms of property rights (land and housing), general equity and rule of law, ii) political, religious, economic and social structures and customs impacting on participation, iii) the household status of women and disadvantaged individuals of society, and iv) structure and performance of the local economy including strategic services like health, public safety (physical and social) and education. In the process it becomes possible for ZWRCN to help reduce the growing ritualization of budget consultations, preparation and publication in the local government sector. This will feed into transformative programming and implementation of gender responsive budgeting.

Based on the discussion in this paper it is recommended that ZWRCN considers prioritizing the following in its future work:

1. Strengthening local authority based gathering, processing and utilization of gender disaggregated data. Circular No. 71 makes this one of the key roles of the Gender Focal Persons but the performance of this function remains weak. This may also include capacity building of Gender Focal Persons on gathering and utilizing gender disaggregated data;
2. Supporting Councils in coming up with clear fiscal frameworks anchored on local economic analyses on the basis of which they then prepare and manage budgets. This will allow Councils to go beyond routinized budget preparation; and
3. Strengthening pro-poor budget delivery, pro-poor financial management, budget tracking and (importantly) revenue source identification and development. Budget tracking will ensure that policy provisions on gender mainstreaming are adhered to during policy implementation. This will depend on individual Councils and the maturity of the relationship that ZWRCN has;

4. Ensuring that gender responsive budgeting and broader civic participation are adequately provided for in the local government policy and laws that the Ministry responsible for local government is leading; and
5. Building local government sector capacity generally. The focus may include ensuring that
 - i) local governance reforms are consistent with gender responsiveness and social inclusion, ii) resource flows towards local authorities from the centre are guaranteed, fair and predictable, iii) identification, development and protection of relevant revenue sources for local authorities, and iv) contributing to the development and utilization of (or sharing) actionable knowledge

The above recommendations relate to individual Council support packages that ZWRCN needs to consider for the future. These will require strategic anchoring through national level support towards or participating in:

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