

ZIMBABWE GOVERNMENT

Beijing +20 Review Report



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List of Acronyms

AIDS – Acquired Immuno-deficiency Syndrome

ART - Anti Retroviral Therapy

ARVs - Anti Retroviral Drugs

AU – African Union

BEAM - Basic Education Assistance Module

CEDAW - Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women

COPAC - Constitutional Parliamentary Select Committee

EMTCT– Eliminating Mother to Child Transmission

GBV - Gender Based Violence

HIV – Human Immune-deficiency Virus

JOMIC - Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee

MDGs – Millennium Development Goals

MTERP – Mid Term Economic Recovery Programme

MWAGCD - Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development

NGOs - Non-Governmental Organizations

PMTCT - Prevention of Mother To Child Transmission

SADC - Southern African Development Community

SME - Small and Medium Enterprise

STERP- Short Term Economic Recovery Programme

TCPL - Total Consumption Poverty Line

UN – United Nations

UNICEF – United Nations Children’s Fund

UNESCO – United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

UN Women - United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

ZDHS - Zimbabwe Demographic Health Survey

Country Information

Demographic Data

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Total Population | 13 061 239 |
| Female percentage | 52% |
| Male percentage | 48% |
| Urban Population percentage | 33% |
| Rural Population percentage | 67% |
| Life Expectancy at birth | 38 |

Social and Economic Data

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Human Development Index | 0.410 |
| National Budget | \$4.1 billion |
| Infant Mortality | 57 per 1000 |
| Maternal Mortality | 470 per 10 000 live births |
| Literacy Rate | 97% |
| National Enrolment Rate | 81.4% |

National Response to HIV and AIDS Indicators in 2013

| Indicator | Incidence |
|--|-------------------------|
| HIV prevalence rate | 15% |
| HIV prevalence amongst women aged 15-24 | 9.85% |
| HIV Incidence rate | 0.98 |
| Percentage of HIV-positive pregnant women who receive antiretroviral to reduce the risk of mother-to-child transmission. | 93% |
| Deaths averted by PMTCT (0-4) (Thousands) | 5.4 |
| ART coverage average | 77% adults; 46%children |

Women in Decision Making

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Women in the National Assembly | 32% (2013) |
| Women in Senate | 48% (2013) |
| Women in Local Authorities | 16.7% (2013) |
| Women in Cabinet | 9% (2013) |

[ACKNOWLEDGE SOURCE OF DATA](#)

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Background: Since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Its Platform for action, Zimbabwe has made remarkable progress in the areas of gender equality and women empowerment. The Government has adopted several legislative, policy and administrative measures to facilitate the implementation of the 12 critical areas of the Declaration. These includes adoption of laws policies that protect girls and women's rights in the area of employment, decision making, health, education, economic empowerment, access and control of resources and the family.

The Constitutional Reform Process initiated in 2009 finally yielded a new Constitution which has clear provisions promoting gender equality, including addressing past gender imbalances. This is a key development in addressing one of the key dimensions of the Beijing Platform for Action related to equality in public and private leadership as well as in access to opportunities and resources.

To consolidate and enhance economic growth and activity, Government in 2013 adopted the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio Economic Transformation (ZIMASSET) which is the latest economic and development framework set to run from 2013 through to 2018. It is noteworthy that the revival of the economy has seen an increase in the number of women participating in various economic activities, despite the participation still being low.

. This report will review the implementation of critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action, highlighting the key successes achieved and the challenges encountered. The report will also show factors that have enabled or limited implementation. The report will conclude by highlighting any emerging issues for consideration in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action.

Introduction:

The 1995 Beijing Women's Conference produced the Beijing Platform for Action, which has become the basis for interventions on advancing gender equality and women's empowerment.

For a country such as Zimbabwe, where the issue of equality between men and women had always at the centre of its development agenda, the Beijing Platform for Action proved to be the impetus required to enhance existing initiatives towards gender equality. At the time that the Beijing Platform for Action was adopted, Zimbabwe had already made significant strides in legislating for equality between men and women, through such legislation as the Legal Age of Majority Act (1982), the Labour Relations Act (1984) the Deeds Registry Amendment Act (1985) and the Matrimonial Causes Act (1987) among others, including key regulations such as the Equal Pay Regulations (1980) and the Public Service Pensions (Amendment Regulations) (1985). These changes in legislation were a result of the recognition by the Government of the need to bridge the inequalities that existed between men and women in the context of the country's history of struggle against colonialism.

Post 1995, Zimbabwe took further measures to implement gender equality in line with the BPA. These included amendment of the Constitution in 1996, through Amendment Number 14 which provided for added "gender" as grounds upon which one could not be discriminated against.

The judiciary also took progressive steps to address gender equality in the period under review. Key legal decisions include the case of *Lloyd Chaduka and Morgenster Teachers College vs. Enita Mandizvidza*¹ in that case the Supreme Court ruled that excluding female students who fell pregnant from a private teachers college constituted gender based discrimination. This was a positive development given that Section 23 of the constitution then had been understood to permit discrimination in non-public institutions. Another important case was that of *Margaret Dongovs. The Registrar General*², in which the Supreme Court ruled that mothers of children born in wedlock had the right to seek passports for their children without the assistance of their fathers. This case had been brought to the courts, because the policy practice in line with the Guardianship of Minors Act was that fathers of legitimate children are the guardians of the children and therefore their consent is required in seeking passport. And recently the Supreme Court also ruled that the State, through its agents, had an obligation to prevent pregnancy for a victim of rape in the case of *Mildred Mapingure vs. Minister of Home Affairs and 2 Others*³

Zimbabwe also ratified key women's rights instruments in fulfilment of the provisions and the spirit of the BPA viz., the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003) which Zimbabwe ratified in 2007; and the Southern African Development Community Protocol on Gender and Development, ratified by Zimbabwe in 2009. Zimbabwe also subscribes to the Millennium Development Goals and its Declaration, and has prioritised MDG 3 on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment among others.

In the first five years of the BPA, efforts were aimed at mainstreaming gender in all state institutions. Zimbabwe managed to initiate the creation of the national gender machinery with the appointment of the Minister of State for Gender issues in the President's office in 2000 and full-fledged Ministry responsible for gender equality and women affairs was set up in 2005 up to date.

Zimbabwe came up with a National Action Plan for Implementing the Beijing Platform for Action [NAP]. Under the NAP, Zimbabwe chose to focus on five of the twelve critical areas in the Beijing Platform for Action in the period 2000 – 2005, namely; Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of women, Women in power and decision making, Education and training of women, Women and the Economy and Women, health and HIV.

While these areas were chosen for the specific period 2000 - 2005, they also became the leading areas of concern for gender equality and women's empowerment in Zimbabwe in the last fourteen years. Other key issues have been taken on board along the way, such as Violence against Women, the Girl Child and Human Rights of Women.

SECTION 1

Major Successes: Zimbabwe has remains committed to achieving gender equality and implementing the Beijing Platform for Action. Zimbabwe has put in place national gender

¹ SC 114/2001

² SC 6/2010

³ SC 22/2014

machinery [in the form of the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development], the National Gender Policy adopted in 2004 and revised in 2013 as well as various policies and legislation aimed at promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. Further the deliberate nurturing of dialogue and collaborations between the MWAGCD and other actors in the promotion of gender equality, such as the UN country team and civil society has enhanced Zimbabwe's implementation of the BPA.

1. **Response to domestic violence:** One of Zimbabwe's major success in implementing gender equality and women empowerment has been the introduction of a comprehensive framework to address domestic violence. While violence against women was not initially a priority for Zimbabwe, in terms of the critical areas it chose to focus on, significant work has been undertaken on the area because of its centrality in achieving gender equality. As noted in the BPA, violence against women remains the key obstacle to achieving gender equality, as it perpetuates the subjugation of women by men. Thus efforts to address gender equality, must necessarily confront the issue of violence against women. The response to domestic violence is considered a success because of the processes to the enactment of the Domestic Violence Act and the policy environment surrounding it. Some key points to note are;
 - The enactment of the Domestic Violence Act of 2006. The Act defines domestic violence broadly enough to cover most instances of gender based violence and criminalizes the acts of domestic violence. The Act also provides for various forms of relief for survivors of domestic violence including protection from potential violence. A key aspect of the Act is the provision for third parties to report domestic violence, where the person experiencing domestic violence themselves is unable to report it. The Act also establishes a Domestic Violence Council tasked with overseeing the implementation of the Act and monitoring the domestic violence in general.
 - Development of a National Gender Based Violence Strategy, based on the four pillars of GBV programming namely prevention, service provision, coordination and research and documentation.
 - Setting up an Inter-Ministerial Cabinet Committee on Rape and GBV, development of a National action plan on Rape
 - Zimbabwe has also come up with Standard Operating Procedures for Safe Shelters (2012) protocol in line with the provisions of the Beijing Platform for Action relating to the provision of shelters for the survivors of gender based violence.
 - In addition to the domestic violence response, it is also important to point out that Zimbabwe has been working to promote the protection of women and girls particularly against sexual violence. These efforts have yielded protective legislation such as the Sexual Offences Act which criminalises marital rape, now incorporated into the Criminal Law (Codification) Act which expands the scope of punishable acts of sexual violations. In addition to legislation, in the area of sexual violence, Zimbabwe has also come up with a Multi Stakeholder Approach to the Management of Child Sexual Abuse that aims to provide a comprehensive response to the management of child sexual abuse. This response has also created the Victim Friendly courts, which protect vulnerable witnesses in sexual abuse cases; which although initially intended for child victims of sexual abuse, have now been extended for use even in cases of adult female rape.
 - The establishment of the Victim Friendly Courts, designed to protect vulnerable witnesses, so that they do not have to face the accused persons in open court. Initially these courts were designed with young victims of sexual abuse in mind, however their functionality has now extended to adult and young women victims.
 - Victim friendly units at police stations were also set up to discreetly handle cases of violence against women, child sexual abuse and adult rape among other issues, to

ensure that vulnerable witnesses are properly handled in reporting and processing their cases.

