



Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association

A Discussion Paper

**Local Government and Corruption in Zimbabwe: Towards
Bridging the Integrity Deficit**

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1. Introduction

Despite its proliferation in local authorities, debilitating effects, ability to undermine service delivery, and derail poverty alleviation efforts in Zimbabwe, corruption, had until recently escaped the attention of the popular press and scholarship. Corruption is endemic across Zimbabwean society and institutions, often escaping censure due to it being accepted as part of normal business by purveyors and victims alike. However, as this paper argues, the culture of corruption has severe effects on not just the moral fabric of society, but also the material wellbeing of people, and warrants immediate and stern action, if Zimbabwe is to escape the vicious cycle of poverty, crime and under-development. While corruption is a national concern, deserving of nation-wide action, this paper focuses on corruption in public resource management. Specifically, it trains its attention on corruption in local authorities. It argues that design defects and the dearth in corruption combatting and public integrity promoting mechanisms in local authorities has led to ad hoc and reactionary anti-corruption activities, which have been met by predictable failure as they are often inadequate, inappropriate, and politicised. This paper also posits that the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing is ill-suited to address corruption in local authorities because of its complicities in the corruption it ought to stem. This is especially so given that when the ministry has acted on corruption, this action has tended to be partisan and factional.

The above arguments are presented on the strength of Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association's (BPROA's) findings from research conducted between September 2016 and June 2017. The BPROA study assessed the nature and scope of corruption in local authorities in Zimbabwe, and through this paper proffers recommendations on non-partisan measures to stem corruption in local authorities, which are apt and adequate enough to escape the critique of being tentative, ad hoc, reactionary and inappropriate.

This paper illuminates the above arguments, findings and recommendations in the rest of the paper which is organised as follows: Post this first section it briefly highlights the historical and contemporary context of corruption in Zimbabwe. Thereafter, it shares conceptualisations of corruption, public integrity, and other relevant terms, outlining the different typologies of corruption, their different manifestations, and causes. The discussion then concretely shifts to the Zimbabwean context through analyses of the constitutional and legislative framework governing corruption and public integrity in Zimbabwe. This will be followed by an outline of the scope of corruption in Zimbabwean local authorities and its implications on service delivery and development, demonstrating the link between corruption and effectiveness of public resource management. The paper then discusses regional and international best practices for strengthening public integrity and combating corruption, and concludes with a nine point plan for strengthening integrity, transparency and accountability in local authorities in Zimbabwe as a means to combat corruption.

1.1. Corruption in Zimbabwe: Past and Present

The pervasive nature of corruption in Zimbabwe is often visible at a very basic level through rampant bribery, nepotism, misappropriation of funds, and fraud in various sectors of society. This common place corruption is preceded by corruption's horrid footprint in pre and post-independent Zimbabwe with prominent cases such as the Willow Gate Scandal in the 1980s¹ and the War Victims Compensation fund abuse in the 1990s, standing as historical examples. In contemporary Zimbabwe, shady deals in the mining sector, particularly illicit financial flows in diamond trade, and the widespread concern over heads of parastatals awarding themselves hefty salaries and packs in what became known as salary-gate, are amongst some of the better known cases of grand scale

¹ This case involved illegal resell of vehicles by government officials at an inflated cost by Government officials including Ministers.

corruption. These have been the “cream” of the corruption “cake” which made up of multiple reports of corrupt tender procedures in state, semi-state, and non-state procurement spheres.

Transparency International’s Corruption Perception Index (CPI) has consistently ranked Zimbabwe as a highly corrupt country (see Figure 1 below). In 2016, it ranked Zimbabwe at 154 out of 176 countries, signalling an increase in corruption perception from its 2015 ranking of 150. This placement of Zimbabwe among the 25 most corrupt nations in the world² indicates the endemic nature of corruption in Zimbabwe. While these rankings tell a torrid national tale, in recent years, corruption has transcended the big Grand National scale, and has become more manifest and a critical cause for concern at sub-national level, increasingly turning the local government sphere into an arena where dramatic cases of corruption play out. In this sphere, cases of bribery, flouting of tender procedures, as well as land and property grabs by corrupt council bureaucrats, councillors and politicians, have become the norm.

Figure 1: Zimbabwe Corruption ranking from 2006 to 2016



Scholars like Mukonza (2013), Sabilika (2012) and Sithole (2013) have acknowledged the endemic nature corruption in local authorities, and its debilitating effects such as exacerbation of poverty through misuse of funds meant for public services such as health and education, and development projects. Findings from Afrobarometer Round 6 survey results (2015) indicated that 75 percent of Zimbabweans perceive some or all local councillors as corrupt. These perceptions have been validated by the media accounts and shocking exposes on local government corruption on various fronts. However, despite the scholarly treatment, public knowledge and perceptions, as well as sensational exposes on corruption, impunity for corrupters has been the order of the day, as there have been limited arrests and prosecutions of perpetrators.

Given the sphere of local governance, the temptation is often to place corruption at the foot of councillors. However, existent research and press reports, indicate a wider cast of perpetrators which includes other local and national authority figures. For instance, in 2016, the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (ZACC) investigated the Minister of Local Government, Public Works and national housing, Saviour Kasukuwere for corruption after the minister sold 300 hectares of land to Planet Africa, a company owned by Prophet Walter Magaya. Minister Kasukuwere’s predecessor,

² 1 is the least corrupt country, 176 is the most corrupt

Ignatius Chombo, was also caught in a corruption storm when it emerged during acrimonious divorce proceedings in 2011 that he owned vast properties and land holdings throughout Zimbabwe. The sheer amount of property, for a public servant and former lecturer, led the public to speculate as to the integrity of the minister, with speculation rife that the wealth could have been acquired through abuse of public office.

Yet despite the ubiquitous nature of corruption in local government, very little effort has been invested into holistically addressing it. This reluctance could possibly be tied to several factors. First, as illustrated above the putative gate keepers at ministerial levels are themselves suspected of serious corruption, and therefore are hardly able to act on crimes they are either guilty or accused of. Second, dealing with corruption at local government level could be a victim of the national politics of patronage, and a decided lack of political will to fight it. These factors have arguably led to a dearth in policy explicitly designed to combat corruption and promote public integrity in local authorities. Resultantly, anti-corruption activities at the local authority level have been at best ad hoc, and at worst, reactionary. In other instances anti-corruption drives have been politicised, expediently placed under the jurisdiction of a partisan Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing, which has, itself, been dogged by corruption allegations. In other instances the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission has handled corruption with kid gloves, and/or in a factional manner. This is despite increasing evidence that corruption in local authorities diverts funds meant for services such as healthcare, education, and other developmental projects that impact on the livelihoods of citizens into the pockets of corrupt public officials.

It is on the strength of the above context that this paper introduces a qualified conversation on the corruption problem in public resource management at local government level.

2. CONCEPTUALISING CORRUPTION AND PUBLIC INTEGRITY

Despite corruption being a universal phenomenon, its precise definition continues to elude consensus. However, consensus exists on its broad, complex and often contingent nature. The World Bank defines corruption as the

“Abuse of power, most often for personal gain or for the benefit of a group to which one owes allegiance. It can be motivated by greed, by the desire to retain or increase one’s power or perversely enough, by the belief in a supposed greater good.”

