



From Grassroots Level to the High-Level Political Forum 2021

CSO in Zimbabwe's Perspectives on the SDGs Progress

Voluntary National Review Spotlight Report



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Acronyms

A4SD	Action for Sustainable Development
AAAQ	Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Quality
ASRH	Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health Strategy
CAFOD	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development
CBOs	Community based organizations
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination
CSO(s)	Civil Society Organization (s)
EU	European Union in Zimbabwe
GBV	Gender based violence
GCAP	Global Action for Sustainable Development Goals
GHI	Global Hunger Index
HLPF	High Level Political Forum
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NANGO	National Association of Non-Governmental Organisation
NAP for OVC	National Action Plan for Orphans and Vulnerable Children
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
NDSI	National Development Strategy I
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NPRC	National Peace and Reconciliation Commission
PRFT	Poverty Reduction Forum Trust
PWDs	People with Disabilities
PWSSC	Provincial Water and Sanitation Subcommittee
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TSP	Transitional Stabilization Program
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

VNR	Voluntary National Review
WHO AFRO	World Health Organization Regional Office for Africa
ZACC	Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission
ZHRC	Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission
ZIMASSET	Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Social Economic Transformation
ZINWA	Zimbabwe National Water Authority
ZNASP IV	Zimbabwe National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan



Acknowledgements

CSOs in Zimbabwe have been actively involved in monitoring the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals before and after its adoption on 25 September 2015 by the United Nations. The CSOs work is based on the realization that the 2030 Agenda is a progressive global development framework. The establishment of the Sectorial - CSOs Sustainable Development Goals Monitoring Framework by the National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (NANGO) and the formation of the Zimbabwe CSOs Reference Group on SDGs coordinated by Poverty Reduction Forum Trust (PRFT) is commendable. This assist in CSOs contribution towards the achievement of SDGs. These mechanisms and structures have enhanced CSOs representation and engagement with grassroots communities, government and other development actors on the Agenda 2030. CSOs in Zimbabwe have lobbied for the advancement of inclusive, just, equitable and sustainable development since the Millennium Development Goals era and continue in the times of the SDGs.

This publication provides CSOs perspectives on the progress made so far in implementing programmes, policies and institutional developments key to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This report represents the perceptions of CSOs on the progress made towards the SDGs. The CSOs VNR report has been produced with inputs of CSOs in Zimbabwe under the leadership of NANGO as well as the members of the CSO SDGs Reference Group. The production of his report was facilitated by the NANGO secretariat and PRFT staff who worked tirelessly to produce this report.

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Introduction

The Government of Zimbabwe will be presenting its second Voluntary National Review (VNR) report at the High-Level Political Forum in July 2021. Government involved the CSOs and other stakeholders from the initial 2021 VNR Inception meeting through to the Validation meeting of the draft 2021 VNR. Government also requested stakeholder views towards the 2021 VNR through the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare. To review the country's progress towards achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (NANGO)¹ and the Zimbabwe CSOs Reference Group on the Sustainable Development Goals² adopted the People's Score Card for CSOs consultations. The People's Score Card is a tool developed by the Action for Sustainable Development (A4SD). A4SD works in partnership with national SDGs focused civil society coalitions around the world. The report benefited from the Government of Zimbabwe questionnaire on the 2021 VNR.

The Zimbabwe CSOs Reference Group on the Sustainable Development Goals and NANGO consulted CSOs across the five NANGO administrative regions (Midlands, Western, Southern, Eastern and Northern). The scores were ranked by CSOs and CBOs across the NANGO 5 regions basing on the monitoring findings and expert opinion from the NANGO 10 thematic sectors or pillars which are economic, land and environment, women, youth, disability, human rights, humanitarian and children sectors. A network of representatives from 10 aforementioned NANGO sectors were engaged to give their perspectives and insights on the implementation and attainment of SDGs in Zimbabwe. These regions covered all provinces.

Following the People Scorecard Training, the CSOs SDGs Reference Group members were given almost a month to consult their membership and complete the scorecard. Due to the time limitations and for fear of having the CSOs views not being taken up, the completed scorecards were shared with the government for inclusion in the country's VNR report. There were deliberate efforts to ensure participation of vulnerable population groups especially women, youths and persons with disabilities in line with the desire to make sure that no one is being left behind. However, the CSO Reference Group on SDGs held an online webinar on Friday 23 April 2021 to validate the people scorecard findings and review the Government's draft VNR.

The number of CSOs and CBOs who responded through the People's Score Card is a fair representation from which meaningful insights into the current progress made in implementation and attainment of SDGs

¹ NANGO is the is an apolitical, non-profit making and non-denominational umbrella body of NGOs in Zimbabwe with over 1000 operational and active members throughout Zimbabwe. NANGO promotes a proactive community of NGOs that are responsive and committed to the sustainable development needs of all people in Zimbabwe and the full realization of human rights, democracy, good governance and poverty alleviation. Regionally and internationally, NANGO is a member of the SADC- Council of NGOs, CIVICUS, AGNA and the Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP).

² The Reference Group is comprised of 13 Apex organizations working on SDGs in Zimbabwe with the Poverty Reduction Forum Trust (PRFT) as the convener. The main objectives of the CSOs SDGs Reference group are to: To provide a platform for CSOs to engage in a coordinated manner in critical dialogue and contribution towards the SDGs implementation; To influence national policy making with a view to creating an enabling and inclusive environment for SDGs implementation in Zimbabwe; To promote innovative approaches and initiatives for realizing the SDGs in all the three dimensions: social, economic and environmental.

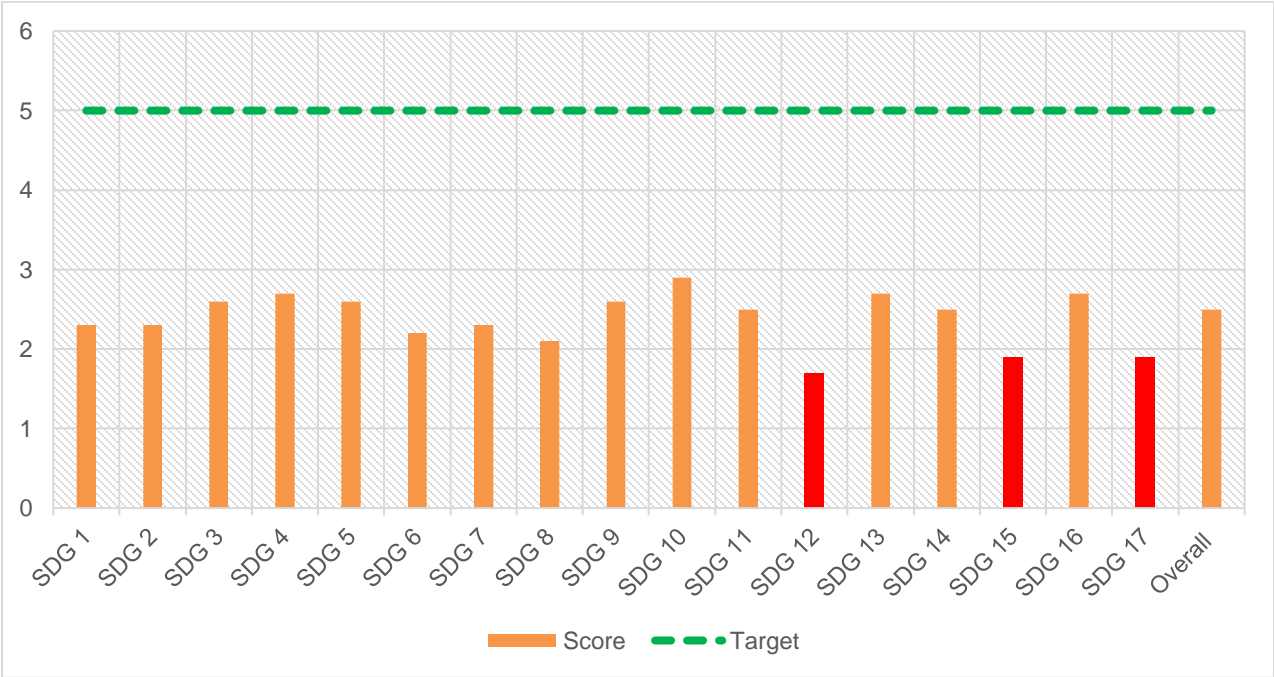
can be drawn. The information obtained from the meetings was used to develop key messages and proffer recommendations covered in this report. *(The Annex 1 to this report provide the list of CSOs and CBOs who were consulted in developing this spotlight report)*

This report provides a consolidated CSOs’ perspectives and analysis on the progress that has been made since the country’s first VNR in 2017. The report looks at the challenges encountered in the SDGs agenda, and particular focus on the impact of COVID-19. The recommendations provided herein assist in building forward better in the Decade of Action.

Description of Key Findings

This section seeks to present the results obtained from the consultations and desk review including some analytical explanations for the results provided by CSOs and CBOs. Figure 1 shows the overall ranking for all the 17 SDGs based on the scoring by CSOs and CBOs.

Figure 1: The overall rankings by Goals

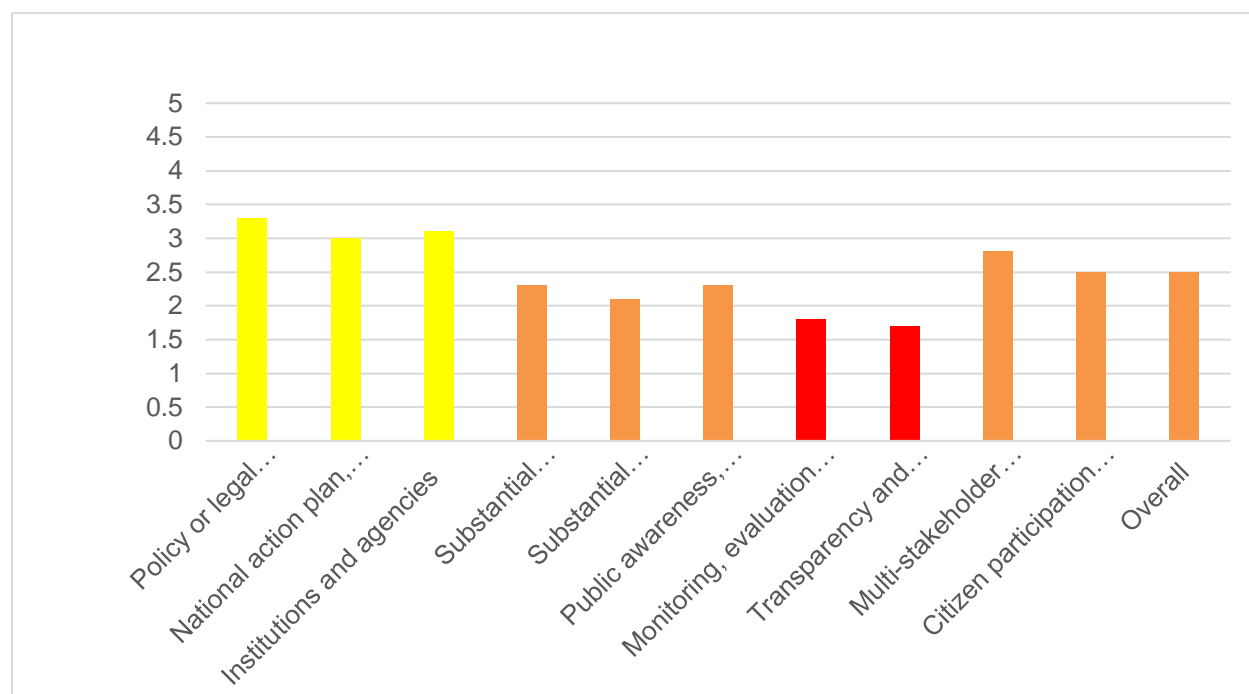


Source: Authors Computation from the consolidated People’s Score Card

As illustrated in **Figure 1**, the general CSOs perception is that overall SDGs progress is still low at 2.5 out of 5 and 8 Goals with a ranking of 2.5 out of 5 and above out of possible highest score of 5. SDG 4, 13, and 16 on Quality Education, Climate Action and on Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions both had a score of 2.7. There is also some progress with respect to Goal 3 on good health and wellbeing and Goal 5 on Gender Equality and Goal 9 on Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure which both had scores of 2.6. However, there are challenges with respect to Goal 12 on responsible production patterns which has the lowest score of 1.7 out of 5 albeit ranked by the women

sector only. The perception is that the partnerships for the goals are weak with Goal 17 getting a score of 1.9 out of 5 as is the case with Goal 15 on life on land.

Figure 2: Overall Ranking by Indicators



Source: Authors Computation from the consolidated People's Score Card

As illustrated in **Figure 2**, Zimbabwe has a fairly comprehensive policy and legal framework in place for most of the goals while the country has also committed to most international agreements related to the SDGs. Policy or legal framework including commitment to international agreements had the highest overall score of 3.3 out of 5. The Constitution of Zimbabwe is fairly progressive with a comprehensive Bill of Rights in place. Policies are also in place with the Vision 2030 as the guiding policy. During the period from 2017 to date, the Transitional Stabilisation Plan (TSP) succeeded the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Social Economic Transformation (ZIMASSET) as the country's development plan running from 2018-2020. This was followed by the National Development Strategy I (NDSI) which is to run from 2021 to 2025. NDSI has social indicators in place aligned to the SDGs, Vision 2030 and the Agenda 2063.

Zimbabwe is doing well in terms of setting up relevant institutions and agencies with clear mandate which are important in addressing SDGs. As such the institutions and agencies had a ranking of 3.1 out of 5. While the institutions are in place the operations of these institutions are hampered by inadequate resources. However, while policies and specific national action plans are in place for a lot of the goals the biggest challenge is the inadequacy of resources. As a result of the budget constraint there is weak implementation of policies, action plans and strategies. Progress in implementation of policies and programmes on a regular basis has a low score of 2.3 out of 5 while implementation at the local level is even lower at 2.1 out of 5.

Public awareness, education and capacity building mechanisms and activities are available for some of the goals but there are still challenges. Some of the challenges include poor and inaccessible information as some of the information is not citizen, child, and disability friendly and or not available in simplified local languages. However, there are some improvements particularly with the translation of the NDSI to 14 local languages including braille and sign language. There is need to improve the distribution channels of the available information in palatable formats meeting the needs of all disability types and other marginalised groups. Overall progress for public awareness, education and capacity building mechanisms got a score of 2.3 out of 5.

Monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms and procedures are in place but in most of the cases these are not made public hence the low average score of 1.8 out of 5. As a result, there are issues in terms of transparency and accountability with the indicator on transparency and accountability with the least score of 1.7 out of 5. There are some functional multiple stakeholder partnerships in place especially in relation to Goal 3, Goal 4 and Goal 5. The key partnerships include between government institutions, development partners, CSOs and the private sector and amongst others. Multiple stakeholder partnerships have a slightly above average score of 2.8 out of 5.

The Constitution of Zimbabwe has a framework for citizen participation in the development processes in place such as section 121 which calls for citizen participation in the development processes. Citizen participation and civil society engagement is available but not widely shared and also not disability friendly as there are gaps including ensuring that consultations are held in accessible forums particularly for PWDs. Information gaps and untimely information gaps also worsens citizen participation while coverage for consultations remains low and centralised in provincial centres. Further, devolution of civil participation frameworks must be considered to ensure there is no one and no place that is left behind. Citizen participation and civil society engagement has an overall score of 2.5 out of 5.

