



ZIMBABWE ECONOMIC  
POLICY ANALYSIS AND  
RESEARCH UNIT

## **Strengthening the Zimbabwe National Policy Making Process**

**Submitted by**

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## Disclaimer

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## List of Acronyms

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| CCZ    | Consumer Council of Zimbabwe                                       |
| CZI    | Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries                               |
| ESAP   | Economic Structural Adjustment Programme                           |
| FAO    | Food and Agricultural Organisation                                 |
| ICT    | Information Communication Technology                               |
| IDP    | Industrial Development Policy                                      |
| M & E  | Monitoring and Evaluation  |
| MDGs   | Millennium Development Goals                                       |
| MTP    | Medium Term Plan   |
| MWAGCD | Ministry of Gender, Women's Affairs and Community Development      |
| NEP    | National Energy Policy   |
| NEPC   | National Economic Planning Commission                              |
| NGOs   | Non-Governmental Organisations                                     |
| NICTPF | National Information and Communication Technology Policy Framework |
| NTP    | National Trade Policy  |
| RCZ    | Research Council of Zimbabwe                                       |
| SADC   | Southern African Development Community                             |
| SMEs   | Small to Medium Scale Enterprises                                  |
| STERP  | Short Term Economic Recovery Programme                             |
| TERC   | Trade and Economic Review Committee                                |
| ZEDS   | Zimbabwe Economic Development Strategy                             |
| ZEPARU | Zimbabwe Economic Policy Analysis and Research Unit                |
| ZIMRA  | Zimbabwe Revenue Authority   |
| ZNCC   | Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce                              |

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Statement of the problem

Zimbabwe has witnessed several policy interventions by the government, aimed at dealing with various challenges. Although this is quite commendable, it can be established that there are several policy gaps that have been identified over the years, which are still outstanding up to now. There are some draft policies which have remained on paper for years without much movement in Cabinet due to concerns that would have not been taken into consideration during the drafting stage. The policy making process is also characterized by lack of extensive consultations among all key stakeholders, in order for the policy to be very inclusive.

ZEPARU thus won a grant from the Research Council of Zimbabwe, through a competitive bidding process, to carry out a research project entitled, 'Strengthening the Zimbabwe National Policy Making Process'. The project seeks to understand the policy making process and identifying obstacles and challenges that have to be addressed through specific recommendations. The ultimate objective/goal of the project is to ensure that policy making process in Zimbabwe is improved for quick adoption of national policies, which are needed to resuscitate the ailing economy. In particular, the following constitute the terms of reference for the study:

- Identify key obstacles towards evidence-based and participatory policy making process in Zimbabwe;
- Identify capacity building needs and institutional reforms that are critical in strengthening the policy making process;
- Identify gaps in information sharing among the stakeholders and recommend strategies and platforms that can enhance information sharing; and
- Provide recommendations for strategies to strengthen the policy making process.

### 1.2 Research Methodology

The method of inquiry that informed this study included the following:

- Desk review of the policies that are currently in place in Zimbabwe and how they were formulated, outlining the challenges encountered there-of;
- Qualitative interviews with relevant stakeholders involved in the policy-making process as well as those involved in implementation to establish their perceptions about the policy-making process as well what could be done to improve them; and
- Based on best practices and experiences from other countries, provide recommendations on what can be done to improve the policy making process in Zimbabwe.

The study combined various survey and information gathering techniques. Firstly, an extensive review of the literature was undertaken, with a focus on the key policies that currently exist, and the gaps thereof. Interviews were then undertaken involving key informants from relevant ministries and stakeholders (See Appendix 1).

The paper focuses on the policy making process in line with the agreed terms of reference. In this regard, focus is on the initial stages of the policy cycle including agenda setting, policy formulation and adoption. Whilst it is acknowledged that the effectiveness of policy largely depends on the whole policy cycle, issues around policy implementation and monitoring & evaluation are beyond the scope of this paper and are subject to future research.

### 1.3 Major Difficulties Encountered

The major difficulties encountered by the team during the surveys included challenges with respect to interviewing senior government officials, as most were either busy with other commitments or were away on government business. Given the sensitivities currently prevailing in the inclusive government, most of the officials were reluctant to actively discuss issues of policy making in Zimbabwe. In addition, there were serious delays in obtaining responses and information from key stakeholders, much of them emanating from bureaucracy. As a result, the study period had to be extended beyond what had been planned.

The rest of the paper is organised as follows. Section 2 takes a theoretical look at public policy and describes the basic tenets within which the policy making process for Zimbabwe would be assessed. Section 3 is a description of the current status of the Zimbabwe policies, which gives a summary of some existing policies and point out gaps which future policies are expected to fill. Section 4 is an assessment of the Zimbabwe situation with respect to the identified theoretical tools that form the backbone for effective policies. Section 5 concludes and gives recommendations on issues which have to be addressed for effective policies in Zimbabwe.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 Basic Tenets of a Public Policy

A public policy can be defined as ‘a purposive and consistent course of action produced as a response to a perceived problem of a constituency, formulated by a specific political process and adopted, implemented, and enforced by a public agency’<sup>1</sup> (*The Public Policy Cycle, 2009*). It is a statement, written or spoken, aimed at solving a particular problem by providing guidelines which are supposed to be followed to achieve set objectives as well as to promote governance (Chigumira, 2005). Thus a policy is a tool by which governments translate their political vision into programmes and actions to deliver outcomes desired by the citizens.

Although the two are often treated as synonymous, a policy is different from a law. Ideally, it is the policy that has to lead to the development of a law as the policy provides for the necessary targets which a law would help ensure implementation and attainment of the desired outcomes. A law would thus be produced as part of implementing the policy and is thus not part of the policy making process, which is the focus of this paper. Unlike a policy, a

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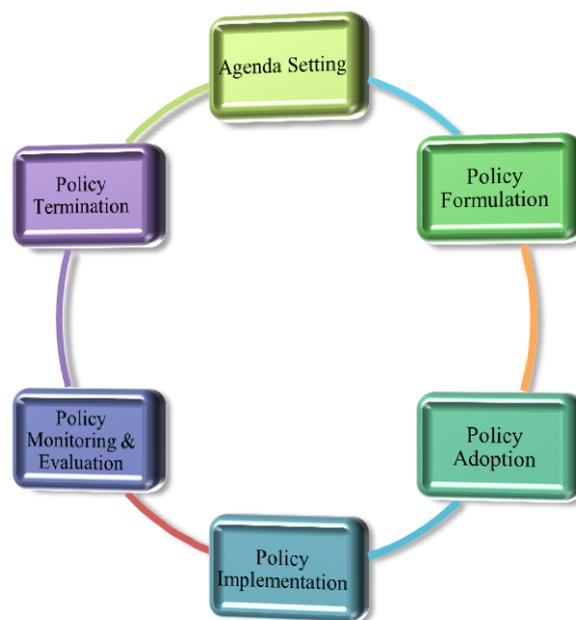
<sup>1</sup> The Public Policy Cycle (2009), *Defining Public Policy*, at website <http://profwork.org/pp/study/define.html> accessed 13 July, 2012.

law would set up institutions to ensure that certain norms are observed, including providing for punitive measures for deviation from the set standards.

This implies that a public policy should have clear goals with an absence of logical contradictions between them. Since the policy would be produced as a response to a perceived problem, the government then has to respond to the concerns and challenges that the stakeholders are facing. This also suggests that the policy making has to emanate from the stakeholders with government responding to their concerns through the policy. The process has to be led by a specific organ of government that has the mandate although there should be room for deliberations before arriving at a stated position.

In that regard, a public policy should undergo distinct stages to ensure that it serves the purpose it is intended to achieve. The stages include agenda setting; policy formulation and adoption; policy implementation; policy monitoring and evaluation and termination (Figure 1)<sup>2</sup>.

Figure 1: The Policy Cycle



Agenda setting appreciates that a policy is formulated in response to a specific problem which has to be prioritized among a set of other problems. It thus focuses on identifying which issues receive attention and which are excluded in public discussion. Thus identified issues have to compete for policy space on the policy agenda.

Policy formulation involves coming up with strategies towards solving the identified problems. In addition to the responsible government department, interest groups may also be involved after consultations, in which they would also offer policy proposals. Policy formulation has to result in a tangible outcome in the form of a draft policy ready for adoption. A policy is adopted when it is passed by the relevant authority, which in the Zimbabwe context is the cabinet, and becomes binding.

<sup>2</sup> CliffsNotes.com, *The Policymaking Process*, Accessed 27 Jun 2012 at website [http://www.cliffsnotes.com/study\\_guide/topicArticleId-65383,articleId-65551.html](http://www.cliffsnotes.com/study_guide/topicArticleId-65383,articleId-65551.html)

The implementation of a policy involves carrying out activities and action points that are set out in the policy. The implementation of a policy would also involve action by other agents who were not involved in formulating and adopted it. The extent to which a policy can be successfully implemented depends on the complexity of the policy, coordination between those agents putting the policy into effect, and compliance with identified targets.

Once a policy has been implemented, there is need for regular evaluation to determine the extent to which the policy is achieving its intended objectives. Evaluation would also involve coming up with corrective measures to whip the policy in line with its aims. More importantly, policy evaluation would also involve assessing the budget to ensure whether enough resources are being distributed towards the attainment of each of the set goals. Where deficiencies are observed, evaluation would also entail sourcing more resources as well as re-distribution of resources from areas where there are surpluses to those that are deficient.

There is always a time when a policy would need to be terminated. The need for termination of a policy can be either a result of set targets being met or the socio-economic and political environment having changed such that new priorities would be set that might not be related to those upon which the policy was set. Thus a policy is terminated after it becomes obsolete, has failed to work, or has lost its support among the stakeholders.

The phases of the policy cycle should obtain regardless of the model used in policy making. There are many models that can be used during the policy making process and these include the following (Chigumira, 2005):

### ***Rational Models***

The rational model, which is also known as the linear model of policy making assumes that there is a logical sequence in policy making, starting with problem definition, through analysis of alternatives, to decision implementation and review. Thus the model involves policymakers identifying problems, gathering and reviewing data about possible policy solutions and their effects before selecting the solution that best matches the goals. In this regard the policy makers would be persuaded by the most accurate options. In this model on policy research, expected to provide policy makers with the alternative policy options to choose from.

### ***Incrementalist (muddling through) Model***

Under this approach, policymakers would choose compromise policies that would be acceptable in the face of competing demands. Under this model policymaking would not follow any clear movement towards predetermined goals but rather a series of steps in which policies are gradually modified, hence incrementalism. Policymakers would generally be conservative in decision making with policymaking simply being an exercise done by ‘muddling through’ with little time, resources and inclination towards the conducting of a comprehensive research that would inform the policy making process. In this regard the policy making process tends to accommodate pressure groups’ demands and deal with crises as they arise, with difficult policy decisions requiring radical changes to solve being deferred or ignored completely

### ***Knowledge Utilisation Model***

The knowledge utilisation model views knowledge as cumulative and has to be incorporated into process through an ‘enlightenment’ process. For example, even though a single piece of

policy research might not be enough to have an impact on policy making, accumulated research findings gradually alter decision makers' perception about the problems that a policy should address, resulting in them gradually adopting such findings. Thus advancement in knowledge would be expected to also be reflected in incremental changes to policies.

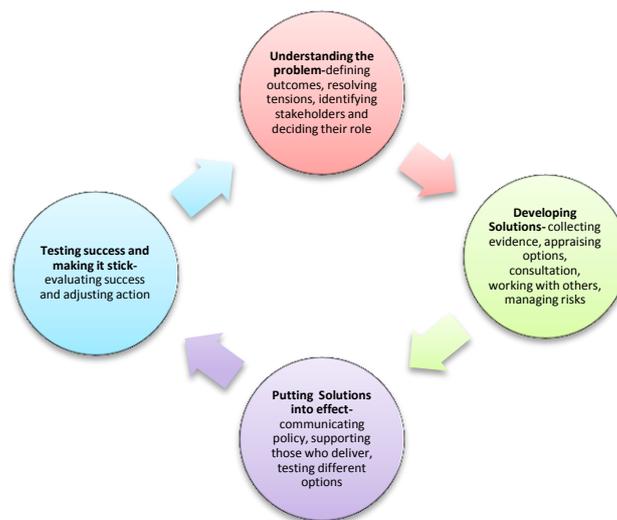
### ***Garbage Can Model***

Similar to the knowledge utilisation model, the garbage can model appreciates that solutions that might have been discarded at previous levels might remain in the policy making system as occasionally some problems to which they could solve would surface. Thus the policy making process would be seen as an untidy process rather than one passing through a series of logical phases.

## **2.2 Qualities of a Good Policy**

The insights that could be drawn from the sample of models discussed above is that the policy making process should be designed to ensure that the resultant policy exhibits the general features of a good policy. Figure 2 below shows one example of the core policy processes under which a policy should undergo to ensure that these issues are taken into cognisance.

**Figure 2: The Core Issues for Effective Policies**



*Source: UK Cabinet Office, 1999*

In the same vein, the following characteristics can be used to judge whether or not a policy has the qualities of an effective policy (OFMDFM, 2003):

### ***a) Forward Looking***

The policy-making process becomes forward looking if outcomes that the policy is designed to achieve are defined clearly. This can be based on a long-term view based on analysis of statistical trends and informed predictions based on social political, economic and cultural trends for at least five years into the future. A forward looking policy should have a statement of intended outcomes prepared at an early stage with the use of forecasting tools to guide predictions.