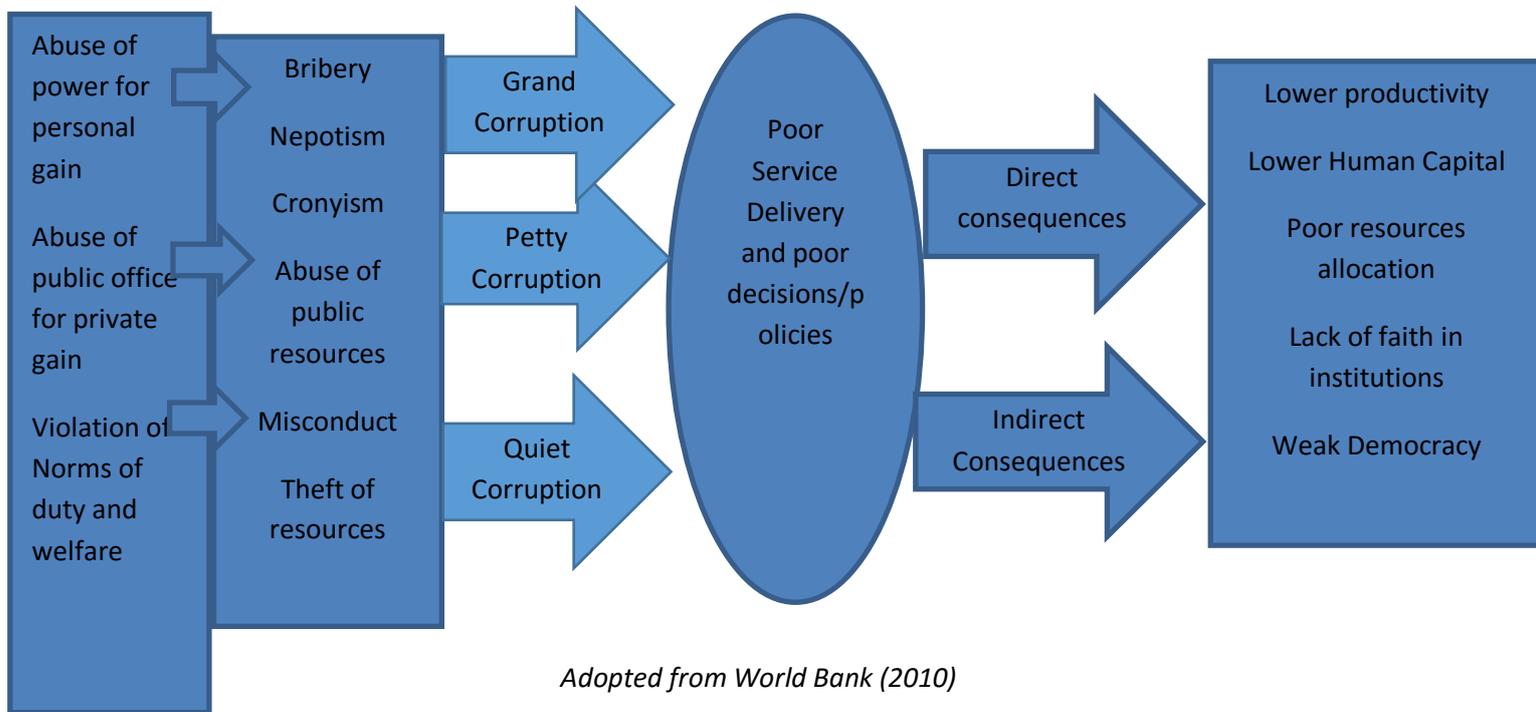
Some scholars view corruption as involving abuse of public office for private gain (Chetwynd *et al*, 2003; Rose-Arkerman, 1998), while others differentiate between systematic and sporadic corruption, organised and disorganised corruption, and grand versus petty corruption (Mapuva 2014). In addition to the commonly cited grand and petty corruption, the World Bank (2010), adds to this typology, what it terms “quiet corruption”, which is a subtle form of corruption that occurs mainly at the point of service provision with negative consequences on the poorest people who rely on public services. This “quiet” variant of corruption is especially important to note, as often it is most salient at the local government level, where service delivery is the core business through direct interface between local authorities and residents.

2.1. Corruption as a Governance Problem with Colonial Antecedents

Corruption is also as a governance problem with links to issues of political power, weakness of democracy, discretion over decision making, limited transparency and weak social accountability (Chetwynd *et al*, 2003; PSAM, 2016; Rose-Arkerman, 1998; World Bank, 2010). Corruption as a governance problem is quite apparent in local governance where corruption manifests and occurs in the context of public resource management. Public resource management, is itself, the process by

which local authorities utilise available resources to provide public services. For this reason, Sithole (2013) argues that corruption poses a serious threat to public administration, and has a negative impact on service provision. In addition to posing a threat to service delivery, corruption also has negative effects on governance systems, sabotages poverty alleviation efforts, and destroys the social contract between the governors and the governed (See **Figure 2** below)

Figure 2: The Functioning of Corruption and its effects



However some scholars like Moyo (2014) argue that reducing corruption in Zimbabwe to a simple crisis of governance that emerged in 2000 is reductionist, and that due attention must be paid to earlier epochs and their effects, especially the effects of colonialism on institutions that have a bearing on corruption. This study acknowledges the roots of corruption in pre-independence Zimbabwe when a ‘corrupt’ white minority used its political and economic position for gain, but also realises that upon independence, the post-colonial state in Zimbabwe inherited, if not embraced, the corrupt system which it began using as a means for private, often illicit accumulation of wealth. This study, following Makumbe (2001), also maintains that corruption in Zimbabwe is inextricably intertwined with the unethical leadership and bad governance, and flourishes because of weak public integrity measures, undergirded by the lack of political will.

2.2. Corruption as a ‘Necessary’ Evil

Commentators like Moyo (ibid) dispute the view that corruption is a vice, arguing that it is necessary in spurring development and neutralising the bottlenecks brought about by bureaucracy and red tape in public administration. According to this school of thought, important developmental projects and other programmes would fail to take off timely due to administrative bureaucracy that sacrifices expediency on the altar of following procedures. Moyo (2014) argues that sometimes corruption facilitates bureaucratic procedures, making the system more responsive, flexible and competent to

the demands of different clienteles. For instance, Moyo (2014) notes that corruption in Zimbabwe to a limited extent managed to keep public servants at work during the hyper-inflation economic crisis of 2007 and 2008 when many peoples' salaries were hardly enough for transport to and from work. This view has however been contested by scholars such as Uneke (2010) who argue that corruption is only beneficial to privileged officials and bureaucrats who can derive rents from its implementation, often through purposely mounting bottle necks in bureaucratic structures or artificial barriers that enable them to extort people through bribes (Moyo, 2014). This paper takes the view that in the final analysis corruption is not beneficial, and that its negative effects outweigh the supposed benefits. As the paper suggests later, other legal and rationale approaches can be put in place to deliver the so-called benefits of corruption.