Performance Review of the Sustainable Development Goals

This section presents the progress made per each goal covering the period 2017 to date. The review therefore provides an overview of the improvements made since the 2017 VNR process where Zimbabwe took part during the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). As previously highlighted, the development of this report used the A4SDG People's Score Card framework, looking at the Likert scale ranging from 1 – 5: 1 = very low; 2 = low; 3 = moderate, 4 = high and; 5 = very high. In reviewing the progress for individual SDGs, this report looks at the perceptions of the different sectors and thematic areas where CSOs operate. The section presents the scorecard ratings on SDGs performance review as provided by CSOs in different sectors. This methodology assists in ensuring comparability across sectors. The section further highlights the challenges, impact of COVID-19, and recommendations proffered going forward per goal.

Figure 3: The Sustainable Development Goals Matrix



Source: Extracted from <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

Review of Goal 1: End Poverty in all its forms everywhere

Introduction

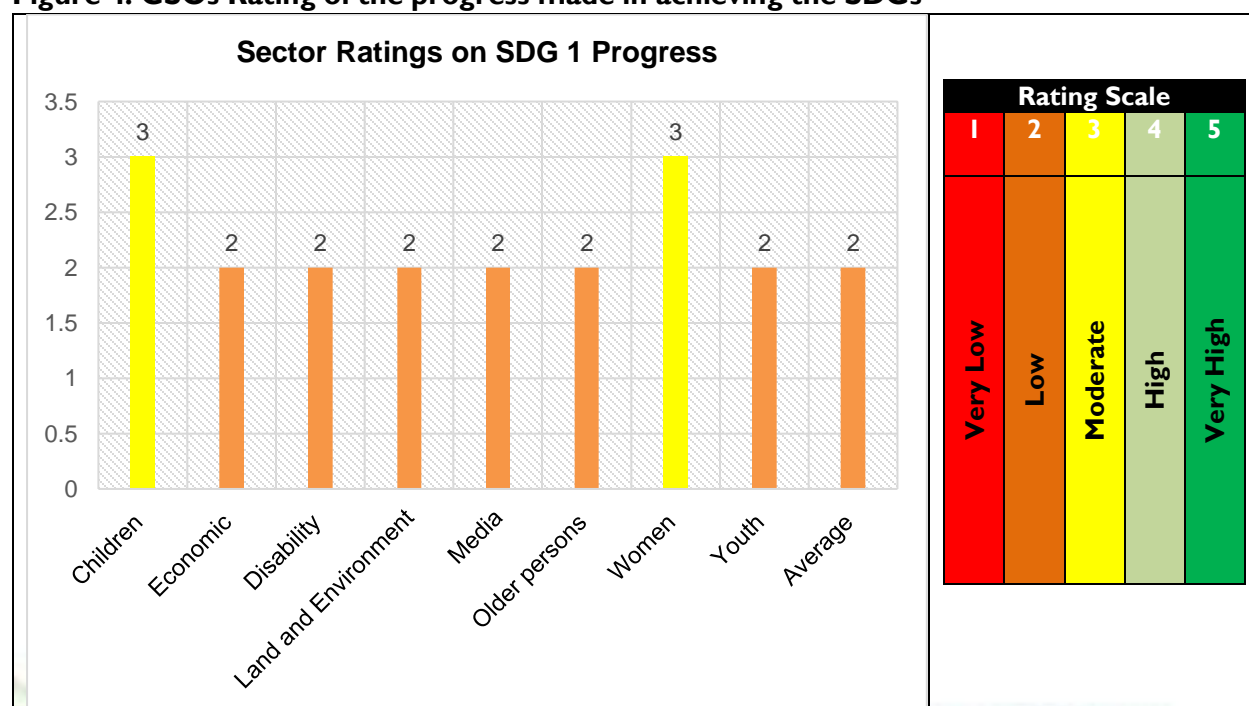
The goal seeks to end poverty in all its forms everywhere. The government of Zimbabwe has developed various national plans and sectoral strategic plans which, if implemented, can assist in alleviating poverty in all its forms in the country. Post 2017 VNR, the GoZ has launched the Transitional Stabilization Program (TSP) 2018-2020 which was a medium-term national development plan that guide Zimbabwe's social and economic development interventions from 2018 to December 2020. The TSP was then succeeded by the National Development Strategy (NDSI) which is a medium-term plan which sets out the social, economic, governance and environmental development trajectory for Zimbabwe for the period 2021 – 2025. The sectors have also developed their specific strategic plans guided by the broader NDSI framework for consistency and coherence purposes. The NDSI seeks to alleviate poverty through poverty reduction programmes and advance the economy towards an upper middle income as embedded in the Vision 2030 Agenda launched by the government. NDSI has specific poverty mitigation strategies and targets, while the 2021 budget incorporated poverty targets for the first time. The country is in the process of finalizing the Disability Policy and there are provisions of ending poverty and economic empowerment for PWDs. However, provisions are dependent on availability of resources.

The GoZ is transitioning from social protection to social development in view to enhance self-reliance of vulnerable groups through livelihoods support outside the conventional traditional social safety nets provided by the government. There are considerable women empowerment projects which help in poverty eradication such as the startup capital projects provided for women in small to medium enterprises by the Women's Bank and Youth Empower bank as well as the internal savings and lending schemes facilitated by CSOs and the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises. CSOs in the women sector are contributing significantly in empowering marginalized women and improve their economic position and status through interventions such as nutritional gardens, bread making, candle making, poultry and other projects by NGOs. Meanwhile, poverty is on the increase with extreme poverty (based on food poverty line of US\$29.80 per person per month) increasing from 22.5% in 2012 to 30.4 % in 2017 and 38.3% in 2019. Poverty (based on lower-bound poverty line of US\$45.60 per person per month) increased from 54% in 2017 to 57% in 2019. The disasters including the intermittent droughts, Cyclone Idai and the COVID-19 pandemic have also worsened the poverty situation for the majority of the people.

Review of the CSOs Perception on progress made since 2017 VNR

Figure 4 illustrates the rating of the progress made in ending poverty since the 2017 VNR. The ratings were provided using the scale of 5 adopted from the People's Score Card. Seven sectors have responded to the questionnaire that is women, youth, children, land and environment, disability, media and older persons. The key to the ratings and colour code is provide in Figure 4. The justifications to the ratings are provided in detail in the consolidated score card which is an annex to this report.

Figure 4: CSOs Rating of the progress made in achieving the SDGs



Source: Authors Computation from the consolidated People's Score Card

The children and women sector have provided a rating of 3 out of 5 signifying moderate improvements in ending poverty for women and children comparing with the progress reported during 2017 VNR. The economic, disability, youth, land and environment, media and older persons sectors perceived that the progress made in alleviating poverty is still low. On average terms, CSOs in Zimbabwe perceived that there is low progress being made in implementing policies, projects and intervention aimed at poverty reduction as evidenced by an average score of 2 out of 5. The positive developments noted for the period under review is provided in the introduction of this section. The challenges and gaps which CSOs identified for improvement and strengthening are provided in the next section.

Challenges and Gaps Identified

- While Zimbabwe has made progress in terms of coming up with the legal and policy framework for ending poverty, the low budgetary allocations to poverty alleviation programmes with no minimum set standards for budgetary allocations, under budgeting and irregular financing is the biggest challenge. Implementation remains a key challenge for the Government. For instance, IPRSP I had positive goals and targets and even included budget allocations to support the identified strategies. However, due to poor financing and resource management most of the strategies were not fully implemented.
- The unstable macroeconomic climate, inflation and fluctuating exchange rates have eroded incomes of the majority of the Zimbabwean's leaving them wallowing in poverty. The country's burden on social protection continue to grow with increasing poverty especially urban poverty.
- The disasters including the reoccurring droughts, Cyclone Idai and the COVID-19 pandemic have also worsened the poverty situation for the majority of the people. On the other end the natural disasters have shown limited planning for social protection in emergencies.

- d) Resources available for spending on essential services are compromised by corruption, illicit flows and leakages especially in the mining sector.
- e) Although there are some social development programmes targeted at different groups, the lack of comprehensive database on PWDs compromises their targeting yet they are the most affected in terms of poverty. Institutions aimed at ending poverty are also not adequately resourced while the Disability Board frequency of meetings is erratic.
- f) In Zimbabwe people are getting poverty wages which undermines the attainment of other SDGs including the SDG 1. Most Zimbabweans are earning below the Poverty Datum line and are not able to afford social services such as health care services which undermines their productivity.

Impact of COVID-19

- The COVID-19 has compounded the already limited resources to social protection programmes and this is worsened by the harsh economic environment as a result there are limited emergency relief funds available.
- COVID19 induced measures has led to retrenchment of workers resulting in loss of incomes.
- Zimbabwe's economy is largely informal with more than 70% in the informal sector. The measures to contain COVID-19 such as travel restrictions, lockdown and curfews, hit hardest the informal sector further putting more people in poverty.

Recommendations for Strengthening and Improvements

- Poverty alleviation strategies should focus on building resilience for communities especially as the country faces more emergencies.
- There is need to increase the capital expenditure in the national budget allocations to boost economic growth and incomes.
- Strengthen monitoring systems to promote efficiency, transparency and accountability of social protection programs and ensure the programmes must apolitical and free from corruption.
- Enforcement of the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry set up to investigate honouring of pension benefits set up in 2017 recommended compensation, without specifying the compensation framework.
- The government needs to sign the Protocol to The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Citizens to Social Protection and Social Security.
- Expedite the amendment of Mines and Minerals Act and review the Communal Lands Act to allow equitable and sustainable access to mineral resources and natural assets for poverty eradication.
- Government must increase women's and PWDs access to land as an empowerment tool which will help reduce poverty.
- Greater inclusion of CSOs in Government programs especially in the context of COVID-19 as Government created its own platforms to coordinate response and efforts to reach the marginalized and hardest hit and affected.

Review of Goal 2 - End Hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Introduction

The goal is aimed at ending hunger through achieving food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. Zimbabwe continue to be food insecure despite having been regarded as the bread basket of Southern Africa in the early 1980s. The 2020 Zimbabwe Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), launched on 2 April 2020, indicated that 7 million people in urban and rural areas were in urgent need of humanitarian assistance across Zimbabwe, compared to 5.5 million in August 2019. This signifies rampant food insecurity in the country. The Global Hunger Index (GHI) score stand at 34.4 in 2019. This was attributable to the erratic rainfall and drought which put downward pressure on food and livestock production. There has been an increase in stunting in children under five from 23.5% in 2017 to 29.4% in 2019. The percentage of underweight children increased by about 21% from 8% in 2015 to 9.7% in 2019 while the percentage of overweight children under five declined from 6% in 2015 to 2.5% in 2019³.

Section 77(b) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe guarantees the right to sufficient food. There are policies that have been put in place towards achieving zero hunger. These include the national agriculture policy framework, Command Agriculture, Horticulture Recovery and Growth Plan (HRGP), Accelerated Irrigation Rehabilitation Growth Plan and Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) amongst others. One of the programmes under the CSA is the Pfumvudza/Intwasa program that is a crop production intensification approach under which farmers ensure the efficient use of resources (inputs and labour) on a small area of land in order to optimize its management. Preliminary second round crop assessment statistics for 2020-2021 season shows that average maize yields for smallholder farmers under Pfumvudza/Intwasa is significantly higher at 5.28 tonnes per hectare compared to the national average of 1.15 tonnes per hectare for small holder farmers.

Government has also put in place a number of financing mechanisms that include the irrigation facilities, livestock facilities while there has been progressive increase in agriculture funding through the national budget. The total budget for agriculture for 2021 is ZWL 46.3 billion against a total budget of ZWL 421.6 billion that is more than 10% in line with the Maputo declaration, in which African countries committed to allocate at least 10% of their annual budgets to agriculture. Fiscal incentives in the national budget that include the suspension of duty on some agricultural inputs and equipment such as fertiliser, fertilised eggs, greenhouse structures etc. are contributing towards agriculture productivity and ending hunger. According to the World Food Programme more than 7.7 million people - half the population faced food insecurity at the peak of the lean season, as poor rains and erratic weather patterns in the 2019/2020 season have a negative impact on crop harvests and livelihood prospects. Cyclones and flooding further worsen the capacity of the country to become food secure.

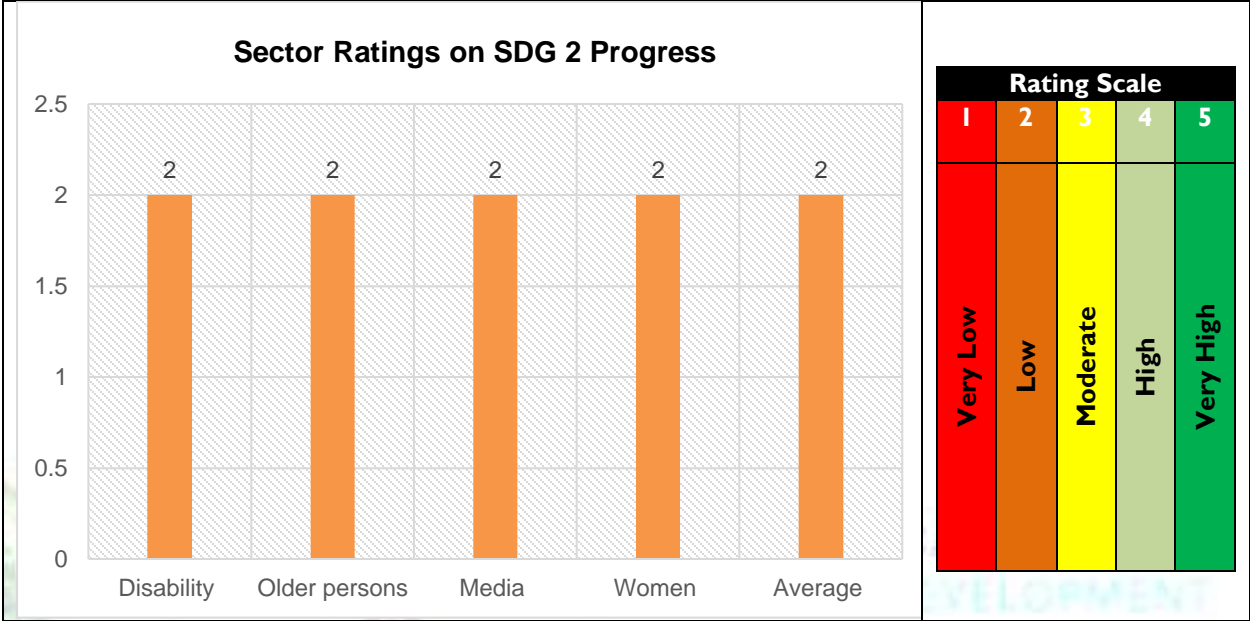
Review of the CSOs Perception on progress made since 2017 VNR

Figure 5 illustrates the rating of the progress made ending hunger through achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture since the 2017 VNR. The ratings were provided

³ <https://www.zimstat.co.zw/wp-content/uploads/publications/Social/Health/MICS2019/MICS-2019.pdf>

using the scale of 5 adopted from the People’s Score Card. Four sectors have responded to the questionnaire that is women, older persons, media and disability. The key to the ratings and colour code is provide in Figure 5. The justifications to the ratings are provided in detail in the consolidated score card which is an annex to this report.

Figure 5: CSOs Rating of the progress made in achieving the SDGs



Source: Authors Computation from the consolidated People’s Score Cards

As shown in Figure 5, all the three sectors: disability, women and children ranked the progress made in ending hunger at 2, signifying low progress made since 2017 VNR. On average terms, CSOs in Zimbabwe perceived that there is low progress being made in implementing policies, projects and intervention aimed at ending hunger as evidenced by an average score of 2. The positive developments noted for the period under review is provided in the introduction of this section. The challenges and gaps which CSOs identified for improvement and strengthening are provided in the next section.