- In addition, the MWAGCD launched the 4 Ps Campaign in 2011, which aims to raise awareness about the Domestic Violence Act and gender based violence, focusing on prevention, protection, partnerships and programming.
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The reasons the response to domestic violence is considered a success include

- Increased public awareness on forms and types of domestic violence
- Increase in reported cases
- Strengthened multi sectoral response to GBV
- Positive response by some traditional and religious leaders to programmes to change attitudes and norms that perpetuate GBV

2. **Significant progress made in ending Mother to Child Transmission:** Zimbabwe has brought the HIV epidemic under control through successful prevention strategies, including major advances made under the Global Plan on Elimination of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV. The HIV response has contributed to strengthening the national health system. Decentralized services, removal of barriers such as user fees, service integration and strengthened community service delivery have helped fulfil the country's commitments to eliminate Mother to Child Transmission of HIV, and also boost all aspects of maternal health. Zimbabwe has significantly scaled up access to HIV prevention and treatment services for women and children. In particular the universal access in relation to testing of HIV+ pregnant women and the strong progress made in the provision and availability of Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART). Beyond the setting national targets in addressing the epidemic through ZNASPII⁴ 2011-2015, Zimbabwe has adopted the national PMTCT plan 2011-15, and its remarkable success in ending Mother To Child Transmission adequately reflected in the 2013 progress report on the Global Plan;

- The estimated number of new HIV infections among children has been more than halved since 2009 – from 21,000 in 2009 to 9,300 in 2012 and around 6,000 in 2013.
- 90% of pregnant women are tested for HIV1 while 93% of HIV+ pregnant women received antiretroviral prophylaxis to reduce risk of mother to child transmission of HIV
- The mother to child transmission rate is about 9% in 2013, down from 27% in 2010.
- The country is on track to meeting the target of no more than 5% mother to child transmission, including in breastfeeding populations by 2015.

3. **The creation of a national framework and machinery for addressing gender equality:** The Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development is the overall coordinating body for implementing gender equality at the national level and also tasked with providing oversight for gender mainstreaming in all sectors. The national framework and machinery for addressing gender equality includes;

- Enactment of a New Constitution with elaborate provisions on gender equality. The Constitution also provides for the Establishment of a Gender Commission.
- The National Gender Policy initially adopted in 2005 aimed to guide the various sectors in mainstreaming gender. An implementation strategy for the policy was also put in place for the period 2008-2012.

⁴The Zimbabwe National AIDS strategic Plan (ZNASPII) 2011-2015

- The Gender Focal Persons as extensions of the machinery to address gender equality, operating within the various ministries.
- The National Gender Forum/Gender Theme Group coordinated by UN Women bringing together actors from UNCT, women non-governmental organizations [NGOs] and the MWAGCD together to strategize on implementation of the various areas of critical concern.
- The re-view of the National Gender Policy to cover the period 2013-2017, with the specific aim of addressing the changing socio-economic and political in which gender is being mainstreamed in the country,. The new Gender Policy prioritizes eight areas from the Beijing Platform for Action viz.; Gender, Constitutional and Legal Rights; Gender and Economic Empowerment; Gender, Politics and Decision Making; Gender and Health; Gender, Education and Training; Gender Based Violence; Gender and Environment; and Gender, Media and ICTS.

4. **Increased women's access to productive resources through the land reform and indigenisation programmes** :The land reform programme introduced at the turn of the century sought among other things to mitigate the limited access to resources by women, through introduction of quotas in the access to land by women. The policy position is that women should constitute 20% of all those allocated large scale farming land also known as the A2 farming land. In addition, women were also entitled to apply for agricultural land in their own right under the A1 village schemes, a departure from the traditional norm wherein women only accessed land through their husbands, fathers or other male relative. This has empowered women to have control over land as a means of production. However, despite the changes in the policy position, women's access to land remains limited due to a variety of factors. First, cultural practices still limit women's access to land, because at customary law, village land is only accessible to a woman through her husband or through her father/brother as land is considered to belong to the clan through the patrilineal line. Thus traditional leaders are still reluctant to allocate land to women outside of this cultural framework. Second, as previously stated, non-implementation of policy remains the greatest challenge remains for gender equality in most instances in Zimbabwe. While under the land reform programme, women had a set quota for land, this was not followed through. There is evidence that while 96% of Zimbabwe's agricultural land was acquired under the land reform programme, only 10% of that land went to women⁵.

The indigenization policies introduced by the government gives Zimbabweans some control over resources in the country and opens up opportunities for equal participation in the economy by women and men. Added to the indigenization drive, the improvement and revival of the agricultural sector means that in the long term, industries will be revived and women and men will be able to participate in the formal employment sector more. Currently, agriculture which is deemed to be the fastest growing sector, is exhibiting results from over 14 years ago. It is therefore anticipated that the indigenization policies currently being put into place and implemented, as with agriculture, will likely reach results in the medium to long term future. In addition to the indigenization policies are the varied economic frameworks put in place by the government, with Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio Economic Transformation (ZIMASSET) being the latest, in a long list of well-articulated policies.Zimbabwe's economic policy framework has always facilitated collaborations between the government, other governments as well as various non-state actors in the fulfilling the development agenda.

⁵ See Report of the Presidential Land Review Committee on the Implementation of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme 2000-2002 (Utete Report) at http://www.sarpn.org/documents/d0000622/P600-Utete_PLRC_00-02.pdf

5. **The closing of gender gaps in some of the critical areas of concern.** Since the coming into effect of the BPA, there has been a steady closing of gender gaps in the critical areas of concern. Notable gaps include;

- The reduction in the prevalence of HIV and AIDS, down from about 24.6% in 2003 to 15% as of 2014. Given the “feminized” nature of HIV infection, the reduction in infection levels means that there are less women being infected and therefore less women dying as from AIDS. The reduction in the HIV infection rates could also be related to the increase in legislation limiting sexual violence against women, such as the prevention of marital rape by law.
- Increased awareness of gender inequality issues. There is evidence that communities are now more aware of gender inequality issues, and generally the term “gender” is being understood to relate to equality of opportunities for women and men. While this appreciation may not yet have translated into real societal change in attitudes, the knowledge levels are an important first step in addressing gender equality and women empowerment. Thus for example, most sectors in society appreciate the need for gender equality considerations in policy formulation and operations, which has resulted in enhanced participation by women in various sectors that were previously inaccessible to women such as mining and large scale farming.
- The maintenance of high literacy levels among women and men and the achievement of gender parity in primary enrolment, even during the times of economic decline.⁶ Despite the economic decline in the Zimbabwe, the enrolment levels in tertiary institutions for young women and men while erratic, shows a steady increase in young women’s enrolment in universities in from about 23% in 2006 to 43% in 2011.⁷
- The increase of women in power and decision making positions. The numbers have increased significantly for women in political decision making, with figures only reaching 34% representation in the National Assembly and 48% in in the upper house after the July 2013 elections. However representation for women in local government has actually decreased from 18% in 2008 to 16% in 2013; other areas of decision making have witnessed a significant and steady growth. For example statistics show that within the civil service, women in leadership positions have increased steadily such as principal directors who moved from 18% to over 25% in a space of 3years. In other sectors there has also been a slow but steady increase, in the judiciary women judges now account for 50% of the judges in the Supreme Court, while other sectors such as the law enforcement agencies, in particular prisons the representation of women has remained low with the higher ranks only having about 25% women officers, while women make up between 33%-40% of middle management⁸.
- The creation of policies that have facilitated women’s access to communal and other land, thus capacitating them to own land, a key means of production.

The closing of gender gaps in these key areas is indicative of success and largely a result of the enabling policy and legislative provisions.

6. **The enactment of several laws in the period under review related to gender equality and women’s empowerment.** This has been exhibited through the passing of significant laws for gender equality such as;

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⁶Zimbabwe 2012: Millennium Development Goals Progress Report

⁷ZIMSTATS: Women and Men in Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (2012)

⁸ZIMSTATS: Women and Men in Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (2012)

- Administration of Estates Amendment Act (1997) – providing for the rights of wives and daughters to inherit from deceased husbands and fathers.
- The Maintenance Act (1999) – creating the right of women to claim maintenance for children born in or out of wedlock.
- Sexual Offences Act [now part of the Criminal Law (Codification) Act](2001)
- Constitutional No 14 of 2005, which introduced gender, marital status and disability as grounds of unlawful discrimination in the non-discrimination clause and also guaranteed women's equal rights to land
- Domestic Violence Act (2006) – legislating for the various types of sexual offences and their maximum sentences. In addition, making rape within marriage a criminal offence.
- Constitutional
- The Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013) which enshrines progressive provisions on the rights of women for example, the Constitution contains a quota provision for women representation in parliament. Women now have equal citizenship rights as men, age of marriage set at minimum age of 18 years for both boys and girls. Women now have guardianship rights over children born in wedlock, all appointed public positions to have an equal number of men and women and Gender Commission established as an independent constitutional body

These laws, as will be discussed in detail further in this report, are considered a success because they have created an environment that facilitates gender equality and women empowerment initiatives. These laws uphold and promote the human rights of women, and provide for equality of access, opportunities and resources to women equally with men.

Major Challenges: While significant strides have been made in implementing the BPA, there are still several challenges to full implementation of gender equality and women empowerment in Zimbabwe.

1. ***Inadequate implementation of the law and policies in place to advance gender equality.***
Although a comprehensive enabling legislative and policy framework exists in Zimbabwe, full implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action remains a challenge. Several factors are responsible for this state of affairs; and it would appear that major cause for this relates to the entrenched patriarchal nature of both society and its institutions. Against this background, even where the state has legislated for equality between men and women, the continued negative norms, attitudes and values prevent the full implementation of the laws.

A second challenge relates to the fact that most of the laws and policies in place to promote gender equality and women's empowerment are not known amongst the intended target group. Often women continue to suffer inequality even where law and policy are in their favour because they are unaware of the positive laws. However, the Government is in the process of strengthening the legal literacy programme to increase awareness of laws.