2.3. Corruption as a Public Integrity Violation

Corruption is also conceptualised as a public integrity violation, consisting of public resource management officials' failure, wilful or otherwise, to comply with integrity expectations. Linked to this, Cameron (2008) defines corruption as a violation of the norms of duty and welfare, accompanied by greed, secrecy, betrayal, deception, and a callous disregard for consequence suffered by the public, ergo, a misuse of public authority. Meanwhile, Huberts & Hoekstra (2016) view integrity as being about wholeness, professional responsibility, moral reflection, incorruptibility, compliance with laws and codes, and compliance with moral standards and values. The United Nations points out that

"In public administration, integrity refers to honesty or trustworthiness in the discharge of official duties serving as an antithesis to corruption or the abuse of office."(United Nations, 2005:1)

According to the Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM) at Rhodes University in South Africa, public integrity is a crucial component of the public resource management system and needs to be considered in operations of the state and local authorities. Integrity violations include corruption, bribery, nepotism, cronyism, patronage, fraud, theft of resources, conflict of interest, improper use of authority, misuse and manipulation of information, waste and abuse of public resources, and misconduct (Huberts & Hoekstra, 2016; Mapuva, 2014; World Bank, 2010). Huberts & Hoekstra (2016) add that integrity violations involving corruption and fraud are about abuse of professional position in order to gain private benefits with or without external parties. It is these kinds of corrupt integrity violations that this paper concerns itself with. The paper thus approaches integrity from an understanding that it is inextricably linked to the concepts of transparency and accountability, as argued by the United Nations (2005).

2.4. Variability of Corruption

The causes and variables that facilitate the proliferation of corruption are numerous, diverse and contingent. Asongu (2012) points out that corruption is linked to numerous factors, including the level of economic prosperity, population growth, democracy, regulation quality, political stability, government effectiveness, voice and accountability, and rule of law. For others, like the World Bank (2010), the realm of procurement and tender processes is a key variable in the discussion on corruption as this is where parties discuss contracts and deals involving large sums of money. Stressing the point on contingency and context, de Sardan (1999) argues that some scholars view

corruption in the African context as linked to sociocultural factors, and as inextricably intertwined with societal behaviours that are deemed to be “normal”. As he puts it, corruption, particularly petty corruption, is sometimes viewed as embedded in “sociocultural logics.” This view is however challenged by research that shows that people in developing countries do make distinctions between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour, but only tolerate corruption due to resignation and fear of reprisals against those who complain (Rose-Arkerman, 1998). Also, incidences of grand corruption in developed countries show that culture is not the main determinant for corruption. While acknowledging these divergent and oftentimes conflicting views, this paper approaches corruption from the conception that it cannot be divorced from the public integrity measures in place in the polity.

3. THE LEGAL MAP ON CORRUPTION IN ZIMBABWE

While there is no explicit anti-corruption policy for local authorities in Zimbabwe, there are numerous measures at the national and local level that seek to combat corruption and promote integrity. The Constitution of Zimbabwe, the Prevention of Corruption Act, the Urban Councils Act (chapter 29:15) and the Public Finance Management Act 9 (Chapter 22: 19) are some of the legal instruments containing provisions deterring corruption and promoting ethical conduct and integrity in local authorities. This section discusses these legislative provisions, identifying gaps and limitations.

3.1. Constitutional Provisions on Corruption

The Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013) is the principal document containing provisions on prevention of corruption and promotion of public integrity in Zimbabwe. The Constitution’s preamble alludes to a people of Zimbabwe committed to building a nation founded on values of transparency, honesty and the dignity of hard work. In Section 3 of the constitution on *Founding Values and Principles*, the constitution envisions a Zimbabwe founded upon the principles of good governance, which include transparency, accountability and responsiveness. These values are all antithetical to and mutually incompatible with corruption

Section 9 (1) of the supreme law has provisions on good governance, including requirements for the state to implement policies that promote transparency, personal integrity and financial probity. Section 9 (1) (b) provides that:

“Measures must be taken to expose, combat, and eradicate all forms of corruption and abuse of power by those holding political and public offices.” (Constitution of Zimbabwe, 2013, Section 91b)

In addition, section 194 of the constitution, on ‘Basic Values and Principles Governing Public Administration’ provides for institutions, state agencies, and public entities to be governed by democratic values and principles including high standards of professional ethics, efficient use of resources, accountable public administration, and transparency through provision of timely, accessible and accurate information.

Further, Section 196 of the constitution on ‘Responsibilities of Public Officers and Principles of Leadership’ provides that authority assigned to a public officer is:

A public trust which must be exercised in a manner which is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the constitution, demonstrates respect for the people and a readiness to serve rather than rule them, and promote public confidence in the office held by the public officer.
(Constitution of Zimbabwe, 2013: Section 196)

The above section also stipulates that public officials should be honest, accountable, and disciplined in the execution of their duties.

Importantly, Section 254 of the constitution provides for the establishment and composition of the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (ZACC), specifically tasked with investigating and exposing cases of corruption in both the public and private sectors; combating corruption, theft, misappropriation, abuse of office, promoting honesty, financial discipline, and transparency in the public and private sectors.

The constitution further provides for establishment of bodies to exercise an oversight role over the operations of public entities including state enterprises, statutory bodies and local authorities. For instance, section 299 provides for parliamentary monitoring and oversight on expenditures of statutory bodies, public entities and local authorities, to ensure, among other things, that all revenues are accounted for. Meanwhile, section 309 of the constitution provides for the appointment and functions of the Auditor General tasked with auditing the accounts, financial systems, and financial management of all departments, institutions and agencies of government, and all provincial, metropolitan and local authorities.

3.2. Laws Covering Corruption in Zimbabwe

In addition to the constitution, the Prevention of Corruption Act (Chapter 9: 16) (2002), the Public Finance Act (Chapter 22: 19) (2009), and the Urban Council's Act (Chapter 29: 15) (2001) also contain provision on public integrity and corruption.

The Prevention of Corruption Act (Chapter 9: 16) of 2002 is the main law governing issues related to corruption and contains guidelines on what should be considered an act of corruption. It also stipulates penalties for public officials convicted of corruption. In its preamble the act states that it seeks to:

Provide for the prevention of corruption and the investigation of claims arising from dishonesty, or corruption, and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

Regarding local authorities, the Prevention of Corruption Act (Chapter 9: 16) (2002) specifically states that its provisions cover:

A member of council, board, committee or authority which is a statutory body or local authority or which is responsible for administering the affairs of a statutory, local authority, body corporate or association...

Section 4 of the act contains provisions including some of the things local authority officials are prohibited from doing, which include *“anything contrary to or inconsistent with his duty as a public officer”* and omitting *“to do anything which is his duty as a public officer to do, for the purposes of showing favour or disfavour to any person.”*

Meanwhile, the Public Finance Management Act (chapter 22: 19) (2009), seeks to “secure transparency, accountability and sound management of the revenues, expenditure, assets and liabilities” of public entities. Section 42 of the legislation, on Fiduciary Duties of Accounting Authorities provides that the accounting authorities of public entities should exercise utmost care to ensure reasonable protection of the assets and records of the public entity and act with fidelity, honesty, integrity and in the best interests of the public entity in managing the affairs of the public entity. Also, section 44 (1) (a) (ii) of the legislation compels accounting authorities to establish and maintain a system of internal audit under the control and direction of an audit committee.