Challenges and Gaps Identified

- a) Zimbabwe has experienced a number of droughts, which have often resulted in crop failure, loss of livestock and power outages. In August 2019, the government declared the 2018/19 drought and cropping season “a State of National Disaster” and appealed for international humanitarian assistance.
- b) Livestock pests and diseases have resulted in loss of livestock with outbreaks of Theileriosis or January Disease decimating cattle herds in Mashonaland East and other provinces.
- c) On the other hand, measures to contain the COVID-19 pandemic particularly the first lockdown that started in March 2020 had a negative impact to access to markets especially for fresh farm produce.

Recommendations for Strengthening and Improvements

- Marginalised groups including women, PWDs and youths should be given opportunities to own land. There is need to expedite the land audit process to identify more land for redistribution.

- Government funded inputs should not discriminate people with disabilities, women, young people and other marginalised groups.

Review of Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

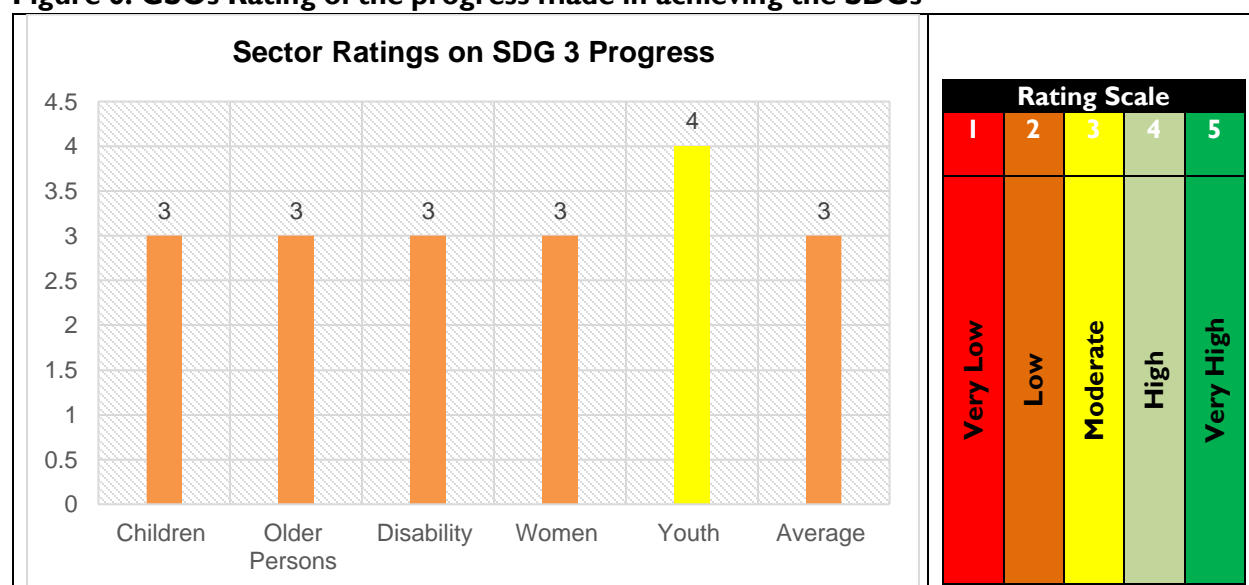
Introduction

This goal seeks to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. The Constitution of Zimbabwe has provisions for health for all. Government has put in place a number of policies and programmes aimed at improving access to health chief amongst these being the Zimbabwe National Health Strategy (2016-2020) which sought to achieve 'Equity and Quality in Health in line with the Leaving no one behind principle. Others include the free user-fee policy for pregnant women, children under 5 years and also adults aged 65 years and above, HIV Prevention Revitalization Roadmap, Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASRH) Strategy, Zimbabwe Community Health Strategy (2021 – 2024), Zimbabwe National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan (ZNASP IV) 2021 – 2025, National Action Plan for Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (NAP for OVC), Mental Health Policy, National Health Policy, and the School Health Policy. The Health Financing Policy and Strategy was developed in June 2018, where Zimbabwe became the 17th country in the World Health Organisations (WHO) Regional Office for Africa Region to develop a health financing policy and strategy. This is another notable milestone as well as the 5 percent levy to the Health Fund. Notable progress includes the decline in maternal mortality ratio from 614 in 2014 to 462 in 2019. The HIV prevalence among the population aged 15-49 declined from 15.1% in 2010 to 11.8% in 2020. Basic vaccinations going well including COVID-19 although this had a slow start. Disability policy component on health is expected to improve access to health for PWDs.

Review of the CSOs Perception on progress made since 2017 VNR

Figure 6 illustrates the rating of the progress to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages since the 2017 VNR. The ratings were provided using the scale of 5 adopted from the People's Score Card. A total of 5 sectors responded to the questionnaire that is women, youth, children, elderly and disability. The scores provided by these sectors are graphically presented in Figure 6. The key to the ratings and colour codes are provided in Figure 6. The justifications to the ratings are provided in detail in the consolidated score card which is an annex to this report.

Figure 6: CSOs Rating of the progress made in achieving the SDGs



Source: Authors Computation from the consolidated People's Score Cards

As shown in Figure 6, the disability, women, older persons and children ranked the progress made in ending hunger at 3 out of 5, signifying moderate and considerable progress made in ensuring healthier lives and well-being of the people since 2017 VNR. On a positive note, the youth sector ranked the goal at 4 out of 5 meaning high score. The various policies and health interventions highlighted previously in the introduction section is translating into better health service provision in line with the ranking provided by youth sector. The overall score given for the goal was 3 out of 5 which means there is moderate progress being made in implementing policies, projects and intervention aimed at ensuring healthier lives. Likewise, the positive developments noted for the period under review is provided in the introduction of this section. The challenges and gaps which CSOs identified for improvement and strengthening are provided in the next section.

Challenges and Gaps Identified

- Neonatal Mortality at 31 deaths per 1,000 live births and remaining largely unchanged over the past 15 years.
- There is an increase in Non-Communicable Diseases that need urgent attention.
- The lack of domestic financing streams is the major challenge for the health sector unearthed through shortage of skilled personnel, lack of essential medicines and equipment. There have been frequent strikes by health personnel which crippled the health delivery and also massive brain drain.
- There is still a wider gap on accessibility and affordability of quality health care especially to the most vulnerable groups.
- There is also an evident gap with regards to provision and accessing of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) services by adolescents both in urban and rural areas.
- The shortage of facilities and dilapidated infrastructure with patients traveling long distances especially in rural areas.
- The high infant mortality rate with significant urban rural disparities is a cause for concern.

Impact of COVID-19

- The heavy burden was put on the health sector which already is crippled with inadequate resources thus reducing quality and quantity of health services.
- Quality services were not attained as health workers were not confident to offer services due to unavailability of appropriate COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment's (PPEs). Strikes by doctors and nurses caused by the lack of PPEs disrupted the health sector.
- The Perennial drought and COVID -19 lockdown have left many children severely malnourished.
- Adherence to HIV treatment was compromised due to transport and user fees challenges. On the other hand, the right to privacy was compromised especially for people living with HIV who were forced to disclose their status in order to pass through COVID-19 related security check points.

Recommendations for Strengthening and Improvements

- There is need for adequate stakeholder's consultations during the development of policies including the National Health Strategy 2021 – 2025. PWD should be included from design stage.
- Increased domestic health financing other than relying on development partners whose contribution is almost 80% of the health sector.
- Government must clearly outline monitoring and reporting systems and publicize fiscal financial and audit reports. e.g., 5% health tax on mobile and internet airtime, National Aids Council (NAC) funds etc.
- Corruption in the sector needs to be addressed and reporting will help improve transparency and accountability.
- To improve on Social Protection for health purposes so that an individual can access services even outside governments institutions when they are not available in public institutions.
- Expedite the alignment of laws to the constitution especially the aspects that provide support to the older persons.
- Government must ensure equitable and comprehensive access to health care. There is need for robust strategies that ensure that all children are delivered at a health facility.
- In order to improve access to health for PWDs there is need for improved infrastructure that is disability friendly and a responsive health system. Training of health personnel on how to interact with the PWDs without offending or discriminating them. Sign language has to be used in all health centers to accommodate those who are hard of hearing while all health-related public awareness programs must be in accessible formats for all including PWDs.
- There is need for the establishment of a sugar tax to fund Non-Communicable Diseases.
- State must address the underlying causes of women's vulnerability to STIs and HIV.

Review of Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

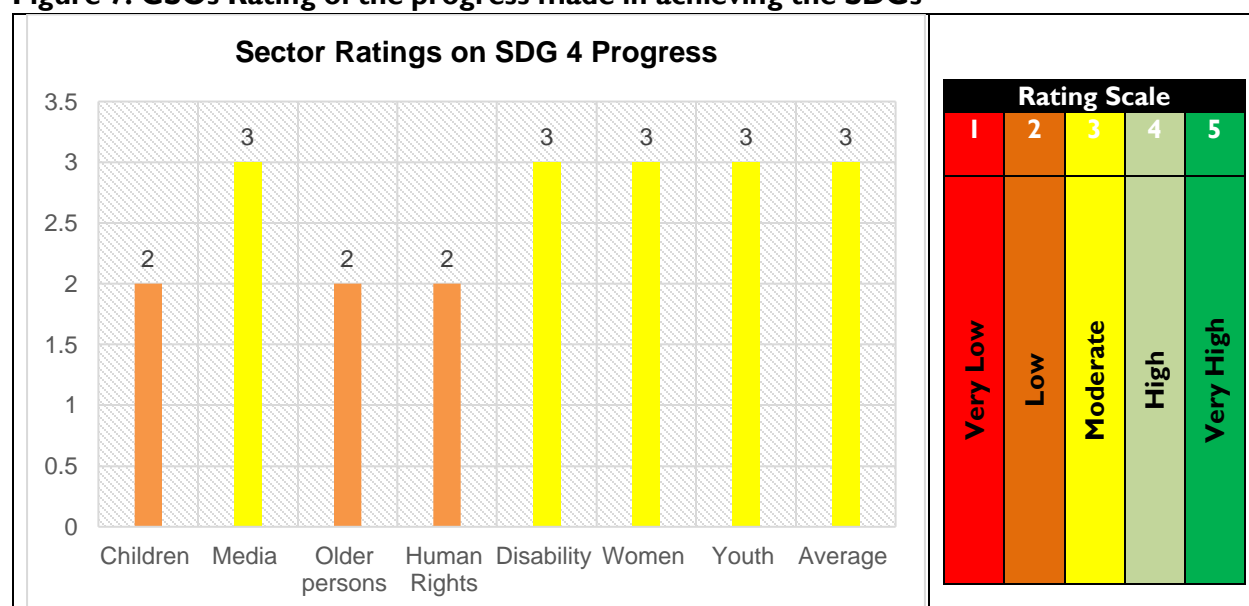
Introduction

The goal seeks to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. The Constitution of Zimbabwe under Section 75 provides for the right to education. This entitles every citizen and permanent resident of Zimbabwe to a basic state-funded education, including adult basic education and further education, which the state, through reasonable legislative and other measures, must make progressively available and accessible. In 2019, the government enacted the Education Amendment Act that seeks to align the Education Act with the Constitution and other international statutes for the provision of an inclusive and equitable quality education. The amendment resulted in introduction of the Education 15 for primary and secondary education; and the education 5.0 for tertiary education. These policy developments have been described by many as progressive. The Centre for Education, Innovation, Research and Development Bill though not yet enacted presents hope on research. The Disability policy has some positives that will help in inclusion in the education sector including facilitation of birth certificates issuance. The policy to facilitate the employment of teachers with impairments is now being implemented well than before providing equal access to opportunities for all. The new curriculum introduced are progressive although it requires resources to be implemented. The STEM programme and vocational interventions including making informal education accessible is commendable. The female scholarships also help improve gender equality. Maternity leave for female students is progressive as well as according prisoners a chance to learn as part of correctional facility.

Review of the CSOs Perception on progress made since 2017 VNR

Figure 7 illustrates the rating of the progress to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all since the 2017 VNR. The ratings were provided using the scale of 5, adopted from the People's Score Card. A total of 7 sectors responded to the questionnaire that is women, youth, children, human rights, older persons, media and disability sectors. The scores provided by these sectors are graphically presented in Figure 7. The key to the ratings and colour codes are provided in Figure 7. The justifications to the ratings are provided in detail in the consolidated score card which is an annex to this report.

Figure 7: CSOs Rating of the progress made in achieving the SDGs



Source: Authors Computation from the consolidated People's Score Cards

As shown in Figure 7, the children and human rights gave a score of 2 out of 5 with regards to the progress made to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. On the other hand, disability, women and youth perceived moderate progress made in attaining SDG 4 since 2017 VNR exemplified by a score of 3 out of 5. The overall score given for the goal was 3 out of 5 which means there is moderate progress being made in implementing policies, projects and intervention aimed to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Likewise, the positive developments noted for the period under review is provided in the introduction of this section. The challenges and gaps which CSOs identified for improvement and strengthening are provided in the next section.

Challenges and Gaps Identified

- There is acute shortage of schools, teachers and learning material. There has also been industrial action in the inform of strikes and stay away by teachers and this compromised the quality of education.
- Student to teacher ratio remains very high and this has an adverse effect on the quality of education delivered.
- Access for children with disability is still a challenge. As with other sectors there are infrastructure gaps with most schools still not disability friendly. Learning materials and some examinations are also not in disability accessible formats.
- There are still some communities where the girl child is still learning up to grade 7 denying them opportunities to further their education. This is against the SDGs leave no one behind principle.
- Due to lack of knowledge and access to SRHR, there has been a high rise in teenage pregnancies resulting in children becoming mothers and denying them access to further their education.

- f) The low pass rate at all levels even before COVID-19 is a cause for concern. COVID-19 worsened the situation with some schools registering zero percent pass rate for grade seven results.
- g) The examinations are poorly managed with the examining body failing to eliminate corruption and leakage of exam papers thereby compromising the quality of education.

Impact of COVID-19

- Serious disruptions to the learning schedule for scholars. Virtual learning which was introduced was only accessible to very few scholars who had access to gadgets and the radio within their households. Access to e-learning is very low with almost 70% of children in Zimbabwe especially rural areas without access to internet. High data costs and lack of radio signal in some areas were posed challenges.
- Some parents are illiterate and could not help with home schooling while some parents of children with disabilities struggled to help children with disabilities at home.
- The lockdown also took a huge knock effect on the toddlers learning routine as they were still at an early stage of acquiring knowledge.
- Rise in child delinquency within schools e.g., children taking drugs, engaging in immoral behaviours within the school environment due to poor monitoring by the teachers.
- Most households' incomes fell below the poverty datum line – this had an adverse effect on livelihoods and ability of parents to pay for school fees.

Recommendations for Improvements and Strengthening

- There is need to look at rural school funding and the financial burden in schools which have ultimately affected their capacity due to their stringent budgets and limited income.
- Government should make all learning materials and examinations accessible to children with different impairments. There is need to ensure access to information for students and educators with disability, through sign, braille and other formats.
- Government to make provision of internet coverage for marginalized schools to support learning during pandemics like COVID-19.
- Re-introduce pay outs to students in institutions of higher learning such a universities and teachers and poly technical colleges in order to mitigate harmful coping mechanisms.
- Subsidised or free assistive devices such as wheel chairs, spectacles, crutches, hearing aids for learners with disabilities. Government must consider having a specific budget on infrastructure to make education centres accessible and promoting inclusive education.