*b) Outward looking*

A good policy is expected to be cognisant of other factors that are outside the control of the policy maker that can have an impact on deliverables. These include taking into account influencing factors in the regional and international arena as well as drawing on experience in other regions and countries.

*c) Innovative, flexible and creative*

The policy making process should also be flexible and innovative, which would involve questioning established wisdom while at the same time encouraging new and creative ideas. This would involve being open to comments and suggestions by other policy actors as well as being able to identify and manage risks. An innovative, flexible and creative approach would involve exploring alternative policy options as well as bringing in people from outside the general policy making structure into the policy making process

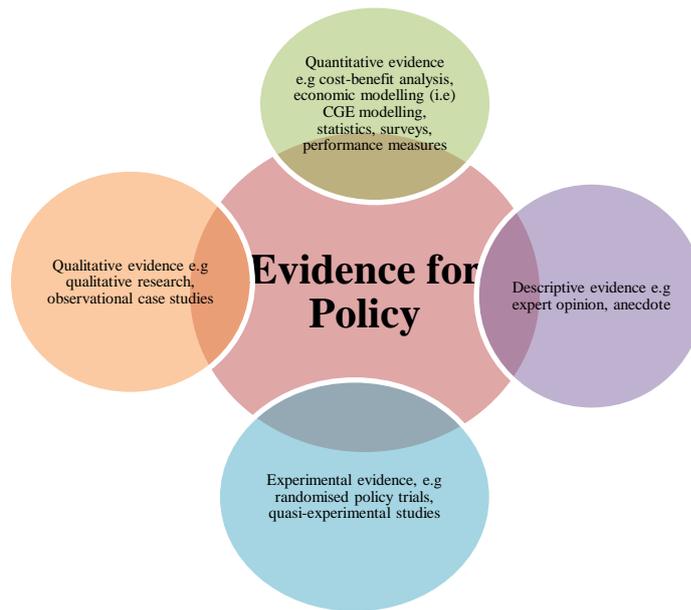
*d) Evidence based*

Good policy making should not be divorced from research, as it is research that forms the basis for evidence based policy making. Policy research assists policy makers to discover new areas of emphasis as well as enabling them to assess the success with which earlier policy targets and objectives have or have not been met (Chigumira, 2005). Policy research makes the backbone of any successful policy making process as it sharpens the analytical parameters of the policy problems to be solved; provides baseline information which would close any obvious information gaps and question conventional wisdom on the issue (Bhorat H, 2005).

Evidence-based approach to policy making thus depends on the existence and availability of reliable evidence, which generally is obtained through research. In addition, the approach also depends on the ability of researchers and policymakers to communicate with each other effectively. An evidence based approach to policy making includes reviews of existing literature on the possible ways to solving the problem, commissioning of new research prior to policy formulation as well as consideration of a range of properly costed and appraised options.

There are different ways through which evidence can be gathered for policy making purposes. Evidence can be quantitative, descriptive, experimental and qualitative, depending on the method used to collect it, although there are a lot of overlaps between them. A summary of the different types of evidence can be given through a diagram (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Types of Evidence



Source: Australian Government Productivity Commission, 2009

*e) Inclusive*

A good policy making process is one which is inclusive to ensure that it takes into account any impact on other stakeholders as well as ensuring that it meets their needs. An inclusive policy making process involves consultations with those responsible for service delivery as well as those at the receiving end of the service. This also entails undertaking an impact assessment and seeks feedback on the effect of the policy on both the recipients and the service providers.

*f) Joined up*

The policy making process should also be joined up with the other complementary processes from other policy initiatives. Thus a joined up approach to policy-making would involve cross cutting objectives which would involve joint working arrangements with other departments, with barriers to effective joining up being clearly identified and the strategies to overcome them being laid out. A policy becomes joined up if it is able to connect with other existing policies as well as establish joint working arrangements with stakeholders who have to perform complementary roles. Joining up for the policy can be assessed from two perspectives; horizontally and vertically. Horizontal joining up refers to the extent to which there is coordination between policy makers at policy making level while vertical joining up would be focusing on whether service providers or implementing agents are playing their part to ensure that the policies are successful

#### *g) Communication*

A good policy making process should have clear strategies on how the policy would be communicated with the public. Communication would involve presentations of policy objectives; implementation strategies; clear time frames; intended outcomes and feedback mechanisms through which the public would use to provide information on whether the objectives of the policy are being met. Communication should also be done regularly as this would also ensure that all economic agents keep track of the policy implementation process.

#### *h) Monitoring and Evaluation*

The policy making process should also have an in-built systematic monitoring and evaluation mechanism to assess the effectiveness of the policy implementation process and policy outcomes. A policymaking process that can be argued to demonstrate a commitment to monitoring and evaluation would be expected to have clearly defined monitoring framework and evaluation criteria at the outset, with clearly defined indicators.

#### *i) Review*

A review mechanism should also be inbuilt into the policy to ensure that it is constantly reviewed to assess whether it is really dealing with problems it was designed to solve. Thus a review mechanism need to be embedded into the policy making process. The review process will inevitably track a range of performance indicators as well as gather views of stakeholders on both the intended and unintended effects of the policy. This will also provide a platform for service providers and customers to provide useful feedback to the policy makers. Where a policy or elements of a policy are found to be redundant or failing, then it should be scrapped off.

The theoretical analysis given above on the basic tenets of public policy and the qualities of a good policy will provide the framework within which the policies in Zimbabwe will be assessed in this paper. The process leading to the policies as well as the qualities of the policy have to reflect whether some of these factors were taken into account at policy design and implementation stages.

### **3. Current Status of Public Policies in Zimbabwe**

#### **3.1 Overview of National Economic Policies Since 1980**

Governments the world over, play a critical role in putting in place enabling policy frameworks that facilitate economic development.. This may require creation of new or reform of existing institutions legal and regulatory frameworks and control mechanisms in which the policy making process is embedded. The creation of such enabling contexts largely hinges on the nature of the state and its political will in the reform process.

Historically, Zimbabwe has had the policy making process for the overarching national economic policy led by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning since independence. The Finance Ministry championed the crafting of the “Growth with Equity Strategy (1981), the Zimbabwe Transitional National Development Plan (1982-1985), the Zimbabwe First Five-year National Development plan (1986-90) as well as the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) (1991 – 1995). However, on realisation that the planning function was being clouded by the finance aspect in the Ministry of Finance and Economic

Planning, government formed the National Economic Planning Commission (NEPC) in 1992. The Commission was housed in the President's Office in order to give it the necessary clout to have influence and oversight over government Ministries, Departments and Agencies. The Commission was involved in the final years of the implementation of ESAP and the subsequent formulation of the Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation, (ZIMPREST) (1996-2000). The NEPC was meant to be the hub of the overall policy making, coordination, implementation and monitoring with the following functions:

- to provide overall policy direction and guidance to all ministries and departments;
- to coordinate the formulation and implementation of development plans and programmes including determination of the capital budget;
- to monitor the implementation of Government programmes by various ministries;
- to analyse and evaluate the impact of policy decisions in the public and private sectors; and
- to coordinate the activities of the various Cabinet Committees and their Working Parties and to establish and administer Commissions of Inquiry.

In 2000, Government reversed its earlier decision to hive off the planning function from the Ministry of Finance and formed the new expanded Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. The National Economic Planning Commission was removed from the President's Office and merged into the Division of Economic Affairs of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. The expanded Ministry of Finance and Economic Development was involved in the crafting of the Millennium Economic Recovery Programme (MERP) (2000), the National Economic Recovery Programme (NERP) (2003) and the Macroeconomic Policy Framework (2004). NERP was also preceded by the Ten Point Plan, enunciated by the President to set the tone for a sectoral driven economic revival growth strategy. The Ten Point Plan outlined ten broad objectives intended to give policy directions on the Post Election Economic Development Strategy and Economic Recovery Programme.

However, six years after its disbandment, in March 2005, the government re-created the planning function in the new Ministry of Economic Development, which was mandated with spearheading the national planning process. The Ministry of Economic Development spearheaded the formulation of the National Economic Development Priority Programme (2006) as a short term government work programme meant to stabilize the economy. Subsequent to that, the Ministry of Economic Development embarked on a decentralized and highly consultative process of formulating the Zimbabwe Economic Development Strategy (ZEDS 2007 – 2012) which was later aborted due to lack of financial and material support as well as discord in government following the disputed elections in March 2008.

At the consummation of the Government of National Unity in 2009, government launched the Short Term Economic Recovery Programme (STERP I & II) in 2009 and 2010 to stabilise the economy. However, while the STERP programme managed to stabilise the economy, the need for an overarching framework to anchor the budget and other sectoral policy was noted. In this regard, the Ministry of Economic Planning and Investment Promotion resuscitated the consultations to develop a Medium Term Plan for the country in September 2009 and launched in July 2011.

The MTP has provided the overarching macroeconomic framework, priority projects and strategies for the five years, 2011-2015, to guide the development agenda. The MTP has also set sectoral growth targets that underpin the overall growth of the economy. In this regard, all sectoral policies and strategies will focus at achieving these targets.

Thus other line Ministries are expected to formulate sector specific policies which take into account the priority national projects; policy targets and strategies outlined in the MTP. The national budgets are also expected to actualise the objectives of the MTP through the provision of adequate resources to the identified anchor/priority projects.

One key policy document that has seen government officials going to the length and breadth of the country to consult the stakeholders is the National Budget. This includes consultation of Parliament through the Parliament pre and post budget seminar to enhance parliament's oversight role. Similarly the development of the MTP and other sectoral policies has been preceded by varying degrees of wide stakeholder consultation.

Although many policies have been put in place, their ability to meet the intended targets has largely been questioned. A look at some of these policies together with their targets (Table 1) would reveal that generally, the policies failed to achieve their intended targets. Although failure for these policies does not necessarily imply that they were not properly crafted<sup>3</sup>, an improvement in policy making could also help in ensuring that policy targets are met.

**Table 1: Assessment of Key National Policies for Zimbabwe**

|   | Year        | Key Policy Features   | Comments (assessment or perception of success or failure)   |
|---|-------------|---|---|
| Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) | 1991-1995   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This programme entailed the removal of all controls and the adoption of market forces for the determination of prices i.e trade liberalisation, financial sector liberalisation and removal of price and exchange controls.</li> <li>Central Bank to manage monetary and credit aggregates to contain inflationary pressure and support balance of payments objectives.</li> <li>Target of 5% economic growth and 10% inflation rate by 1995.</li> <li>Reduce budget deficit from 13% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to 5% of GDP.</li> <li>Reduce tax levels and rationalise the tax structure to enhance equity and efficiency of tax system.</li> <li>Increase cost recovery in education (0.5% of GDP), training and health (0.2% of GDP).</li> <li>Eliminating redundant and non-essential employment to reduce the size of the civil service.</li> <li>Elimination of export subsidies and encouraging non-traditional exports.</li> <li>replacement of direct monetary policy control by indirect methods with emphasis on Open Market Operations (OMO)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inflation rose from 39.7% to 46.3% against a target of 16% and 14% from 1991 to 1992. In 1995 inflation declined to 22.6% against a target of 10%. Inflation was initially exacerbated by the removal of subsidies.</li> <li>The budget deficit ballooned to -12.2% exceeding the 5% target in 1995 hence crowding out private investment.</li> <li>Economic growth during the period only averaged 0.5% per annum against a target of 5% growth by 1995.</li> </ul> |
| Zimbabwe Program for Economic and Social        | 1996 - 2000 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>main objective was 'to bring about an adequate and sustainable rate of economic growth and social development to reduce poverty</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The economy recorded negative real growth of -4.8% against a target of 6%. The budget deficit ballooned to -24% against a target of -5% during the same period.</li> </ul>   |

<sup>3</sup> Due to hyperinflation, it was difficult for policy makers to adequately capture the various dimensions that a policy would be intended to solve.