In section 81, the Public Finance Management Act provides that the Comptroller and Auditor General shall audit or cause to be audited the financial statements of all accounting officers, receivers of revenues, statutory funds, designated or specific public entities and constitutional entities.

Specific to local governments, the Urban Councils Act (Chapter 29: 15) (2001) contains important provisions covering corruption and promoting public integrity. In sections 97 and 98, the act provides that every council shall appoint an audit committee which ascertains whether funds and assets of the council are applied to the purposes intended and are consistent with any regulations and standing orders issued by the council or the Minister as the case may be.

Section 114 of the Urban Councils Act gives the Minister of Local Government powers to dismiss and suspend a councillor who has contravened any provision of the Prevention of Corruption Act, has committed an offense involving dishonesty in connection with the funds or other property of council, or has been responsible for loss of council property or funds through negligence or gross mismanagement.

Sections 210 and 211 of the Urban Councils Act contain provisions relating to procurement and tender processes. Section 210 provides for appointment of municipal procurement boards to ensure prudence and good practice in tender and procurement processes. Section 211 outlines some of the minimum standards and practices to be upheld in tendering and procurement. Section 211, subsection 2 (b) (6) prohibits any local authority from accepting a tender of any person who “canvasses or solicits, or causes to be canvassed or solicited the support of the mayor, any councillor or employee of council...” Notably, the Urban Councils Act does not explicitly provide for local authorities to avail to citizens any minutes of meetings or documents with information relating to tenders and contracts.

Despite these fairly good constitutional and legal provisions on corruption in Zimbabwe, there are evidently gaps at the level of implementation, as evidenced in the next section which paints a picture of the corruption in Zimbabwean local authorities.

4. THE SCOPE OF CORRUPTION IN LOCAL AUTHORITIES

While a fairly good constitutional and legislative framework on corruption and public integrity is in place in Zimbabwe, evidence of perverse corruption suggests that there are either some notable policy gaps, or the good framework is rendered redundant by lack of political will to implement existing provisions, or both. Rampant corruption in local authorities, which is discussed in this section shows that the spirit of the good constitutional and legal provisions have not been matched by action in terms of implementation. Events in cities and towns like Gweru, Bulawayo, Masvingo, Chitungwiza, Harare and Mutare give an indication of the nature of this corruption.

4.1. Primitive looting & Rent-Seeking through Land & Leases

The most commonly reported form of corruption in Zimbabwean local authorities is abuse of office for wealth-accumulation through rent-taking. For the purpose of this study, rent seeking refers to use of official positions to accrue benefits without putting in any work or making any payment. Across the country, council bureaucrats and councillors have used their positions to accumulate wealth. For instance in September 2016, an investigation by the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing found that Bulawayo councillors had corruptly amassed commercial and residential stands, leading to suspension of five councillors, including the Deputy Mayor of Bulawayo, Gift Banda³. According to the ministerial report of the investigations, Bulawayo councillors had not only awarded themselves prime commercial and residential stands, but had also not paid for them and owed the Bulawayo City Council US\$ 650 000. One of the suspended councillors, Reuben Matengu had bought a stand at a discount and sold it for a profit on the open market. There were also suspicions that Deputy Mayor, Gift Banda had taken possession of prime commercial land for development of town houses for less than the market value of the land. The investigations on the City of Bulawayo were instituted after the Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association (BPRA) raised the red flag on discovering a trend whereby councillors were being awarded prime land despite Bulawayo having a steadily increasing housing waiting list of over 100 000.

Besides Bulawayo, corruption allegations in land and housing deals, were also prominent in other local authorities. In Chitungwiza, the local authority was prejudiced of around \$13 million dollars through irregular parcelling of stands (Herald, 26 July 2017). According to an audit, between 2013 and 2017, Chitungwiza council parcelled out stands worth \$14 382 541 and only \$1 686 194 was received. Meanwhile, the Minister of Local Government was quoted in Parliament arguing that up to \$54 million had been lost in Harare to what was termed “land barons” who participate in this kind of corruption (Chronicle, 6 May 2017). Also, in 2015, a housing scheme in Mutare, known as the Gimboki South Housing Scheme, allegedly cost beneficiaries millions of dollars (The Manica Post, 21 August 2015). More than 5000 would be beneficiaries who had deposited their money in the scheme failed to get any benefits amid incidents of double allocation of stands and allegations of wilful abuse of beneficiary’s deposits. This prompted the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing, through the Manicaland Provincial Administrator, Fungai Mbetsa, to set up a five

³ Three of the councillors who were initially suspended over corruption have been reinstated, including Gift Banda, the Deputy Mayor.

member team to investigate the matter, which concluded that there was fraud, corruption and double allocation of stands in the scheme.

CASE HIGHLIGHT: PRIMITIVE LOOTING beyond land grabs IN GWERU

In the Gweru City Council, corrupt rent-seeking, in addition to illicit land and property accumulation took the form of abuse of office for accumulation of other moveable assets. Alarm was raised when it emerged that then Mayor, Hamutendi Kombayi, and Town Clerk, Daniel Matawu, had bought 400 herd of cattle at a council auction without following procedures (The Chronicle, 13 July 2015).

The allegations led to institution of a special investigative audit, whose report was released in June 2016, revealing that Gweru City Council:

- Had failed to account for more than \$1 million loan balance,
- The city's Mayor and Town Clerk had unlimited access to fuel,
- Senior employees had been paid holiday and education allowances outside the payroll.
- The local authority had misappropriated \$313 419 on purchase of personal vehicles for middle management as well as buying laptops and training councillors at a cost of \$31 544
- The Council also paid MDC-T party expenses to the tune of \$1 875 to host party leader Morgan Tsvangirai at Antelope Park using ratepayers' money.
- Council paid \$155 812 for traveling and subsistence allowances to its councillors who undertook training workshops not relevant to their duties (For example, the Mayor attended an accountants' workshop while councillors attended fraud investigation workshops).
- Councillors were buying stands at a reduced rate of 60 percent despite a directive by the government that required stands to be sold to councillors at full market value.
- Council also paid \$50 667 for travel and subsistence allowances to councillors and officials for extended trip days
- Gweru Council also paid \$45 520 to the Regency Fairmile Hotel for meals and refreshments without documented official requests.
- According to the report, Council also incurred wasteful expenditure to the tune of \$617 798 after being overcharged by \$365 028 for survey fees by Terra Survey Mandaza.
- Council was also found to be incurring high litigation costs which amounted to \$308 181. For instance, \$40 000 was paid to Messrs Danziger & Partners legal practitioners in the matter between City of Gweru and the former Chamber Secretary R Masinire.
- Councillors bought stands at Kopje Low Density Suburb for \$3 per square metre instead of about \$25 per square metre.