Review of Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Introduction

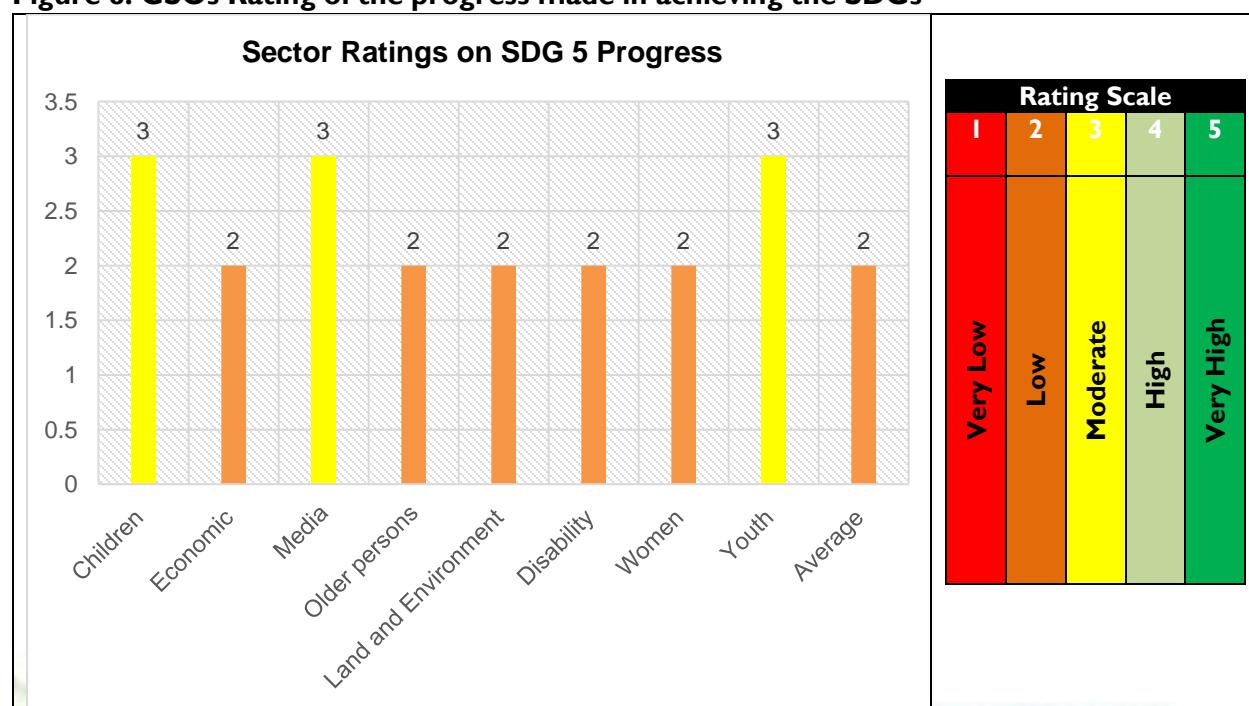
Goal 5 envisions to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Several policy and legal frameworks are in place such as provisions in the Constitution on gender equality. Zimbabwe is signatory to several international and regional instruments which advocate for gender equality such as Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) among others. There is continual progression towards meeting these by the government, for instance in education there is affirmative action for women to allow them access and within the Parliament there is proportional representation of women. Zimbabwe has a National Gender Policy Implementation Strategy and Action Plan; National Action Plan and Communication Strategy on Ending Child Marriage (2019-2021); National Gender Based Violence Strategy and a National Programme on GBV Prevention and Response (2016-2020). The Zimbabwe Women Micro Finance Bank and Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises has established a Women Development Fund which is a platform that provides loans to women's projects at an interest rate of 10% per annum. In recent court rulings, women can now access inheritance from their deceased spouses and have increased powers with regards to family inheritance issues. In previous cases, women had no voice over such matters.

Government has a line ministry dedicated to gender issues and an independent commission, the Zimbabwe Gender Commission and Gender Desks across all government ministries tasked with addressing gender equality and policies. All players (state and non-state actors) make concerted efforts to bring awareness to programs that relate to gender and to empower both males and females in the delivery of these critical programs. These are mostly available in form of government - civil society partnerships e.g., spotlight initiative in ending violence in all its forms. The government for instance, through its line ministry runs key interventions on gender which build capacity in soft and practical skills like sewing, poultry and carpentry. There are still proposals to amend laws to promote gender equality such as those for marriages, SRHR, and second chance education.

Review of the CSOs Perception on progress made since 2017 VNR

Figure 8 illustrates the rating of the progress in achieving gender equality and empower all women and girls since the 2017 VNR. The ratings were provided using the scale of 5 adopted from the People's Score Card. A total of 8 sectors have responded to the questionnaire that is women, economic, youth, children, land and environment, media, older persons and disability sectors. The scores provided by these sectors are graphically presented in Figure 8. The key to the ratings and colour codes are provided in Figure 8. The justifications to the ratings are provided in detail in the consolidated score card which is an annex to this report.

Figure 8: CSOs Rating of the progress made in achieving the SDGs



Source: Authors Computation from the consolidated People's Score Cards

From Figure 8, the children, media, economic and youth sectors perceived that progress made in achieving gender equality and empower all women and girls is moderate signified by a score of 3 out of 5. On the other hand, , disability, land and environment, older person and women sectors had provided a rating of 2 out of 5, meaning low progress made in achieving gender equality and women and girl's empowerment. The overall average score given for the goal was 3 out of 5 which means there is generally low progress being made in implementing policies, projects and intervention aimed to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Likewise, the positive developments noted for the period under review is provided in the introduction of this section. The challenges and gaps which CSOs identified for improvement and strengthening are provided in the next section.

Challenges and Gaps Identified

- Implementation in any Government program remains a key challenge, there are always clear gaps between policy, plans and the practice of government agencies. For instance, the constitution advocates for 50-50 gender representation but across all sectors women continue to be under represented.
- Access of young women to sexual and reproductive health services and rights is a key issue – the 2019 national budget committed to provide free sanitary ware to female scholars. Whilst noble, the initiative was poorly executed. Whilst policies and plans might provide for access, in practice there is no access at the different points at which health is accessed by young women and men.
- Shrinking civic space, lack of political will and rampant corruption all disproportionately affect women.
- Intimidation and stigmatisation of women in politics is still rampant
- COVID-19 exposed real problems; Gender Based Violence (GBV) cases were on the rise.

- f) No access to health, restriction of movement, murder, suicide and mental health cases are on the increase.
- g) Loss of livelihoods for women who are mostly in the informal sector.
- h) Closure of schools resulted in high rates of teenage pregnancies and child marriages (as reported by Minister Sithembiso Nyoni).
- i) Loss of lives and the increased burden of unpaid domestic and care work.
- j) Prioritisation of COVID-19 at health facilities compromised other health services.

Recommendations for Improvements and Strengthening

- Putting in place strategies to ensure the progressive realization of 50-50 gender representation as provided for within the constitution in key areas and institution.
- Need to put in place social protection programs which protect women in the event of health epidemics as witnessed with COVID-19 which creates shocks and has ripple effects across the entire fabric of society.
- Increased Government investments in the economic empowerment of women.
- Political parties must empower women. Women in leadership positions and their participation in civic processes needs to be enhanced as well as introducing local initiatives to boost their participation. Such as training women in governance, encourage taking up of local, village, ward positions, proportional representation to start from constituency level up to parliament.
- State to ensure elections are free from violence which inhibits women participation.
- Public education to deal with women in politics stigmatisation.

Review of Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

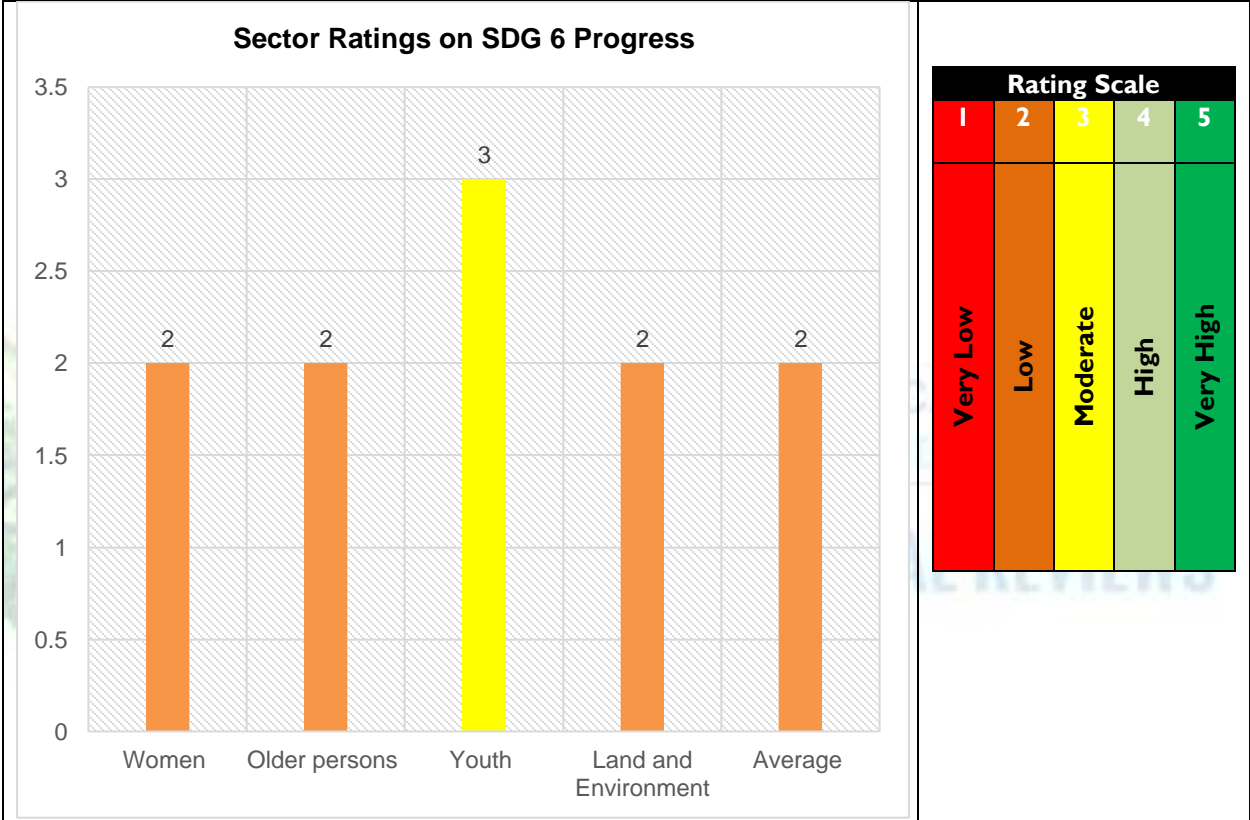
Introduction

This goal aspires to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. Access to water is recognized as a right within the Constitution. Further to this, the government has put in place a policy and strategy on water and sanitation with various government and UN agencies projects being rolled out on the same. There are gaps on the Government committing for instance to human rights standards on water. For instance, water quality remains poor – water availability is a key issue with most households failing to access water from the water points within their households and water accessibility is a concern. On a positive note, there was a significant budget allocation in the 2021 budget allocation earmarked towards the development of alternative water sources for major cities and towns. One of the projects enunciated in the budget includes the construction of the Muda and Kunzvi dams. The completion of the Nyamandlovu Epping Forest boreholes project which services the city of Bulawayo and surrounding areas in 2021 fiscal year is another positive milestone. The courts in recent years, have passed landmark rulings which have protected the right to water. This places emphasis on the need to ensure the provision and accessibility of water to all citizens.

Review of the CSOs Perception on progress made since 2017 VNR

Figure 9 illustrates the CSO’s rating of the progress in ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all since the 2017 VNR. The ratings were provided using the scale of 5 adopted from the People’s Score Card. A total of 4 sectors responded to the questionnaire that is women, older persons, youth and; land and environment sectors. The scores provided by these sectors are graphically presented in Figure 9. The key to the ratings and colour codes are provided in Figure 9. The justifications to the ratings are provided in detail in the consolidated score card which is an annex to this report.

Figure 9: CSOs Rating of the progress made in achieving the SDGs



Source: Authors Computation from the consolidated People’s Score Cards

As shown in Figure 9, three sectors: women, older persons and; land and environment ranked the progress made in ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all at 2 out of 5, signifying low progress made since 2017 VNR. On average terms, CSOs in Zimbabwe perceived that there is low progress being made in implementing policies, projects and intervention aimed at ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all as evidenced by an overall estimate score of 2 out of 5. The positive developments noted for the period under review is provided in the introduction of this section. The challenges and gaps which CSOs identified for improvement and strengthening are provided in the next section.

Challenges and Gaps Identified

- a) Most citizen's travel for long distances to access water yet ideally water must be accessible within a radius of a kilometer. Water and sanitation policy must be in place, the advent of COVID-19 placed water, hygiene and sanitation at the center of fighting the pandemic. There are serious challenges on water provision in urban areas. New urban settlements, most of them, do not have sewer reticulation systems.
- b) Budget allocations targeted for water related projects rarely cascade to the intended development projects on account of lack of financing and corruption with government agencies.
- c) There have been several institutions set up by the government that include the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA), Water Catchment areas as per the rainfall regions within the country among others. Each local authority has water works department which focuses on the supply of water at the local level. However, at times these institutions do not always seem to pull in the same direction. The formation of Provincial Water and Sanitation Subcommittee (PWSSC) and District structures in most areas gives a platform for Water and Sanitation Health to be better coordinated and visible.
- d) Transparency and accountability in the water sector is problematic. There is high perceived corruption around water tenders, procurement of water treatment chemicals and on the purchasing of equipment for infrastructural development related to water projects.
- e) Most water points and sanitation facilities under state and non-state actors are not ageing and disability friendly e.g., bush pumps and squat toilet holes.
- f) Citizen participation and civil society engagement is still not at the required standard. However, through the #ClaimYourWaterRights for instance, civil society organizations like the National Association of Youth Organizations (NAYO) are mobilizing Youth to demand the right to water by way of using both physical and virtual activities to place demands on the Government. These include online protests, petitions to local authorities, water point demonstrations and engaging with the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC).

Recommendations for Improvements and Strengthening

- Adoption of the Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Quality (AAAQ) Framework in ensuring the progressive realization of the right to water for all. This denotes water, availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality. The framework sets clear standards per each benchmark.
- There is need to work on water harvest initiatives and intensive borehole drilling.
- Develop one comprehensive updated water sector policy, covering all subsectors; also develop a sector strategy and financing plan to achieve updated national targets.
- Update national data sets through audits and needs assessments; and develop one monitoring framework and a process of annual joint sector reviews.
- The urgent case for increased investment needs to be made at the highest levels while there is need for the development of an overall sector financing strategy.
- Institute inclusive coordination mechanisms, working in partnership with parallel financing modalities, and establish an independent sector regulator.

Review of Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

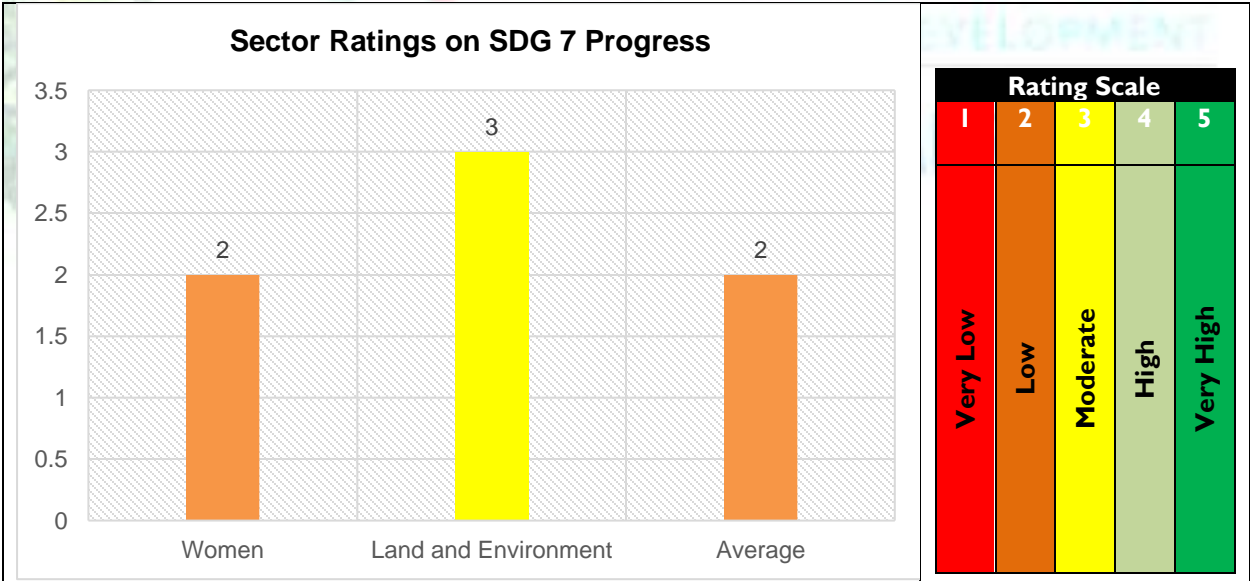
Introduction

This goal seeks to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. Zimbabwe has developed and operationalized a National Renewable Energy Policy which seeks to increase access to clean and affordable energy. The policy has targets for renewable energy in the country based on the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in line with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Most of the strategies are still in formative stages hence the need to speed up the implementation process. Generally, the government of Zimbabwe is still lagging behind in terms of coming up with strategies of smart energy.