|   |           |  |   |
|---|-----------|--|---|
| Transformation                              |           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the program was hinged on the principle that no meaningful socio-economic transformation is possible without restoring and sustaining macroeconomic stability</li> <li>Target 6% economic growth, -5% budget deficit and 8% inflation by 2000.</li> <li>grow exports by and average of 9% annually</li> <li>promote Exports Processing Zones (EPZS) and improve incentives</li> <li>Pursue policies to encourage outward looking industrial sector</li> <li>Central bank to improve management of monetary policies to contain inflation to single digit by 2000 through the usage of indirect instruments of monetary policy. The Central Bank also had to ensure stability of the Zimbabwean dollar by ensuring low and stable inflation.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The economy was adversely affected by rising production costs, cash flow difficulties, weakening domestic demand.</li> <li>Annual broad money supply went on an upward trend rising from 34.9% (December 1997) to 164.8% (December 2002) due to domestic credit expansion.</li> <li>This growth in money supply underpinned by declining real economic activity led to a rise in the rate of inflation</li> <li>The inflation rate rose from 21.4% in 1996 to 55.8% by the end of 2000 against a target of single digit rate.</li> </ul>   |
| Millennium Economic Recovery Program (MERP) | 2000-2002 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MERP was deemed a multifaceted response to the fundamental imbalances in the macroeconomic environment.</li> <li>The prime objective of the programme was to remove the fundamental causes of inflation and restore macroeconomic stability in order to create an economic environment conducive to low interest rates and hence sustainable investment capacities, stable real income as well as poverty mitigation.</li> <li>This was going to be achieved through maintaining a tight monetary policy, negotiating a social contract, stabilize prices through enhancing food security.</li> <li>Targeted -1.7% economic growth, -8% budget deficit and 32.6% inflation by 2002.</li> <li>Enhance deepening of financial reforms.</li> <li>Stimulate the growth of productive sectors.</li> <li>Protect vulnerable groups.</li> <li>Accelerate and complete Public Enterprise Reform.</li> <li>Stabilise the Zimbabwe Dollar and resolve the foreign currency crisis.</li> <li>Engage the support of the international community.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The economy continued to deteriorate from -4.8% to -19.9% from 2000 to 2002 against a target of 6% and 1.7% respectively.</li> <li>Money supply grew to around 150% by December 2002 as a result of increased bank lending to the public sector. Inflation became unsustainable and accelerated to 126% in 2002 against a target of 32%. Domestic prices continued to escalate, against the background of shortages of basic commodities. This was further compounded by the distortions in the goods and foreign exchange markets. Central bank financing of the deficit was critical at this point because foreign financing had dried as other donors took a cue from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. While monetary policy was being restrictive the fiscal authorities were seeking accommodation from the central bank hence money supply growth continued and inflation remained on an upward trend.</li> </ul> |
| National Economic Recovery Plan (NERP)      | 2003      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diversification of exports through penetration of non-traditional markets.</li> <li>Reviewing the selective issuing of export permits and licences for unprocessed and semi-processed products.</li> <li>Approaching friendly donors to raise additional foreign exchange funding.</li> <li>Introduce incentives to mobilise remittances from non-resident Zimbabweans.</li> <li>Reduce external payment arrears through a credible repayment programme.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The economy registered some positive developments. The availability of commodities greatly improved contributing to the stabilization of prices.</li> <li>This saw year on year inflation going on a downward trend from 622.8% in January 2004 to 251% by September, 2004 (CSO).</li> <li>This was also achieved at the backdrop of tight fiscal policy with the government managing to maintain daily positive balance on its account at the central bank as opposed to inflationary money printing as a source of financing (GoZ, 2004).</li> <li>Increased foreign exchange availability, coupled with the provision of concessionary financing for the productive and export sectors increased industrial capacity utilization. During this period manufacturing sector recorded an increase in productive capacity from 30-40% (last half of 2003) to 50-60% in 2004.</li> </ul>   |
| Industrial                                  | 2004 -    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote domestic and foreign investment.</li> </ul>   |   |

|   |                       |   |  |
|---|-----------------------|---|--|
| Development Policy  | 2010                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote exports.</li> <li>• Consolidate existing markets and diversify into non-traditional markets.</li> <li>• Enhance the competitiveness of Zimbabwean products on the regional and international markets.</li> <li>• Develop an export culture and positive change of attitude among the business entrepreneurs.</li> <li>• Exploit comparative advantage and develop new industries.</li> <li>• Achieve a shared vision on exports-led growth.</li> </ul>   |  |
| Macroeconomic Policy Framework (2005-2006): Towards Sustained Economic Growth | 2005-2006             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The program was hinged on the realization that macroeconomic stability can only be realized through consistent implementation of government's inflation reduction programme. The programme targeted reducing inflation to 20% in 2005 and to below 10% in 2006.</li> <li>• This was to be achieved through tightening of monetary policy by restraining unproductive credit expansion to contain the growth of both broad and reserve money. Fiscal policy was to anchor rapid economic growth.</li> <li>• Fiscal deficit and consequently government borrowing was to be contained at levels consistent with monetary targets necessary to reduce inflation.</li> <li>• Requests for unbudgeted expenditures were not to be supported. In this regard prudent fiscal policy management was to be followed.</li> <li>• Resort to the use the foreign exchange auction system to guarantee viability of exporters.</li> <li>• Enhance efforts to marshal foreign exchange from Zimbabweans in the diaspora.</li> <li>• Exploit areas of comparative advantage and preferential access to foreign markets under trade agreements.</li> <li>• Utilise the services of the Export Credit Guarantee Company of Zimbabwe to push exports.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The actual inflation outturn in 2005 and 2006 was 237.8% and 1016% respectively, which proven to be way off the target of 20% and 10%. This was mainly fuelled by the high growth of money supply as a result of government's recourse to the central bank to finance its expenditures. With no foreign financing and the economy declining, the government had no alternative but to seek the funds from the central bank.</li> </ul>  |
| National Economic Development Priority Program (NEDPP)                        | April - December 2006 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEDPP was premised on the stabilisation of the economy in the short-term through the implementation of quick win strategies. Key objectives of NEDPP are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ inflation reduction,</li> <li>○ stabilisation of the Zimbabwe dollar,</li> <li>○ ensuring food security,</li> <li>○ increasing output and productivity and generation of foreign exchange,</li> <li>○ removal of price distortions, and</li> <li>○ ensuring effective policy co-ordination and implementation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The broader objectives focus on the restoration of investor confidence, infrastructure rehabilitation and development, reduction of both domestic and external debt to sustainable levels, restoration of a positive image of the country, and economic empowerment.</li> <li>• The projected macroeconomic targets for the year 2006 reflected growth of between</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quasi-fiscal operations which were undertaken in order to capacitate the productive sector resulted in the expansion of the budget deficit from the already difficult level of 44 percent recorded in 2006 to over 60 percent of GDP as at October 2007. The failure to contain the fiscal deficit has led to an explosion of fiscal financing needs met, to a large extent, from domestic sources. This domestic financing of quasi fiscal operations has not helped the situation leading to a rise in the inflation rate to 66 212.3% by December, 2007 (CSO). This was deemed the highest inflation rate in the world.</li> </ul> |

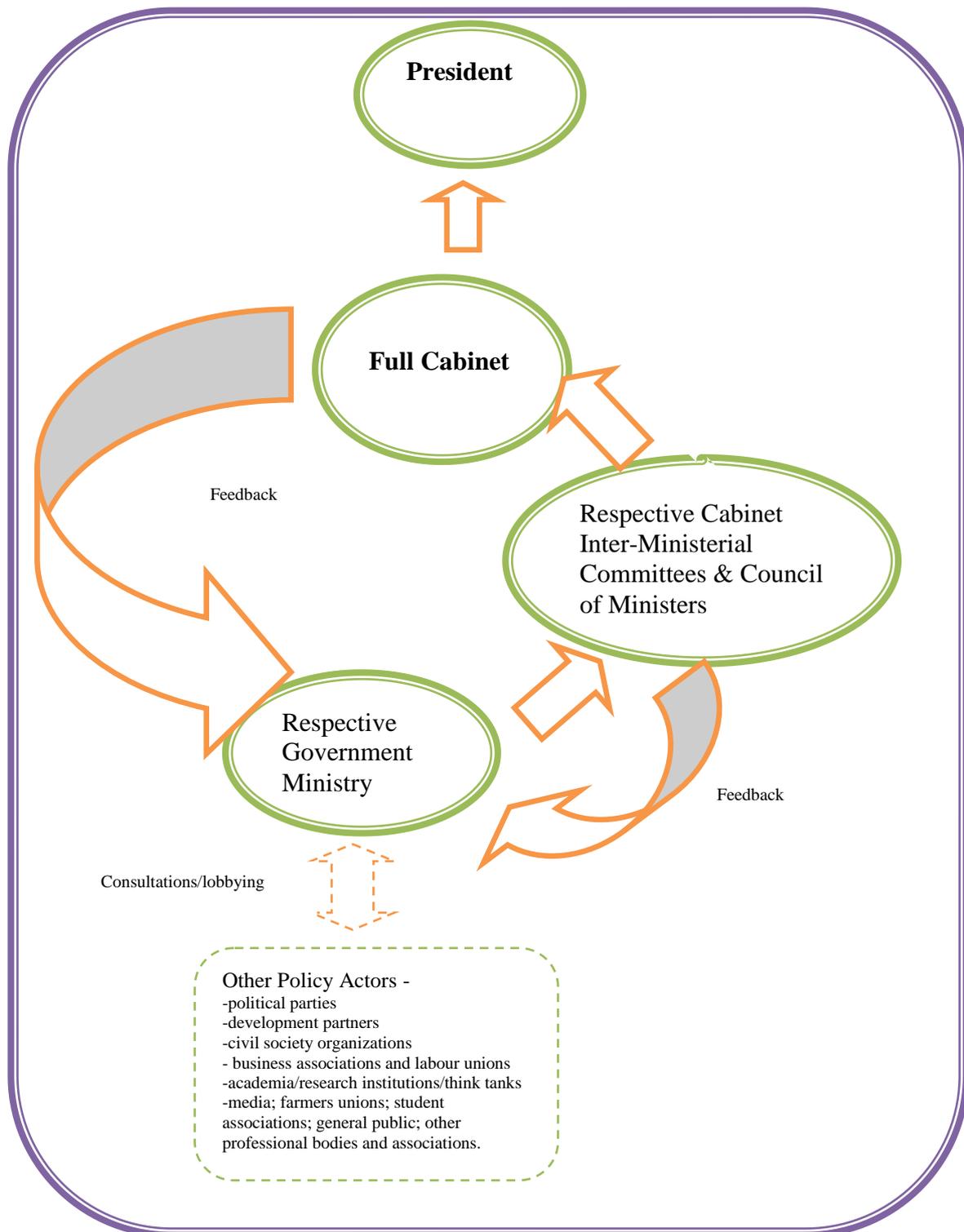
|  |                           |  |  |
|--|---------------------------|--|--|
|  |                           | <p>1-2 % and an inflation range of 230-250 % by December 2006. Savings and investment as a percentage of GDP were targeted at 10% and 15% respectively. The budget deficit was targeted at 4.6%. Economic growth was expected to increase to 3,5% to 4,8% from 2007 to 2008. Inflation was also expected to decline to 20-30% and 6-9% during the same period. The budget deficit on the other hand was expected to further decline from 2,3% to 2% in 2007 and 2008.</p>  |  |
| Short Term Economic Recovery Programme (STERP) | February to December 2009 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• STERP is an emergency short term stabilisation programme, whose key goals are to stabilise the macro and micro-economy, recover the levels of savings, investment and growth, and lay the basis of a more transformative mid term to long term economic programme that will turn Zimbabwe into a progressive developmental State.</li> <li>• The key priority areas of STERP are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Political and Governance Issues</li> <li>○ Social Protection and</li> <li>○ Stabilisation</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The key objective is to implement an economic recovery strategy and plan to resuscitate the economy i.e address the issue of production, food security, poverty and unemployment and the challenges of high inflation, interest rates and the exchange rate.</li> <li>• key issues are economic stabilisation and national healing, whilst at the same time laying the foundation of a more comprehensive and developmentalist economic framework.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To a large extent, STERP was able to slow down inflation rates to single digit levels and was also able to stabilise the economy which has experienced a decline for more than a decade.</li> </ul> |

Source:

### 3.2 Institutional Framework for Policy Making

Generally there is a pattern which can be used to infer about the institutional framework for policy making in Zimbabwe, for which the respective Government Ministry and Cabinet are the critical players (Figure 4). Assuming that the policy is being formulated in response to public pressure from the various stakeholders (which still needs to be enhanced in Zimbabwe), the respective Government Ministry would initiate the consultative process and produce a draft policy. The draft policy would be submitted to the respective Cabinet inter-Ministerial Committee. There are various such inter-Ministerial Committees, developed to have oversight to respective economic sectors. The Cabinet Inter-Ministerial Committee would discuss the draft, suggest areas for improvement to the Ministry, after which the revised report would be submitted to a full Cabinet meeting. Once Cabinet is satisfied and approved the policy, it would then be launched. Thus, Cabinet is the highest approval authority for policies in the country.

Figure 4: The Institutional framework for policy making in Zimbabwe



Some of the key policy actors that influence the policy agenda include the government ministries; political parties<sup>4</sup>, development partners given their financial muscle, business

<sup>4</sup> Political party manifestos outline the party’s policy agenda which they will pursue while they are in government. In a coalition Government policy conflicts may arise from differences in party policy positions. The policy agenda is sometimes

community; the media given their capacity to influence public opinion; some umbrella civil society organisations and professional bodies. However some policies have mainly been driven by technocrats in government.

### **3.3 Sectoral Policies that are in place**

There are many policies that are currently in place in Zimbabwe. A sample of policies has been selected for discussion in this section. The policies chosen were randomly chosen, with the target being largely those whose formulation could assist in enhancing key economic growth drivers.

#### **a) International Trade and Industrial Policies**

The Industrial Development Policy (2012-2016) and the National Trade Policy (2012-2016) were both launched on March 26, 2012. The overall objective of the Industrial Development Policy (IDP) is to restore the manufacturing sector's contribution to GDP of Zimbabwe to 30% and its contribution to exports to 50% by 2015 consistent with the Medium Term Plan. The IDP also aims at increasing capacity utilization to 80% by the end of the Plan period, which would arise through re-equipping and replacing obsolete machinery and new technologies for enhanced value addition.