The findings of the audit eventually led to the suspension of all 16 Gweru councillors and the setting up of a three member commission led by former Masvingo Town Clerk Tsunga Mhangami to run the affairs of the city. Some of the accusations levelled at the councillors based on the findings of the audit included abuse of public resources and failure to execute their duties. However the commission that the Minister of Local Government put in place was also later accused of corruption. In October 2016, residents disrupted a budget consultative meeting in Gweru demanding explanations over how the three member commission had used \$300 000 in travel and subsistence allowances in one year (Chronicle, 13 October 2016).

4.2. Tenderpreneurship & Corrupt Contracting

Corruption has also been rampant in the tendering and awarding of contracts. In May 2017 former City of Harare Town Clerk, Tendai Mahachi was arraigned before the courts on allegations of awarding tenders worth \$ 33 million to companies that did not bid. The tenders were part of programmes to upgrade and rehabilitate sewer plants at Firlle and Crowborough. Mahachi and his co-accused, Christopher Zvobgo (Water Director) and Simon Muserere (Waste Water Manager) allegedly handpicked Energy Resources Africa Consortium (ERAC) for a contract valued at \$13 816 117 in subversion of procurement procedures, manipulating the companies' name to Portriver as a cover up. The group also allegedly awarded a tender worth \$18 121 125 to Sidal Engineering (PVT) LTD, and another worth over \$1 million to Showbyte Engineering which was owned by Simon Muserere's in-laws, outside tender procedures.

In Mutare a senior engineer was suspended after he orchestrated the awarding of a \$330 000 contract to a shelf company in 2012 (Newsday, 9 August 2012). The botched deal had a negative impact on delivery of water services, as the shelf company, Shitazburg Enterprises (Pvt) Ltd failed to supply and fix water pipes that would have alleviated water problems in Mutare. In Bulawayo, local authority documents suggest that up to \$70 000 was spent on a contract to rehabilitate a bulldozer, when the bulldozer was either not attended to, or a shoddy job done. Investigations show that while the Bulawayo Council spent \$70 000 on repair of the bulldozer, to buy a functional bulldozer costs between \$75 000 and \$125 000 (depending on model and specifications) for the most commonly purchased models with 110 to 130 horse-power. The Bulawayo City Council was also accused of corruption in tender processes by the Affirmative Action Group, which in 2015 filed a court application seeking to compel the minister of local government to suspend then Deputy Mayor Gift Banda over tender irregularities involving allocation of stands for development of town houses (Chronicle, 18 August 2015). Meanwhile in Hwange, a coterie of councillors in 2009 allegedly contracted a company to service stands without going to tender. The contract was reportedly worth \$1.6 million (Chronicle, 21 January 2017). In Mangwe Rural District Council, the Chief Executive Officer, Nketha Mangoye Dlamini resigned in 2016 after being suspended for unprocedurally awarding a tender for roads maintenance works. While a tender winner in Gweru failed to deliver on a \$1.2 million contract which included supply of a grader, bulldozer, back haul loader, and excavator (Chronicle, 4 April 2017).

4.3. Theft, Theft by Conversion and Common Fraud

Fraud and theft are also commonplace in Zimbabwe's local authorities, covering both grand and petty corruption, involving high ranking officials and lower level employees. In June 2016 a report by Zimbabwe's Auditor General, Mildred Chiri, revealed that Harare City Council may have been fleeced of millions of dollars through fraudulent issuance of receipts. According to the audit report, two anonymous computers were used to bill customers each month. In the same month the Newsday (23 June 2016) reported that the City of Harare had lost at least \$2 million in a racket involving municipal officials, transport operators, and some unlicensed businesses. According to the story, the city was prejudiced of money as transport operators used fake license discs which they allegedly received from corrupt individuals within council. Meanwhile in Zvishavane a bar manager running Zvishavane Town Council's two beer halls allegedly prejudiced the town of \$100 000 through altering sales figures.

1.1.Nepotism, Misconduct and Poor anti-poor Decision Making

In addition to corruption linked to self-enrichment, other ethics and integrity violations within local authorities are linked to nepotism, misconduct, and mismanagement. A central theme in these forms of corruption, appears to be a failure to follow procedures. Bulawayo, normally rated as the best run local authority in Zimbabwe, has many reports of this nature. For example residents of Bulawayo raised concerns of corruption in hiring of ward community cleaners by councillors (Meeting between residents and town clerk; *Newsday*, 1 February 2017). In Magwegwe (ward 29) residents alleged that the councillor, Monica Lubimbi, hired people from one family for the community cleaners' scheme, which is supposed to benefit disadvantaged families on a rotational basis (*Chronicle*, 25 May 2017). According to reports, the councillor also hired her boyfriend and was said to be getting kickbacks of up to US\$40 from each beneficiary to keep them on the scheme. In Victoria Falls, the Director of Housing and Community Services was suspended in February 2017 for allocating a stand to his son without following council procedures (*Chronicle*, 18 February 2017).

Poor decision making and poor prioritisation of issues appear to be at the centre of most corruption scandals within the local governance sector in Zimbabwe. Most of these related to decisions to spend scarce resources on luxuries such as cars, laptops and trips, at a time when most local authorities were experiencing shortfalls in service delivery. In Bulawayo for instance, the local authority quoted controversy in February 2017 when it approved purchase of a Mercedes Benz for Mayor, Martin Moyo, for a cost of \$118 000. The Bulawayo City Council further committed over \$600 000 to purchase of vehicles for top management in April 2017. Similar incidents are on record in Masvingo, where in February 2017 the Masvingo City Council made a resolution to spend \$1, 85 million on vehicles for top officials (*Chronicle*, 18 February 2017).

4.4. Central Government in Local Corruption

A major curiosity to emerge from this study was that key officials in the ministry of local government, who are tasked with exercising oversight over operations of local authorities in terms of the Urban Councils Act and the Rural District Council Acts, were themselves involved in corruption scandals. The two most recent ministers of local government, Dr Ignatius Chombo and Saviour Kasukuwere, have both been the subjects of corruption allegations. In 2011 it emerged that former local government minister, Ignatius Chombo owned vast properties across Zimbabwe's local authorities. There were concerns in media reports that the properties may have been massed (whether legally or not) through the influence of the position of minister of local government. The properties, which were reviewed during a divorce settlement included commercial stands, residential stands and other properties dotted around most of the country's provinces. Likewise, current local government minister, Saviour Kasukuwere was in 2016 investigated by the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (ZACC) over allegations of corruption during his stint as Minister of Youth Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment. In addition, in April 2017, he was sensationally accused of demanding a \$50 million bribe from businessman Philip Chiyangwa in return for speeding

up the process of compensating the latter's companies for land that was compulsorily acquired by the state for resettlement purposes (Chronicle, 22 April 2017). Given these allegations of corruption against the minister of local government, it is fair to ask whether the office of minister of local government is the best to address corruption challenges in local authorities, when it is mired in the same corruption. Furthermore, multiple court cases against the minister of local government by various local authority officials suspended or dismissed on allegations of corruption have cast a spotlight on the constitutionality of the powers of the minister of local government to dismiss local authority officials, especially in the context of provisions for devolution in chapter 14 of the constitution. The high levels of corruption in local government in Zimbabwe, naturally point to a need to review policy and practice regarding promotion of public integrity and fighting corruption. This is critical because corruption, especially at the local level, negatively impacts on public services such as education, water provision and health care as it diverts funds and resources meant for public services and other developmental projects to the use of corrupt officials.