Review of the CSOs Perception on progress made since 2017 VNR

Figure 10 illustrates the CSO’s rating of the progress in ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all since the 2017 VNR. The ratings were provided using the scale of 5 adopted from the People’s Score Card. Only 2 sectors responded to the questionnaire that is women and; land and environment sectors. The scores provided by these two sectors are graphically presented in Figure 10. The key to the ratings and colour codes are provided in Figure 10. The justifications to the ratings are provided in detail in the consolidated score card which is an annex to this report.

Figure 10: CSOs Rating of the progress made in achieving the SDGs



Source: Authors Computation from the consolidated People’s Score Cards

The women sector ranked the progress made in ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all at 2 out of 5, signifying low progress made since 2017 VNR. However, the land and environment sector perceived moderate progress made in the country towards achieving Goal number 7. Overall, CSOs in Zimbabwe perceived that there is moderate progress being made in implementing policies, projects and intervention aimed at ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all as evidenced by an overall estimate score of 3 out of 5. The positive developments noted

for the period under review is provided in the introduction of this section. The challenges and gaps which CSOs identified for improvement and strengthening are provided in the next section.

Challenges and Gaps Identified

- a) Most of the strategies are still in formative stages hence the need to speed up the implementation process. Government is still lagging behind in terms of coming up with strategies of smart energy

Recommendations for Improvements and Strengthening

- More investment in solar energy and expanding fiscal incentives in the budget to promote clean energy.
- Education and awareness in community on the importance of energy.
- Monitoring and enforcement of regulations to ensure companies do not harm the environment.
- There should be a clear youth engagement strategy for the young people who have knowledge and interest on solar energy.

Review of Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Introduction

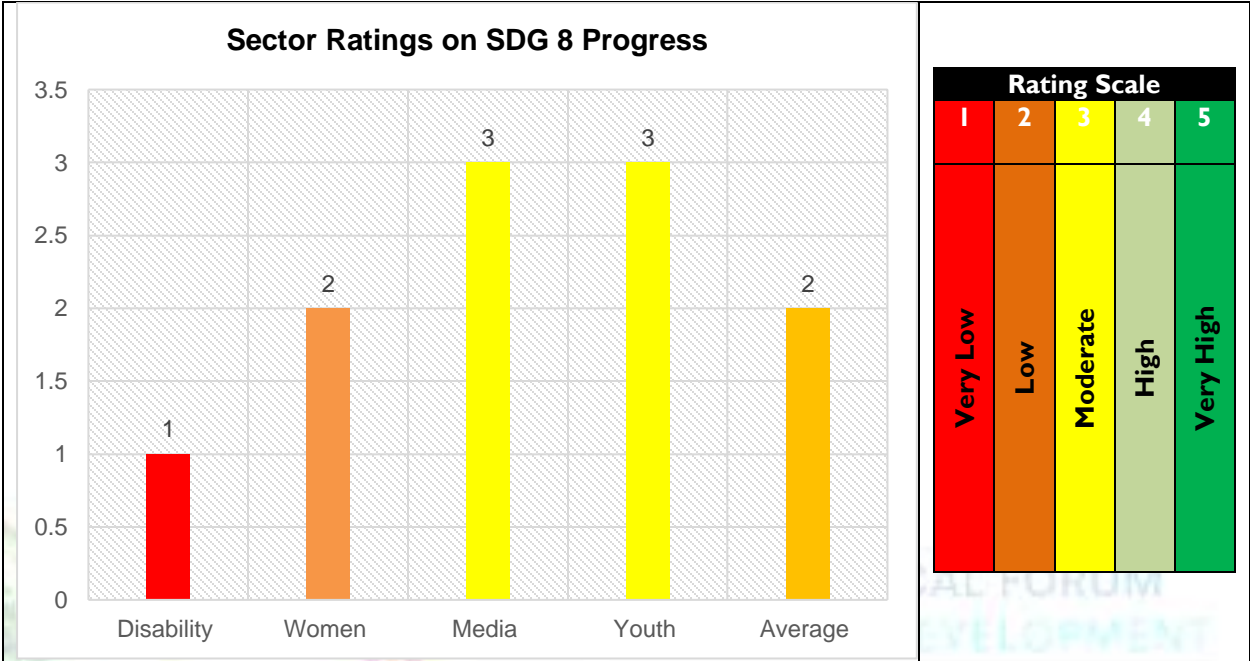
The goal seeks to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. The NDSI (2021 – 2025) was developed and premised on sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth. The unemployment rate for Zimbabwe has remained high implying insignificant progress being made in creating employment for all. The auction system was introduced and to a greater extent it has stabilized the exchange rate notwithstanding that the parallel market is still in existence. There is still poor performance of the economy with GDP estimated to have declined by -6% in 2019 and -4.1% in 2020 owing to various factors including COVID19. Year-on-year inflation peaked at 838% in July 2020 eroding workers' wages and pensioners' income. The Zimbabwean economy has remained highly informalized with less effort being made to transition those informalized into formal sector and maximize their contribution to the GDP growth of the country. There is another gap on informal sector workers' working conditions, infrastructural development, harassment and violence as they fall victim to council and police harassment making their workplaces unsafe and not decent. Not much is being done to improve working conditions in the informal sector and nothing was done to create a safe environment for those working in the informal sector, they are still exposed to harassment and abuse. There is lack of clear-cut policy on government's part to formalize and revitalize the local industries in the country.

Review of the CSOs Perception on progress made since 2017 VNR

Figure 11 illustrates the CSO's rating of the progress in promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all the 2017 VNR. The ratings were provided using the scale of 5 adopted from the People's Score Card. Four sectors have responded to the questionnaire that is women, youth, media and disability sectors. The scores provided by the four sectors are graphically presented in Figure 11. The key to the ratings and colour codes are provided in

Figure 11. The justifications to the ratings are provided in detail in the consolidated score card which is an annex to this report.

Figure 11: CSOs Rating of the progress made in achieving the SDGs



Source: Authors Computation from the consolidated People’s Score Cards

The disability sector ranked the progress in promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work at 1 out of 5, signifying very low progress made since 2017 VNR. The disability sector perceived that the country has not made concerted efforts in creating decent employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. Women sector has provided a score of 2 out of 5, that is low progress made in promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work from women perspectives. On the other hand, the youth and media sector perceived moderate progress made in promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work. Overall, CSOs in Zimbabwe perceived that there is low progress being made in implementing policies, projects and intervention aimed at progress in promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work as evidenced by an overall estimate score of 2 out of 5. The positive developments noted for the period under review is provided in the introduction of this section. The challenges and gaps which CSOs identified for improvement and strengthening are provided in the next section.

Challenges and Gaps Identified

- a) The main challenges identified are lack of transparency and policy consistency in the management of the economy.

- b) COVID19 put everything on a standstill, various line ministries by the mid-term review of the budget had not claimed even half of the funds allocated to them.
- c) High Interest rates and need for collateral/guarantors made people shy away from applying for loans.
- d) Closure of business resulted in lagging in the production and manufacturing sector.
- e) People lost jobs due to COVID-19, informal sector could not operate, and most people are dependent on the informal sector.
- f) Demolition of structures during lockdown was a major setback for informal traders.

Recommendations for Improvements and Strengthening

- There is need to address economic fundamentals first before providing economic blueprints which fail afterwards.
- Disability policy if adhered to can see improved employment and economic empowerment of persons with disabilities.
- The stance by Empower Bank and other banks to provide templates of business plans is commendable.
- The support from banks including Banc ABC, Stanbic and others to have hubs for entrepreneurs is also a progressive move.
- More should be done to capacitate young people to have registered companies.
- More support to civic society, even in terms of allowing them to operate freely and get international support.
- Dedicated resources in economic ministries towards fulfilling goal 8, departments or desks to coordinate some of the issues affecting PWDs.
- Disability representation in economic ministries should be improved and policies must be taken from an empowerment perspective rather than a charity model.

Review of Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Introduction

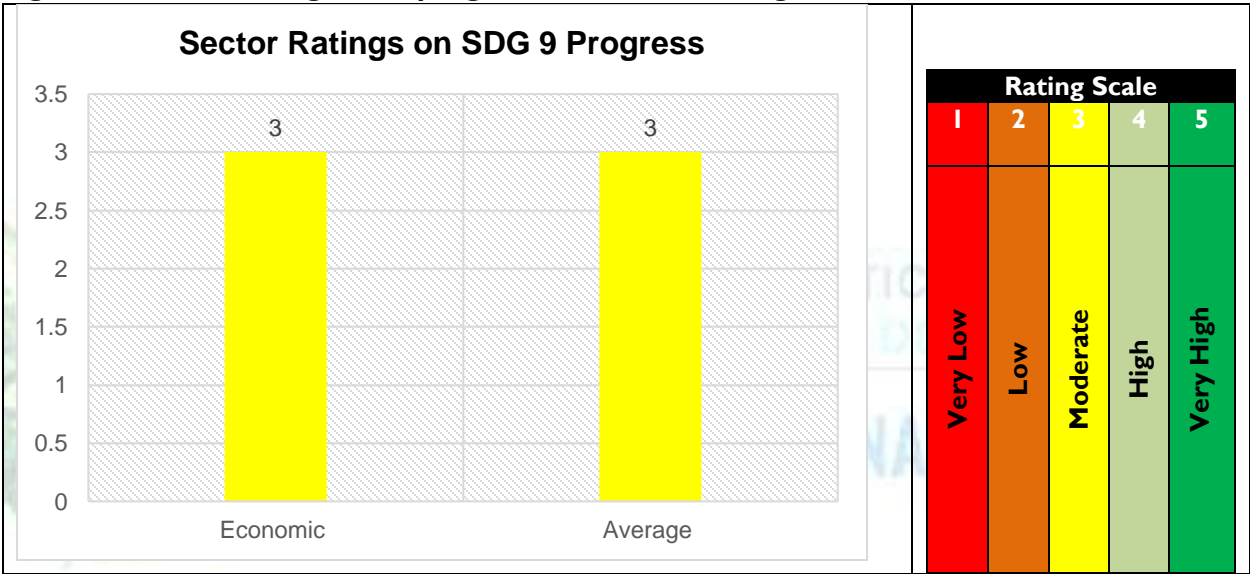
The goals aimed at building resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation. The NDSI identified infrastructure and utilities as one of the priorities targeting improved infrastructure development and investment in energy, water, sanitation, roads, health, education, housing and social amenities. NDSI also seeks to accelerate value addition and beneficiation of agriculture and mining production. Despite the poor state of infrastructure in most of the sectors significant progress has been made in the ICT sector. For example, in 2017, fixed broadband (fiber) and mobile broadband stood at 8,765km and 3,74 mobile broadband base stations respectively. At the end of 2020, approximately 9500km fiber and 4,012 mobile broadband base stations had been deployed amid the harsh economic conditions. As a result, there has been an increase in active mobile penetration rates of 94.2% and the internet penetration rate, which stood at 60.9%, as at the end of 2020 having increased from 50.8% in 2017. Another positive is the development of Community Information Centers (CICs) in a bid to further the knowledge and appreciation of ICT throughout the country. CICs are mainly focused on serving the 'underserved and unserved' communities as far as ICT is concerned. However, Zimbabwe's infrastructure across all sectors is in a bad state. Zimbabwe is ranked number 127 out of 138 countries in the

Infrastructure Index under the 2017-2018 World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report which is indicative of the poor state of the country’s infrastructure.

Review of the CSOs Perception on progress made since 2017 VNR

Figure 12 illustrates the CSO’s rating of the progress in building resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation since the 2017 VNR. The ratings were provided using the scale of 5 adopted from the People’s Score Card. Only one sector has responded to the questionnaire that is economic sector. The score provided by the economic sector is graphically presented in Figure 12. The key to the ratings and colour codes are provided in Figure 12. The justifications to the ratings are provided in detail in the consolidated score card which is an annex to this report.

Figure 12: CSOs Rating of the progress made in achieving the SDGs



Source: Authors Computation from the consolidated People’s Score Cards

The economic sector was the only sector which responded to the questionnaire for goal 9. The sector ranked the progress in building resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation at 3 out of 5, signifying moderate progress made since 2017 VNR. Overall, CSOs in Zimbabwe perceived that there is moderate progress being made in implementing policies, projects and intervention aimed at building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation as evidenced by an overall estimate score of 3 out of 5. The positive developments noted for the period under review is provided in the introduction of this section. The challenges and gaps which CSOs identified for improvement and strengthening are provided in the next section.

Challenges and Gaps Identified

- a) According to NDSI, the past two decades has been marred by economic challenges, which led to difficulties in ensuring the continuous rehabilitation and maintenance of infrastructure including expansion of critical areas.

- b) Funding constraints are the major challenge. According to the IDBZ, Zimbabwe's entire road network would require about US\$5.5 billion. It also estimated that the National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ) requires in excess of US\$2 billion worth of investment for its rolling stock and to rehabilitate its entire network.⁴
- c) Natural disasters such as the several cyclones that have hit Zimbabwe like, Cyclone Eline and Cyclone Idai in 2019 left a trail of disaster. People in Chimanimani and other Cyclone Idai affected areas still living in tents almost two years of the cyclone.
- d) There are still digital gaps that need to be addressed. The Digital terrestrial migration is yet to be completed.

Impact of COVID-19

- COVID-19 response made plans change. Priority was given to setting up and revamping COVID-19 centers including quarantine and isolation centres.
- Limited access to information by rural and marginalised communities.
- Increase in costs of acquiring data for conducting business, education and other work online remained a major challenge.

Recommendations for Improvements and Strengthening

- Mechanism for safe relocation of people and acquisition of stands should be regulated to cushion citizens.
- Stiffer penalties to land barons and a monitoring mechanism put in place.
- There should be more awareness to the public on plans.
- Re-evaluation of all information centres established through the Universal Services Fund.
- Development of more infrastructure to facilitate access and use of ICTs in Zimbabwe.
- Development of a cybersecurity and data protection framework in line with international standards and best practices.
- Deliberate and intentional exercise of functions by POTRAZ.
- On public transport infrastructure, Government has to import Buses which are disability friendly and also educate bus staff members on how to communicate and engage persons with disabilities without offending or discriminating them.