The National Trade Policy (NTP) on the other hand is aimed at increasing exports and promoting export diversification through harnessing comparative advantage in key priority sectors, which would see export earnings increasing by at least 10% annually to US\$7 billion by 2016. It also aims at consolidating and expanding export markets by exploring new markets to expand into regional markets under regional integration.

A look at both policies however would reveal that the extent to which the objectives would be met would also depend on how other supporting policies and legislations would be implemented. For example, the NTP recognises that the Competition and Tariff Commission is a critical institution for the success of the policy as the institution is the investigating authority for unfair trade practices in Zimbabwe, a mandate which was strengthened by the Competition (Anti-dumping and Countervailing Duty Investigations) Regulations (2002) and the Competition (Safeguards Investigations) Regulations (2006). Capacitating and strengthening the Investigating Authority is noted as an important step, though indications on the ground do not reflect that this is being given any priority.

The NTP also points out the need for a legislation to put in place a Quality Standards Regulatory Authority which would make it mandatory for companies to comply with specified national and international standards on specified products. The institution would also work hand in hand with the Standards Association of Zimbabwe. Measures to create such an institution are already lagging behind and not being prioritised, which also reveals that the policy is not being fully implemented.

Other important institutions with roles to play for the successful implementation of the NTP include ZimTrade, ZIMRA and an inter-institutional consultative mechanism, the Trade and

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influenced by the outcomes/resolutions of the party annual congresses. This has been evident in Zimbabwe on the policy debate on the implementation of indigenisation and land reform programme.

Economic Review Committee (TERC) which all need either setting up or being capacitated for them effectively implement their mandates. Thus, unless these entities are in a position to perform their roles as envisaged, there are possibilities of the NTP targets being missed. A sound policy implementation framework is one which tries to ensure that all loopholes are identified and action towards their removal is instituted, something which is missing from the Zimbabwe policy making process.

The IDP is also premised on other issues which are central to its successful implementation. This includes the review of employment and labour legislation, such as the Labour relations Act (Chapter 28:01) which is considered not flexible enough to cater for the prevailing economic environment. The policy also appreciates that its successful implementation is based on inclusivity, which would also see the private sector, labour and government being involved in goal setting, decision making and acceptance of responsibility. It is thus critical that the necessary platforms for such inclusivity be established; otherwise most of the targets could be missed.

## **b) Agriculture policy**

Zimbabwe is operating under an agriculture policy that was formulated in 1994, the 'Zimbabwe Agricultural Policy Framework: 1995 to 2020'. Given the several changes to the socio-economic environment that were witnessed in the sector between 2000 and 2008, the policy framework is hardly suitable, warranting a review. Attempts to come up with an agricultural policy have not been successful, largely due to financial challenges. The Ministry of Agriculture, with some financial assistance from the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) also carried out some consultations through workshops and seminars with key stakeholders to solicit for views. However, the consultations continue to be hampered by financial challenges that have delayed the policy making process.

The aim of the 1994 Agricultural policy framework was to transform smallholder agriculture into a fully commercial farming system. However, since 2000, Zimbabwe's farming areas have undergone fundamental transformation under the Land Reform Programme. The changed farm structure presents a number of challenges and opportunities. There are new and expanded demands for knowledge, given the large number of resettled farmers. Old farming systems based on large scale land holdings are largely obsolete as the majority are now small holder farmers. There is need for more intensive farming systems and institutions have to adjust to cater for the larger numbers of farmers that need servicing. All these factors demand a new policy to optimize resource use.

The policy framework was also designed during the time Zimbabwe was undertaking the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP), which emphasized free-market solutions to agricultural problems. However, since February 2009, Government has recognized the necessity of market-related policies to guide agricultural production decisions. These changes in the macro-economic policy contained in the Zimbabwe Medium Term Plan, 2011-2015, require a revision of the policy framework guiding agriculture, if the targets set are to be achieved.

It is on this basis that the Comprehensive Agricultural Policy Framework (2012-2032), which is still in its draft form, was prepared in April, 2012. The draft policy addresses issues concerning crop and livestock production, marketing and trade taking into account the current

situation and constraints to give the broad policy goals and objectives. If this is passed, it could go a long way in improving some of the limitations in the current policy.

### **c) Health Policy**

The country's health sector is currently guided by the 'National Health Strategy for Zimbabwe (2009 - 2013) - Equity and Quality in Health: A People's Right'. The current policy is a successor to the 'National Health Strategy, 1997 – 2007: Working for Quality and Equity in Health' whose major thrust was to improve the quality of life of Zimbabweans. The process of developing the Strategy began in 2006 with financial assistance from the World Health Organisation. Formulation of the policy benefited from various studies, surveys and consultations conducted by the Ministry of Health from 2006. However, the policy making process took longer than expected due to socioeconomic challenges, lack of funding for social services by both government and development partners as well as the political situation in the country which made it difficult to plan long-term. This directly contributed towards an unprecedented deterioration of health infrastructure, loss of experienced health professionals, drug shortages and a drastic decline in the quality of public health services. Some government central hospitals were completely closed forcing patients to seek health care from the private sector, church run health facilities and traditional health practitioners.

Hence in view of the foregoing, the National Health Strategy seeks to provide a framework for immediate resuscitation of the health sector and to put Zimbabwe on track towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Policy objectives thus include provision of adequate, skills and well remunerated human resources for the health sector; ensure the continuous supply of medicines and medical supplies; provision of functional equipment and machines; provision of transport; and ensuring a sustainable and predictable financial base.

The Strategy seeks to address the following thematic areas in the health sector:

- determinants of health i.e., the factors outside the health sector which have an impact on health;
- diseases affecting Zimbabweans, i.e.; addressing the burden of specific diseases and conditions affecting Zimbabwe;
- health system strengthening i.e., supporting the overall health system in which services must be planned, delivered and monitored; and
- Inclusive implementation i.e., acknowledging and enabling the actions of a wide range of stakeholders towards realising the health of the nation.

### **d) Energy Policy**

As part of its efforts to increase investment and operational efficiency in the energy sector, the Ministry of Energy and Power Development developed an energy policy framework. A Draft National Energy Policy (NEP) was then developed to improve policy clarity and awareness, achieve consistency in policy implementation and identify and address gaps in policy development. In 2007 the Ministry launched the process to develop the NEP through extensive stakeholder consultations. Provincial consultative workshops were held in November and December 2007 and were attended by people from Government and non-government organisations, private sector, institutions of higher learning, community

representatives and independent experts and consultants. The workshops were useful in identifying issues of concern and some recommendations on policy options. These recommendations were presented to a National Consultative workshop in Harare in January 2008 and the proceedings of that workshop were summarised in the first draft NEP. A second National Consultative Workshop was held in June 2009 to review, update and validate the draft NEP.

The NEP was eventually launched in September 2012, with its goal being to provide a framework for the exploitation, distribution and utilisation of energy resources. To attain this goal, some of the policy objectives of the NEP are to:

- Increase the access of all sectors of the economy to affordable energy services through the optimal use of available energy resources and the diversification of supply options;
- Stimulate sustainable economic growth by promoting competition, efficiency and investment in the sector;
- Improve the institutional framework and governance in the energy sector to enhance efficiency and the delivery of energy services;
- Promote research and development in the energy sector; and
- Develop the use of other renewable sources of energy to complement conventional sources of energy.

#### **e) Information Communication Technology (ICT) Policy**

Zimbabwe launched its first ICTs policy, the National Information and Communication Technology Policy Framework (NICTPF), in December 2005. The NICTPF seeks to harmonise the different sector-based ICT related policies into a coherent and internally consistent national ICTs Policy Framework. The Framework also provides the requisite guidance and direction to the formulation and implementation of ICTs strategies and programmes in and across all sectors of the economy.

The Policy Framework was crafted with the aim of narrowing the digital divide through enhancing public awareness and education on ICTs; improving penetration in all economic sectors; increasing access by all communities; expansion of basic and supportive communication infrastructure; developing relevant local content in vernacular; and establishing a business culture open to the new ICT based economic dispensation.

Furthermore, the Policy Framework sought to spell out the roles of stakeholders in the sector for the avoidance of duplication of efforts and consequently the sub-optimal use of resources across all sectors of the economy. In addition, the Policy Framework sought to create a robust, coherent and internally consistent national policy framework. The ICTs policy is an integrated infrastructural, social, economic, environmental, legal and institutional framework that provides strategic direction and guidance for sustainable national development through the development and application of ICTs.

In crafting the National ICT Policy Framework, the Government adopted a consultative and participatory approach, wherein the key stakeholders were given the platform to participate during the policy formulation process. The Policy making process was conducted in three

phases i.e. the National e-Readiness Survey, which measures the preparedness/ readiness of the country to adopt and use ICTs. The second phase was the e-Period Phase, which was mainly on information and publicly campaign during which citizens discussed the findings of the e-Readiness Survey and proposed policies and strategies that would guide the development and use of ICTs in their respective sectors. The third stage was the drafting of the National ICTs Policy Framework, which involved the collection and collation of stakeholder input across all sectors of the economy into the NICTPF document.

Whilst the 2005 policy framework provided a launch pad for the development of the ICT sector, continuous innovations in the sector call for the need for an up-to date policy. Revision of the Policy should help provide a framework to help narrow the digital divide between Zimbabwe and developed countries, through improving penetration of ICTs in all economic sectors and all communities. More importantly, the policy review should help facilitate that the country realize the full potential of ICTs. The policy should aim at attaining the broad objectives of: transforming Zimbabwe into a knowledge society as outlined in the MTP and encourages ICT investments and hence the sector's contribution to sustainable economic growth and development.

#### **f) Environmental Policy**

The sector is currently under the guidance of the National Environmental Policy and Strategies (NEPS) of 2009. The NEPS was meant to promote and achieve the goal of a clean, health and productive environment for all and to direct and support environmental management activities. The overall thrust of the policy is to avoid irreversible environmental damage, maintain essential environmental processes and preserve the broad spectrum of biological diversity so as to sustain the long term ability of natural resources to meet the basic needs of people, enhance food security, reduce poverty and improve the general standard of living of Zimbabweans.

It was crafted in response to the need to develop an environmental policy discussed at a national conference that was held as a follow up to United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), and response to Agenda 21. Before the NEPS, the sector was under the National Conservation Strategy (NCS) of 1987 which had the aim of promoting the sustainable use of national resources through integrating socio-economic and environmental issues in development programmes, focusing on land degradation and growth, water and energy. The NCS only worked as a framework to guide aspects of environmental and natural resources management before the launch of NEPS in June 2009.

The formulation process involved setting up of a working group, steering committee, developing a proposal and holding consultative meetings and workshops at national, provincial, district and local levels. The draft policy was produced in September 2003 and subsequently launched and adopted in November 2005. The Environmental Management Agency EMA is responsible for the policy implementation.

#### **g) Gender Policy**

The National Gender Policy currently in place was finalized and adopted in 2004. In 2005, there was the Beijing +10 conference which globally reviewed the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA) and recommended areas that needed special action and attention. In 2008, there was the United Nations Security Council

Resolution (UNSCR) 1820 and in 2009, there was the UNSCR 1889 which both urged governments to achieve gender equality and justice. A lot has happened in the country since 2004 and this has left the policy with the need for major revisions. Efforts are already underway to review the 2004 National Gender policy since September 2011. Government has already hired a consultant to assist in the national gender Policy formulation process.

The revision of the National Gender Policy is currently being led by a consultant working with the Ministry of Gender, Women's Affairs and Community Development (MWAGCD). A road map for the process of developing the National Gender Policy was outlined. A stakeholder inception workshop was organized by the Ministry of Gender, Women's Affairs and Community Development in September 2011. This involved the participation of public and private sector, civil society organizations, the UN Family and Development partners. The key outcome of the inception workshop was the identification of thematic areas to be included in the National Gender Policy. The Ministry of Gender, Women's Affairs and Community Development has constituted an Inter-Ministerial Committee mainly made up of gender focal persons from all the key Ministries. The role of the IMC was to provide oversight guidance to the process of the development of the National Gender Policy. Also involved in the revision process is the National Gender Management System (NGMS), comprising of Gender Focal Persons (GFPs) and women NGOs, responsible for monitoring and evaluation (M & E).

With the guidance of the Lead Consultant, Thematic Consultants, worked on the development of background papers which would inform the development of a draft National Gender Policy. The background papers provide a rich situation analysis of the policy sectors also include statistical data relevant for the respective thematic areas. The development of background papers provides a basis for research findings to inform the gender policy making process. This is a good practice that needs to be cultivated and supported to enhance evidence based policy making and gender mainstreaming. The consultative process culminated in the launch of the Government Broad Based Economic Empowerment Framework in July 2012 which seeks to provide a guiding outline for economic empowerment. The framework's strategic interventions include enhancing women business ownership or entrepreneurship and facilitating women's participation in key economic decision-making positions.