The lack of implementation of the laws and policies has been managed at two levels. In the first instance, the Government has undertaken partnerships with the various agencies of the UN and civil society to continue to raise awareness on the need for gender equality. While progress is slow, there has been an improvement in the knowledge and awareness levels, which make it easier for women to utilize the laws in place. In addition, women's NGOs have taken to litigation to enforce and therefore raise awareness on certain aspects of the law. Thus in recent years, there has been the litigation of test cases on key issues for women's human rights such as the mother's right to exercise guardianship over her child even during

the subsistence of a marriage⁹ or more recently the confirmation by the Supreme Court in Zimbabwe of the responsibility of the state to protect women from sexual violence and its consequences including unwanted pregnancy.¹⁰

2. **Inadequate budgetary allocations for the promotion of gender equality and women empowerment :(Allocations to MWAGCD and Line Ministries).** Another key challenge to implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action is the fact that the national machinery has inadequate resources to fund its programmes and activities. The MWAGCD has consistently received a low budget allocations of less than 1% of the total national budget for the past five years. Thus despite the provisions of the Beijing Platform for Action stating that adequate resources for the national machinery are a critical component for achieving gender equality. This has constrained full implementation of Ministry's programmes.

Despite the limited financial resources from the treasury, the MWAGCD has focused on prioritizing those interventions that will produce the most impact, such as improvement to the policy and legislative framework for gender equality, taking leadership in various national processes to promote gender equality such as the recently concluded Constitutional reform process. The continued implementation of gender budgeting across the ministries, although not very successful, helps to retain the focus on issues of gender equality in the formulation of budgets for the specific ministries. Further, the collaboration between the MWAGCD and its partners in the UNCT and in civil society has seen a significant portion of programmes being implemented through development assistance.

3. **Challenges in implementing socio-economic rights.** The economic challenges faced by the country in recent years have negatively affected the gains that the country had made in the area of gender equality and women empowerment. These economic challenges largely resulted in the feminisation of poverty, with women out of jobs and mainly engaging in the informal sector. Women still account for the majority that work the land in rural areas, but do not own it. This exacerbates their already vulnerable situation as their other rights, such as the right to health, become compromised. In addition the economic challenges negatively affected provision of social services such as water and sanitation which has resulted in women being seized with the burden of sourcing clean water and fuels, at the expense of their participation in public life. Further increased poverty means reduced access to educational opportunities for women and girls thus negating some of the advances that had been made in education.

Women's access to fiancé and micro credit has largely inhibited their effective participation in key economic sectors, such as mining, agriculture, tourism and manufacturing.

4. **Developments in the global political and economic context:** The global economic recession has negatively impacted the global gender equality agenda, as the reduced funding has affected gender equality and women's empowerment initiatives. The focus in development aid is targeted at governance issues, at the expense of social and economic rights.

⁹Margaret Dongo Test case wherein the Supreme Court ruled that married women were entitled to acquire passports for their children in the absence of their husbands.

¹⁰Mildred Mapingure Test case in which the Supreme Court ruled that the State had an obligation to compensate a rape victim for a pregnancy arising out of rape because the various actors in the criminal justice system failed to effectively execute their responsibility.

The countries in the global north have resorted to protectionist policies to support their industries, which results in dumping on the markets in the global south thereby stifling local manufacturing and producing sectors. The stifling of the local sectors means more jobs are lost as industries close because they are unable to compete with the cheap goods dumped on the market. This tends to prejudice women more, as they tend to lose jobs and suffer increased poverty. Examples include the textiles industry in Zimbabwe where women were employed but had to be retrenched with the importation of cheap clothing items from other parts of the world including second-hand clothes

Main Constitutional, legislative and/or legal developments

There are several key legislative developments that have occurred from the time the Beijing Platform for Action was adopted in Zimbabwe. Key among them are the following;

- i. **The Electoral Act (1990)** – the Electoral Act provides for participation by women in elections as candidates or voters, and makes specific provision against gender discrimination in Section 3(a) (i) which states that every citizen is entitled to “participate in government directly or through freely chosen representatives, and is entitled, without distinction on the ground of ...gender, ...education, ... or economic or social condition¹¹, to stand for office and cast a vote freely”
- ii. **Administration of Estates Amendment Act (1997)** – This Act changed the customary law positions that prohibited women and girls from inheriting from the estates of deceased husbands or fathers, to allow women and girls to inherit.
- iii. **Sexual Offences Act [now part of the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act] (2001)** – The Act introduced the “marital rape” clause i.e. criminalizing rape within marriage. The Act, for the first time in the history of legislation in Zimbabwe provided for criminalization of deliberate transmission of HIV and AIDS. The Act also addressed human trafficking and introduced harsher penalties for sexual offences.
- iv. **The Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act (2004)** – The Criminal Law Codification was enacted to consolidate and codify the various criminal acts, some which were covered by the law, and others which were covered under what was previously known as the “common law”. The Criminal Law (Codification and Reform Act) incorporates key pieces of legislation such as the former Sexual Offences Act, which are now all form part of the main Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act. This Act basically amends various sections of existing legislation and consolidates the criminal law legislation in Zimbabwe.
- v. **Domestic Violence Act (2006)** – The law and its regulations promulgated in 2008, provide the framework for addressing domestic violence. The Act gives a very detailed definition of domestic violence and acknowledges the non-physical forms of violence as domestic violence. The Act makes a novel provision for the treatment of domestic violence offences as criminal. The Act also provides for various forms of relief for survivors of domestic violence including protection from potential violence. A key provision of the Act is the provision for third parties to report domestic violence, where the person experiencing domestic violence themselves is unable to report it. The Act also establishes a Domestic Violence Council tasked with overseeing the implementation of the Act and monitoring the domestic violence in general.

¹¹Underlining writer's own emphasis.

vi. The Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (20) of 2013 – The Constitution of Zimbabwe enacted in 2013. The new Constitution has wide ranging and comprehensive gender equality provisions which are worth acknowledging, such as the clear provisions stating that gender equality as a founding value for the Constitution. Further the Constitution makes very clear provisions for equality between women and men and even in marriage. The Constitution of Zimbabwe not only provides for gender equality, but also makes provision for addressing past gender imbalances. The Constitution also provides for proportional representation by women in the House of Assembly. Additionally, the introduction of a Gender Commission in the new Constitution, another step in commitment to enhancing gender equality, should together with the national gender machinery, become a consolidated mechanism to monitor and enforce gender equality both within the state and non-state institutions

Dialogue between Government and Civil Society

The MWAGCD collaborates with various stakeholders in the implementation of the BPA. As noted earlier, the National Gender Forum/Gender Theme Group, coordinated by UN Women is the coalescing platform for the regular dialogue between government represented by MWAGCD and civil society. The National Gender Forum/Gender Theme Group is made up of women NGOs, members of the academia, representatives from the private sector with an interest in gender equality, representatives of girl child organizations and faith based organizations. The National Gender Forum/Gender Theme Group meets quarterly to share progress made in implementing gender equality.

The National Gender Forum/Gender Theme Group is also a key factor in the mechanisms to monitor implementation of the BPA. In particular, the National Gender Forum/Gender Theme Group participates in processes related to preparing reports of implementing the BPA, and other treaty body reports.

Cooperation in monitoring and implementing the BPA

Zimbabwe is involved in sub-regional and regional cooperation in sharing the knowledge and experiences of monitoring and implementing the Beijing Platform for Action through Southern African Development Community [SADC] and the African Union [AU]. Both the AU and SADC have developed Gender and Development gender protocols¹² based on the critical areas of the BPA. Thus through implementing and monitoring the AU Protocol and the SADC Gender Protocol, Zimbabwe in these platforms also addresses implementation of the BPA.

Both the Protocols have been instrumental in providing guidance to local implementation of the provisions of the BPA. The existence of the sub-regional and regional mechanisms to track implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and through their attendant peer review and reporting mechanisms have enabled domestication of a significant number of the provisions of the Beijing Platform for Action into local legislation in Zimbabwe, including enactment of the Domestic Violence Act and the gender sensitive provisions of the new Constitution of Zimbabwe as examples.

¹² The African Union has the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa [The African Women's Protocol] and SADC has the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development

How the Millennium Development Goals [MDGs] have facilitated or strengthened implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action

The Millennium Development Goals [MDG] strengthened and facilitated the implementation of the BPA. The coming into effect of the MDGs, five years after the BPA, with clear indicators served to focus efforts to enhance gender equality and women’s empowerment. The placing of time bound indicators meant that in order to achieve the MDGs, Government had to take focused actions. This proved to be useful, for example on MDG 3, related to gender equality. In a limited space of time, governments had to ensure that they eliminated gender disparity in primary and secondary education as well as increase women’s participation in leadership and decision making in all sectors.

Thus the MDGs gave impetus to the implementation of the BPA, across several of the critical areas of concern. While MDG 3 provided for direct gender equality interventions, other MDGs also influenced implementation of the other critical areas, since most of the indicators for the various goals had specific gender equality implications such as the indicators under goal related to young people and women’s access to and full participation in economic activity or the indicators under goals seven and eight related to how women interface with the environment, in particular their access to clean and safe water or their access to information and other communication technologies. The MDGs were therefore a crucial factor in enhancing gender equality in the period 2000 -2014.

Section Two: Progress in the implementation of the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action since 2009

Since 2009 the Government has strengthened the socio economic environment of the country to which was conducive for the various gender equality and women empowerment’s initiatives. Progress in this area was recorded in legislative, policy formulation and implementation of gender related programmes.