Review of Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

Introduction

The goal seeks to reduce inequality within and among countries. Generally, there is considerable success on issues of gender equality. However, income inequalities have been generally on the rise in the country. The Zimbabwe Poverty Update 2017–19 shows that inequality rose as the Gini index increased from 44.7 in 2017 to 50.4 in 2019. The increase in inequality was driven by a rise in inequality within urban and within rural areas rather than between urban and rural areas. In terms of the policies, the NDSI is premised on promoting inclusive economic growth that is a deliberate attempt to reduce income inequalities. The

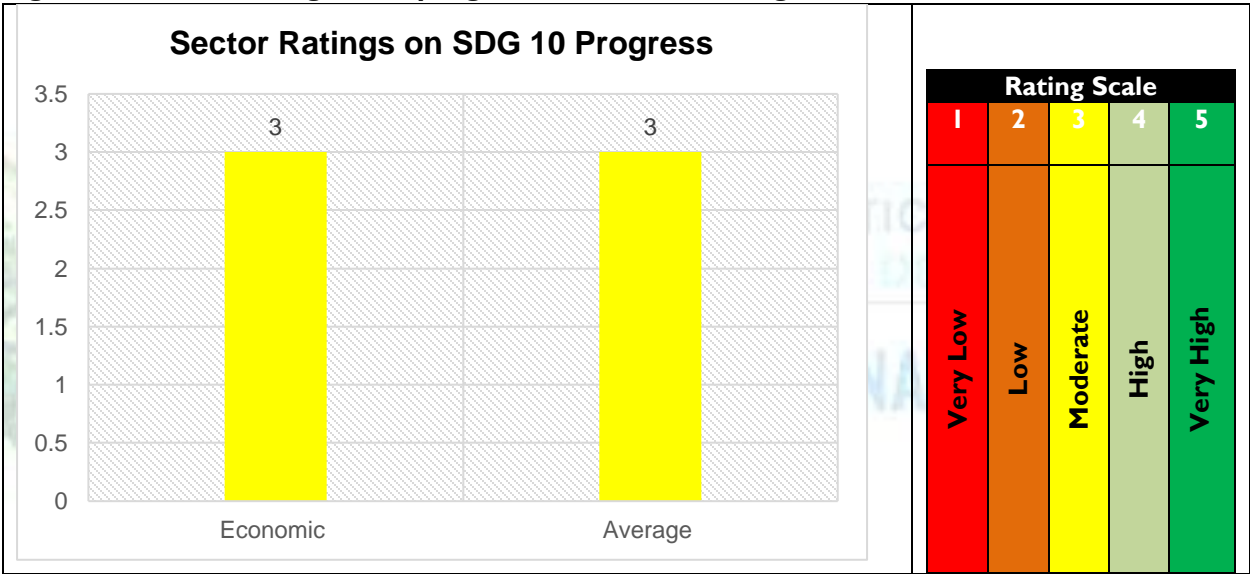
⁴ <https://www.idbz.co.zw/sector-operations/transport>

primary principle of the SDGs is the “Leave No One Behind” thus there is need for concerted efforts to reduce all forms of inequalities and achieve equity at all levels.

Review of the CSOs Perception on progress made since 2017 VNR

Figure 13 illustrates the CSO’s rating of the progress in reducing inequality within and among countries since the 2017 VNR. The ratings were provided using the scale of 5 adopted from the People’s Score Card. Only one sector responded to the questionnaire, the media sector. The score provided by the economic sector is graphically presented in Figure 13. The key to the ratings and colour codes are provided in Figure 13. The justifications to the ratings are provided in detail in the consolidated score card which is an annex to this report.

Figure 13: CSOs Rating of the progress made in achieving the SDGs



Source: Authors Computation from the consolidated People’s Score Cards

Like the previous goal, the economic sector was the only sector which responded to the questionnaire for goal 10. The sector ranked the progress in reducing inequality within and among countries at 3 out of 5, signifying moderate progress made since 2017 VNR. Overall, CSOs in Zimbabwe perceived that there is moderate progress being made in implementing policies, projects and intervention aimed at reducing inequality within and among countries as evidenced by an overall estimate score of 3 out of 5. The positive developments noted for the period under review is provided in the introduction of this section. The challenges and gaps which CSOs identified for improvement and strengthening are provided in the next section.

Challenges and Gaps Identified

- a) There is still more work to be done regarding inclusion of women in mainstream politics and also equal rights to state resources and democratic spaces in Zimbabwe.

- b) The rural urban digital divide is worrisome while COVID-19 has exposed the inequalities and exposed the need for policies that are inclusive.
- c) There is increasing inequalities in accessing social services especially in the education and health sectors of Zimbabwe

Recommendations for Improvements and Strengthening

- Increase investment in social protection and better targeting of the schemes. The policies must be inclusive and cover all segments of the society. For example, some older persons that are living with vulnerable and orphaned children are living in extreme poverty.
- There is need for political will and politically untainted commitment in order for equality to be fully realised in Zimbabwe.

Review of Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

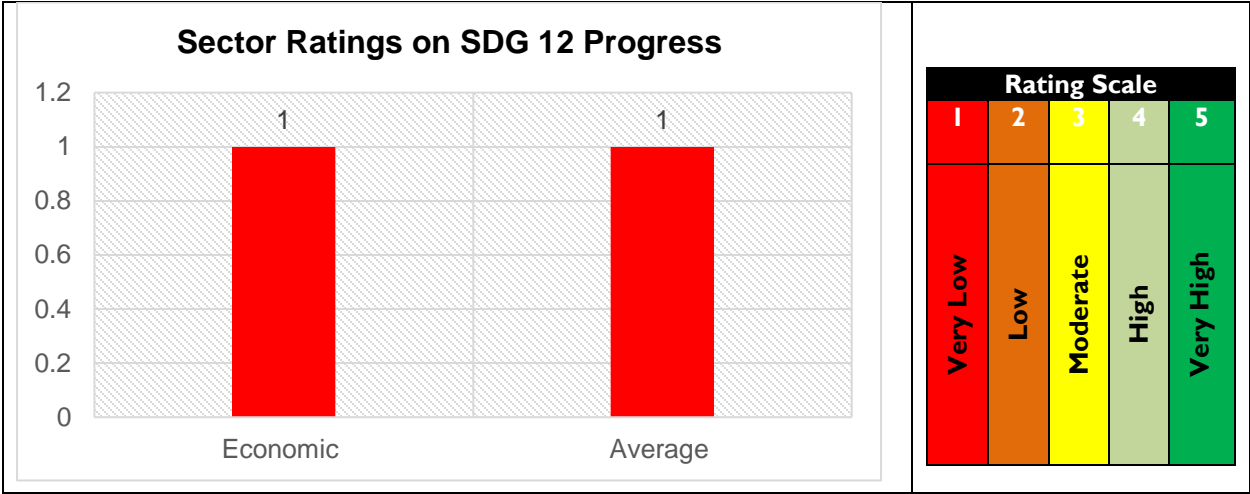
Introduction

The goals envision to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns. Zimbabwe has considerable legal and policy framework in place to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns. These include provisions enunciated under the Section 73 of the Constitution, ZERA ACT and Electricity Act (Energy) and Environmental Management Act. Institutions in support of the Goal include the Environmental Management Agency (EMA), Forestry Commission, Zimbabwe Energy Regulatory Authority, REA amongst others. However, the national budget is highly consumptive and the propensity to import is still high thus compromising sustainable consumption. The country is making efforts to address the balance of payment position of the country by export and investment promotion. However, despite having policies and institutions in place implementation is very weak partly due to resources constraints.

Review of the CSOs Perception on progress made since 2017 VNR

Figure 14 illustrates the CSO's rating of the progress in ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns. Only one sector responded to the questionnaire that is women sector. The score provided by the women sector is graphically presented in Figure 14. The justifications to the ratings are provided in detail in the consolidated score card which is an annex to this report.

Figure 14: CSOs Rating of the progress made in achieving the SDGs



Source: Authors Computation from the consolidated People’s Score Cards

Like the previous goal, the economic sector was the only sector which responded to the questionnaire for goal 10 as illustrated in Figure 14. The sector ranked the progress in ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns at 1 out of 5, signifying very low progress made since 2017 VNR. Overall, CSOs in Zimbabwe perceived that there is very low progress being made in implementing policies, projects and intervention aimed at ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns with an overall estimate score of 21 out of 5. The positive developments noted for the period under review is provided in the introduction of this section. The challenges and gaps which CSOs identified for improvement and strengthening are provided in the next section.

Review of Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Introduction

The goal seeks to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. The legal and policy framework for the goal is in place. Section 73 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe provides for environmental fundamental rights and freedoms. Zimbabwe has ratified the Paris Agreement on climate change. The country has a National Climate Policy which aims to enable Zimbabwe to establish the legal structures to regulate businesses in climate-related matters, and enable them to reduce their greenhouse gases emissions. The Policy further focuses on adaptation with regard to rural communities and agriculture. Other policies include the National Child Friendly Climate Policy, Renewable Energy Policy, the Forest Policy and other strategies aimed at achieving climate resilience and sustainable development. These include the Agriculture Manual for Agriculture Education in Zimbabwe, National Climate Change Response Strategy, National Environmental Policy and Strategies and National Climate Change Learning Strategy. The Government developed the Long-term Low Greenhouse Gas Emission Development Strategy (LEDS), for the period 2020-2050, in response to the global climate change crisis. The Climate Smart Agriculture policy will help in the adaptation to climate change.

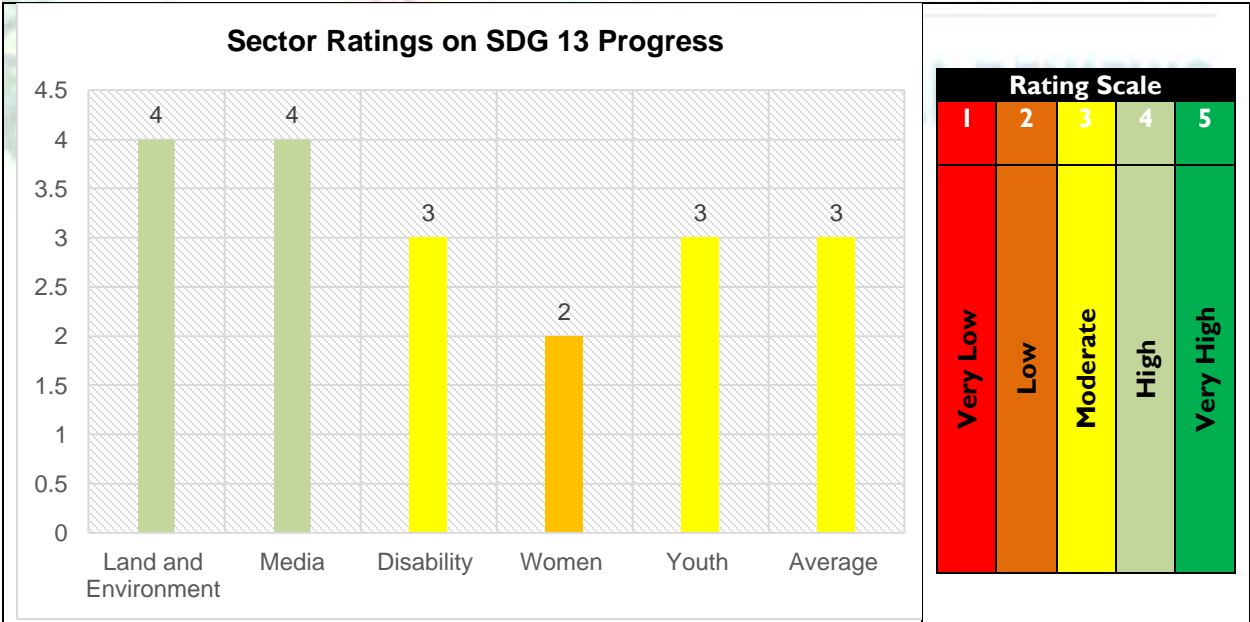
Government has established the Department of Climate Change Management. The Department is mandated with promoting best practices in climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies to enhance

the country’s response and capacity to manage the impacts of climate change. There are also other several functional agencies of government taking an active role in delivering on mandates related to climate change within the government. Some progress in implementation of policies and strategies has been noted. For instance, the Integrated Climate Risk Management for Food Security and Livelihoods in Zimbabwe Focusing on Masvingo and Rushinga Districts from the Green Climate Fund. The project is being implemented by the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water and Rural Resettlement together with World Food Programme (WFP) Zimbabwe. The project will strengthen national and community adaptation based on climate forecasts and information. Several solar plants and projects have also been rolled out in the country which are contributing electricity to the national grid. The National Cleanup Campaign was also launched by the President in December 2018 is another important milestone bringing together all stakeholders in cleaning up the environment.

Review of the CSOs Perception on progress made since 2017 VNR

Figure 15 illustrates the CSO’s rating of the progress in taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts since the 2017 VNR. The ratings were provided using the scale of 5 adopted from the People’s Score Card. Five sectors responded to the questionnaire that is women, media, youth, land and environment; and disability sectors. The scores provided by the sectors are graphically presented in Figure 15. The key to the ratings and colour codes are provided in Figure 15. The justifications to the ratings are provided in detail in the consolidated score card which is an annex to this report.

Figure 15: CSOs Rating of the progress made in achieving the SDGs



Source: Authors Computation from the consolidated People’s Score Cards

As shown in Figure 15, the disability and youth ranked the progress made in taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts at 3 out of 5, signifying moderate and considerable progress made since 2017 VNR. On a positive note, the land and environment and media sector ranked the goal at 4 out of 5. The women sector perceived low progress in taking urgent action to combat climate change and its

impacts. The overall score given for the goal was 3 out of 5 which means there is moderate progress being made in implementing policies, projects and interventions aimed at taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. Likewise, the positive developments noted for the period under review is provided in the introduction of this section. The challenges and gaps which CSOs identified for improvement and strengthening are provided in the next section.

Challenges and Gaps Identified

- a) Although there are legal and policy framework and strong institutional arrangements, the main challenge is on the financing of those plans.
- b) There is lack of disability framework and limited participation by PWDs in climate change related programs.
- c) Low awareness on climate change issues and information including policies not in accessible formats such as language and disability friendly. However, some CSOs are plugging the gap with organizations such as the Green Governance Zimbabwe cascading information within the Manicaland Province.
- d) COVID-19 disrupted and slowed progress in resettlement, accessing social protection of climate change victims, e.g., Cyclone Idai victims.

Recommendations for Improvements and Strengthening

- Government has done well in development of relevant policies e.g., national renewable energy policy, biofuels policy. However, these now need to be supported by budgetary allocation so that renewable energy is taken to a higher level than the current levels.
- The need to use traditional methods of preserving water.
- There is need for law enforcement on gold panners.
- Focus should be put towards afforestation and concentrate on indigenous trees.
- Educate people on climate change using vernacular.
- There is need for climate resistant infrastructure.