#### **h) SMEs Policy**

The SMEs sector is currently operating without a guiding policy since the previous policy approved in 2002 expired in 2007. Since then, the sector has been guided by broader national policies such as STERP 1 & 2 and the MTP. However, these national policies only serve to give an overarching direction of the economy as opposed to sector specific issues. Hence, their coverage of the sector remains more exploratory, and inadequate in addressing the real challenges and needs of the sector. A new policy is therefore required to spearhead the development of SMEs and enhance their contribution to employment, government revenues, exports and the sector's overall contribution to economic growth. The new policy framework should help create an enabling legal and regulatory environment, investment promotion, financial assistance, market promotion, technology and infrastructure support, entrepreneurship, management and skills development and institutional reforms. Furthermore, the policy should address, among other things, the following issues:

- provide an appropriate institutional mechanism to facilitate SME development efforts;
- commit SME growth over the long term rather than dependence on any quick-fix solutions;

- set priorities and the appropriate allocation of limited public resources; and
- rationalise support programmes for SMEs and mobilize resources for SMEs

### **i) Second Science, Technology and Innovation Policy of Zimbabwe**

The Second Science, Technology and Innovation Policy of Zimbabwe was established in March 2012 to replace the first National Science and Technology Policy of 2002. The need for a new policy was based on the observed reality that there had been significant advances in science and technology globally especially in ICT, biotechnology, space sciences and indigenous knowledge systems which could not be adequately captured by the 2002 policy. In addition, it was also noted that circumstances in the country had also changed since the adoption of the 2002 Policy. For example, the country experienced closure of various manufacturing companies and a large flight of skills to the Diaspora, a phenomenal expansion of Higher Education as reflected in establishment of new universities. It was thus felt necessary to have a new policy document based within the correct context.

The Policy is premised on six key objectives, namely:

- Strengthen capacity development in science, technology and innovation (STI);
- Learn and utilise emergent technologies to accelerate development;
- Accelerate Commercialisation of Research Results;
- Search for scientific solutions to global environmental challenges;
- Mobilise resources and popularise science and technology; and
- Foster international collaboration in STI

To ensure realisation of these objectives, the policy provides for a Policy Implementation Strategy, which would be produced as a separate document.

In June 2012, the Implementation Plan for the Second Science, Technology and Innovation Policy of Zimbabwe was established. The Implementation Plan sets out the activities that are essential to implement each of the six specific objectives spelt out in The Second Science, Technology and Innovation Policy. It provides guidance by outlining the specific activities and targets that would be undertaken to achieve the set objectives.

### **3.4 Critical Policies that are yet to be established**

To ensure that the overall policy environment achieves its intended objectives, there is need for sectoral policies that are complementary. Policies that share a common objective are key to ensure that the national policy framework generates the desired economic efficiency and welfare gains. Lack of such complementary policies limits the effectiveness of the enacted policies. For instance, it can be argued that the success of the recently announced NTP and NIP hinges largely on the establishment of the Quality Standards Regulatory Authority, which would make it mandatory for companies to comply with specified national and international standards on specified products. Whilst some policies are totally nonexistent, other simply require to be reviewed and updated so take into account the ever-changing socio-politico-economic environment. Among those seen as critical are the following:

## **a) Consumer Protection Policies**

Whilst Zimbabwe has made remarkable progress in the formulating socio-economic policies, there still exists a glaring gap in as far as consumer protection is concerned. Although the Government has put in place some laws and regulations that have a bearing on consumer protection, Zimbabwe does not have a comprehensive consumer protection policy at the moment. A consumer protection policy would guide all activities by the government and the regulators to provide and ensure recognition of the rights of consumers. This would pave the way towards a comprehensive consumer law as well as ensuring that the various industrial sector specific rules and regulations that govern the conduct and standards of economic agents adequately protect consumers.

Consumer policy measures take into account consumers' concerns, ranging from product quality and safety issues, availability of choices in the market to fair prices of products. A consumer protection policy aims to provide for protection to consumers from defective goods, dangerous or inferior goods, fraudulent and other unfair trade practices related to quality and safety, labelling and pricing, selling and credit terms, advertising, among others. Such a policy provides an important safety net in markets where competition might tempt some businesses to gain an unfair competitive advantage through exploiting consumers.

It is against this background that some stakeholders such as the Consumer Council of Zimbabwe (CCZ) have been at the forefront in calling for the enactment of a consumer protection law for the benefit of all consumers. This was on the recognition that there is an urgent need in Zimbabwe to protect consumers from being taken advantage of by retailers and producers. The need for a consumer policy also becomes more pronounced within the context of harmonising the various pieces of legislation that are being administered by different bodies yet they share an objective of trying to protect consumer interests. Such legislation include the Consumer Contract Act (Chapter 8:03) of 1994, the Competition Act [Chapter 14:28] of 1996, the Class Action Act (Chapter 8:17) of 1999, the Control of Goods Act [Chapter 14:05] and the Small Claims Court Act of 1992. The pieces of legislation that exist currently are fragmented and thus difficult to administer in their present form. A consumer protection policy would usher in a law that would comprehensively deal with all consumer protection issues by a competent institution created under the law.

Zimbabwe is also lagging behind regional practices with regards to consumer protection. For example, the SADC Declaration on Regional Cooperation in Competition and Consumer Policies calls upon all member States to implement measures that prohibit unfair business practices and promote competition; for which consumer protection policies are central. Under COMESA, consumer protection is also a central theme for the COMESA Competition Commission. As countries are moving towards a free trade zone, nations within the blocs are expected to have consumer protection laws so that their nationals are protected when goods and services are moving across borders. This makes the need for a consumer protection policy more urgent in order to harmonise the national laws with regional laws on consumer protection.

## **b) Construction Policy**

Zimbabwe currently does not have a clear construction sector policy in place. Most of the day to day decision making processes in the sector are guided and derived from the country's

fiscal policy, in addition to *ad hoc* responses to the prevailing conditions/environment in the sector. However the Ministry of Public Works at one stage in 2011, together with players in the construction sector, crafted the Construction Industry Council Bill which sought to establish a council that would regulate and set standards to be followed by players in the industry (engineers, builders, architects etc). The role of the government in coming with such a bill was to only to coordinate whilst the process was driven by the interest groups in the construction sector. However the Construction Industry Council Bill had to be withdrawn from the Cabinet Committee on Legislation after infighting among the interest groups with regards to the implementation and administration of the council. In the meantime the bill has been shelved and there are no decisions yet on how the bill can be taken forward.

Meanwhile the Ministry of Public Works hasn't thought about coming up with a construction policy, but highlighted that the process of coming up with such a policy would involve consultation with a number of ministries in the infrastructure cluster which it chairs and also stakeholders in the construction sector such as the Construction Industry Federation of Zimbabwe (CIFOZ), the Engineering Council of Zimbabwe (ECZ) and the Architect Council of Zimbabwe, among others etc. The Ministry of Public Works highlighted that the challenges that it is likely to face in crafting a construction policy are resources to carry out consultations and also without any activities in the construction sector stakeholders' views are unlikely to capture current challenges and incorporate international best practices.

Despite the lack of an active policy, the sector is not short of necessary legislation to facilitate the effective implementation of the policy, if crafted. Such Acts include the Architect Act and the Engineering Acts which all seek to regulate the industry players and protect the citizens from sub-standard work.

### **c) Tourism Policy**

Like the construction sector, the tourism sector has been operating without a clear tourism policy. However, given the increasing importance of the tourism sector to economic growth, the need for a comprehensive policy can not be over emphasised. The Ministry of Tourism and Hospitality Industry is currently in the process of coming up with a National Tourism Policy to guide the operations of the tourism sector in the country. The process started in 2010 and currently they have reached the final stage where the Draft Policy document is with the Cabinet Committee on Investment and Development for consideration and approval. Also in place is the Tourism Act Chapter 14:20 to guide the operations of the sector.

The National Tourism Policy would help create an enabling environment for the development and management of the tourism sector, help attract investment on new and existing tourism products, promote domestic tourism development as well as promote sustainable tourism development

## **3.5 Attempts made at establishing the Policies**

Attempts have been made in crafting the aforementioned policies and in some instances its work in progress. It can be noted that whilst some policies would require starting from scratch, in some instances it is just a matter of reviewing and updating the current policies to take into account the current developments in the country as well as the regional and global economy.

On the other hand, there has been some progress in reviewing the outdated/ expired policies. Such policies include the ICT policy of 2005-2010, which needs to be reviewed and updated to take into account recent innovations in the sector. Reviewing the policy would help improve diffusion of ICTs and help the country close the digital divide within societies and with rich nations. Equally, work is already underway to review and update the Agricultural policy and the National Gender policies. For the National Gender Policy, the process is already underway with government having hired a Consultant to lead the process. Also, Government through the MWAGCD has held a number of consultative meetings, workshops and set up committees to spearhead the process. Similarly, the Ministry of Agriculture has since produced a draft Agricultural policy which has been submitted to cabinet.

On the other hand, some policies simply require consolidating and harmonising the various pieces of legislation into a one solid legislation for ease of administration and avoidance of duplication of roles. For instance, there is need to harmonise the different pieces of legislation being administered by different bodies into a comprehensive Consumer Protection Policy. These include the Consumer Contract Act (Chapter 8:03) of 1994, the Competition Act [Chapter 14:28] of 1996, the Class Action Act (Chapter 8:17) of 1999, the Control of Goods Act [Chapter 14:05] and the Small Claims Court Act of 1992.

## **4. Improving the Zimbabwe policy making process**

### **4.1 Assessment of Completed Policies**

The extent to which the completed policies reflect the discussed qualities of a good policy would help in identifying any challenges that need to be addressed. Among other qualities, a policy has to be forward looking, outward looking, evidence based, inclusive and joined up to be considered a quality policy. It is thus important to assess whether the completed policies reveal such qualities.

#### **a) Forward Looking**

As already explained, a policy that is forward looking should generally have a statement of intended outcomes on a long term basis. Most importantly, the policy should be designed to contribute to the Government's long-term goals. Since the intended outcomes would be of a long term nature, the inputs into the process would include scenario planning through the use of forecasting tools based on past statistical trends as well as making informed predictions of social political, economic and cultural trends, for at least five years into the future.

It is thus important to assess the extent to which the existing policies are forward looking. Although the interviews with the stakeholders behind the formulation of the policies could not give all details about the policy making process, the policy documents can be used to try and assess the extent to which such elements were factored into account during the policy making process. A look at all the policies would reveal generally that there are some elements of a forward looking policy that can be revealed in terms of statement of intended outcomes, even though some elements of a forward looking policy are missing.

For example, the National Information and Communication Technology Policy Framework of December 2005 stated its target as to transform Zimbabwe into a knowledge-based society by the year 2020. However, although the ICT policy has clear statements of a long term nature in as outcomes with respect to ICT developments in education and training; e-Governance; ICT infrastructure; commerce and SMEs as well as agriculture sector, the outcomes are all not quantified, such that the policy objectives are largely not measurable. This seems to point to the absence of scenario planning through the use of forecasting tools and statistical trends.

The same is equally true for the National Environmental Policy and Strategies established in 2009. The policy does not give time frames within which the identified goal and policy objectives would be met. Although the policy has some clearly stated policy goal and objectives, none of these is stated with any quantity measure. The policy thus might call for some review if the objective is to make it forward looking.

The Industrial Development Policy as well as the National Trade Policy also have clear statements on intended outcomes by 2016. Unlike the ICT policy, these two policies have quantifiable policy targets, which include increasing exports to US\$7 billion by 2016 and restoring manufacturing sector contribution to export earnings to 50% by 2016. Whilst this is commendable, it can also be established that the policy period for both policies is only for a four year period (2012-2016), which falls short of the minimum five year period for a forward looking policy.

A look at the Agricultural Policy Framework would also reveal that it has some forward looking elements, as it had set some quantifiable policy targets by 2015. However, given that the policy had set very long term targets, over a twenty year period, also proved to be the policy's shortfall as all the targets have since been overtaken by events. Thus a shorter time horizon could have been ideal to assess whether it satisfies forward looking characteristics.

In the same vein, the Second Science, Technology and Innovation Policy of Zimbabwe could also be enhanced to make it more forward looking. The policy itself does not provide clear timelines and targets on which the objectives could be measured to assess progress. In addition, the policy does not indicate the time period in which it would be operational; hence is not time bound. Although some quantifiable targets, such as providing that at least 60% of university education should be in S&T skills development, or that pupils at primary and secondary school should spend at least 30% of their overall time studying science subjects, there are no specific time frames within which this is supposed to be attained.

However the health policy, especially the National Health Strategy for Zimbabwe (2009 - 2013) can be cited as an example of a policy that is forward looking. The policy sets quantifiable policy targets at set time frames, which could have been achieved through scenario planning and forecasting. Such policy objectives include to promote positive health behaviours (lifestyles) in 80% of targeted health promotion audiences by 2010; to reduce the maternal mortality ratio from 725 to 300 deaths per 100,000 live births by 2015; to reduce the under five mortality rate from 86 per 1000 live birth to 43 by 2013; and to reduce the burden of non communicable diseases by between 15 and 20% by 2013.

In addition, another important criterion to measure the extent to which a policy is forward looking is the extent to which the policy is aligned to the Government's long term goals. Currently, the Government's long term goals are articulated in the Medium Term Plan

(MTP), which is the overarching policy document governing the country's operations. Thus the extent to which each of the policy strives to meet the objectives set out in the MTP would also reveal whether the policy is forward looking.