5. FINDINGS: Corruption, Service Delivery, and Development

Corruption in local government has had negative effects on service delivery, poverty alleviation and relations between the governed and the governors. These negative effects are both perceived and real. For instance, there is a dominant perception amongst stakeholders that corruption has resulted in poor service delivery, stifling of development and undermining the credibility of democratic institutions and democratic governance.⁴ These perceptions are borne out by theory, and are similar to what the World Bank's (2010) African Development Indicators Report states on corruption based on their research on how corruption undermines Africa's development by allowing diversion of funds meant for public services and developmental projects into the hands of corrupt officials.

This study found that financial prejudice resulting from corruption in local government has debilitating effects on socio-economic wellbeing, and limits local authorities' abilities to deal with problems such as poverty, hunger, health care, and illiteracy, with the poorest constituents, who cannot afford private services, being the hardest hit. The case of Bulawayo is illustrative. In a meeting with the Town Clerk and City Council Directors on 4 April 2017, residents testified on how corruption in the city had resulted in poor residents failing to receive benefits from the local authority's community worker's scheme as nepotism and rent seeking led to the benefits going to unintended beneficiaries. The community workers' scheme, was introduced by council as a means to cushion poor residents, by hiring them to do cleaning and environmental maintenance work at the local level. Residents stated that the public works programme, which was supposed to benefit poor people with employment, had instead benefitted connected individuals and the kith and kin of councillors. As a consequence of this, poor families, who are in most need of social welfare assistance, had been left vulnerable to hunger and other vices, as they could not access the work scheme.

⁴ These perceptions were gathered from Interviews, focus group discussions and meetings with various stakeholders in local government across sectors (residents, Business, Civil society leaders and council officials)

Corruption in local authorities has also undermined the credibility of democratic institutions, with negative effects on democratic governance. In all areas studied, it emerged that corruption had had a negative impact on residents in Bulawayo, Gweru and Harare, who are increasingly losing confidence in their councillors, whom they accuse of no longer serving their constituencies, but conjoining with the bureaucrats in corrupt activities for self-aggrandisement. Residents felt that instead of ameliorating corruption and poor management in local authorities, councillors had instead, entered into deals with local authority bureaucrats in looting of stands and other forms of rent-seeking as extensively outlined in the previous section (Ministry of Local Government, 2016). Residents also accused corrupt councillors of using their positions, wealth and even threats to control residents at the ward level, undermining participation of residents in local government processes (Meeting between residents and Town Clerk, 4 April 2017). For instance residents alleged that the councillor for ward 29 (covering Magwegwe North and West), Monica Lubimbi threatened that any church that offered residents a venue to hold community meetings would be stoned.

Residents alleged that some councillors use their power to hire people to work in the public works programme to institute vote buying in preparation for upcoming elections in 2018 (Focus Group Discussion, 3 May 2017). The foregoing seems to vindicate Collier (2007), who argues that corruption usually proliferates and thrives in an environment of patronage politics, where politicians use vote buying to influence people, as opposed to performing well on their mandate (Collier 2007). Paul Collier adds that “big corrupt money is likely to undermine the political process, enabling the strategy of patronage to triumph over honest politics (Collier 2007: 138). The foregoing is borne out by this study’s findings, which suggest that patronage has had a devastating impact on development at the local level in Zimbabwe, as bribery and vote buying have taken the place of performance legitimacy and honest politics. Essentially, councillors have no incentive to promote equitable development as a means to earn votes. Instead patronage networks are the order of the day, in the process stifling democracy, and democratic distribution of resources.

This study also found strong indications that corruption in local authorities in Zimbabwe had problematically diverted resources away from poverty eradication efforts and provision of public services. In areas like Masvingo, Bulawayo and Chitungwiza, the study found that the local authorities had spent huge amounts on cars and other related comforts for councillors and management, while poverty alleviation, improvement of service delivery and other issues were severely underfunded (Newsday, 10 February 2016; Newsday, 16 May 2017). For example, in a focus group discussion with BPRA ward chairpersons in Bulawayo on 3 May 2017, residents bemoaned how the Bulawayo City Council had splashed \$118 000 on a vehicle for Mayor Martin Moyo, at a time when roads in Bulawayo were in a bad state of disrepair, and services such as water, housing and education were in a poor state. Residents also lamented how council management was getting huge salaries at a time when the economy was depressed and there were shortfalls in service delivery. They argued that this was money that could have been diverted towards critical sectors such as health and education where there were serious service delivery shortfalls. In essence, corruption and profligacy on the part of local authorities indicate a mismatch in priorities between city residents and the so called city “fathers”.

Linked to this, the study established that poor practices in tender procedures had led to citizens missing out on service delivery improvements. For example the failure by Axis Medical Corporation Limited Company to supply four ambulances to the Bulawayo City Council in 2011 despite advance

payment of \$205 106 meant that Bulawayo residents were denied improved health services through an increased ambulance fleet (Newsday 14 June 2017). As residents, argued on 3 May 2017, every time a life is lost due to ambulance delays, that blood is on the hands of Council due to its failure to better manage the ambulances tender. Likewise the missing millions of dollars in failed tender deals in local authorities such as Harare, Gweru, and Mutare as discussed in the previous section meant that citizens were short-changed of potential improvements in their livelihoods through improved service provision.

Consequently, corruption in local authorities has made it difficult for Zimbabwe to progressively realise provision of socio-economic rights such as housing, water and education as outlined in the constitution. A case can be made that proliferation of unchecked corruption partly explains why Zimbabwe failed to meet the millennium development goals. How Zimbabwe deals with corruption in local authorities, the frontline of service delivery, will inevitably impact on how the country performs in achievement of the sustainable development goals, and move towards progressive realisation of socio-economic rights.

The high prevalence of corruption in local authorities has reduced the effectiveness of local authority administrative staff who sometimes require bribes to carry out their day to day work. This has had negative impacts on poor citizens who can hardly afford to pay for the services, let alone the increase in costs infused by bribes. The poorest thus find themselves in a prisoners' dilemma, where they either do not get access to services because they cannot pay a bribe or face very long delays which they can ill afford, or pay a bribe which they can ill afford. Invariably, they capitulate, and deprive themselves further in other respects by acceding to pay bribes and moving scarce resources from other areas of need to line the pockets of corrupt public servants. In major urban centres like Harare, Bulawayo, Gweru, Mutare and Victoria Falls, residents report that it has become impossible to get services such as plan drawings without paying a bribe. Where the bribe was not solicited, residents said the process took very long to complete, and offering it, often quickened the pace. Sithole's (2013 study on corruption in Gweru in makes similar findings. Sithole notes that:

In Zimbabwe, people are often told to 'sit down while we try to sort out your problem' and they are made to wait until business closes, and then they are told to come back on the next day and the day after that. The waiting only ends after a bribe has been paid.