Review of Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Introduction

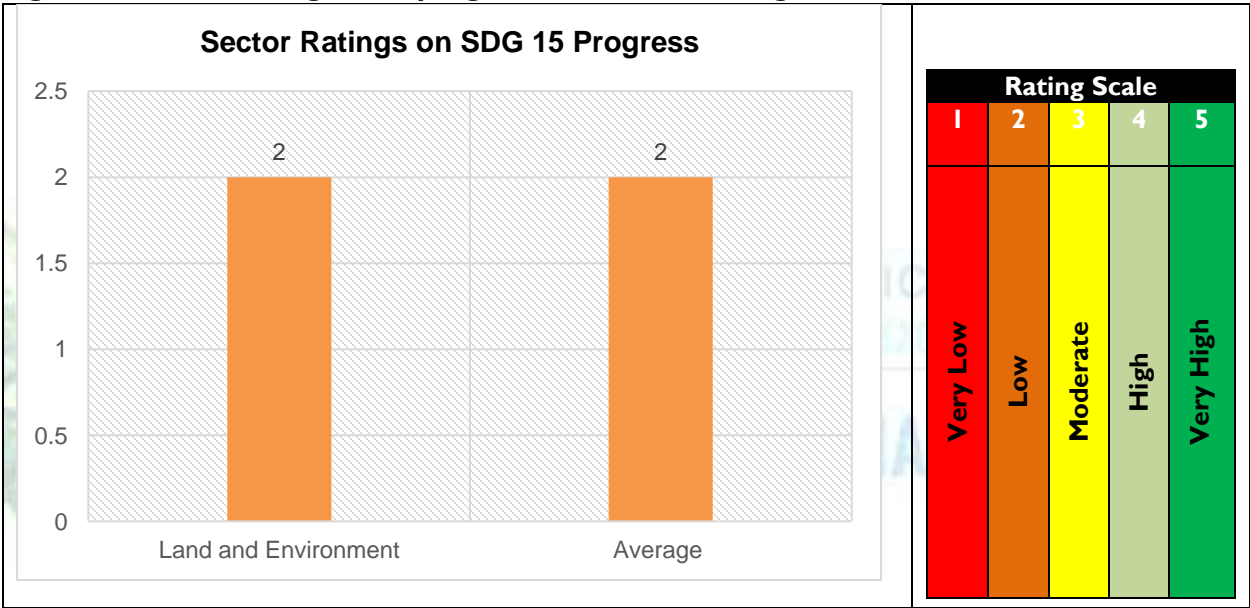
Goal 15 aspire to protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. Zimbabwe is a signatory to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of 1971. The Constitution through section 73 as well as the Environmental Management Act chapter 20:27 and Forest Commission Act have provisions in support of Goal 15. Government established Environmental Management board through EMA Act. Government amended the Forestry bill to improve its efficiency in managing forestry ecology. The GoZ has revised the national biodiversity strategies and action plans to mainstream biodiversity priorities into national and sectorial planning processes. In addition to EMA other institutions available include the Forestry Commission and the department of Parks and Wildlife conservation. NGOs are

playing their role of complementing government in raising awareness and building citizens’ capacity to be vigilant in their localities and demand transparency and accountability from their government.

Review of the CSOs Perception on progress made since 2017 VNR

Figure 16 illustrates the CSO’s rating of the progress in taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts since the 2017 VNR. The ratings were provided using the scale of 5 adopted from the People’s Score Card. Land and environment is the only sector which responded to the questionnaire. The score provided by the sector is graphically presented in Figure 16. The key to the ratings and colour codes are provided in Figure 16. The justifications to the ratings are provided in detail in the consolidated score card which is an annex to this report.

Figure 16: CSOs Rating of the progress made in achieving the SDGs



Source: Authors Computation from the consolidated People’s Score Cards

The land and environment sector were the only sector which responded to the questionnaire for goal 15 and the ranking is illustrated in Figure 15. The sector ranked the progress in taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts at 2 out of 5, signifying low progress made since 2017 VNR. Overall, CSOs in Zimbabwe perceived that there is low progress being made in implementing policies, projects and intervention aimed at progress in taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts evidenced by an overall estimate score of 2 out of 5. The positive developments noted for the period under review is provided in the introduction of this section. The challenges and gaps which CSOs identified for improvement and strengthening are provided in the next section.

Challenges and Gaps Identified

- a) There is a lack of commitment when it comes to resources for institutions that implement effectively policies to protect the environment. Corruption and politicization of these institution is also a concern raised.

- b) Wetlands are being sold as residential and industrial stands in urban areas.
- c) There is less commitment from government though there is rich legal framework in Zimbabwe that advance protection of forests and other forestry species. Mining licenses are being issued without due processes e.g., mining licenses to Chinese investors in protected areas such National Parks under the International Union of Conservation of Nature and its World Commission on Protected Areas. Zimbabwe violated this by granting mining prospectus licenses in the Hwange and Gonarezhou national parks.
- d) Unregulated surface mining activities of gold and chrome are becoming the major causes of land degradation.
- e) Opaque deals by government officials taking advantage of communities' inabilities to organize themselves and barring of meetings during COVID-19.
- f) Weather variability due to climate change is another big challenge.

Recommendations for Improvements and Strengthening

- Creation of strong institutions that are independent from government influence to enforce the legal provisions aimed at protecting the land.

Review of Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Introduction

Goal 16 of the SDGs seeks to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. There is some considerable government commitment to promote peace for instance the establishment of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) which is there to foster peace and healing. There have been marked improvements in the judicial sector with courts much more accessible to citizens thereby improving access to justice. In 2018, The government established the Political Actors Dialogue (POLAD), which is a multi-stakeholder grouping aimed at bridging the divide that exists on the Zimbabwean political landscape although there is need to broaden the platform and have all key political players on board. There is some progress made through the resuscitation of the Tripartite Negotiation Forum which is the National Dialogue Structure. However there seem to have been little or no progress on economic growth and this is affecting SDG 8 and 16.

Accountability and inclusion remain key issues despite for instance the formation of the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission which is meant to deal with all forms of corruption. Corruption and cases of bribery remain very high within the country and include high profile figures who are rarely prosecuted for the crimes committed. The COVID-19 scandal in which resources were diverted by political elites paints a clear picture to the nature and scale of corruption within the government and the lack of effective institutions and mechanisms to deal with this at the source. Inclusion of CSOs in these spaces is

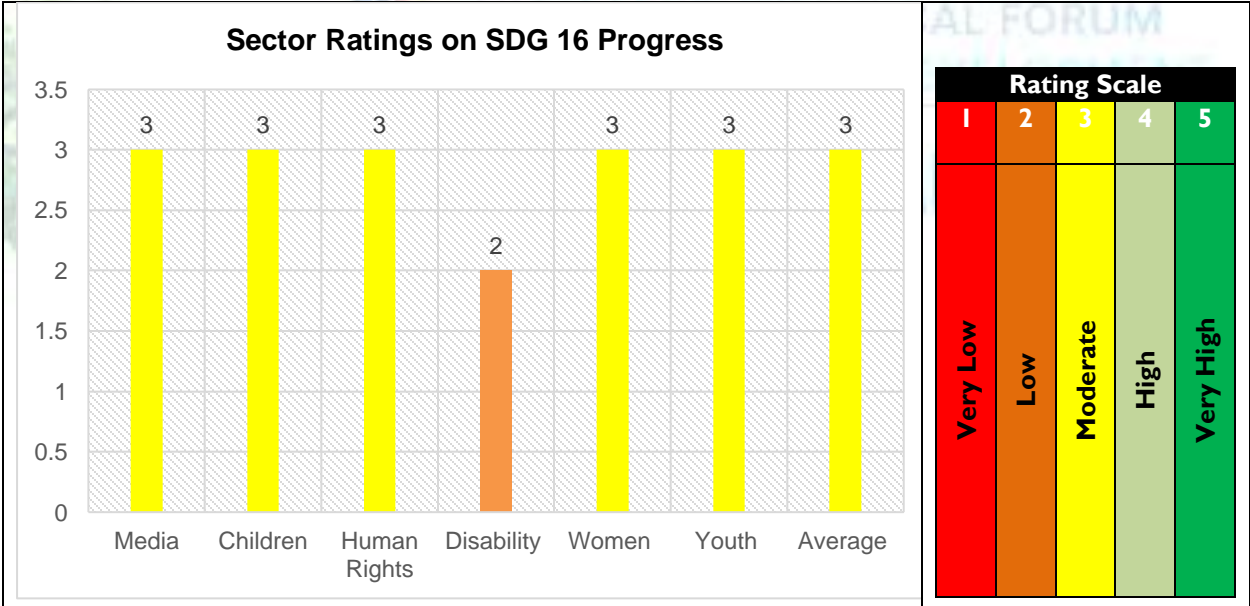
commendable for example there are CSOs representatives sitting within the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Sub Committee on Strategy Development and in the NPRC.

The reform of the judicial sector has been an ongoing issue for a while now and there has been regular implementation of this which has included refurbishing of the courts, constructing courts at the local level thereby making them accessible to citizens. The NPRC and the Anti-Corruption Commission are both fairly new. The zero tolerance to corruption campaign by the Government has not yielded much results as corruption remains high and is endemic across government departments and public service in general.

Review of the CSOs Perception on progress made since 2017 VNR

Figure 17 illustrates the CSO’s rating of the progress in promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels since the 2017 VNR. The ratings were provided using the scale of 5 adopted from the People’s Score Card. A total of six sectors responded to the questionnaire that is women, youth, human rights, media, children and disability sectors. The scores provided by these sectors are graphically presented in Figure 17. The key to the ratings and colour codes are provided in Figure 17. The justifications to the ratings are provided in detail in the consolidated score card which is an annex to this report.

Figure 17: CSOs Rating of the progress made in achieving the SDGs



Source: Authors Computation from the consolidated People’s Score Cards

As illustrated clearly in Figure 17, 5 out of 6 sectors responded to the questionnaire has provided a score of 3 out of 5 signifying moderate progress made in promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. The disability sector provided a score of 2 out of 5 meaning low progress made in promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. Overall, CSOs in Zimbabwe

perceived that there is moderate progress being made in implementing policies, projects and intervention aimed at promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels evidenced by an overall estimate score of 3 out of 5. The positive developments noted for the period under review is provided in the introduction of this section. The challenges and gaps which CSOs identified for improvement and strengthening are provided in the next section.

Challenges and Gaps Identified

- a) Citizen participation is in the form of alliances and networks that deal with specific issues such as debt, corruption, peace building and human rights in a broad sense. Human rights defenders and activists organize actions to lobby for governance issues are met with arrest in most cases. However, occasionally, the government engages with civil society organizations on these matters.
- b) The majority of citizens especially the youth (as per a 2020 research by the Youth Empowerment and Transformation Trust) have very limited to no knowledge of the Constitution, their Rights and how to access instruments of justice.
- c) Involvement of PWDs in the sector is still low and there is no inclusivity in the institutions charged with peace and justice. Access to information and awareness of legal provisions among the PWDs is low. Police reception not friendly especially related to domestic violence. People with hearing impairments are most affected because there are few within the justice system who can do sign language.
- d) The use of force in maintaining peace and order and continuation of media violations is a cause for concern. The reported abductions, corruption, election and post-election disturbances, exclusion of minority groups.
- e) There is still limited access to media in rural and marginalised communities in Zimbabwe.
- f) Shrinking civic space on the rise within the country – this has had an adverse effect on the accountability role of CSOs and undertaking of actions targeted at the state to demand redress such as demonstrations.
- g) Amendments within the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment No.2 narrows the space for citizen consultation, inclusive decision making and participation going forward which will have an adverse effect on the independency of a commission, the judicial sector itself and any other related institutions.

Impact of COVID-19

- During lockdown courts were not functioning thereby undermining Goal 16.
- Deployment of security forces into civilian or public life to enforce the COVID -19 measures – this resulted in serious human rights violations with some of these cases reaching the attention of independent commissions e.g., ZHRC and NPRC.
- Disruption to citizen and CSO organizing due to restrictions imposed on travelling, movement and public gatherings.

Recommendations for Improvements and Strengthening

- Training of police, military and nurses on how to interact with PWDs without offending or discriminating them.
- There is need to advance peace building initiatives to incorporate everyone including the vulnerable groups.
- Peace related institutions need to be fully supported to work from home in times of pandemics or disasters.
- Co-regulation of the media in Zimbabwe.
- Prosecution of all perpetrators of media and human rights violations.
- Use of police instead of the military in maintaining lockdown regulations during pandemics such as the COVID-19.

Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Introduction

The goal seeks to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. Government has put in place some partnerships towards implementation of the SDGs with development partners, civil society organizations, and the private sector. The major partnership remains the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework. The ZUNDAF (2016-2020) supported six results areas aligned to the SDGs namely, Social Services and Protection; Poverty Reduction and Value Addition; Food and Nutrition; Gender Equality; HIV and AIDS and Public Administration and Governance. This has been largely successful and there is an attempt to include CSOs albeit in an ad hoc manner. The government has put in place an SDGs coordination mechanism that include CSOs participation. However, the implementation still largely remains ad hoc. Zimbabwe is a signatory of the SADC, AU, UN and other various regional agreements. These have been helpful in monitoring and tracking progress as well as being conduits for official development assistance.

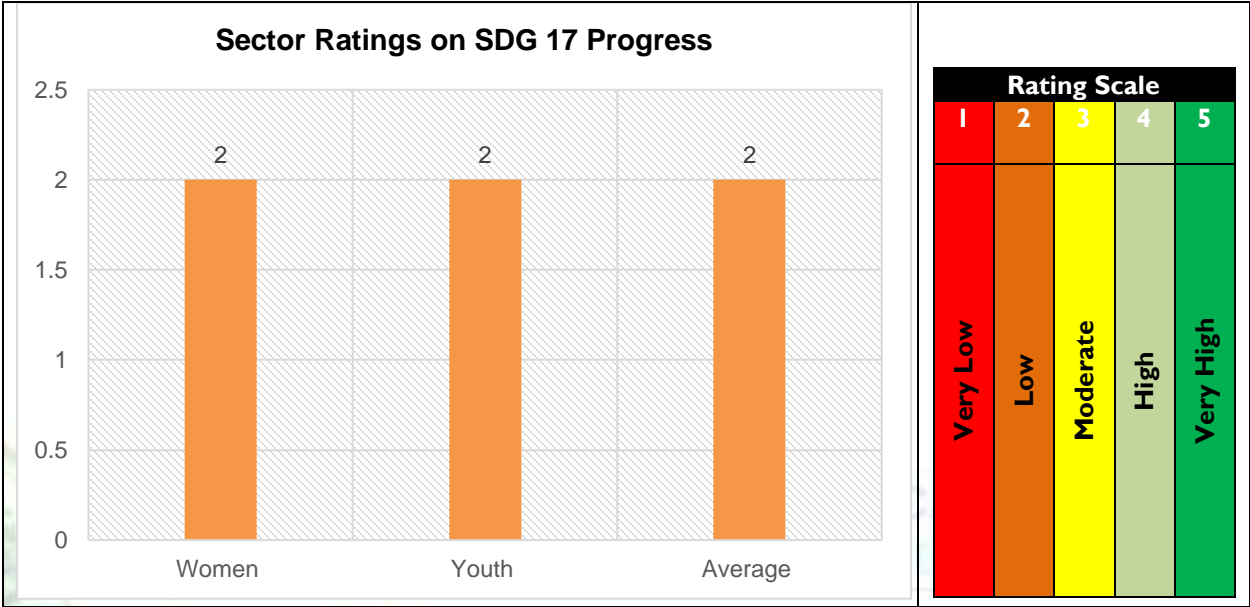
Official Development Assistance increased during the period from an estimated US\$450.4 million in 2017 to US\$606.7 million in 2019 and US\$677.6 million in 2020. Some improvements have been noted in the ease of doing business with the World Bank ranking Zimbabwe among the top 20 countries that have improved the most in terms of ease of doing business reforms. Zimbabwe has also improved in terms of budget transparency with the Open Budget Survey of 2019 ranking Zimbabwe number three in Africa with a score of 49 out of 100 compared to the score of 23 out of 100 in 2017. However, the score of 49 out of 100 is still very low and the lack of adequate budget and debt transparency is a cause for concern. Such information is key to stronger and sustainable partnerships which can drive growth and development.

Review of the CSOs Perception on progress made since 2017 VNR

Figure 18 illustrates the CSO's rating of the progress in strengthening the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development since the 2017 VNR. The ratings were

provided using the scale of 5 adopted from the People’s Score Card. Only two sectors responded to the questionnaire that is women and youth sectors. The scores provided by these sectors are graphically presented in Figure 18. The key to the ratings and colour codes are provided in Figure 18. The justifications to the ratings provided is provided in detail in the consolidated score card which is an annex to this report.

Figure 18: CSOs Rating of the progress made in achieving the SDGs



Source: Authors Computation from the consolidated People’s Score Cards

As illustrated clearly in Figure 18, both women and youth sectors provided a score of 2 signifying low progress made in strengthening the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. Overall, CSOs in Zimbabwe perceived that there is low progress made in implementing policies, projects and intervention aimed at strengthening the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development evidenced by an overall estimate score of 2 out of 5. The positive developments noted for the period under review is provided in the introduction of this section. The challenges and gaps which CSOs identified for improvement and strengthening are provided in the next section.

Challenges and Gaps Identified

- Despite the improvements in budget transparency and ease of doing business reforms, fiscal space remains constrained with the economy underperforming. Total revenue to GDP increased from 17.1% in 2016 to 21.5% in 2018 before declining to 17.5% in 2019. Tax revenue to GDP improved from 15.8% in 2016 to 21.1% in 2018 before declining to 17.3% in 2019.
- Corruption has led to massive leakages of resources which could have been invested in SDG related investment.
- Foreign direct investment increased from US\$349 million to US\$745 million in 2018 before declining to US\$280 million in 2019.

- d) Debt remains unsustainably high, due to the continuous accumulation of arrears, as well as expansion in domestic debt. According to the 2021 National Budget Statement, public debt was ZWL\$17 billion (46.9% of GDP) in 2018 rising to ZWL\$142.7 billion (88.1%) in 2019 and ZWL\$1.5 trillion (78.4% of GDP) in 2020 External Debt rose from about US\$7.5 billion in 2017 to US\$8 billion in 2019.
- e) The Constitutional Amendment Bill no. 2 aims at weakening powers of the Parliament in debt management which reduces transparency and accountability.

Impact of COVID-19

- Slowed economic growth and closure of the country from prospective investors that might be willing to establish business with Zimbabwe. Such plans had to wait till the lifting of the measures to contain COVID-19.
- The Auditor general's work was disadvantaged by COVID-19 but the office is quite helpful in tracking public debts and revenue.

Recommendations for Improvement and Strengthening

- Greater inclusion of the private sector in the SDGs to tap into its resource base to generate domestic resource and buy-in in the strategies to achieve this by the private sector.
- Inclusive consultations and involvement of stakeholders in all stages of development from planning up to implementation.
- There is need to give feedback and updates on the progress of the projects as well as raising public awareness on government policies and programmes.
- Partnerships should give back to societies through established community institutions and proper monitoring of the projects.
- Need to institutionalize multi-stakeholder participation in the SDGs implementation with proper, oversight roles.
- There is need to operationalize the SDGs monitoring and evaluation framework that the government in partnership with the UN and CSOs has developed.

Areas for Strengthening and Improvement

Lack of disaggregated data: The data which is currently available in the country for Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for SDGs is in composite and aggregate form. However, from our analysis the principle of 'Leave no one behind' requires disaggregated data which makes it easier even to track and report on SDGs targets. The current information systems used to collect data should be reviewed to include indicators for granular data. Currently it's almost impossible to generate data for each and every indicator.

Integration of SDGs at local levels: Whilst we commend the government for developing SDGs based long term national development strategies in form of Vision 2030 and periodic plans inform of NDSI (2021 – 2025), there is no clear pathways for integrating SDGs at local levels. The provincial and local governments do not have periodic plans, implementation rigor, or capacity to implement.

Enabling environment: Much is still to be done in creating adequate enabling environment and role for all stakeholders especially the private sector which is currently not meaningfully involved in the SDGs coordination and implementation. SDGs focusing on infrastructure require huge investment as already shown by various studies. So, there is a big role of innovative financing mechanism and financial markets in the private sector. It is worrying that the civic space is continuously shrinking in Zimbabwe despite the critical role and contribution of CSOs towards sustainable development through various ways at both local and national levels. The operating environment should acknowledge and seek to nurture civil society's role in service delivery, humanitarian assistance, research, public participation in policy development, accountability and watchdog, monitoring, amplifying the voices of the vulnerable, among other roles.

Domestic Resource Mobilisation: It is the primary responsibility of the government to mobilise resources for the financing of SDGs. Mobilization of domestic resources in Zimbabwe is still a challenge owing to the constrained fiscal space. The country should leverage on the resource endowment comparative advantage to advance the financing of various SDG related interventions.

Alignment of M&E Systems: Government ministries and departments, CSOs, private sector and development partners should align and synchronise their M&E systems with SDGs targets and indicators to ensure easy tracking of the progress and reporting on SDGs implementation.

Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic: The uncontrollable COVID19 has undermined Zimbabwe's efforts to achieve the SDGs. COVID-19 pandemic is not only affecting the health sector, it also has widespread impacts on agriculture, manufacturing, mining, transport, tourism and education sectors, as well as general economic activities, remittance inflows and employment. The COVID19 induced lockdowns and disruptions in economic activities have long-term impact on the lives and livelihoods of the people and the socioeconomic situation of the country. COVID19 Recovery Plan should be expedited to mitigate the multidimensional impacts of COVID-19. This pandemic has adversely affected the efforts towards the effective implementation of the SDGs in Zimbabwe as well as eroded some of the gains which have been already recorded in the country.

Policy Implications and Way Forward

Progress on most of the SDGs reviewed remains very low making it very difficult for the country to achieve the set targets for Agenda 2030. While the country has done well in terms of putting the policy and legal framework in place for most of the goals and committing to most international agreements related to the SDGs, implementation of the policies and programmes is disappointingly very low. There is need for an improvement in the implementation of the policies and programmes put in place by the government. Greater participation by stakeholders including, Parliament, CSOs, the private sector, and citizens is required in both the formulation, implementation and monitoring of the SDGs. Linking the monitoring framework in the NDSI with SDGs monitoring and the Results Based Programme adapted by Government is critical as is inclusion of all stakeholders and regular feedback on progress. The programme-based budgeting that government is now using should be complemented by quarterly budget implementation reports with adequate information such as activities undertaken and outputs at the minimum. These will also help with improving implementation and tracking of progress.

There is also need for adequate resources to the Zimbabwe National Statistical Agency (ZIMSTAT) to plug the SDGs indicators data gap and also ensure timely production of data. Government has also done well in terms of involving stakeholders in the VNR processes but there is need to institutionalize the consultation processes and have clear timelines or a calendar to allow for adequate preparation and meaningful participation of all stakeholders. The media especially the public media is also useful in raising public awareness on the SDGs. Post HLPF stakeholder feedback sessions for the government to report on outcomes of the HLPF are important to map the way forward and complete the accountability cycle.

Way Forward: CSOs Commitment to the SDGs Implementation in Zimbabwe

Building on the SDGs implementation and co-ordination framework presented in 2017 VNR Government is further strengthening the institutional framework by establishing the SDGs Secretariat to co-ordinate SDGs implementation, and the tracking of the implementation of the 17 SDGs through the national SDG Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. Government has also involved other stakeholders in the SDGs Monitoring and Evaluation Framework though this should become formalised and also include the participation of communities in line with devolution thrust adopted by government. The NDSI was developed and premised on inclusive economic growth and sustainable development which dovetails well with the country's SDGs framework. There is considerable progress in strengthening CSO partnerships with development partners and government to complement each other in SDGs implementation through Leave No One Behind initiatives, Gender Mainstreaming and Integration, Disability Inclusion, Supporting Government efforts through resource mobilization for SDGs implementation, Research and Advocacy for SDGs localization, Participatory Citizen Monitoring of SDGs implementation and SDGs Awareness Raising.

CSO Effective Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting on SDGs: For effective review, tracking and monitoring of the SDGs by CSO there is need to generate granular data especially at community level that is aligned to the SDGs goals, targets and indicators. From the action, it was evident that there are huge data gaps which makes it difficult to adequately trace and track the progress the nation is making on attainment of SDGs by CSOs including qualitative aspects of the SDGs implementation such as public

awareness. Most of the data provided was not in line with the indicators outlined in the SDGs framework thus making it difficult to gauge the progress made in the attainment of SDGs in Zimbabwe. Though a lot is being done by CSOs which is in line with the SDGs it is not yet clear whether the country is making headway on the SDGs as absence of appropriate data which is in line with SDGs indicators is a huge problem. Most of the survey that are undertaken by CSOs do not capture the majority of the information needed to assess SDGs progress. There are very few evaluations and assessment reports that were produced by both government and CSOs to provide evidence and substantiate the data which was provided by line ministries and this has a bearing on the credibility of the statistics provided.

Coordination of CSOs on SDGs: There is need for strengthening the currently available platforms for CSOs to engage in a coordinated manner in critical dialogue and contribution towards the SDGs implementation. This is key to support government efforts through resource mobilization for SDGs implementation as well as ensuring participatory citizen monitoring on SDGs implementation

Creation of CSOs enabling environment: There is need for CSOs to influence national policy making with a view to creating an enabling and inclusive environment for SDGs implementation in Zimbabwe. This is key in developing CSOs led and driven initiatives for realizing the SDGs in all the three dimensions: social, economic and environmental.



Annexure I: List of Organisations that participated

1. Advocates of Hope youth organization (Harare)
2. Albino Association
3. All About Love Trust Zimbabwe
4. All for Climate Change
5. Association of the Disabled and Elderly Persons of Zimbabwe (ADEPZ)
6. ARDEZ Masvingo
7. ARDT
8. Africa Self-help Assistance Programme (ASAP)
9. AWH
10. BCC
11. Bulawayo Junior Council
12. CCSZ
13. CCSPM
14. Community Working Group on Health (CWGH)
15. Childline Zimbabwe
16. Centre for Children With Disabilities (CHCD)
17. Centre for Democracy and Peace Advocacy (CDPA)
18. Centre for Disability and Development
19. Centre for Natural Resource Governance (CNRG)
20. Chosen Trust
21. CIVIC FORUM on Human Development
22. Conscious Development and Empowerment Trust (CODET)
23. Compassion Zimbabwe
24. Community empowerment trust
25. Community Solutions Zimbabwe
26. Community Tolerance Reconciliation and Development (COTRAD)
27. Christian Legal Society
28. Centre for Youth Empowerment and Development (CYEDT)
29. Deaf Zimbabwe Trust (DZT)
30. DEMCO Trust
31. DP Foundations
32. Environmental Management Trust
33. Ebenezer Women Social Trust
34. Ecumenical Church Leaders' Forum (ECLF)
35. ECOZI
36. Education Coalition of Zimbabwe (ECOZI)
37. Forum for African Women Educationalists Zimbabwe (FAWEZI)
38. Female Prisoners Support Trust (FEMPRIST)
39. Family Orphan Care Trust (FOST)
40. FYBY
41. GCE

42. GGZT
43. Girls and Women Empowerment Network,
44. Green Governance
45. Green Hut
46. Gweru East Development Trust (GEDT)
47. GML
48. Gweru Residents and Ratepayers Association
49. Habakkuk Trust
50. Harare Residence Trust (HRT)
51. HelpAge Zimbabwe
52. Hope Alive Child Network
53. Hope for Kids Zimbabwe
54. HTT
55. HOCIC
56. Huldah Foundation
57. Imba Mukadzi
58. International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR)
59. Island Hospice
60. Katswe Sisterhood
61. Kwekwe Child Led Group
62. Labour and Economic Development Research Institute of Zimbabwe (LEDRIZ)
63. Let's Do Chariy
64. Limitless Women Zimbabwe (LIWOZ)
65. Lupane Youth for Development Trust
66. MAPRORIWEB
67. MAYA
68. Masvingo Centre for Research Development (MACRAD)
69. Media Institute of Southern Africa
70. MHCC
71. Midlands AIDS Support Organization (MASO)
72. Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA)
73. Multi-Therapy Trust
74. Masvingo United Residents and Rate Payers Alliance (MURRA)
75. Musasa Project
76. Mutare Junior Council
77. Mutasa Youth Forum
78. Mvuramanzi Trust
79. Mwana Trust
80. MWTa
81. National Association of Societies for the Care of the Handicapped (NASCOH)
82. National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (NANGO)
83. National Association of Youth Organisation (NAYO)
84. National Council of Disabled Persons of Zimbabwe (NCDPZ)

85. Nkabazwe Community Radio station
86. Ntengwe for Community Development
87. Omni Village
88. Orphans' friend and Community Development Trust
89. Orphans and vulnerable Children Oasis and verification centre
90. Pakasipiti,
91. Peace-building and Capacity Development Foundation (PACDEF)
92. Pan African Development Foundation
93. Pastoral Care and Counseling Services (PCCS)
94. Penhalonga Residents Trust
95. Pro Africa Development
96. Poverty Reduction Forum Trust (PRFT)
97. Quadriplegic and Paraplegic Association of Zimbabwe (QUAPAZ)
98. RAFTY
99. Real Agenda for Youth Transformation (RAFYT)
100. Research and Advocacy Unit (RAU)
101. Resource Economics & Sustainable Development (RESO Trust)
102. Regional Network of Children and Young People Trust (RNCYPT)
103. Rural Communities Empowerment Trust (RUCET)
104. Southern African Trust (SAT)
105. Save The Children
106. SAYWHAT
107. Scripture Union Zimbabwe
108. Sustainable Environmental Conservation Trust Africa (SECTA)
109. Self Help Development Foundation
110. Sese Community Trust
111. Signs of Hope Zimbabwe Trust
112. Simukai Child Protection Program
113. Shamwari Yemwana Sikana (SYS)
114. Sikhulile Zenzele
115. St Daniels Renah
116. Tariro Foundation of Zimbabwe
117. Tasvika
118. Transparency International Zimbabwe (TIZ)
119. Trinity Project
120. Tony Wait
121. Unathi Children's Network
122. UNIZIM TRUST
123. Vision Africa
124. Victory Siyanqoba Trust
125. VU
126. WALPE
127. Women's Coalition in Zimbabwe (WCoZ)

128. We are Phenomanol (WAP)
129. WELEAD TRUST
130. Women's Empowerment and Rehabilitation Trust (WERT)
131. Women of Africa
132. Women and Law in Southern African Research and Education Trust (WILSA)
133. Window of Hope
134. Women space Trust
135. Women's Action Group
136. World Vision
137. Youth Alive Zimbabwe (YAZ)
138. Youth Empowerment and Transformation Trust (YETT)
139. Youth Empowerment And Support Organization (YESO)
140. YIELD
141. Younger Onset Dementia Aotearoa Trust (YODAT)
142. Young Entrepreneurs Trust Zimbabwe
143. Young Voices Disability Zimbabwe
144. Young Voices Trust
145. Youth Essence
146. Youth for Innovation Trust
147. Youth for Today and Tomorrow (YTT)
148. Youth Network Connect (YNC)
149. Zimbabwe National Council of Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)
150. YVT
151. Young Women Christian Association of Zimbabwe (YWCA)
152. Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association (ZELA)
153. Zimbabwe Humanitarian and Livelihoods Development Trust (ZHLDT)
154. ZICET
155. Zimbabwe Blind Women Trust
156. Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC)
157. Zimbabwe Climate Change Coalition (ZCCC)
158. Zimbabwe Community Health Intervention Research (ZICHIRE)
159. Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZIMCDD)
160. Zimbabwe Chamber of Informal Economy Association (ZCIEA)
161. Zimbabwe Climate Change Coalition
162. Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions
163. Zimbabwe Evaluation Association
164. Zimbabwe National Council for the Welfare of Children
165. Zimbabwe Natural Resources Dialogue Forum (ZNRDF)
166. Zimbabwe Women's Bureau
167. Zimbabwe Young Women's Network for Peace Building
168. Zimbabwe Reconstruction Fund (ZIMREF) Trust
169. Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZIMRIGHTS)
170. Zimbabwe National Council for the Welfare of Children (ZNCWC)
171. Zimbabwe Organisation for Youth in Politics (ZOYIP)
172. Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association (ZWLA)

- 173. Zimbabwe United Nations Association (ZUNA)
- 174. Zimbabwe Young Women's Network for Peace Building (ZYWNP)