The policy documents that were produced after the MTP are thus expected to have policy objectives in line with the Government's long term goals. It can be established that the Industrial Development Policy as well as the National Trade Policy align their policy objectives to those of the MTP, implying they exhibit forward looking characteristics. However, even those policies established before the MTP can also be said to possess forward looking characteristics if they aligned themselves to the prevailing national policies at the time. The National Health Strategy for Zimbabwe was aligned to the Short Term Economic Recovery Programme (STERP), which was the extant national policy document at that time. The National Information and Communication Technology Policy Framework of December 2005 for example aligned its goals with the national Vision 2020 programme and the National Economic Recovery Programme (NERP) (2004- 2006), the extant overarching policy at the time. The Agriculture policy was also aligned to ESAP, the existing policy strategy at the time. The Second Science, Technology and Innovation Policy of Zimbabwe also acknowledges that objectives of both the MTP and the Millennium Development Goals are achievable as part of the exercise of implementing the Policy. The same is however not true for the Environmental policy, which does not recognise the Government's long term policy thrust in its objectives.

Since efforts are already underway to ensure that new policies are put in place, it is important that due care is given into ensuring that they do not fall short with respect to the forward looking attributes. Existing policies which are falling short could also be revised in this regard.

#### **b) Outward looking**

In addition to taking into account the social, economic and political realities at the national level, a policy that is outward looking would also be cognisant of other factors that are outside the control of the policy maker that can have an impact on deliverables. Policy makers need to be aware of exogenous factors that may arise from developments in regional and international market including movements in international commodity prices as well as multilateral agreements which the country has signed into. It is thus critical to assess whether the existing policies also display the outward looking characteristics.

Since trade takes place at both the local and international level, it would be the expectation that the National Trade Policy has to be outward looking. A look at the policy would also reveal that it is indeed outward looking, as it has taken into account key developments at the regional and international level and tried to capture the possible policy interventions to take this into account. These include both bilateral and multilateral trade agreements that would determine trade as well as taking into perspective the export market dynamics which have to be overcome to make the local firms more competitive. The policy is thus outward looking.

The same is equally true for the Industrial Policy, given that it is also intended to ensure that local firms are developed to meet international competition. The policy thus takes into account regional integration issues under SADC, COMESA and the EAC that can have an impact on industrial development. As expected, the policy is thus outward looking.

Although the Environmental policy notes that Zimbabwe is a party to some multilateral environmental agreements as well as acknowledges the need for collaboration between countries over trans-boundary natural resources and water resources, it is not overly outward looking. For example, the policy does not borrow from the various strategies on climate adaptation and mitigation measures being developed across the world so as to streamline them into the policy using the latest tools. The policy does also not borrow much from some developments within WTO and other fora on environmental protection, thus needs improvements to make it outward looking.

Among the principles that underpin the national ICT policy were elements derived from the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action agreed to in Geneva in 2003 by Heads of State and Government. The WSIS Declaration recommended the adoption and utilisation of ICTs to meet the agreed developmental goals by recognising that education, knowledge, information and communication are at the core of human progress. The policy design was thus influenced by the quest to capture such issues, especially in these critical sectors and hence is outward looking.

The Draft Gender Policy of 2012, which however has not yet been launched, can be cited as an example of an outward looking policy. The policy was crafted on the realisation that the 2004 had since been overtaken by events, especially arising at the international level. The Draft policy thus captures recommendations arising from International Women's conferences which took place after 2004 that have a bearing on the promotion of gender issues. These include the recommendations from the Beijing +10 on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 2005 and the United Nations Security Council Resolutions in 2008 and 2009 intended to ensure that governments achieve gender equality and justice. In addition to events which took place after the 2004 policy had expired, the 2012 Draft policy continues to be informed by the resolutions at various international women's conferences and regional and international protocols that urged the efforts of governments to achieve gender equality and justice. The policy is generally outward looking.

### **c) Evidence based**

It is generally accepted that a policy would not meaningfully achieve its intended goals unless it is evidence based. An evidence based policy would rely heavily on research, which would see the most viable strategy being adopted. While in other jurisdictions academia and research institutions play a key role in influencing the research agenda, this has not been the case in Zimbabwe. Policy research has tended to be reactive and of an evaluative nature. There has been limited demand from policy makers of research results to inform decision making. Research generally influences policy where policy makers consider the issue to be important thus stimulating a strong desire for research findings or where there is strong advocacy from civil society organisation including the media and business associations on the importance of the research findings.

Although detailed information on the kind of research that was used for each policy could not be established during stakeholder consultations, a look at the policies would reveal whether any research was used to inform the policy. There are two main ways in which a policy can be regarded as evidence based. Firstly, it is important to ensure that the context in which the policy is being crafted is backed by evidence. This would ensure that the policy is being made from an informed point of view by assessing all the available information at hand and

identifying which areas require priority. Thus a policy is expected to fully describe the context in which it is being crafted by carefully identifying problems to be addressed and presenting trends and other facts about the problems to be described as evidence based. Secondly, the policy prescriptions and strategies can only be feasible if they are backed by evidence. Thus a policy has to apply theory to the realities on the ground to be considered as evidence based, outlining the different assumptions on which the prescriptions are based.

The Health policy is a good example of a policy that was structured based on evidence at context level. It was based on information from several studies that had been carried out in the three preceding years, which include a study on access to health services of 2008; Vital Medicines and Health Services Survey; Community Working Group on Health surveys and the Zimbabwe Maternal and Perinatal Mortality Survey of 2009. The policy also relied heavily on the regional and international policies, strategies and commitments made by the country such as the Millennium Development Goals, the Ouagadougou Declaration on Primary Health Care and Health Systems in Africa, as well as other international, continental and regional health protocols including the African Union (AU) Health Plan; the East, Central and Southern Africa (ECSA) Health Community Agreements, and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Health Sector Protocol. Thus research based information was used to inform the health policy. However, recourse could not be made to research to go around the uncertainties over resources to set more concrete targets over the life of the policy strategy, which demonstrates some limitations in evidence based policy targeting.

The Second Science, Technology and Innovation Policy was also premised on evidence. A national science, technology and innovation status review in 2009 and 2010 furnished statistics on the current environment in Zimbabwe; identified gaps and assessed the financial support and fiscal incentives which informed the policy formulation process. The review also noted disjointed efforts that existed, calling for coordination in research and funding of research.

The ICT policy was also contextualised through the use of research, especially during the National e-Readiness Survey Phase where the country's e-business environment in relation to availability of communication infrastructure, adoption of e-business by government, consumers and companies, the social and cultural conditions that influence use of ICTs and the capacity and speed of connectivity were assessed. This formed one of the basis upon which the policy interventions were structured, as the survey revealed the need for measures to improve the country's score of 1.4 out of a possible score of 4.0 using the Harvard University Guide (HUG). However, the policy targets are largely not evidence based given that they did not set any particular targets to enable the review to gauge if there have been any progress towards the attainment of the identified targets. This is something that could have been possible with recourse to research.

The same trend is also apparent in the Environmental policy which was also able to make recourse to evidence in contextualising the situation with respect to water, land, biodiversity and genetic resources. However, the use of evidence in policy targeting appears weak due to absence of any time frames on which the policy is based.

It is however the Industrial Development Policy and the National Trade Policy that are generally evidence based policies, based on both criteria. The policies strategies are based on a variety of identified challenges that were informed through research. In addition, policy

targets were also framed based upon a variety of assumptions that are also outlined in the paper. The use of evidence enabled the drafters to be able to properly identify policy targets within stipulated time frames during the course of the policy.

It is therefore critical to ensure that future policies embrace existing evidence during formulation and then make use of research to ensure that policy targets would be realistic.

#### **d) Inclusive**

Inclusiveness of a policy can be defined as ensuring that policy makers take as full account as possible of the impact the policy will have on different groups who are affected by the policy (UK Cabinet Office, 1999). The most efficient way of ensuring that this is done is by ensuring that a wide range of stakeholders, including those who will be affected by the policy, service providers, academics and civil society organisations, are involved in the policy process. Involvement in this case would be through participation during the policy making process as well as being consulted during the different phases of the policy cycle. Participation by a range of stakeholders would only become important if the views and suggestions of such groups are also taken into account in the policy, a process that consults the groups but discards the suggestions and opinion of such stakeholders would not be inclusive. Inclusiveness would thus give policy makers the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding on how the policy will work on the ground from the point of view of the user, which also reduces the likelihood of unintended consequences. Inclusivity also enhances ownerships and eases implementation, as stakeholders feel that they are part of the process.

A look at the process that established most of the policies in Zimbabwe would reveal that some elements of inclusiveness are present. The positive elements include the following:

##### *(i) MTP*

The MTP formulation process can be regarded as widely inclusive. With the support of development partners, country-wide consultations were conducted at provincial level to involve the grassroots. At national level, different clusters representing different interest and interest groups were established. These clusters; namely; social, infrastructure, economic and rights and governance, held consultations amongst themselves and provided recommendations to the policy framework. Upon the production of the draft, several consultations (feedback) were conducted at provincial as well as national level, wherein the various clusters made further recommendations. The launch of the MTP at the National level was followed by provincial launches attended by local leadership among other stakeholders. The Sector Working Groups based on the clusters are reviewing progress of the implementation process which will culminate in the production of the first annual report on the implementation of the MTP. However, the general observation and views obtained from different stakeholders appear to indicate that the culture of broad based consultation and accountability on the use of stakeholder input still needs to be strengthened.

##### *(ii) Environmental policy*

The process leading to the enactment of the Environmental policy for example was inclusive, with the process starting in 2003 with an initial consultative process at national level meant to canvass people's perceptions of key issues to be addressed by

the policy, since a deliberate stance had been made to ensure that the policy should fully and accurately reflect the interests and concerns of all stakeholders on issues of environmental conversation, management and protection. In addition, the consultative workshops were also held at national, provincial and district levels to widen reach.

*(ii) Trade and Industrial policies*

The process of coming up with both the Trade policy and the Industrial policy was generally very long and inclusive. The Ministry of Industry and Commerce produced a zero draft in 2009 and called for a consultation workshop where some select stakeholders were invited to offer their comments. Among the stakeholders consulted were the representatives of the private sector such as the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries (CZI) and the Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce (ZNCC), as well as the academia such as the University of Zimbabwe, Harare Polytechnic College, National University of Science and Technology (NUST), Africa University, Midlands State University and Bulawayo Polytechnic College.

The comments from the groups were then incorporated; resulting in the second draft that was produced in 2010. In addition to the report being sent for review to these stakeholders, it was also presented in CZI and ZNCC breakfast and annual conferences, before a third draft was produced and sent to cabinet towards the end of 2011. The comments from cabinet were then incorporated to result in the two policies.

*(iii) ICT Policy*

In interviews with stakeholders, it was noted that, in crafting the National ICT Policy Framework, the Government adopted a consultative and participatory approach, wherein the key stakeholders were given the platform to participate during the policy formulation process. Some of the stakeholders who participated included Office of the President and Cabinet, Government ministries and departments, National ICT Project Steering Committee, Private sector organizations, Civil Society Organizations and the general populace. Although a number of various stakeholders were consulted, the Policy document noted that the key partners in the programme were:-

- Government of Zimbabwe (key Ministries and Departments);
- National Economic Consultative Forum (NECF);
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); and
- National University of Science and Technology (NUST).

The policy can thus be argued to be inclusive.

*(iv) Draft Gender policy*

Although not yet fully developed into a fully fledged policy, the process that gave birth to the current Draft Gender Policy contains some inclusive elements. Once the lead Consultant for the review and development of the National Gender Policy was appointed, a number of activities were done in preparation for the review and development of the policy. Inception activities included a series of meetings with the senior management in the Ministry of Gender, Women's Affairs and Community Development (MWAG & CD). A road map for the process of developing the National Gender Policy was outlined. A stakeholder inception workshop was organized by the Ministry of Gender, Women's Affairs and Community Development in September

2011. This involved the participation of public and private sector, civil society organizations, the UN Family and Development partners. About 90 people participated in the Stakeholder Inception Workshop. The key outcome of the inception workshop was the identification of thematic areas to be included in the National Gender Policy.

*(v) Health Policy*

The policy process was also characterised by consultations, which can be traced to an Emergency Health Summit from 5-6 March 2009 organised by the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare. This was intended to develop a 100-Day plan to kick start the health system under the auspices of the new Inclusive Government. The summit saw more than 180 stakeholders participating in developing concrete recommendations for action.

*(vi) The Second Science, Technology and Innovation Policy*

The policy formulation process underwent a nationwide consultative process that included participation from industry, academia, civil society and entrepreneurs from both public and private sector organizations. The consultation process included sessions held in Chinhoyi, Bulawayo, Gweru, Masvingo, Mutare and Harare. This demonstrates that attempts were indeed made to ensure that the policy making process is inclusive.