Conversations with residents and other stakeholders, also revealed that corruption in local authorities was one of the causes of local authorities' poor revenue collection. In two respects. Firstly, the propensity of local authority employees, particularly those that disconnect water from defaulting citizens, to demand bribes in exchange for reconnection meant that local authorities were prejudiced of huge amounts of revenues. Secondly, rate payers were weary of paying for services that were either erratic or unavailable. Residents were convinced that potential revenue was lost through corrupt activities such as rent-seeking and bribery (Gweru Focus group Discussion, 10 June 2017).

The preceding negative effects of corruption in local governments point to a need for Zimbabwe to put in place measures that prevent corruption and strengthen public integrity in local authorities. In summary, some of the implications of corruption on service delivery and development in the local government sphere in Zimbabwe include that it:

- 1. Promotes socio-economic problems such as poverty, hunger disease and illiteracy

2. Undermines the credibility of democratic institutions and counteracts good governance
3. Diverts resources away from poverty eradication and provision of public services
4. Undermines service delivery and increases the costs of socio-economic projects
5. Leads to projects being awarded to unqualified companies who do shoddy work or fail to deliver
6. Leads to ineffectiveness of local authority administrative staff
7. May lead to loss of tax revenues and loss of skilled labour

6. BEST PRACTICE: SOUTH AFRICA AND THE NETHERLANDS- SOME LESSONS FOR ZIMBABWE

Different countries have employed different strategies to fight corruption and promote public officials ethical behaviour at local national government levels. Invariably, most countries have used combinations of integrity and compliance strategies.

Illustrative Case: South Africa's Compliance and Integrity Strategy

While corruption is also a problem in South Africa, the country has done a better job than most of its regional peers in combating corruption at local government level through implementing a hybrid strategy of compliance and integrity mechanisms. In addition to having Anti-Corruption Legislation and measures promoting accountability and transparency in local government, South Africa rolled out a Local Government Anti-Corruption Strategy in 2006, which was in line with the country's Public Service Anti-Corruption Strategy. South Africa has thus taken steps to address corruption and public integrity in local government as distinct from the public service. Some of the objectives of the Local Government Anti-Corruption Strategy include:

- **Promoting a culture of integrity in the dealings of local government employees**
- **Development of anti-corruption capacity within municipalities**
- **Improving the application of systems, policies procedures, rules and regulations within municipalities**
- **Changing aspects within municipalities that undermine institutional integrity and facilitate unethical conduct, fraud and corruption and allow these to go unnoticed or unreported.**
- **Encouraging all employees and other stakeholders to strive toward the promotion of integrity and the prevention and detection of unethical conduct, fraud, and corruption impacting or having the potential to impact on the local sphere of government.**

Some of the measures in place to attain these objectives include ethics training for local government employees and elected officials, as well as the establishment of

integrity or ethics officials whose duty is to ensure that ethical conduct is promoted in local authorities. South Africa has also come up with a framework that prohibits public officials from accepting gifts. Where it is impossible for them to refuse gifts, they are required to declare the gifts in a gift register, housed on a Special Anti-Corruption Unit website to promote transparency. In addition, South Africa also has requirements for employees to disclose financial interests and assets. In terms of South Africa's Public Integrity Management Framework, "An employee whose spouse, partner, business associate, or close family member, stands to acquire any direct benefit from a contract concluded with their department, must disclose in writing full particulars of the benefits to the Ethics Officer, and withdraw from participating in any manner whatsoever in the process relating to that contract."

Zimbabwe, with its myriad challenges to ethical behaviour and integrity on tender processes and bidding could successfully make use of measures mentioned above for disclosure of interests and assets.

Another global leader in anti-corruption initiatives and public integrity is the Netherlands. Among some of the useful approaches it has employed are the introduction of integrity training courses for new Members of Parliament (Huberts and Hoekstra, 2016), which can be adopted in Zimbabwe for councillors. Integrity and ethics training for councillors upon assumption of office could go a long way in militating against corruption and promoting councillors' and bureaucrat's integrity. However in the case of the Netherlands, while local government are expected to have codes of conducts and activities to promote activities, the content of such is left to the local authorities themselves (Huberts and Hoekstra, 2016). This may be a critical for Zimbabwe to consider given that citizens have clamoured for autonomy from central government through devolution of power as espoused in chapter 14 of Zimbabwe's constitution.

According to Huberts and Hoekstra (2016), integrity policies and general codes of conduct in the Netherlands:

Contain rules on the reporting /disclosure of ancillary jobs, dealing with confidential information, gifts, and invitations to excursions, events, foreign trips et cetera, and the use of facilities of the organisation. In addition they often contain provisions on procedural agreements relating to reporting and handling of ethical dilemmas and misconduct...

The two cases highlighted above South Africa and the Netherlands, show that there is a need for flexibility and introspection in coming up with strategies to promote public integrity and fight corruption. They also indicate that on developing anticorruption and integrity frameworks, it is also imperative to be mindful of the local contexts. The next section offers possible strategies that Zimbabwe could employ to promote public integrity and ethical conduct in local authorities.

7. Recommendations: Nine Point Plan to Curb Corruption in Zimbabwean Local Authorities

Based on this study's findings and international best practices, there are some policy changes that Zimbabwe can make to prevent corruption and promote public integrity in local authorities. We recommend a hybrid of the integrity approach and the compliance approach, as follows

1. Development of a National Local Government Public Integrity Policy

- ⇒ Zimbabwe should develop a National Local Government Public Integrity Policy that works to address corruption through strengthening integrity, accountability and transparency. This approach, which has been implemented in South Africa and in the Netherlands, would guide how all municipalities and local authorities handle issues related to public integrity and prevention of corruption.
- ⇒ One of the reasons why corruption in local authorities in Zimbabwe is increasing is that there are no local government specific anti-corruption and public integrity efforts, while oversight efforts by the ministry of local government have been ad hoc and reactive as opposed to proactive, while the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission has been ineffective.
- ⇒ Development of a National Local Government Public Integrity Policy would be part and parcel of local government laws amendments as there is need for clear frameworks on how corruption in local authorities is addressed after the powers of the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing over local authorities are reduced in line with the 2013 constitution that provides for devolution of power.

2. Formation of a Local Authorities Public Integrity Commission

- ⇒ To support the National Local Authorities Public Integrity Policy, the government should institute a Local Authorities Integrity Commission, tasked with overseeing anti-corruption efforts in local authorities.
- ⇒ Alternatively, the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission could institute a section dedicated to anti-corruption at the local government level. While there currently exists a broad range of institutions such as the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission and the Auditor General, they tend to operate at a national level, with no bodies working specifically on public integrity in local authorities.
- ⇒ Having an entity whose focus is anti-corruption efforts at the local authority level will ensure a sustained and holistic effort to public integrity in local authorities. It would also free the Ministry of Local Government from issues related to corruption in local authorities, giving it more time to focus on issues of policy and service delivery and putting to rest concerns on the constitutionality of suspension/firing of corrupt local government officials by the ministry.

3. Income and Asset Declarations and Registers of Interests for Local Officials

- ⇒ Senior council employees and councillors should be compelled to declare their incomes, assets and financial interests when assuming office. This would be in line with Section 198 of the Constitution which stipulates that senior public officials should declare their assets and

that there should be codes of conduct and standards of good corporate governance to be observed by state entities.

- ⇒ In line with this, registers of interests, codes of conduct and standards of good corporate governance should be developed for local authorities and administered by the Local Authorities Integrity Commission that is proposed in the previous point. To be effective, the registers of assets and registers of interests should be updated annually and as and when changes in an official's assets occurs. Asset and interest registers have been implemented in countries including South Africa and Rwanda, but effectiveness has been in some instances stifled by lack of clarification on what constitutes "assets and interests." For effectiveness, it is therefore important for the government to clarify what constitutes "assets and interests", and the terms should be clearly defined in whatever legal instrument is employed. It would also be pertinent for the registers of assets and interests, code of conduct and corporate governance standards to be available to the public, so that citizens, civil society, residents associations and other third sector organisations can carry out their watchdog function.

4. Periodic Lifestyle Audits for Local Officials

- ⇒ To complement disclosure of assets and declaration of interests, lifestyle audits of senior council employees and councillors should be undertaken as means to deter corruption. Zimbabwe could put in place requirements for elected councillors and senior bureaucrats in local authorities to be regularly subjected to lifestyle audits, which can be performed by the Local Authorities Integrity Commission and/or the Auditor General.
- ⇒ When lifestyle audits occur regularly, senior council employees and elected councillors would be deterred from engaging in corrupt activities in the fear that they could get caught. This strategy would work very well where registers of assets are functioning well and publicly available for scrutiny by civil society and citizens. To enhance the effectiveness of lifestyle audits, their findings should also be made public as a way to promote transparency.

5. E-Governance and ICTs for Enhanced Transparency and Accountability

- ⇒ The government should consider introducing an e-governance and ICTs policy for local governments that compels them to utilise new information technologies such as websites, social media and cell phone applications to share information such as strategies, policies, budgets, council meeting minutes and information on status of big projects with members of the public.
- ⇒ Local authorities should develop computerised data systems that allow citizens to access critical council information, where necessary with the assistance of a municipal worker at the public offices. For instance in Campo Elias in Venezuela there is a technological service called E-corruption that allows citizens to track municipal transactions via the internet. All contracted companies providing services to the local authority must register and provide status reports on the site (World Bank, 2000). Empowered by such information, citizens and civil society can play a role in detecting and preventing corruption, in line with Transparency International's exhortation that civil society should play a role in curbing corruption through raising awareness and obtaining information from local authorities (Harris, 2012).

6. Traditional Community Engagement and Information Sharing for Accountability and Transparency

- ⇒ In addition to use of e-government and information and communication technologies, it would also be prudent to utilise traditional methods of community engagement and information sharing since the digital divide is still wide in Zimbabwe.
- ⇒ Public hearings to discuss performance of local authorities, monthly consultation meetings with councillors, budget consultations and other methods of community engagement should also continue as means to promote accountability and transparency, which are critical in combating corruption.
- ⇒ While most councils in Zimbabwe are on paper already undertaking these kind of activities, it would be critical for the National Local Authorities Public Integrity Policy proposed above to set clear benchmarks on how local authorities should carryout budget consultative meetings and monthly consultation meetings.
- ⇒ Studies have shown that some local authorities often carryout these activities in a tokenistic box-ticking manner because there are no clearly laid out benchmarks and minimum standards on the qualities of such activities.

7. Internal Reporting Mechanisms and Protection of Whistle-blowers

- ⇒ Measures and mechanisms to protect whistle-blowers and to promote internal reporting in local authorities must be instituted. This would require development of protected disclosures legislation, witness protection mechanisms and establishment of hotlines to enable reports.
- ⇒ Most activities of corruption are visible only to insiders with reports such as minutes of full council meetings and annual reports often not containing critical information relating to corrupt activities. Measures to promote internal reporting and protection of whistle-blowers would thus be critical in ensuring that corruption is revealed.

8. Introduction of Project Procurement Related Audits (PPRAs) and Publicising of Details of Major Contracts

- ⇒ Since most grand corruption in local authorities is linked to procurement and tender processes, introducing Project Procurement Related Audits may be a good way of fighting corruption. These audits, carried out by oversight bodies are necessary as local authorities and contractors are often unwilling to disclose information.
- ⇒ In line with this, it may also be useful to put in place legal provisions to ensure that details of tenders and contracts are availed to stakeholders, including members of the public. In Liberia, for instance, a Public Procurement and Concession Commission (PPCC) was established in 2005 with the responsibilities of publicising the details of major contracts and tasked with preventing fraud in tender processes.

- ⇒ With the rapid expansion of information and communication technologies, information on tenders and contracts can even be availed on websites and other digital platforms. For instance, in the Slovakian Town of Martin an online bidding system was introduced to minimise corruption in tender processes. The initiative was a prize winner in the United Nations Public Service Awards for Preventing and Combating Corruption in the Public Service in 2011 (United Nations, 2012).
- ⇒ Other approaches that have been employed to address corruption in tendering and procurement include online systems for registration for local government tenders. Adequate, timely information on all steps of the procurement cycle should be available.

Awareness and Education on Ethics, Public Integrity and Corruption

- ⇒ To promote a culture of ethical conduct and integrity, councillors and council workers should be trained in ethics, public integrity and corruption. This would help them understand their fiduciary duties, improve professionalism and enable them to make better choices when faced with difficult ethical situations. Training of public and elected officials has been done successfully in countries such as the Netherlands.
- ⇒ It would also be prudent to carryout programs and activities to educate members of the public on what corruption is, and what its effects are on development and service provision. +This would serve to ensure that people have an appreciation of what corruption is, can identify it, and have the motivation to report it. This approach has been used successfully in Malaysia, which in 2012, through the Malaysia Anti-Corruption Commission, undertook a campaign to educate citizens and public officials on corruption offences that were not really new, but were poorly understood (United Nations, 2012).
- ⇒ If the public understands the negative effects of corruption, it can play a crucial role in the fight against corruption. Education and awareness raising are critical to bust the increasing perception in Zimbabwe that corruption is an indispensable part of governance and natural. Ethics and integrity officers working in the Local Authorities Public Integrity Commission would do the awareness raising, training and other work related to public integrity.

8. CONCLUSION

This paper has demonstrated that while Zimbabwe has fairly good legislation to combat corruption and promote public integrity, there is an urgent need for improvements in policy and policy and procedures implementation. There is increasing evidence that corruption is proliferating local authorities, and there is a need to address this in the interests of ensuring improved service delivery and advancing poverty alleviation. Existing attempts at fighting corruption in local authorities have been ad hoc and reactionary as there is no explicit policy for fighting corruption in local authorities. In addition, the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing has proved unequal to the task of fighting corruption in local authorities because it is partisan, has a political agenda, and has its Ministers have been either accused of or implicated in corruption. Unfortunately, corruption in local authorities has had negative implications on service provision and in the quest to fight poverty, robbing citizens of their livelihoods. This paper sought to provide some recommendations to address the corruption problem in Zimbabwean local authorities. The study proposes a nine point plan which addresses three cross cutting issues which have a bearing on

corruption – public integrity, transparency and accountability. This paper proposes that Zimbabwe should develop a Local Government Public Integrity Strategy and also develop a Local Authorities Public Integrity Commission to be tasked with implementation of the integrity strategy.

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