Women and Poverty

The Government of Zimbabwe remains committed to attainment of gender equality through ensuring the elimination of poverty. Statistics show that with the land reform programme, women benefited and acquired 18% of the A1 village land and 12% of the A2 large scale farming land was acquired by women. Zimbabwe has during the period under review; put in place several economic policies that have specific gender equality provisions intended to facilitate women’s participation in economic activities equally with men including accessing credit for businesses and equal access to employment opportunities.

| Strategic Objective | Actions Taken since 2009 | Implementation |
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| A1. Review, adopt and maintain macroeconomic policies and development strategies that address the needs and efforts of women in poverty. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short Term Economic Recovery Plan (STERP) (2009 – 2010) and Mid Term Economic Recovery Plan (MTERP) (2011 – 2013), recognised the importance of the role played by women in economic recovery programmes. The Zimbabwe Agenda for | The STERP and MTERP went a long in addressing socio economic and political challenges faced by women. The policies clearly articulated strategies that enhanced the implementation of gender equality provisions and commitments. |

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| | <p>Sustainable Socio Economic Transformation (ZIMASSET)(2013-2018) has dedicated section on gender and development and recognises gender mainstreaming in all the four thematic areas namely food and nutrition, value addition and beneficiation, infrastructure development and poverty reduction and social services.</p> | <p>Through ZIMASSET women empowerment initiatives are being mainstreamed in all key economic sectors</p> <p>However all the frameworks are negatively affected by limited resources.</p> |
| <p>A2. Revise laws and administrative practices to ensure women's equal rights and access to economic resources.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2011 Government enacted the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment [Chapter 14:33]. Section 3 of the Act empowers Government to specifically recognise women in the measures taken to implement the Act. Other special groups include young persons and person living with disabilities. • Broad Based Women's Economic Empowerment Framework (BBWEEF) (2012)The framework provides a systematic way of mainstreaming women in key economic sectors by the establishment of empowerment targets, mobilisation of financial resources and capacity building for women's effective economic participation. The framework is designed to serve women from all backgrounds and to be applied across all sectors, hence broad-based. • Gender-Responsive Economic Policy Management Initiative (GERPMI) (2013): aimed at ensuring gender equality in all sectors of the economy particularly in the light of indigenization of the economy. • To promote women's participation in agriculture, the government facilitated contract farming for women farmers and provided agricultural inputs. | <p>Government and women NGOs and development partners have continued to lobby gender mainstreaming in the current indigenization initiatives as well as in economic recovery activities in general.</p> |
| <p>A3. Provide women with access to savings and credit mechanisms and institutions.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women Development Fund was created to economically empower marginalized women at grassroots level. Cognisant of | <p>To date \$2 350 million has been disbursed to 1417 women's groups and 6630 women have benefitted</p> |

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| | <p>women's living realities and the challenges thereof, no collateral security is required in accessing the loans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government is promoting the establishment of Internal Lending and Saving Schemes meant to build a capital base, where participants are able to access loans at very low interest rates and with no collateral security required • Government is in the process of establishing a women's bank | <p>MWAGCD has encouraged women in communities to set up savings and lending clubs as well as to form groups through which they receive assistance for the implementation of small scale economic empowerment projects, such as small livestock rearing or informal trading.</p> |
| <p>A4. Develop gender-based methodologies and conduct research to address the feminization of poverty.</p> | <p>The Government in partnership with the world bank conducted research on women's participation in agriculture, tourism, mining and manufacturing. Based on these research papers, the Government developed a Broad Based Women's Economic Empowerment Framework</p> | <p>The research and the framework are informing legislative and policy changes.</p> |

Women and Poverty Challenges: The major challenge in addressing women and poverty is limited resources. The economic challenges have seen an increase in poverty, with the number of people living below the Total Consumption Poverty Line (TCPL) at 72.3% in 2011¹³, as a result of the decline in formal employment, even though statistics show that the economy is growing¹⁴. This has resulted in many of the productive people, predominantly women being engaged in the informal sector. Due to the uncertainty and insecurity of the informal sector this means increased poverty for women.

Education and Training of Women

The education and training of women is important both in terms of women accessing and exercising their human rights, as well as for their participation in all spheres of life. Zimbabwe has traditionally maintained high literacy rates at 97.5%¹⁵, with literacy rates remaining quite high at the height of Zimbabwe's economic decline in the period 2006-2010¹⁶. One of the successes and key interventions that the Zimbabwe government has undertaken in implementing gender equality is facilitating access to education for the girl child as part of addressing women's discrimination. This commitment is reflected in the new Constitution, which provides for the right to free and compulsory basic education, as well as the right for equal access to education, by all children in Section 27¹⁷. This section of the Constitution also calls for the provision of education opportunities equally between girls and boys. Generally Zimbabwe has managed to achieve gender parity in primary school. However more still needs to be done as the enrolment and completion rates in secondary school and

¹³ Zimbabwe 2012: Millennium Development Goals Progress Report

¹⁴ Zimbabwe 2012: Millennium Development Goals Progress Report states that the economy was projected to grow by 4%

¹⁵ Zimbabwe 2012: Millennium Development Goals Progress Report

¹⁶ Zimbabwe 2012: Millennium Development Goals Progress Report

¹⁷ Section 81 further emphasises the right to education, as one of the key rights a child is entitled to, including shelter, health and the right to a name among other rights.

tertiary institutions still skewed in favour of young men for various economic and social reasons including early and forced marriages of girls.

| Strategic Objective | Actions Taken since 2009 | Implementation |
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| <p>B.1. Ensure equal access to education.</p> | <p>The government partnered with development partners (led by UNICEF) established the Education Transition Fund (ETF) which facilitated access to education, and ensuring that children remain in schools.</p> <p>Government provides social safety nets for orphan and vulnerable children by paying school fees for them. 52% of the beneficiaries are girls</p> <p>The Government launched a 18+ Campaign against child marriage as a measure to keep girls in schools.</p> <p>The Government developed a Girls/Young Women Empowerment Framework, which has access to education as one of its strategies areas of intervention.</p> <p>Establishment of gender clubs in schools as an entry point of addressing gender stereotypes at an early age</p> | <p>Education is accessible to all, particularly at the primary school level, as a result of there is parity in enrolment at primary school level.</p> <p>The ETF among other things facilitated the purchase of textbooks, rehabilitation of schools infrastructure, provision of technical support to school governing bodies, on the job training for teacher and the provision of water and sanitation in schools facilities.</p> |
| <p>B.2. Eradicate illiteracy among women.</p> | <p>Through the ETF, the Ministry of Education was able to facilitate a “second chance” education for young people who had dropped out of school.</p> | <p>Due to on-going literacy initiatives both through formal and non-formal education, literacy rates for women in Zimbabwe remained high. The Second Chance Education Programme enabled young drop outs, especially young women to return to school since they are most likely to drop out due to teen pregnancy or even when they have to take on the roles of looking after ill parents or siblings.</p> |
| <p>B.3. Improve women's access to vocational training, science and technology, and continuing education.</p> | <p>Introduction of Maths and Science camps (2009)</p> | <p>Implemented through UNESCO and NGOs, these camps aim to encourage girls to participate in science, maths and other technical subjects. This has resulted in more girls entering tertiary institutions. In 2011, statistics showed that female university enrolment rose to 41%.</p> |

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| | | <p>In addition the increase in the number of tertiary institutions has seen an increase in the number of women in tertiary institutions.</p> <p>In teacher training institutions Zimbabwe has achieved gender parity.</p> |
| B.4. Develop non-discriminatory education and training. | An important policy directive introduced by the Ministry of Education, relates to allowing girls to come back school should they fall pregnant after giving birth . | <p>Implementation of existing policies ensures that there is no discrimination in education and training in Zimbabwe.</p> <p>The Ministry of Education has embarked on an initiative mainstream gender through the use of gender sensitive language in the educational tools used by children in schools, and ensuring that such as tools, especially textbooks depict women and men, boys and girls as equal to any task.</p> |
| B.5. Allocate sufficient resources for and monitor the implementation of educational reforms. | | |
| B.6. Promote lifelong education and training for girls and women. | The establishment of Zimbabwe Open University and Women’s University in Africa have provided an opportunity for women who were previously denied education an opportunity to acquire university education | Women continue to participate in non-formal education activities. |

Education and Training Challenges: Gender parity has been achieved in primary school, but the figures change as young women transition into secondary school and tertiary institutions. The drop in the number of young women pursuing higher education remains a challenge which the Government is trying to address. Young women’s failure to pursue higher education is a result of many factors, key among them being the increase in poverty that has resulted in livelihoods being prioritized ahead of education as families struggle to survive in harsh economic conditions.

Women and Health

The Government of Zimbabwe has prioritized women and health from the time of the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action. This is reflected in the various initiatives, policies and strategies that the Government has put in place to address health issues for women. These include the resuscitation of primary health care facilities in rural areas and low income urban areas, the introduction of Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) to those living with HIV as well as the “provider initiated HIV testing and counselling” to ensure that women are aware of their sero-status and therefore can make informed health choices. Given that women and men interface with health service provisions differently from women, a significant number of the policies related to health in Zimbabwe are quite

gender sensitive as a result of the years of designing women sensitive policies to address gender issues in HIV and AIDS. The Government of Zimbabwe's HIV and AIDS response has been quite successful, as evidenced by the reduction in HIV infection rates in general and among women¹⁸. The government continues to spearhead a successful PMTCT that has seen a significant decline in transmission of HIV from mother to child. As Zimbabwe makes PMTCT services available in all reproductive health and maternal, new-born and child health settings, there has been strengthened mutual accountability which has translates into improved maternal health and prevention addressing the root causes of maternal mortality.

Further to the interventions on HIV and AIDS, the Government of Zimbabwe, through the Ministry of Health has taken the policy decision to ensure that pregnant women, access medical attention and facilities for free. In addition, the Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMMA) (2010) aimed at reducing maternal mortality has been adopted at the national level. This has seen an increase in campaigns for expectant mothers to seek ante natal and post natal care.

In addition to the above, the Ministry of Health has undertaken successful campaigns to raise awareness on non-communicable diseases such as cancer. Initiatives to address cancers include the campaign to raise awareness on the need for voluntary testing that is being spearheaded by the Ministry of Health in association with development partners. This has also seen the introduction of the HPV vaccine for young girls that has been piloted in major cities in the country, aimed at reducing the incidences of cervical cancer. Additional responses include the introduction of the free Visual Inspection with Acetic Acid [VIAC] Programme for Cervical Cancer.

| Strategic Objective | Actions Taken since 2009 | Implementation |
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| C.1. Increase women's access throughout the life cycle to appropriate, affordable and quality health care, information and related services. | The National Health Strategy for Zimbabwe (2009-2013) aimed at protecting the right to health care for the poor and vulnerable through abolition of user fees, use of primary health care and promoting preventive healthcare. | The National Health Strategy has facilitated the resuscitation of primary health care services both in rural and low income urban areas. |
| C.2. Strengthen preventive programmes that promote women's health. | <p>Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMMA) (2010) aimed at reducing maternal mortality</p> <p>Health Transition Fund (2011) aimed at among other things to reduce maternal mortality and enhance ante natal care for women during the period 2011-2015</p> <p>The Government has commissioned a Blood Coupon/Voucher programme to improve the supply of affordable blood and its related products to women in need in an effort to avoid maternal deaths resulting from post</p> | <p>CARMMA targets access to health care for mothers in low income urban areas, and is aimed at being implemented through local authority primary healthcare facilities.</p> <p>This fund has facilitated access to pre and post natal care for rural women, who would otherwise not afford user fees in health institutions.</p> |

¹⁸Zimbabwe 2012: Millennium Development Goals Progress Report stating that the HIV infection rates have dropped from over 30% at the height of the HIV pandemic in Zimbabwe, to current levels of around 15%.

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| | <p>partumhaemorrhage. The programme has gone a long way in saving the lives of pregnant women in need of blood and its related blood products.</p> <p>In 2010, the Government developed National Operational Guidelines on Maternity Waiting Homes (MWHs) and commissioned the revitalization programme. The target has been to revitalize at least one MWH per district in the initial phase of the programme.</p> | |
| <p>C.3. Undertake gender-sensitive initiatives that address sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, and sexual and reproductive health issues.</p> | <p>National Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASRH) Strategy (2010 – 2015) National HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan (2011-2015) National strategic plan on PMTCT 2011-15</p> | <p>These comprehensive policy frameworks for addressing and managing HIV and AIDS have enhanced gender sensitive initiatives to reduce the prevalence and incidents of sexually transmitted diseases and to address reproductive health issues.</p> <p>In addition to the above, continued interventions by the National Aids Council, through the Aids Levy has ensured that constant gender sensitive awareness initiatives to address HIV and AIDS as well as other women's health issues.</p> |
| <p>C.4. Promote research and disseminate information on women's health.</p> | <p>Targeted research on women and health issue</p> | <p>Due to the impact of HIV and AIDS in Zimbabwe in the late 1990s, there is significant research that has been undertaken on women's health by various actors including academics, women NGOs, UN agencies and other actors. This has helped in various interventions to promote women's health initiatives including but not limited to accelerated support for those living with HIV and AIDS and leveraging for better maternal health.</p> |
| <p>C.5. Increase resources and monitor follow-up for women's health.</p> | <p>Introduction of Visual Inspection with Acetic Acid [VIAC] Programme for Cervical Cancer (2013-2017)</p> | <p>The introduction of the antiretroviral therapy (ART) programmes has resuscitated health follow-up programmes</p> |

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| | | <p>in rural communities, as those on ART are followed up. This has also been useful in other women's health issues such as women's reproductive health.</p> <p>The introduction of VIAC has also enhanced follow up to women's health at the local level, as the VIAC is available government hospitals that are accessible to the majority of women.</p> |
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Women and Health Challenges: The economic challenges facing the country have affected women accessing quality health, despite an enabling policy framework. The limited resources both at the national and family levels, means that the ideals for women and health, particularly as regards sexual and reproductive health may not be met. The health delivery system is heavily overloaded resulting in compromised service delivery in areas such as maternal health and the prevention and management of HIV and AIDS. Statistics show that during the reporting period maternal mortality remained high at 960/100 000 in 2010/11 according to the Zimbabwe Demographic Health Survey (ZDHS).

Due to socio and economic factors, and very limited access to contraceptives and family planning, girls between the age group 14-25 remain highly vulnerable to HIV infection with infection rates which are 4-5 times higher than that of boys the same age and teenage pregnancies. There is limited access to comprehensive sexuality education for this age group resulting in the high fertility rate, dropping out of school and health complications brought forth by early pregnancies including death.

Violence against women

Zimbabwe's response to violence against women is indicative of the Government's commitment to gender equality. In addition, to the existing legislation and regulations, policies have been put in place to support initiatives to combat violence against women, including regulations on the provision of shelters both by women NGOs and other actors. Further, the Government has put in place policies to also address sexual violence specifically the sexual abuse response framework. The Victim Friendly Court System designed for vulnerable witnesses has now also been extended to adult rape survivors who are considered vulnerable and unable to give evidence in open court. Zimbabwe continues to support interventions aimed at protecting and mitigating the effects of violence against women.

| Strategic Objective | Actions Taken since 2009 | Implementation |
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| D.1. Take integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women. | Zimbabwe has effectively responded to the problem of gender based violence through the implementation of the co-ordinated multi sectoral system. The multi sectoral approach has assisted survivors to access a wide range of services from health services; psychosocial support; | Domestic Violence Council has been set up to coordinate prevention of violence against women Women NGOs continue to provide support to women experiencing violence. The Protocol has facilitated the effective and enhanced support |

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| | <p>legal aid, protection services; safe sheltering and economic empowerment. GBV service providers have been trained on how to handle survivors in line with the established Standard Operating Procedures. The following services are offered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Police Victim Friendly Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - establishment of a Victim Friendly Unit, which is specialised Unit within the Zimbabwe Republic Police that has been mandated to police violence against women and children, particularly sexual offences and domestic violence. The Victim Friendly Units are in all Police Stations nationwide. - Health Services- all local hospitals and clinics offer services to survivors of GBV and have been trained to handle rape victims - Legal Aid- free legal support is offered by the Legal Aid Directorate and women’s organisations like Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association and Women and Law in Southern Africa. - Psychosocial Services- Anti Domestic Violence Counsellors have been established to offer professional counselling and mediation on domestic violence matters - Safe Shelters- Mainly offered by Women’s organisations and community based safe sheltering offered by traditional leaders. • Standard Operating Procedures for Safe Shelters (2012) in legislation and regulations¹⁹ • The Protocol on the Multi Stakeholder Management of | <p>for survivors of sexual violence. This has been implemented including the provision of Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) to avoid infection with HIV or other sexually transmitted infections as a result of rape, as well as the provision of emergency contraception to avoid pregnancy.</p> <p>These various policies have been put in place to alleviate the situation of women and girls, particularly with regards to violence against women. These policies together, with other policies for children such as National Action Plan for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (2011-2012) targeting girls and in the health sector such as National Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASRH) Strategy (2010 – 2015) and National HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan (2011-2015)</p> |
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¹⁹ Domestic Violence Act of 2007 and the Domestic Violence Regulations (2008)

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| | <p>Sexual Abuse and Violence (2012) is to address sexual abuse and violence against children and women in an effective and holistic manner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National GBV Strategy (2012-2015) it gives a guiding framework for a coordinated response. • Engagement with Traditional Leaders to create a critical mass of opinion leaders that will promote the message of social change for a zero tolerance to GBV. • Male Involvement and Participation in GBV response • In 2010, Government launched the Campaign to extend the 16 Days to 365 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence underpinned by the Zero Tolerance to Gender Based Violence. The Campaign is promoting the 4Ps concept which focuses on Prevention, Protection, Participation and programmes. As part of the campaign, information on Domestic Violence Act and other laws have been translated in local languages and distributed to rural, communities. • The Government established an Inter-Ministerial Committee on Rape and GBV as a response to ever rising cases of rape. | |
| <p>D.2. Study the causes and consequences of violence against women and the effectiveness of preventive measures.</p> | <p>National Baseline Survey on the Life Experiences of Adolescents (NBSLEA) conducted in 2012 focusing on sexual, emotional and psychological abuse experiences of adolescents with a view to creating a comprehensive response to sexual abuse and violence.</p> <p>ZDHS now has questions on</p> | <p>The NBSLEA informed the development of the Protocol on the Multi Stakeholder Management of Sexual Abuse and Violence developed and adopted in that year.</p> <p>Women NGOs such as Musasa Project continue to gather</p> |

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| | prevalence on VAW The VAW baseline study conducted in 2012-2013 focused on prevalence and causes of VAW | information and data on violence against women as part of their work |
| D.3. Eliminate trafficking in women and assist victims of violence due to prostitution and trafficking. | Government ratified the Anti-Trafficking Convention and parliament passed the anti-trafficking law | Government is working towards putting in place mechanism to ensure implementation of the anti-trafficking law |

Violence against Women Challenges: Despite the comprehensive response to violence against women, incidences of violence against women and girls both in the private and public spaces remain high. In 2011, Zimbabwe Demographic Health Survey showed that the prevalence of gender based violence stood at 47% among women.²⁰ One major challenge is the un-deterrent sentences being pronounced for grave violence against women cases, leading to reduced reporting to law enforcement agencies. Studies show that only 13% of women who suffer violence seek help from the police and only a combined 5% of those sought help from a doctor/medical institution, social services or a lawyer. Further the scourge of violence against women, particularly sexual violence pervades even to spaces where women should be safe such as churches, the family and the workplace. About 57% of women who suffered violence sexual violence reported the perpetrators as a husband/boyfriend or intimate partner while 78% of young women who experienced violence also reported the perpetrator as a boyfriend or romantic partner.

The limited resources available for gender equality initiatives also have a negative impact on the work to end violence against women. One of the major drivers of violence against women in Zimbabwe remains the perceived subordinate status of women in society. The Government will therefore continue to raise awareness on the equality of women and men, girls and boys in society in order to reduce discrimination and subsequent violence.

Women and Armed Conflict

Zimbabwe has not had domestic/internal armed conflict since the coming into effect of the Beijing Platform for Action. However, Zimbabwe has participated in various regional and international peace keeping initiatives. Zimbabwe remains committed to its international responsibility to increase women's participation in conflict resolution and decision making at all levels. This has been exhibited by the continued support that the Zimbabwe Defence Forces and Zimbabwe Police Service continue to give the international community in terms of peace keeping personnel, and this has included the seconding of very senior women officers to peace keeping missions. Further, Zimbabwe by virtue of being part of the United Nations, has adopted UN Resolution 1325, hence the actions to ensure that peace keeping missions adhere to the requirements of Resolution 1325. This resolution obligates the government to ensure that in addressing conflict, gender parity and the concerns of women and girls are taken into account in any response to conflict, including ensuring that gender perspectives are constantly taken into account in any conflict resolution initiative.

In the aftermath of the 2008 harmonized elections, the political parties involved in the election had to negotiate the setting up of a government national unity which set through the Global Political Agreement. The process of negotiations created Zimbabwe's inclusive government for the period 2009-2013.

²⁰Zimbabwe Demographic Health Survey (ZDHS) 2010/2011

| Strategic Objective | Actions Taken since 2009 | Implementation |
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| E.1. Increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protect women living in situations of armed and other conflicts or under foreign occupation. | <p>Women took part in the negotiation of the Global Political Agreement .</p> <p>Setting up of the Organ on National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration (OHNRI) tasked to facilitate peace building and reconciliation .</p> <p>Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee (JOMIC) set up under the GPA to monitor conflicts of a political nature during the lifespan of the inclusive government. (2010)</p> | <p>The whole negotiation process had limited participation of women, with only one being an official negotiator and others being part of the political party teams.</p> <p>Appointment of a woman as co-minister responsible for the OHNRI.</p> <p>The OHNRI working together with JOMIC were able to initiate community level peace dialogues, initially on the subject of political diversity .</p> |
| E.4. Promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace. | Increase of in women in peace keeping forces | Zimbabwe has been able to meet the 20% UN quota of requirement of women police officers participating in peace keeping missions ²¹ . |

Women and the Economy

Participation by women in the economy is one sure way of guaranteeing their equality and empowerment. To that end, Zimbabwe has put in place several policies promoting equal participation in economic activity by women. The continued policy support for women in the informal sector and for small to medium enterprises by the government of Zimbabwe is intended to accelerate the full participation in the economy by women.

| Strategic Objective | Actions Taken since 2009 | Implementation |
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| F.1. Promote women's economic rights and independence, including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Constitution in terms of the national objectives provides for equality at work Section 25 and in terms of labour rights in Section 65 provides for equality for women in the workplace. • Labour Act provides for non-discrimination in the selection, recruitment and promotion. Further the Government has ratified all ILO Conventions on gender and the workplace and recognises the ILO principle equal pay for equal work of equal value • The Tourism Policy, which | <p>The Government in partnership with development partners continues to work on ensuring improved working conditions for women in both the formal and the informal sector.</p> <p>Government its economic framework such as ZIMASSET continues to create opportunities for employment.</p> |

²¹<http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2012/10/zimbabwean-women-police-officers-make-inroads-as-members-of-the-blue-berets/>

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| | <p>promotes women’s participation in the sector by reserving a 30% quota;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Policy that provides for the reservation of 30% of its loan facilities for women. • Reservation of a 30% for women in the mining mechanisation that is run by the Ministry of Mines and Mining Development; <p>(SEE SECTION ON WOMEN AND POVERTY AS THE INTERVENTIONS ARE THE SAME)</p> | |
| F.2. Facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade. | <p>20% of land reserved for women</p> <p>Government is facilitating women’s participation in international and regional trade fairs as a means of linking them to markets.</p> <p>(SEE SECTION ON WOMEN AND POVERTY AS THE INTERVENTIONS ARE THE SAME).</p> | (SEE SECTION ON WOMEN AND POVERTY AS THE INTERVENTIONS ARE THE SAME). |
| F.3. Provide business services, training and access to markets, information and technology, particularly to low-income women | Government initiated a programme to facilitate women access to appropriate technology for small scale miners. Through this programme women in agriculture are being supported in value addition of their agricultural produce | Government through its stakeholder partners has facilitated training for low income women in project development and management, including training in management of small businesses. |
| F.4. Strengthen women's economic capacity and commercial networks. | Government has facilitated the creation of commercial networks in the four key economic sectors of the country which include agriculture, mining, tourism and manufacturing. | Through these network women have manages collectively engage lobby and advocate for their effective participation in these key areas. |
| F.5. Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination. | Section 24 of the Constitution provides for the right to work for without inhibitions for women, including the right to provision of care at work to enable women to work, while Section 65 provides for elimination of discrimination at work. | This has already been implemented in terms of existing labour legislation. |
| F.6. Promote harmonization of work and family responsibilities for women and men. | Section 65 of the Constitution provides for labour rights without discrimination and provides for maternity leave for women, as well as equal pay. | |

Women and Economy Challenges: The comprehensive policy framework for economic development may be gender sensitive, but the limited resources hamper women’s meaningful participation in the

economy. Finally, cultural and social attitudes that relegate women to small and medium enterprises continue to close out women opportunities mainstream trade and economic activity.

It is noteworthy that while women in Zimbabwe are very enterprising, the lack of access to credit has hampered their participation in the economy and women remain on the periphery of economic activity. The economic empowerment of women therefore has to become a key priority if gender equality and women empowerment are to be achieved.

Women in Power and Decision-making

The situation of women in power and decision making has been steadily improving in the last five years. This is in line with the prioritization that Zimbabwe has placed on women's participation in power and decision making positions. Women in power and decision making has been one of Zimbabwe's priority areas from the time of the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action. On the political decision making front, women in Parliament are now 35% of the representatives, a status that was achieved in July 2013 after the coming into effect of the new Constitution. This signifies a huge increase from 17% in 2008. The introduction of the proportional representation seats in the National Assembly, and the "zebra system" for election into Senate have facilitated this growth.

The process leading to the enactment of the new Constitution raised the profile of women leaders and enhanced appreciation for the presence of women in leadership and decision making positions. To date there has been significant increases in women in decision making positions in various institutions. In government women are beginning to take leadership of previously male dominated positions, such as Permanent Secretaries and Directors in ministries²²

| Strategic Objective | Actions Taken since 2009 | Implementation |
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| G.1. Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making. | New Constitution Section 124(1)(b) providing for proportional representation in Parliament Section New Constitution Section 17 provides for equal representation of women and men in all appointed positions in public institutions. | The proportional representation provisions have already been implemented in the National Assembly and Senate. |
| G.2. Increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership. | Launch of the " 50:50 campaign " to encourage increase of the number of women seeking political office Capacity building initiative for women leader both in politics and decision making is on-going | Government in partnership with development partners and civil society organisation continues to build capacity of women leaders and those interested in political office. |

Challenges for Women in Power and Decision Making: The major challenge for women's participation in decision making is the cultural attitudes that do not value women's leadership. Added to this, is the fact that for most women, access to political leadership must be through a political party. Political parties in Zimbabwe are male led and dominated, thus women have very limited leadership and influence opportunities. Further there are still very few women in leadership

²² ZIMSTATS: Women and Men in Zimbabwe Report 2012

in local government, the private sector, parastatals and at the level of senior management in the civil service.

Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

Zimbabwe is committed to achieving gender equality and women empowerment. The Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development (MWAGCD), is responsible for implementing and coordinating gender equality and women empowerment programmes at the government level. Further it is responsible for coordinating gender mainstreaming across all government ministries as well as coordinating other stakeholders outside of state institutions on the implementation of gender equality and women empowerment programmes. In addition, MWAGCD recently revised National Gender Policy (NGP) which seeks to carry on the agenda of addressing gender equality from the former NGP. The new policy places emphasis on eradicating violence against women because of its pervasive nature to gender equality and women empowerment. The new policy also seeks to provide a broad based approach to addressing gender equality both in state and non-state institutions across the various sectors including the private sector.

| Strategic Objective | Actions Taken since 2009 | Implementation |
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| Create or strengthen national machineries and other governmental bodies. | The establishment of the National Gender Commission to complement existing framework in terms of the new Constitution | The process to set up the gender commission are underway |
| H.2. Integrate gender perspectives in legislation, public policies, programmes and projects. | New National Gender Policy (NGP)(2013-2014) The country's economic blue prints have always prioritized gender; The laws of Zimbabwe will have to be aligned with the new constitution to ensure that all gender sensitive provisions of the constitution translate into policies and programmes, under the leadership of the MWAGCD (SEE SECTION ON WOMEN AND POVERTY AS THE INTERVENTIONS ARE THE SAME). | The NGP is the framework through which the Government works to mainstream gender as well as to monitor implementation of gender equality across all sectors. Gender budgeting remains instrumental in tracking how much money is allocated to women by the national treasury. |
| H.3. Generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation | There is now policy commitment under the National Gender Policy to develop gender disaggregated data through the national statistics agency ZIMSTATS in consultation with the gender focal group that has been set up by the MWAGCD. | Strong integration of gender disaggregated data in the ZDHS, Census. The National Statistical Offices produces the man and women reports after every two years. A specific working group on gender has been set up to identify gender gaps in relation to statistics and come up with |

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| | | strategies of addressing these gaps. |
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Challenges for Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women: The greatest challenge facing the MWAGCD as the country’s national machinery for gender equality and women empowerment is inadequate resources. Further, the delay in changing of attitudes to gender equality has slowed down progress in ensuring gender equality. Further, another challenge relates to the lack of gender disaggregated data to enable the national machinery to track progress made in implementing gender equality.

Human Rights of Women

Zimbabwe has comprehensive legal framework for the human rights of women as indicated in the key legislations stated earlier. The greatest development and enhancement of the human rights of women has been the enactment of Zimbabwe’s new Constitution. The Constitution seeks to consolidate the women’s human rights namely equality before the law, equal access and opportunities both in the public and private spheres as well as providing for affirmative action to deal with previous disadvantages. The Constitution specifically incorporates the international human rights framework in Section 46(1) (c) which states that in interpretation of the Constitution, any body, court or tribunal “*must take into account international law and all treaties and conventions to which Zimbabwe is a party*”.

The Constitution provides for and recognizes the equality of men and women throughout and state as a founding value and principle. It also recognises the equality of the sexes in Section 3(1) (g). Further, the Constitution states gender balance as an objective. Section 17 provides that the state “*must promote the full participation of women in all spheres of Zimbabwean society on the basis of equality with men*”²³ While section 56 gives the women the *right to equal opportunities in political, economic, cultural and social spheres*”²⁴. These sections capture the essence of Zimbabwe’s commitment to gender equality and the provision of equal access to opportunities for women and men. The Constitution also provides for equality in marriage, in the workplace, in the economy and public leadership and participation to address the issues of women empowerment in the private and public sectors.

| Strategic Objective | Actions Taken since 2009 | Implementation |
|---|---|---|
| I.1. Promote and protect the human rights of women, through the full implementation of all human rights instruments, especially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. | Enactment of the New Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013), thereby domesticating the major provisions of CEDAW and other women’s human rights instruments. Zimbabwe state party reporting under CEDAW done in 2012 and recommendations from the committee are being implemented | The Government and other stakeholders are currently working to align the various laws to the new Constitution to provide for gender equality. |
| I.2. Ensure equality and non-discrimination under the law and in practice. | New Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013) guaranteeing equality before the law | Zimbabwe has independence guaranteed equality before the laws. |
| I.3. Achieve legal literacy. | Government has embarked on a legal literacy programme through the publication of a Family Laws Handbook, as well as simplified pamphlets on the family laws. The | The Ministry in partnership with civil organisation continues to ensure women’s access to justice |

²³ Section 17(1)(a)

²⁴ Section 56(2)

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| | objective of the programme is to explain family related legislation in a simplified form, thereby improving women's access to Justice. | through legal literacy programmes, especially on the new constitution. |
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Challenges to Human Rights of Women: Previous experience have shown that the enactment of enabling laws does not necessarily translate into change in behaviours of society or better access to human rights for women. This is mostly due to the attitudes of society, which have yet to shift to fully appreciate the importance of equal participation of women in society. Thus while the new Constitution is a key development, it will need to be supported with legal literacy and change in norms and behaviour. Further the inadequacy of resources to implement the various provisions of the Constitution such as addressing past gender imbalances in terms of realigning state and other public institutions to meet gender equality requirements might mean a delay in full implementation of the Constitution.

Women and the Media

The media remains an important tool in shaping society and its views. The media in Zimbabwe is no exception and remains a critical voice in terms of shaping views on gender equality and women's empowerment. Since the coming into effect of the Beijing Platform for Action, efforts have been made to increase the levels of gender awareness among media practitioners with a view to raising their levels of appreciation of the need for gender equality in the media as well as how to portray women (as leaders, consumers of news and citizens) in non-stereotypical ways.

The development of new forms of media and information technologies has also been an important development in terms of the variety of media available to citizens. Statistics show that the technologies like the mobile phone have made media more accessible to women and men alike, with about 86% of Zimbabweans having access to it. Mobile phones serve both as means of communication but also as information sharing platforms, thus complementing existing forms of media in terms of availing information to women.

| Strategic Objective | Actions Taken since 2009 | Implementation |
|---|--|--|
| J.1. Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication. | National Gender Policy seeks to address this through has provisions for engender the media | There has been slow implementation of increasing women leadership in the media. |
| J.2. Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media. | National Gender Policy has provisions for engender the media. | The Government in partnership with civil society organisations continue to encourage non-stereotypical portrayal of women in the media, through training for journalist and engagement with the editors. |

Women and the Media Challenges: The media remains male dominated in terms of leadership and ownership. None of the major newspapers are owned by women. In addition, most of the media do not seem to have gender policies that govern the way they operate or their staff. Another challenge is that the media, especially the print media is still inaccessible to the greater part of the population as a result of cost, and in some instances the failure by service providers to reach certain parts of the

country. A disturbing trend however, has been the use of ICTs to perpetuate discrimination against women, particularly among young people, who use ICTs to portray women as objects.

Women and the Environment

Environment and climate change issues are critical to Zimbabwe for many reasons. The country's economy is based on agriculture and the utilization of natural resources and minerals. In addition Zimbabwe is a country that still relies heavily on the natural resources for fuel, food and general livelihoods. This makes the subject of environment management important, and has informed the policy framework that Zimbabwe has put in place to support protection of the environment. Statistics already show that the majority of those living in rural areas and likely to rely on natural resources are women who also bear the responsibility of finding water and firewood. This has resulted in several community level initiatives to protect the environment wherein women participate in decision making. Zimbabwe remains committed to ensuring a clean environment, and has managed to maintain a low deforestation rate of just 1.5%. Zimbabwe remains committed to the international community interventions on environment management and climate change, having ratified all the major conventions and protocols.

| Strategic Objective | Actions Taken since 2009 | Implementation |
|--|--|---|
| K.1. Involve women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels. | The National Gender Policy has now incorporated the issue of environment, as a key area of intervention. | At the local level, where communities are taking leadership and responsibility for environment management, women do participate in decision making. |
| K.2. Integrate gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programmes for sustainable development. | The various economic policies and development interventions developed by the government, such as the MTERP and ZIMASSET all incorporate gender concerns. | Efforts have been made to mainstream gender into sustainable development and environment management programmes. |
| K.3. Strengthen or establish mechanisms at the national, regional, and international levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women. | Some studies have been conducted to establish the relation between gender and the environment | Zimbabwe continues to participate in regional and international initiatives to manage environment degradation and climate change. |

Women and the Environment Challenges: Environment management remains a key concern for Zimbabwe. A major challenge in this area is inadequate data and information on the environmental changes on women and their livelihood. The impact of global warming has not been properly analysed in relation to women in Zimbabwe.

The Girl Child

Zimbabwe's commitment to developing the rights and situation of girls is evidenced in the manner in which education for the girl child has been prioritized. There are several initiatives in place to ensure that girls are not discriminated in schools, including the formulation of policies to encourage them to attend school even when they have had to drop out of school. The Government of Zimbabwe has also embarked on various campaigns through the various stakeholders on issues of the girl child such as the two ministries of education and MWAGCD, with a view to reducing discrimination against the

girl child in the family and in society. This has resulted in more girls enrolling into school and pursuing higher education.

The Ministry of Health and Child Care and stakeholders in the justice delivery system have also been instrumental in calling for an end to discrimination against the girl child especially as regards child and early marriages, sexual abuse and exploitation. There is a vast array of policies and frameworks to ensure that the girl child is protected in Zimbabwe.

| Strategic Objective | Actions Taken since 2009 | Implementation |
|--|---|--|
| L.1. Eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl-child. | <p>New Constitution provides for the equal access to education for both boys and girls, its further set the minimum age of marriage for both at 18</p> <p>Domestic Violence Acts criminalise all act of violence and discrimination against the girl child</p> <p>Girl/ Young Women Empowerment Framework provides for strategies that targeted at eliminating all forms of discrimination against the girl child</p> | Government continues with implementation of the constitutional and legal provision that guarantee the rights of the girl child . |
| L.2. Eliminate negative cultural attitudes and practices against girls. | SEE SECTION ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN | MWAGCD in collaboration with child rights and women NGOs have been instrumental in ensuring that negative cultural practices and attitudes against girls are reduced. These interventions enhanced awareness on child sexual abuse of girls and caused multiple interventions to protect the girl child. |
| L.3. Promote and protect the rights of the girl-child and increase awareness of her needs and potential. | Girl /Young Women Empowerment Framework , provides for programming around leadership development and increased awareness for girls and young women | The Government in partnership with development partner continues to programme on this area. |
| L.4. Eliminate discrimination against girls in education, skills development and training. | SAME AS ABOVE | The Education Act’s provisions on equal access to education has resulted in increased opportunities |
| L.5. Eliminate discrimination against girls in health and nutrition. | SAME AS ABOVE | |
| L.6. Eliminate the economic exploitation of child labour and protect young girls at work. | The Government is working with development partners in eliminating the worst forms of child labour. | |
| L.7. Eradicate violence against the girl-child | The Protocol on the Multi Stakeholder Management of Sexual Abuse and Violence (2012) developed [under the leadership of the Judicial Service | This Protocol provides a comprehensive framework for managing violence against girls. |

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| | <p>Commission] to provide a framework to address sexual abuse and violence against children and women in an effective and holistic manner.</p> <p>SEE SECTION ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN</p> <p>National Action Plan for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (2011-2012) the NAP for OVCs is designed to create a national framework the protection of children and for the management of violence against children and in particular sexual violence, exploitation and other forms of abuse.</p> | <p>In addition, the Protocol has placed the responsibility to raise awareness on girl child sexual abuse on various state actors, who have taken on the role diligently and an impressive multi stakeholder response to girl child sexual abuse has been operating.</p> <p>The NAP for OVCs has been implemented in various ways to protect all children and the girl child in particular, in terms of sexual abuse.</p> |
| L.8. Promote the girl-child's awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life. | | <p>The introduction of the Child Parliament and junior local authorities, where gender equality in leadership is encouraged and exercised has seen an increase in the number of girls participating in social and political life.</p> |
| L.9. Strengthen the role of the family in improving the status of the girl-child. | | |

Girl Child Challenges: Girls remain vulnerable to abuse both in the home and in public spaces due to deep seated cultural and religious practices. Thus for example girls find themselves being the first ones forced to drop out of school during times of economic distress. Further, girls are the ones that are likely to also drop out of school to take care of sick parents/guardians or to look after siblings in the event of the death of parents/guardians. The increase in poverty means that despite the positive steps made in providing education and an enabling environment for girls to grow up, girls are still vulnerable to discrimination and exclusion.

Section Three: - Data and statistics

The greatest challenge in tracking implementation of gender equality in Zimbabwe has been the difficulty in establishing national indicators for monitoring progress due to lack of adequate data and statistics. An additional challenge relates to the fact that the responsibility to collect data related to implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action remains unresolved. While civil society organizations attempt to collect gender disaggregated data, in the specific areas that they operate in, there is generally no national level responsibility for the collection of data on implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action as a whole. The national statistics body, ZIMSTATS collects data at the

national level, however this generic data is not tailored to respond to the questions related to implementation of the BPA.

Efforts are underway to develop gender specific data collection tools, as evidenced in the indicators developed for implementation of the NGP. While the indicators may not meet the detailed format of the “Minimum Set of Gender Indicators”, a significant number of issues provided for in the Minimum Set of Indicators are actually covered under the indicators for the implementation of the NGP. The current NGP provides for a set of indicators to monitor the eight critical areas it focuses on, but again the responsibility for data collection is left with ZIMSTATS and other research institutions.

Statistics related to rural women, women living with HIV and AIDS are available through ZIMSTATS as the institutions collects data on a variety of issues. Further, since the advent of the land reform programme in Zimbabwe together with the requirements of MDG one, data on rural women may be available from ZIMSTATS. In addition, given the priority that the government of Zimbabwe has placed on HIV and AIDS, sex-disaggregated data on HIV/AIDS, specifically reflecting the national figures on women living with HIV and AIDS is available from ZIMSTATS. The national data on HIV/AIDS is being collected and systematized for broader national presentation by the responsible institutions i.e. the National Aids Council and the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare via HMIS (Health Management Information System) .

Over the years partnership by the MWACGD with UN and other development partners have filled in gaps in areas such as violence against girls and young women. For example in 2012-2013, a baseline survey on Violence Against Women was carried under the leadership of

There are opportunities to strengthen data collection on women and girls through the existing surveys and reports such as the ZDHS, the household surveys and the ZimVac. The men and women report produced by ZIMSTATS relies on already collected data from other surveys. The MWACGD intends, over the next two years, to strengthen its collaboration and work with ZIMSTATS to identify gaps in gender data and influence surveys by ZIMSTATS so that they cover these gaps. In addition, specific surveys to address each of the critical areas for better analysis of progress in each of the critical areas will be undertaken under this collaboration.

Mainstreaming of gender in statistics and data collections remains a commitment of the MWACGD and this is part of its strategy of monitoring other government departments’ performance in meeting gender equality obligations in terms of the new Constitution, the NGP and other regional and international commitments that Zimbabwe has acceded to.

Section Four: Emerging priorities

Key Priorities for Action

Acceleration of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for action in the next five years for Zimbabwe is critical given the challenges and numerous gaps noted in this report. Key priorities therefore will not focus on the critical areas of concern alone, but also on administrative

arrangements to facilitate better tracking and monitoring of implementation of gender equality and empowerment.

a. Critical Areas of Concern

The twelve critical areas of concern identified in the Beijing Platform for Action are important and interrelated. Therefore in identifying critical priorities for action, Zimbabwe is guided by its NGP which has identified the following as the core focus areas for the period 2013-2017 viz;

- i. Gender, Constitutional and Legal Rights: The focus here would be on aligning the laws to the new Constitution as well as raising awareness on the provisions of the Constitution and the rights it now provides for women.
- ii. Gender and Economic Empowerment: This would focus on increasing women's capacity to meaningfully participate in economic activity. This would cover issues such as access to credit and the means of production such as land. It may also be necessary to put in place a policy framework for women's participation in the economy both in terms of the formal and informal sectors. The MWAGCD are focusing on the key economic sectors identified in ZIMASSET to ensure women's full participation
- iii. Gender, Politics and Decision Making: Women remain under represented in political, economic and other forms of decision making. It is therefore important to fully implement the proposed affirmative action provisions of the new Constitution to increase the numbers of women in decision making, including encouraging more women to seek political leadership.
- iv. Gender and Health: The targets here relate to reducing maternal mortality, the incidence of HIV infection in women in the 15-49 age groups, including implementing all the policies on enhancing women's health.
- v. Gender Education and Training: Focusing on increasing the number of girls accessing higher and tertiary education, and the creation of a policy framework that supports women's non-formal education and pursuit of technical and professional qualifications.
- vi. Gender Based Violence: Given the comprehensive domestic violence legislative and policy framework, focus should now be on addressing the causes and ways to eliminate violence against women and girls, with a specific focus on implementation of preventive laws and programmes to change practices and attitudes.
- vii. Gender and Environment: There is inadequate information on women and the environment; therefore focus should be on demystifying environment management and climate change, the creation of gender sensitive policies and enhancement of participation by women in matters related to management of the environment.
- viii. Gender, Media and ICTS: There is still a great need to change the stereotypical presentation of women in the media. This will require gender mainstreaming in the media institutions themselves, as well as enhancing women's access to new forms of media and ICTs. Further there is need to harness the power and potential of media and technology for the advancement of women's rights.

These eight areas will need specific focus, given that performance and implementation in the period under review has failed to meet most of the actions that should have been taken. The major limitation to the implementation of the critical areas has been the inadequacy of resources. Therefore these identified areas will succeed on the back of adequate financial and other support. It is imperative therefore that there is support for the national machinery to implement these critical areas. The collaboration and support of women NGOs and other stakeholders cannot be over-emphasized.

b. Administrative arrangements

One of the greatest challenges of monitoring and providing a comprehensive and fair assessment of implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action has been the gaps in terms of information and data. It is therefore important that in implementing the now identified priority areas, the following be taken into account;

- i. Research: The current analysis of implementation of the critical areas is in most cases without baseline information. Even where there is baseline information, there are no further mechanisms to continue action research in implementation of the critical areas. Further in most of the critical areas due to capacity and resource constraints, most of the research required to be undertaken was not done. Thus in the next phase, research will be a key component of implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.
- ii. Data Collection: Data collection for implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was not assigned to MWAGCD. ZIMSTATS was thus supposed to mainstream gender and provide gender disaggregated data on the critical areas but this did not happen. Thus in the next phase, there will be development of both indicators and a system for data collection that makes data on implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action readily accessible and available. The MWAGCD will work closely with ZIMSTATS on this.
- iii. Knowledge Management System: In addition to inaccessibility of data, a major challenge with assessing implementation of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action has been the fact that significant amounts of strategic information are just not readily available. Further, where the information is available, it is fragmented and scattered. For example it is difficult to give the information on women and the economy, despite the presence of anecdotal data that shows the poor participation of women. In the next phase, it is imperative that there be collation of all the data relating to gender equality and empowerment under the coordination of the MWAGCD.
- iv. Violence against women indicators: The violence against women indicators proposed for monitoring implementation of management of violence against women have not been utilized. Adoption of those indicators would go a long way in beginning to address some of the gaps in information currently available on violence against women in terms of implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and enhancing the prevention and management mechanisms currently in place.

Gender equality and women empowerment remain critical and relevant to any meaningful discussion on development. There can be no development without the participation of women, and the participation of women should not be an add-on, but should be at the core of discussions on development. The participation of women in development is dependent on their freedom from violence, their ability to speak and be heard and their access to resources and opportunities equally with men. Outside of this, there can be sustainable development and thus the key recommendation is that there is need to sustain the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at the international and local levels. The Government remains committed to supporting the country level plans of action towards achieving gender equality and women empowerment. In particular;

- i. There must be a global consensus on the continuance of implementing gender equality and women empowerment that is backed by capacity and financial resources.
- ii. Consolidation of the indicators for the regional and international gender equality and women empowerment frameworks, particularly in terms of monitoring and reporting will facilitate better appreciation and understanding of the interventions being undertaken to enhance gender equality at the international, regional and local levels.
- iii. There is need to formulate indicators that can facilitate the easy tracking of implementation of the actions required under the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.
- iv. Policy frameworks related to gender equality and women empowerment must be disseminated to all levels of society for ease of implementation of gender equality and women empowerment initiatives.



Annexure A: Excerpts of the Constitution

Section 17 Gender Balance

- (1) *The State must promote full gender balance in Zimbabwean society, and in particular—(a) the State must promote the full participation of women in all spheres of Zimbabwean society on the basis of equality with men; (b) the State must take all measures, including legislative measures, needed to ensure that—*
- (i) both genders are equally represented in all institutions and agencies of government at every level; and*
 - (ii) women constitute at least half the membership of all Commissions and other elective and appointed governmental bodies established by or under this Constitution or any Act of Parliament;*
- (c) the State and all institutions and agencies of government at every level must take practical measures to ensure that women have access to resources, including land, on the basis of equality with men.*
- (2) *The State must take positive measures to rectify gender discrimination and imbalances resulting from past practices and policies.*

Section 56 Equality and non-discrimination

- (1) *All persons are equal before the law and have the right to equal protection and benefit of the law.*
- (2) *Women and men have the right to equal treatment, including the right to equal opportunities in political, economic, cultural and social spheres.*
- (3) *Every person has the right not to be treated in an unfairly discriminatory manner on such grounds as their nationality, race, colour, tribe, place of birth, ethnic or social origin, language, class, religious belief, political affiliation, opinion, custom, culture, sex, gender, marital status, age, pregnancy, disability or economic or social status, or whether they were born in or out of wedlock.*
- (4) *A person is treated in a discriminatory manner for the purpose of subsection (3) if—*
- (a) they are subjected directly or indirectly to a condition, restriction or disability to which other people are not subjected; or*
 - (b) other people are accorded directly or indirectly a privilege or advantage which they are not accorded.*
- (5) *Discrimination on any of the grounds listed in subsection (3) is unfair unless it is established that the discrimination is fair, reasonable and justifiable in a democratic society based on openness, justice, human dignity, equality and freedom.*
- (6) *The State must take reasonable legislative and other measures to promote the achievement of equality and to protect or advance people or classes of people who have been disadvantaged by unfair discrimination, and—*
- (a) such measures must be taken to redress circumstances of genuine need;*
 - (b) no such measure is to be regarded as unfair for the purposes of subsection (3).*

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