Despite these positive attributes, it can also be revealed that there was room for improvement for the policies to become more inclusive. During interviews with various stakeholders, it came out that although attempts were made at consulting the relevant groups, especially during the preparation of the Trade policy as well as the Industrial policy, civil society organizations and other representatives of consumers, such as the Consumer Council of Zimbabwe (CCZ) were not given the same opportunities in comparison to business. The civil society is also expected to mobilize and sensitise consumers about the roles they should play in ensuring that the policy becomes more effective. This becomes more relevant in the context of monitoring standards and unfair trade practices, which are also important pillars of the policies that have a direct bearing on consumers.

Consultations also need to be properly structured to take into account the socio-political realities of the country. For some policies which were developed in the years 2000 to 2009, meaningful consultations were deterred by intense political polarization of the social environment in Zimbabwe, especially with respect to labour. While on paper the consultations could be deemed to have been completed, this would call for a balanced approach to ensure that the process does not only capture views of stakeholders aligned to one school of thought.

## **e) Joined up**

In Zimbabwe, the first line of joining up should be the extent to which the policies are connected to the MTP, which is the overarching national policy. A policy that is not joined up with the MTP is likely to have targets that do not complement the overall country targets. The current situation is however such that only a handful of policies would be expected to be in line with the MTP given that it has been recently launched while some policies date back before its existence. Indeed a look at the industry and trade policies would reveal that most of

the targets were aligned with the MTP. The health policy is however aligned to STERP, which was the national policy then while the ICT policy is also aligned to the National Economic Recovery Programme.

It can also be revealed that some policies are horizontally joined up. The ICT policy for example identifies that the policy objectives must be in line with the objectives of some complementary policies such as the Science & Technology Policy (2002), Industrialisation Policy (2004) and Zimbabwe Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (2005). The health policy also sets the need to strengthen inter-sectoral coordination and collaboration with other sectors towards improving health and quality of life of the population as one of its objectives. This would include increasing awareness on and advocate for action by relevant ministries and other stakeholders on the major determinants of health such as water, sanitation, food, hygiene, education and gender amongst others. In the same vein, the industrial policy also acknowledges that the policy can only be successfully implemented through close cooperation with other relevant Government ministries. These include the Ministry of Energy and Power Development, the Ministry of Water Resources, Ministry of Transport Infrastructure and Communication and the Ministry of ICT. The Environment policy, which lacks this kind of specification, might also need to be revised in this line when the new policy is crafted.

Vertically, it can be established that the trade policy as well as the industrial policy are also joined up. The policies identify other institutions as well as the role that they have to play if the policy is to be successful. For example, the trade policy recognises that the Competition and Tariff Commission is a critical institution for the success of the policy as the institution is the investigating authority for unfair trade practices in Zimbabwe. Other important institutions with roles to play for the successful implementation of the policy include ZimTrade, ZIMRA and an inter-institutional consultative mechanism, the Trade and Economic Review Committee (TERC) which all need either setting up or being capacitated for to effectively play their roles. This also reveals vertical joining up.

The MTP is also vertically joined up through the role of the various clusters. These consist of stakeholders from different institutions on which the implementation of the MTP would have an impact. This helps to facilitate easy implementation of the Plan, as it would be in line with identified realities across the vertical chain.

Such clear vertical joining up is however missing from the other policies, which also call for attention when the policies expire.

## **4.2 Challenges to Policy Formulation**

The policy making process in Zimbabwe is characterised by a lot of challenges, which explains why certain policies have taken long to be formulated, whilst in some instances, key policies have not been formulated. Some of these challenges are encountered at the various stages of the policy cycle. In interviews with stakeholders, the key challenges identified include lack of funding, capacity of stakeholders, lack of political will, and data constraints. The net effect of these challenges is delays in finalisation of policies whilst some die at the agenda building stage.

### **a) Funding gaps**

Ensuring that adequate financial resources are available is key for the success of the policy making process. However, lack of adequate funding for policy making remains the major challenge to policy making in Zimbabwe. This is largely due to tight budget constraints emanating from limited fiscal space, a situation which the Treasury is still battling to control. Although the constraint is genuine, lack of funding affects the consultation process, and hence the quality of policies. Some policies died at the consultation stage and never saw the light of day. For instance, Zimbabwe Economic Development Strategy (ZEDS), which was meant to be the country's medium term plan from 2007 to 2012, could not be completed due to challenges associated with funding to conduct broad/ country-wide consultations with stakeholders. Also, the Ministry of Agriculture noted that it has taken long to come up with a new Agricultural policy to replace the 1994 policy mainly due to funding constraints. The tourism policy has also been heavily affected by the inadequacy of financial resources to consult widely. Given that tourism attractions are found across the country, an optimal policy should be derived from wide consultations with stakeholders across the entire country so as to have a representative view of how people want the tourism sector to be shaped.

The issue of funding has had a direct impact on the level of consultations with key stakeholders, which would have allowed Government to tap wider sources of information, perspectives and potential solutions in order to meet the challenges of policy making. This would also help to integrate public input into the policy making process, in order to respond to citizens' expectations and ensuring that their voices are heard and their views are considered in decision making by Government. Since the budget constraints are genuine, there is need for a policy making process that is designed taking into account the budget constraints.

### **b) Capacity of key stakeholders in policy making**

Another drawback to policy making in Zimbabwe is the issue of inadequate skills and expertise particularly on emerging policy issues. Lack of skills relates to both practitioners in government and other stakeholders that are expected to participant in policy making consultations. For instance, inadequacies in the existing ICT policy can be attributed to the fact that at the time of policy crafting this was a relatively new field and expertise in the area were limited. This tends to limited active participation of stakeholders and hence compromised the quality of the policy. The policy implementation also suffered from a lack of supporting policies in education and infrastructure development. Requisite ICT human skills and infrastructure are key complements to the successful implementation of the ICT policy. However, there has not been a supporting educational policy for the creation of a pool of experts in school, and at the workplace (government and private) as well as policies that encourage massive investments in the development of ICT infrastructures.

Related to the above, is a lack of seriousness attached to the policy making process and lack of administrative capacity. Administrative capability means the institutional capacity of a Government to formulate and carry out plans, policies, operations, or other measures to fulfil public purposes. Typical aspects of capacity includes, the quality of civil servants, some organisational characteristics, the use of information technology in organisational units and the style of interaction between government and its social and economic environment. While

administrative capacity is mostly associated with implementation stage of policy process, it is equally relevant for other stages in the policy process.

Limited administrative capacity has also been compounded by the fact that high level officials often delegate junior staff to represent them in high level fora, when they lack the requisite competences to debate policy issues. This issue has also been compounded by the brain drain that affected the country during the socio-politico-economic crisis of 2000-2008. A lot of government departments are now staffed with young and fresh university graduates with little to no practical experiences yet they are expected to lead the policy making process.

### **c) Prioritisation of policies by Government**

In addition, policy making in Zimbabwe suffer from a lack of political will and support at the highest level. This is further compounded by the different political persuasions of the different stakeholders who normally hold very strong and extreme views on the crafting of policies. Certain policies, though important are not regarded priority, e.g. the consumer protection policy. The general government attitude indicates that consumer protection is not treated with the priority it deserves, being subjugated by other identified priorities.

### **d) Availability and Accessibility of Quality Statistical data**

Policy making initiatives have also suffered from poor quality data and at times, its unavailability. Some of the data base in Zimbabwe is out-dated and characterized by gaps and inconsistencies. Some of the data is not even available for analysis to inform policy makers. This tends to affect the quality of policies and lengthens the policy making cycle as it takes time to gather the requisite data. Such shortcoming in data is especially damaging given the complexities that policies have to address. Most of the sectoral and national policies have thus over the years been based on estimates, projections and assumptions that in most cases have not prevailed, rendering the policies inefficient even before reaching half their implementation phases. Furthermore, most of the country's statistics are not gender disaggregated data, which has been one of the major challenge towards the formulation of the National Gender Policy and policies that addresses gender disparities between men, women, boys and girls.

### **e) *Other socio-political factors***

Conflicting priorities and divergent views by the different stakeholders whom the policies were intended to address, have also affected the policy making process. In dealing with different stakeholders, the policy makers need to balance the interests of different stakeholders some which maybe conflicting e.g. labour and business who inevitably may have opposing views on some policy issues. For example the issue of labour market inflexibility has been raised by business as an impediment to competitiveness. Similarly, stakeholders in the construction sector noted that infighting among the key players in the sector has impeded progress in coming up with a guiding policy for the sector. It was pointed out that despite having produced a draft construction stakeholders from the different sub-sectors could not reach a consensus which led to the abandonment of the policy.

Furthermore, organisations, associations, committees, and other groupings that are purported to represent the interests of their members do not truly represent the interests of the majority

of their members. Some are not autonomous and they are influenced by politicians so that they reflect the interests of politicians. Some of these organizations, associations, committees, end up not discharging their duties in a non-partisan manner due to political influence.

### 4.3 Policy Making Model for Zimbabwe

From the forgoing discussion, and the assessment of the Zimbabwe situation, it can largely be concluded that most of the policies have been following the incrementalist approach. Over the years, it can be established that Zimbabwe policy makers have accepted their limitations and have been choosing compromise policies that satisfy organisational goals and are largely acceptable in the face of competing demands. There has not been path consistency in the implementation of policies to achieve predetermined goals but rather a series of steps in which policies have been modified or abandoned completely without due regard to implications on policy consistency and credibility. There is no standardised procedure to policy making. Line Ministries employ different strategies and policies are not aligned to the overarching national policy framework, with regards to objectives and time frames.

In some instances the policies have been largely conservative and mainly constrained by political considerations. This has limited the policy-makers' flexibility and their willingness to make bold decisions on policy reforms. There is also evidence of underutilisation of research findings and underfunding of policy research to support policy decisions. The world over, research support from independent policy think tanks or research within institutions of higher learning has yielded immense knowledge and insights which helped built a culture of evidence based/informed policy making process. This has also helped to relieve pressure on technocrats within the civil service who are inundated by the demands of policy implementations and ensuring the proper functioning of the government machinery.

As we noted in our discussions above there have been some attempts to make the policy making process inclusive in the development of some policies. However, there is still wide room for improvement with regards to coverage of consultations and constant feedback during the implementation process. Capacity challenges of some key stakeholders were also noted, especially those from the grassroots (who are in most cases not organised) to articulate their views on some policy proposal. In this regard the views of government; organised business, and labour tend to dominate the policy discourse. Thus, capacity needs to be built to enable all stakeholders to not only contribute to the process but to fully own the process.

The majority of the stakeholders in the country are not well versed with policy making process, and tend to think that the crafting of policy is the responsibility of technocrats in government departments or by consultants hired by the same technocrats. This thinking is evidence by apathy or weak responses to calls for stakeholder inputs in policy initiatives or the country's negotiating positions in regional and multi-lateral institutions.

The need to promote inclusivity in the policy making process may compel the Government and other policy actors to mobilise resources to undertake civic education on charters, protocols, conventions and declarations that form some building blocks of policy development. Such civic education is a prerequisite to effective participation of all stakeholders in national policy debates and the policy making process.

Among the institutions with an important role to play in policy implementation is Parliament. The role of Parliament includes legislative and executive oversight functions, which involves

coming up with legislation as well as scrutinizing the policies and activities of the Executive and to hold the Executive accountable for its actions. However, there are instances where Parliament has voiced concern that it has not been invited to provide input in the consultative process of major policy initiatives. In other instances, Parliament is represented during the consultative process. However, the effectiveness of the representatives in articulating the views of Parliament will depend on how conversant the respective Parliamentarians are with the policy issues under discussion. There is evidence that there is low economic literacy level within the current Parliament (ZEPARU, 2010). This capacity gap limits the level and depth of participation of Parliamentarians in critical economic policy issues. Building capacity of Parliament in economic literacy is therefore critical to ensure effective contributions by Parliamentarians in economic policy debate and oversight on the implementation of economic programmes.

Given that Parliament is a critical institution in the policy making process, building the capacity of Parliamentarians will equip them to understand the evolution of the policy. This will then make it easier for them to conceptualise and make decisions on the required legislative changes to ensure effective implementation of pronounced policies.

## **5. Conclusion and recommendations**

### **5.1 Conclusion**

The study has identified that there are a number of obstacles that need to be addressed to ensure that the policy making process is improved into one that is evidence-based and inclusive. Firstly, an analysis of some of the existing policies shows that the policies do not have the basic features of a good policy. The policies have some limitations as far as the following are concerned; forward looking, outward looking, joined up, inclusive and evidence based.

- Forward looking is lacking in terms of clearly defined and quantifiable targets for some policies. It also becomes even more important given the need to ensure that their objectives are consistent with the broad macroeconomic framework and policy targets outlined in the MTP.
- It was also noted that there was underutilisation of research and existing knowledge to inform the policy formulation process for some of the policies discussed in the paper. To avoid reinventing the wheel, there is need to learn from our past experience and the viable/avoidable policies from other countries. The literature is awash with information which provides policy makers and opportunity to learn about what has worked and not worked in other countries and in what context. This will avoid experiments in the policy-making process.
- The study underscored the importance of knowledge generated through research/practice in the policy process, without which policies would be based on half backed intuition, ideology, or conventional wisdom. Policies based on broad consultative process and backed by rigorous research are less likely to be reversed during implementation when unintended and unforeseen deviations from policy objectives arise.
- The study also highlighted the need for inclusivity throughout the policy making process. The policies that were reviewed showed varying degrees of stakeholder

consultation to ensure ownership of policies and setting the stage for effective implementation of the policies. As noted, there is also generally limited participation of the unorganised grassroots during policy consultations. The study noted the need to capture the interest of all stakeholders without some interest groups dominating the policy making process.

In addition, the economic challenges have also contributed negatively to the policy making process in Zimbabwe. Funding gaps due to the limited fiscal space by the Government has resulted in inadequate financial resources being available for key stages in policy making process. This has resulted in either policies being of lower quality or some policies dying at the consultation stage. Inadequate skills and expertise, which could also be explained by brain drain in response to the economic challenges, have also affected the policy making process.

Other challenges include the lack of prioritisation of some policies by government, even when there is need on the ground; poor quality of data as well as unavailability of data needed for evidence based policy making; and the conflicting priorities and divergent views by the different stakeholders whom the policies would be intended to address, thereby delaying the whole process.

The study has also established that the institutional framework for policy making is mainly centred on cabinet and the respective ministry. This excludes other institutions that could help in strengthening the process such as Parliament and the Attorney General's office to ensure that all the suggested legislative changes suggested by the policy are feasible. The platform for information sharing during the course of the policy making process is also limited, as the policy is only known by most stakeholders when it is near completion or complete.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

The recommendations herein seek to improve the policy making process in Zimbabwe. Overly, there is need to ensure that the policy making process is uniform across all sectors, taking heed of all the norms that result in a quality policy. For example, a law requiring the gazetting of draft policy statements and a minimum period for submission of written comments could be enacted. The respective Ministry would also be expected to summarise the main issues coming out of the consultation as a way of compelling the respective Ministry against ignoring the views of stakeholders.

There is also need to ensure that all policies are properly crafted for them to become binding. It was established that in Zimbabwe there are some policies that are being implemented but were only crafted through a government circular. As a result, there is no documentation for such policies even though they are considered binding. Monitoring and evaluation of such policies would become very difficult in the absence of clearly defined targets.

It is also recommended that the country needs to move away from the current incrementalist approach of compromise to policy making. One option would be to opt for the knowledge utilisation approach. The country hosts several research organisations who have over the years undertaken a lot of policy research that can easily feed into the policy process for the country. This is even more evident during policy debate, as most of the problems that are affecting the country have solutions that have been suggested to each of them. The

polymakers value the outputs of local research institutions and think tanks and use them more to inform the policy making process. This also calls for deliberate efforts to rebuilt capacity of policy research institutions within and outside government. There is need thus for policy making to leverage on the knowledge base resident in the countries and experiences from other countries with similar policy challenges and contexts.

In addition, recent international experiences has shown that the rational model to policy making works well as it would be as all-inclusive as possible. This would involve a logical sequence in defining the problems and needs of all Zimbabweans, proper selection of relevant policy alternatives taking into account their consequences and impacts, and then a comprehensive implementation framework and review procedures. This approach is premised on the need for policy makers to be persuaded by the most accurate policy options that maximise long term social and economic gains. Thus it is important for the Zimbabwe policy making process to be one which embraces the rational model of policy making while borrowing heavily from the knowledge utilisation methodologies. This would ensure that policies respond to the needs at hand with strategies that are evidence based.

It is also crucial that policy decisions should be based on sound evidence. Good quality policy-making depends on high quality information, derived from a variety of sources - expert knowledge; existing local, national and international research; existing statistics; stakeholder consultation; evaluation of previous policies and new research. Hence, the involvement of policy Think Tanks in policy making cannot be overemphasised.

To enhance the speed and effectiveness of policy making, there is also need to ensure that all stakeholders are involved through out the policy cycle and that consultations are thorough. The respective Government Ministry should play a facilitatory role by allowing stakeholders for the concerned sectors to lead the process by identified key targets and strategies rather than Government prescribing/ imposing strategies on sectors. The policy making process should adequately involve and consult the intended beneficiaries of the policy so that the policy truly address the concerns of the beneficiaries. This also aides buy-in and ownership of the policy by stakeholders and facilitate implementation.

Whilst adequately funding policy consultations to ensure that the process is not half baked and compromise the end product is important, there is need to ensure that constrained optimisation is adopted in policy making. Ensuring that all key stakeholders are always able to relate with their constituencies could save a lot of budget constraints as the consultation process can become centralised and thereby saving on costs. For example, if business organisations can easily mobilise the voices of their members, then a consultative process that is centralised could also be able to capture views of the business without the need to hold consultations in all provinces. Thus strong institutions that are able to adequately represent their constituencies would also save consultation costs.

Policies should also be reviewed periodically so as to align them to both international and local developments and standards. This ensures that the policies not only take into account stakeholders' inputs but the regional and global developments that can impact positively or negatively on the socio-economic environment in Zimbabwe. In this regard, some of the existing policies are now outdated, as they have been overtaken by events, thus creating a policy vacuum. This calls for periodic review to ensure that the policies are amended and brought in line with new developments.

There is need to ensure that the capacity of the national statistical agency, ZIMSTAT as well as the whole National Statistical System is enhanced to ensure availability of data for policy making purpose. This will strengthen the quality, availability and coverage of national statistics including gender disaggregation, which feeds into national policy making. This would ease the process and enhance quality of policies that addresses gender equalities within societies and across sectors.

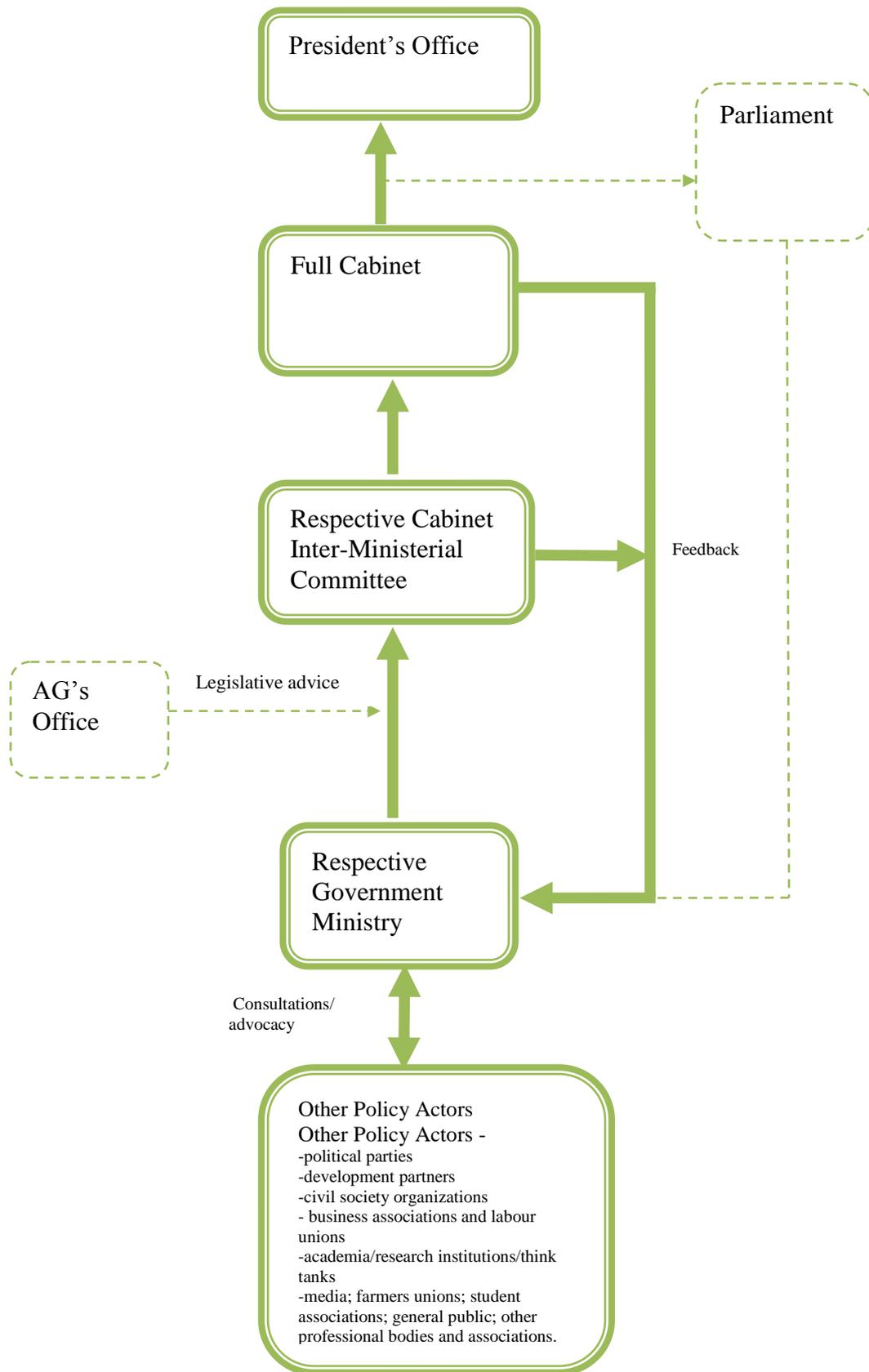
Capacity building needs across the policy making units in all Ministries is also apparent, especially given the loss of skilled manpower during the economic crisis period. This is particularly within the current context where policies that fall short of international best practices have been produced, as well as the need to ensure harmony among all policies in the country. The need to address conflicting objectives among the various stakeholders also makes the need for capacity building more pronounced. It is therefore, recommended that structured courses and programmes on policy making be designed within the Zimbabwe context for building the capacity of all stakeholders.

It is also recommended that a standard policy making procedure is adopted across all line Ministries and for all policies, unlike the status quo, wherein line ministries employ different strategies and procedures in formulating their policies. Equally, sectoral policies should be synchronised and aligned it to the overarching policy (the MTP). Though some of the policies being announced are aligned to the MTP with regards to objectives and targets they vary on the timeframe with some going beyond the span of the MTP. All sectoral policies should be valid until 2015.

There is also the challenge related to the way ministries are related to each other. Cabinet is the authority unto itself, and ministers are accountable to it, in addition to being the cabinet members. Policies that are made by fellow cabinet colleagues are made to affect other ministers. This has the challenge that there is a difficulty in supervising other ministers as they all are at the same level. It would have been ideal that the overarching policy organ be above ministerial level. This could be in the form of the now disbanded National Economic Planning Commission of the 1990s under the Office of the President and Cabinet. This enhances the supervisory role of the planning organ whose powers to monitor the implementation of the policy is derived from its housing

Finally, the current institutional framework needs to be reformed. It is recommended that other institutions such as parliament and the AG's office be involved in the process. Involvement of Parliament would allow the entity to exercise its mandate of an oversight role, which would help in ensuring that deliverables are enforced, while the AG's office would give advice on the feasibility of suggested legislative changes. Involvement of Parliament would also ensure that resources are allocated within the national budget for the respective policies that Parliament would have approved. Many of the announced policies have not been implemented due to lack of funding, hence the involvement of Parliament would help ensure that it pushes for provisions that are made in the budget to fund policy implementation. It is thus recommended that the institutional framework presented in Figure 4 be amended to give a framework shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Suggested Institutional Framework for Policy Making in Zimbabwe



## 6. References

OFMDFM (2003), **A Practical Guide to Policy Making in Northern Ireland**, Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, Northern Ireland

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UK Cabinet Office (1999), **Professional Policy Making for the Twenty First Century**, Strategic Policy Making Team Cabinet Office, UK September 1999

Australian Government Productivity Commission (2009), **Strengthening Evidence-based Policy in the Australian Federation**, Commonwealth of Australia 2010

Chigumira, G (2005), **The Role of Applied Research and the Policy Making Process**, ZEPARU Working paper Series, ZWPS/1/2005.

ZEPARU (2010), **Baseline Survey of Economic Literacy for the Parliament of Zimbabwe**

## **Appendix 1: List of Policies Documents Reviewed**

- Medium Term Plan 2011-2015
- Industrial Development Policy (2012-2016)
- National Trade Policy (2012-2016)
- Zimbabwe Agricultural Policy Framework: 1995 to 2020
- Draft Agricultural Policy Framework (2012-2032),
- National Health Strategy for Zimbabwe (2009 - 2013) - Equity and Quality in Health:
- National Information and Communication Technology Policy Framework (NICTPF), in December 2005
- National Environmental Policy and Strategies (NEPS) of 2009
- The National Gender Policy of 2004
- Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMMEs) The Engine for Growth – Policy and Strategy Framework (2002 – 2007)

### **List of Institutions Met**

Ministry of Economic Planning and Investment Promotions

Ministry of Finance

Ministry of Information Communications Technology

Ministry of Energy and Power Development

Ministry of Mines and Mining Development

Ministry of Indigenisation, Youth and Economic Empowerment

Ministry of Trade and Commerce

Ministry of Justice Legal and Parliamentary Affairs

Ministry of Health and Child Welfare

Ministry of Public Works

Ministry of Agriculture

Ministry of Gender, Women's Affairs and Community Development (MWAGCD)

Labour and Economic Development Research institute (LEDRIZ)

Consumer Council of Zimbabwe

National Social Security Authority (NASA)

Zarnet

Parliament of Zimbabwe

Southern African Parliamentary Support Trust (SAPST)

Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe