Contextual Analysis For the Zimbabwe Programme

Contextual analysis that can be used as part of a process to update and strategise in Diakonia Zimbabwe
# CONTENTS

1. Abbreviations ................................................................................................................... 3
2. Executive Summary ......................................................................................................... 4
3. Focus of Assignment ....................................................................................................... 9
4. Situation since July 2013 Elections: Changes and Continuities .................................... 10
   4.1. Political Landscape ................................................................................................. 10
   4.2. Socio-economic Landscape .................................................................................. 14
5. Key Challenges and Threats .......................................................................................... 18
   5.1. Socio-Economic Threats ...................................................................................... 18
   5.2. Political Threats .................................................................................................. 21
6. Opportunities in Political Framework ............................................................................ 24
   6.2. Opportunities in the Legal and Institutional Framework ........................................ 26
7. Key Actors ......................................................................................................................... 27
   7.1. Political Movements/Parties .................................................................................. 27
   7.2. Governance Structures ......................................................................................... 33
   7.3. Social Actors ......................................................................................................... 35
   7.4. Regional and International Actors ......................................................................... 39
8. Conclusion: Operational Environment and Pointers to Programming .......................... 42
9. References ......................................................................................................................... 45

Annex 1: Interview and Focus Group Guides ..................................................................... 48
Annex 2: Interview List ....................................................................................................... 52
1. **Abbreviations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFDB</td>
<td>African Development Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIPPA</td>
<td>Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Country Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPAC</td>
<td>Constitutional Select Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COTCO</td>
<td>Cotton Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CZI</td>
<td>Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHPI</td>
<td>Denis Hurley Peace Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECLF</td>
<td>Ecumenical Leaders Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFZ</td>
<td>Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDI</td>
<td>Foreign Direct Investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAPWUZ</td>
<td>General Agricultural Workers Union of Zimbabwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GNU</td>
<td>Government of National Unity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA</td>
<td>Global Political Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hivos</td>
<td>Humanist Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRC</td>
<td>Human Rights Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICCO</td>
<td>Inter-church Organisation for Development Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICG</td>
<td>International Crisis Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPI</td>
<td>Information and Media and Public Inquiry (IMPI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOC</td>
<td>Joint Operations Command</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOMIC</td>
<td>Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LHR</td>
<td>Lawyers for Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSZ</td>
<td>Law Society of Zimbabwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDC</td>
<td>Movement for Democratic Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDC-T</td>
<td>Movement for Democratic Change-Tsvangirai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Member of Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCA</td>
<td>National Constitutional Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPRC</td>
<td>National Peace and Reconciliation Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSA</td>
<td>Public Order and Security Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAU</td>
<td>Research and Advocacy Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REC</td>
<td>Regional Economic Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADC</td>
<td>South African Development Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCMZ</td>
<td>Student Christian Movement of Zimbabwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLSA</td>
<td>Women and Law in Southern Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOZA</td>
<td>Women of Zimbabwe Arise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YETT</td>
<td>Youth Empowerment and Transformation Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZANU PF</td>
<td>Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZAPU</td>
<td>Zimbabwe African People’s Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZEC</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Electoral Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZCC</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Council of Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZIMASSET</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Economic Transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZIMCODD</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZIMRA</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Revenue Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZNCC</td>
<td>Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZPP</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Peace Project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Executive Summary

This context analysis of Zimbabwe is aimed at helping Diakonia Zimbabwe develop a proper understanding of the current and future political, social and economic dynamics of the country; how these dynamics are likely to affect its work; and the kind of engagement strategy needed by Diakonia and its local partners to make its Zimbabwe programme more effective in the next 5 years (2014-18).

The key findings of the analysis of the political landscape include the following:

- The July 2013 elections which resulted in ZANU PF receiving a landslide parliamentary victory and the subsequent appointment of an entirely ZANU PF cabinet enabled the party to recapture state power completely. At the same time, the decline in opposition representation in parliament, coupled with the growing problems of the MDC-T due to intense leadership struggles, has altered power dynamics in the country and opened up more room for ZANU PF to intensify its hegemony. The weakness of the opposition means that there is no institutional constraint on ZANU PF power, besides the new Constitution which has a number of provisions designed to curtail the potential abuse of power by any governing party or Executive.

- ZANU PF’s 2013 victory shattered the dreams of many CSOs that have become too close to the opposition MDC and were expecting an opposition victory. As a result, CSOs have become disoriented and this has affected civic activism. The problems of civil society have been compounded by the decline in international funding for civil society, which has affected their capacity to implement their programmes and organise communities.

- The capacity of CSOs to implement their programmes has also been negatively affected by community apathy to electoral politics caused by disillusionment with both the GNU and the outcome of the elections. Citizen disenchantment has particularly worsened in the last few months given increasing economic challenges and hardships. The broad sense is that citizens are not interested in politics because it does not deliver results.

- The changes in Zimbabwe’s political landscape have important implications for the programming and intervention strategy of Diakonia and its partners. ZANU PF’s consolidated control over sectors of both local and central government makes it an important stakeholder/duty bearer that has to be engaged constructively to bring change. The civic movement will have to rethink its forms of intervention, meaning that CSOs have to take ZANU PF’s political dominance into consideration when planning intervention strategies and complement traditional strategies of confrontation with ones of negotiation and accommodation where appropriate, if they are to be effective. At the same time, the growing community apathy to politics caused by public disillusionment with the political and economic direction of the country presents CSOs with massive challenges of organizing and mobilizing communities for change. Diakonia and its CSO partners will need to revitalize public interest in community action and
politics, and this implies coming up with intervention and mobilization strategies that speak to people’s day to day priorities and concerns at both local and national levels.

The analysis of the socio-economic landscape noted the following key points:

- While ZANU PF has established its dominance in the political landscape, it has struggled to come up with valuable solutions to the country’s worsening economic challenges. The political and economic uncertainty has caused an economic downward spiral and a high number of people are experiencing intensified economic and social hardships.

- Women, children and young men and women have been hard-hit by the growing social and economic problems of Zimbabwe. As a result, they will need special intervention measures to deal with their challenges.

- The informalization of the Zimbabwean economy, including mining, calls for Diakonia and its partners to develop intervention strategies specifically targeting communities in the informal sector, mines and resettlement areas for both mobilisation and advocacy.

- Current trends suggest Zimbabwe’s economic and social problems are likely to continue for a while and Diakonia and its partners need to develop long term intervention strategies aimed at helping vulnerable communities develop capacity to deal with their challenges at both the political and economic levels.

The majority of the people interviewed across disciplines agreed that the key threats to peace, democracy and enjoyment of human rights in Zimbabwe are located in the economic as well as the political domain. The following issues were identified as the key social and economic challenges to peace and stability in Zimbabwe:

- Growing disenchantment and frustration with increased economic hardships among citizens which is already manifesting in isolated public protests and could, if not managed carefully, lead to violent protests which might cause political instability.

- Increased inter-group and intra-communal conflicts in both urban and rural communities resulting from intensified struggles for limited resources. Evidence of this includes the scramble for mining claims among informal miners (makorokoza) which has resulted in growing cases of violent conflict in former mining areas; the sporadic violent clashes over trading space among traders at the lucrative Mbare Vegetable market; and, the growing issue of resource nationalism in some parts of the country like Manicaland where communities have been complaining about being marginalised from benefits accruing from diamond mining in their areas.

- The deterioration in service provision as government continues to struggle to secure funds to meet its service delivery obligations which might result in more and more Zimbabweans failing to access their socio-economic rights including access to water, electricity, health, adequate nutrition, shelter and education which are enshrined in the new constitution but cannot be enforced because of poor government revenue, delivery problems and shortages.
- Increased despondency and deprivation resulting from the increase in poverty and suffering among a section of the population which is already beginning to negatively affect public interest in politics. This trend might lead to inaction as citizens focus on individual rather than collective methods of resolving challenges. To counter this trend, CSOs need to develop creative ways of not only connecting with the people and their struggles but also mobilising them for meaningful citizenship participation.

The analysis of political threats noted that ZANU PF’s consolidated hold over power in a context where the opposition is fragmenting and weakening constitutes a threat to the entrenchment of democracy in Zimbabwe. To ensure that the country does not slide into a one-party state, it is critically important for civics to implement programmes that help to maintain the democratic space opened up in the last few years and ensure that the culture of political plurality and open debate is kept vibrant and organised. Diakonia programming thus needs to focus on strengthening Zimbabwean civil society so that it is not only able to voice alternative views but also able to effectively guard against the abuse of power by the dominant political parties.

The analysis further noted that another critical challenge to current initiatives to build peace and democracy in the country is the reluctance by ZANU PF to reform policies and laws that restrict people’s freedoms and access to political and economic rights as well as government failure to uproot the culture of violence and dismantle the institutional infrastructure responsible for structural violence. The unresolved questions of healing and reconciliation from the past, especially around Gukurahundi and 2008 electoral violence, also constitute a threat to sustainable peace in the country, while the succession crisis and intraparty struggles over leadership in both ZANU PF and MDC-T is a critical threat to peace, democracy and human rights.

Given the above, Diakonia and its partners need to continue investing in initiatives that use participation and inclusion to strengthen communities, building on peace-building programmes focussed on uprooting the culture of violence in society and reforming institutions instrumental in perpetuating violence. This will include seeking mechanisms to address the unresolved questions of healing and reconciliation from the past in order to achieve sustainable and peaceful democracy.

The key opportunities for facilitating peace, democracy and development in Zimbabwe in the next five years are:

- ZANU PF’s quest for legitimacy is prompting reengagement with both domestic and international stakeholders. This presents civics with an excellent opportunity to engage the ruling party and its government and try to influence processes from within.

- The leadership restructuring processes within ZANU PF have created opportunities for reform and alliance building. The restructuring has forced ZANU PF to deal with questions of governance, corruption and policy reform and this presents CSOs with a good opportunity to bring to the fore issues of transparency, accountability and democracy and mobilise communities around these key issues.

- The reduced polarisation of the current context has created more space for civics to play an active role in development, peace and democracy building without the ‘burden of political
labelling’ which in the past constrained their autonomy and ability to engage ZANU PF and implement programmes in certain communities.

- Public disillusionment with politics and national parties presents CSOs with the greatest opportunity to re-establish their connections with grassroots communities.

- The enactment of a new constitution with a number of democratic provisions presents a perfect opportunity for both civics and citizens to use the constitution to advance their democratic and socio-economic rights.

- The establishment of new Chapter 12 commissions, such as the Anti-corruption Commission, Human Rights Commission, the Gender Commission, National Peace and Reconciliation Commission, is an entry point for the consolidation of improved governance, respect for human rights, gender equality, democracy and peace.

- The gradual openings in the country’s restrictive media and communication environment, particularly changes in the country’s broadcasting laws which have led to an increase in the number of both independent and state broadcasters, has created more space for unrestricted information flow.

To effectively utilise all the identified opportunities in the realisation of its goals, Diakonia will need to develop a strategy of engagement with a number of key actors in the current context including:

- ZANU PF is still the most dominant domestic power-broker in the country and their control over the state and substantial popular support on the ground make the party an indispensable actor to be engaged in any initiatives aimed at bringing change.

- The MDC-T whose leveraging capacity has weakened since the July 2013 electoral defeat remains the biggest opposition party in the country. It has some limited power to push for reform through the forging of strategic alliances with local stakeholders, negotiations with ZANU PF and lobbying of regional and international actors like SADC, AU and the EU.

- The other minority opposition parties such as the MDC and the NCA, whose support base is not strong enough to win them parliamentary seats, do represent the plurality and diversity of political ideas among Zimbabweans and where they are represented in the structures of power constitute an important force to establish checks and balances against the abuse of power by the dominant parties.

- Securocrats remain an influential grouping in Zimbabwe’s power matrix and economy with the capacity to stall progress towards democratic reform if they feel left out of the political and economic processes.

The key governance structures that need to be factored into the crafting of an effective intervention strategy are:
Government bureaucrats at national, provincial and district levels who have developed into powerful and influential figures in their departments and constituencies, and need to be engaged to ensure that they become stakeholders in the political and transformation agenda.

Parliament whose capacity to play an effective monitoring and oversight role can be enhanced through carefully crafted networks and collaboration strategies with the institution, its Parliamentary Committees and individual MPs.

The judiciary whose courts are an alternative site of the struggle for justice and equality, especially within the context of a new constitution with a number of progressive, democratic provisions. This creates opportunities for the entrenchment of democracy and good governance through strategic utilisation of the courts to apply and enforce the newly opened up provisions.

Traditional leaders who have continued to play an important role in the lives and governance of most rural Zimbabweans, and can be engaged by CSOs as partners in development, democracy and peace-building.

Among the various key domestic social actors critical to Diakonia’s intervention efforts are:

CSOs that continue to play an important role in the fight for democracy, human rights, women’s rights, children’s rights and the empowerment of marginalised groups. CSOs, including representatives of informal sector groupings, will need to assume a more active watchdog role in providing checks and balances to the establishment given the absence of a strong political opposition.

Churches have great influence in the lives of Zimbabweans and have the ability to reach out to people without much interference from the state. The church is one of the few platforms that can be used to coordinate not just community development programmes and humanitarian assistance to vulnerable groups but also to spearhead civic education around people’s rights.

Labour which specifically needs to play a critical oversight role over both government and capital at this particular juncture in Zimbabwe when the country’s economy is at its weakest and the government is desperate to negotiate loans and FDI deals which might be detrimental to both labour and national interests.

Business which has the potential to influence political and economic processes in Zimbabwe because of its linkages to regional and foreign capital and positioning in the national economy. Democracy and peace building initiatives will need to engage and include business because of its capacity to influence decision-makers.

The list of regional and international actors that play a critical influence in Zimbabwe’s political and processes include SADC, AU, EU and Eastern Bloc countries that all need to be engaged on different levels.

The overall conclusion of the analysis is that the changes in the balance of power in Zimbabwe and the fragility of the political and socio-economic environment calls for innovative strategies of intervention and engagement by both CSOs and international NGOs. The analysis points to a pressing need for civil society to reconnect with the people and establish a relevant social base.
This will require civics to rebuild and reconnect with their structures, and in some cases establish new structures on the ground. Given the capacity challenges in Zimbabwe’s civic movement, CSOs will need more support in the area of rebuilding, which also involves strengthening their advocacy capacity. International organisations like Diakonia will have a key role to play in facilitating all this. CSO programming in the current context of increased fragility and vulnerability will have to move from the narrow focus on political rights to a broader focus that tries to address both civic rights and socio-economic rights. To ensure the viability and sustainability of Zimbabwe’s democratisation processes, there is need for a strategy that aims to build and strengthen democracy and accountability in local communities. Such a strategy will help to develop resilient communities with strong institutions of transparency and accountability that are instrumental in the achievement of sustained democracy and development.

3. Focus of Assignment

This context analysis of Zimbabwe is aimed at helping Diakonia Zimbabwe to develop a proper understanding of the current and future political, social and economic dynamics of the country; how these dynamics are likely to affect its work; and the kind of engagement strategy needed by Diakonia and its local partners to make its Zimbabwe programme more effective in the next 5 years (2014-18). The fundamental objective of the review is to ensure that Diakonia is strategically positioned to maintain its relevance, effectiveness and efficiency.

The analysis systematically maps key changes and continuities in the national context, identifying opportunities and challenges as well as key interlocutors who can positively influence programme results. The analysis further considers the strategic positioning of Diakonia in Zimbabwe and its relationship with stakeholders and partners in order to ensure the on-going relevance of the thematic areas and to appropriately contextualise the policies and priorities of Diakonia in relation to the Zimbabwean situation.

The analysis focuses on both rights-holders and duty-bearers in order to isolate gaps in the current context – whether as a result of planning and legal frameworks or a lack of evidence during policy making – and establish a clear picture of violations and the mechanisms through which rights-holders can seek redress or raise national consciousness of their needs. It considers opportunities for and threats to the full participation of rights holders (including accessibility); the institutional structures and legal frameworks to ensure accountable governance by duty-bearers (including mechanisms for redress); the extent to which rights holders are empowered and included in decision making; and, the legal framework supporting the protection and exercising of all human rights, with an emphasis on socio-economic second generation rights.¹

The analysis seeks to address among other considerations:

- What have been the major political and socio-economic changes in Zimbabwe in the last 18 months and how is the political and economic scenario likely to develop until 2018?
- To what extent have political and economic shifts in the last few months since the

¹ For a more detailed discussion on this see the Strategy (attached separately).
holding of elections changed the landscape for possible interventions by Diakonia in the country?

- Who are the key power brokers and stakeholders in Zimbabwe today and what is the extent of their leveraging capacity?

- To what extent has the legal framework or national planning environment shifted in the recent past and how does it affect the rights of citizens and the potential realisation of those rights?

- What are the key opportunities, challenges and threats to development, peace and democracy in Zimbabwe today and in the near future?

- How do understandings of rights-holders and duty-bearers need to be understood in this new context and where are the gaps in terms of need and violation?

4. Situation since July 2013 Elections: Changes and Continuities

4.1. Political Landscape

The July 2013 elections which resulted in ZANU PF gaining a more than two-thirds majority in parliament signalled the end of the consultative politics of the inclusive government and ZANU PF’s partial sharing of power with the MDC. Although the coalition government of the GNU period had a number of problems and challenges, there was some semblance of power sharing. The balance of power was tilted in favour of ZANU PF which was in control of the hard power, but the MDC-T and MDC’s presence in government and parliament enabled them to exercise some checks and balances on ZANU PF.

Under the GNU, despite serious interparty differences, the parties had managed to establish a working relationship that enabled them to establish consensus on certain issues and accomplish a few important national projects together, such as the promulgation of the new constitution. The ideals and culture of consultative politics fostered under GPA platforms was an important development in the consolidation of Zimbabwe’s democracy and a step towards the building of sustainable peace and stability. More importantly, while ZANU PF remained firmly in control of state power through its control over strategic ministries and precious economic resources like diamonds, the opposition had some political leverage in parliament because of their representation.

ZANU PF’s 2013 victory resulted in a shift in the balance of power after it won an overwhelming majority in both the Lower and Upper House. The ZANU PF landslide win of 197 of the 270 seats in the National Assembly, compared to MDC-T’s 70 seats and MDC’s 2 seats means ZANU PF now has 79% control of the House of Assembly. At the same time, it controls 77% of the local council wards countrywide (1 501 against MDC-T's 442). Before the 2013 poll, the MDC-T controlled six of the ten provinces but now controls only two metropolitan provinces (Harare and Bulawayo). ZANU PF’s dominant position in Parliament, local government and exclusive control of central government following the appointment of a cabinet made up entirely of ZANU PF leaders has enabled it to recapture state power completely. ZANU PF is now in a position to make and direct implementation of policies singlehandedly.

See ‘ZANU PF wins Chegutu Ward 11 By-Election’, The Herald, 2 June 2014.
The decline in opposition representation in parliament, coupled with the growing problems of the MDC-T due to intense leadership struggles, have altered power dynamics in the country and opened up more room for ZANU PF to intensify its hegemony. “The opposition”, as most interviewees pointed out, “is at its weakest”. ZANU PF’s parliamentary strength and single party dominance in government, what some policy analysts interviewed described as ‘super majority’ status, gives it unrivalled power. Its parliamentary majority gives it power to pass or block legislation arbitrarily, including amending the constitution. The weakness of the opposition in parliament and outside at the moment means that there is no institutional constraint on ZANU PF power, besides the new Constitution which has a number of provisions designed to curtail the potential abuse of power by the governing party and its Executive. The main restraint for ZANU PF at the moment, as one political analyst interviewed pointed out, is ‘self-restraint’ and not opposition restraint.

However, analysts agree that there is little incentive for ZANU PF to abuse its power because of a number of factors. First, the lack of a strong political opposition gives ZANU PF no reason to abuse its power. Second, as pointed out above, the new constitution is a strong institutional constraint against ZANU PF’s abuse of power. A good example of this is the attempt by the Ministry of Justice to rush through unpopular amendments to the Electoral Act. Utilising provisions in the new constitution, CSOs were able to stop the attempts and Parliament had no option except to call for public hearings to get input from both organisations and members of the public. Third, ZANU PF leaders know that abusing their power, including trying to change the constitution, will attract attention regionally and internationally because of the extent of interest in the new constitution. Fourth, after a decade and a half of trying to deal with a political and economic crisis which almost saw the country grind to a collapse, the ruling party is eager to engage both its domestic and international opponents in order to normalise political and economic relations so that the economy can be revived and political and economic stability can be re-established. The party is therefore currently more open to moving away from confrontational politics as part of a broad strategy aimed at reengagement.

ZANU PF’s attempts to engage national stakeholders, however, depends on how these stakeholders, especially the opposition parties and civics respond to these initiatives. The election process and results, as Chitiyo and Kibble correctly note in their post-election assessment on Zimbabwe, have been divisive. The MDC-T and many civil society observers


4 For instance, an amendment to the constitution requires a two thirds majority vote of members of each house (i.e. National Assembly and Senate) and a majority vote at a national referendum. See Chapter 18, Part 2, Sec 328 of Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No.20) Act 2013.

5 Interview with Political Analyst, Harare, 5 June 2014.


7 Regional and international interest in the country’s constitution mainly derives from SADC’s involvement as as guarantor of the GPA in the constitution making process, while international interest derives from Western countries’ sponsorship of the process through the UNDP basket fund.
allege that the polls were rigged to ensure a victory for ZANU-PF and President Mugabe. The MDC-T and some of its close allies in the civil society sector therefore continue to be reluctant to engage ZANU PF regarding its government as illegitimately constituted and arguing that only a credible re-run will confer political legitimacy on the government.

Meanwhile, there has been confusion and disorganisation in opposition politics since the announcement of the results. The MDC-T’s political effectiveness has increasingly been undermined by in-fighting which has been ongoing but intensified after the heavy electoral loss of 2013. The internal divisions within the MDC-T have already resulted in the expulsion of leading officials, such as Biti, Party Treasurer Elton Mangoma and Youth Chairperson Solomon Madzore, and split the party between disgruntled party members opposed to Tsvangirai’s continued stay as leader and those supporting him as leader. Calls for Tsvangirai’s resignation and renewal of leadership within the MDC-T have effectively fragmented the party into two groups- one led by Party president Morgan Tsvangirai and the other led by Secretary General Tendai Biti. Both groups are working on outmanoeuvring each other, with the Tsvangirai-led group currently focussed on purging supporters of the leadership renewal project, while the Biti group is seeking to lure other opposition parties and civics to form a United Democratic Front. The split has the potential to severely weaken a party whose support base and organisational capacity was already weakened by the 2005 split. On the other hand the MDC, led by Welshman Ncube, lacks the capacity to influence national politics given its showing in the 2013 election. With only two MPs, the party’s leveraging capacity in both Parliament and outside is severely diminished.

CSOs have equally become disoriented and this has affected civic activism. The election shattered dreams, work and planning among many CSOs that have become either embedded or close to the opposition MDC parties and were expecting an opposition victory. Compounding


10 See Chitiyo and Kibble, Zimbabwe’s International Reengagement, p.5.


the problems of civil society since the elections has been the decline in international funding for civil society and opposition parties. The decline in funding for Zimbabwean civics, increasingly dependent on donor-funding over the years of economic collapse has diminished their capacity to implement programmes and organise communities. Many of the representatives of CSOs interviewed bemoaned the dwindling of funding for their organisations which is threatening not only their capacity to implement programmes but also the survival of their organisations.

More significantly, there is growing community apathy to politics caused by disillusionment with both the GNU and the outcome of the elections. Citizens welcomed the economic and social progress that occurred in the early years of the GNU (2009-10) but by 2013, a growing number of people were frustrated with the ‘arrested development’, the economy’s partial recovery and the limited nature of political and economic reform that the GNU managed to bring about. Others were particularly frustrated by the inability of the opposition to deal with the myriad challenges confronting the country and their inability to improve service delivery in those areas where they had greater control, such as urban councils.  

Many people across the political divide were hoping that after the election the fifteen year long Zimbabwe crisis would be over, there would be political stability, the economy would recover and their livelihoods were going to improve. MDC sympathizers and supporters expected that the election would not only result in a victory for their party but also rapid economic recovery spurred by improved investment by both foreign and domestic investors who would have more political confidence in an MDC government. ZANU PF supporters, on the other hand, expected that once their party had recorded a convincing electoral victory over the MDC the resulting single party government would have more time to focus on developing and implementing economic turnaround strategies.

The expectation that ZANU PF will deliver on its campaign promises appears to be doomed, even among some of its own staunch supporters. Leaders of community organisations consulted in both Harare and Bulawayo pointed out that community disenchantment has worsened in the last few months. The sense is that citizens are not interested in politics because it does not deliver results. The failure to realize these expectations has led to disenchantment in a significant proportion of the Zimbabwean population. A growing number of people are turning to their community organisations, such as churches, burial societies and informal residents’ groupings whenever they need to deal with issues as a collective. For some this apathy is caused by fear, for others it is cause by disillusionment.

**Recommendation**

The developments and changes in Zimbabwe’s political landscape have important implications for the programming strategy of Diakonia and its partners. ZANU-PF’s dominance of the political landscape makes it a central powerbroker that Diakonia and its partner CSOs have to engage and consult more in their work in order to make headway. In the past, especially the GPA era where there was an asymmetry of power in government CSOs could successfully implement programmes without having to engage or consult ZANU PF officials. A number of CSO sought to bring change through engaging the MDC parties which many regarded as politically

---

progressive. Those CSOs that continue to refuse to engage ZANU PF and seem to be aligned to opposition political parties will find it difficult to operate.

The drastic changes in the political landscape mean that the civic movement will have to rethink its forms of intervention. Zimbabwean civics have faced a dilemma over whether and how to work with government, given its political, economic, and social agendas, i.e. the participation or resistance dilemma. Most CSOs chose the resistance path, and allied themselves with the opposition movement to maximize their impact. The political dominance of ZANU means that civil society will have to complement strategies of confrontation with ones of negotiation and accommodation where appropriate, if they are to be effective.

The growing community apathy to politics caused by public disillusionment with the political direction of the country presents CSOs with challenges in terms of organizing and mobilizing communities for change. Diakonia and its CSO partners will need to come up with innovative strategies to revitalize public interest in community action and politics. This implies some rethinking of intervention and mobilization strategies around what speaks to people’s day to day priority issues and concerns at both local and national levels.

4.2. Socio-economic Landscape

The GNU struggled to revive Zimbabwe’s economy which was on the verge of total collapse by the time of its formation in 2009. However, the GNU made progress in addressing some of the economic challenges confronting the country and the introduction of multi currencies helped to stabilise the economy. There were also improvements in the realisation of socio-economic rights and the provision of some social services improved, while there was a marginal improvement in employment percentages. All this had a positive impact on the realisation of basic human rights, the building of peace in communities and the struggle for democratic space.

However, since early 2012 the country has experienced economic meltdown and the situation escalated after the July 2013 elections. Inflows of investment slowed considerably in the last two years and there has been increased factory closures and de-industrialisation. The various Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries (CZI) Manufacturing Sector Surveys suggest that industrial capacity utilisation declined sharply from 35.8% in 2005 to 18.9% by 2007 and to less than 10.0% by 2008. It increased to 33.0% in 2009, 43.7% in 2010 and 57.2% in 2011, before declining again to 44.2% in 2012 and 39.6% in 2013. The 2011 Labour Force Survey suggested that 84% jobs in Zimbabwe were in the informal sector.14

Analysts argue that the economic meltdown is a result of the lack of investor confidence in the current political dispensation and the government’s inability to come up with policy options beyond ZIMASSET.15 The government’s attempt to attract FDI through its Look East policy has not worked either. The government has reportedly failed to secure an economic rescue package from China, South Korea and Kuwait.16 The situation has been compounded by lack of clarity over key government policies, especially the controversial indigenisation policy that has kept many investors worried about the long term prospects of the Zimbabwe economy.


15 See Chitiyo and Kibble, Zimbabwe’s International Reengagement, p.6.
indigenisation policy that compels all foreign owned companies to relinquish majority stakes to local Zimbabweans, has been a source of confusion and a deterrent to foreign capital inflows. Furthermore, the banking sector has been hit with massive withdrawals by risk-averse depositors. Since December last year, most businesses have been transacting in cash and avoiding the banking sector, resulting in an overall shrinkage in deposit levels. An acceleration of deposit withdrawals has worsened the liquidity crunch in a country desperate for cash to revive the economy. In his national budget presentation, Finance Minister Chinamasa reported that there has been a sharp shrinkage in money supply. The year on year growth in money supply stood at 3.61 percent as at the end of October 2013, compared to 24.9 percent as at the end of October 2012, highlighting a serious liquidity hitch.\textsuperscript{17}

The monetary policy uncertainty in the country, particularly increasing depositor speculation over the possible return of the Zimbabwe dollar, has increased speculation and cash holdings by investors and companies.\textsuperscript{18} The Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA) Commissioner General, Gershem Pasi, told a Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs in May that local banks were keeping large amounts of money in their nostro accounts (bank account held in a foreign country by a domestic bank, denominated in the currency of that country), exacerbating the liquidity crunch. The liquidity crunch and shortage of lines of credit have forced a number of companies to either downsize or close shop.

The contraction in the economy and withdrawal of business transactions from the formal banking system has led to contractions in revenue collection. Government revenue declined from USD 353.43 million in September to USD 259.1 million in November 2013. This was 26.33 percent lower than the target of USD 351.7 million, making November the third consecutive month in which actual revenues missed the targets.\textsuperscript{19} This downward trend has continued in 2014. As the Principal Director in the Finance Ministry Pfungwa Kunaka recently expressed, during the first quarter of 2014 the economy has shown signs of slowing down, signifying inherent challenges. Notable indicators included a decline in revenue collection during the first quarter of 2014.\textsuperscript{20} The government’s inability to collect adequate revenue from taxes has negatively affected its ability to fund public services like health and education. More fundamentally, government has since the beginning of the year been struggling to pay salaries for its employees.\textsuperscript{21}

The problems for peasants in the rural areas have equally been escalating. Although agricultural production has improved, the sector is struggling to recover because of shortages of capital and

\textsuperscript{16}See ‘Chinamasa Panics over meltdown’, \textit{Zimbabwe Independent}, 22 May 2014.

\textsuperscript{17}‘Banks hit by panic Withdrawals’ \textit{The Financial Gazette}, 2 May 2014.


inputs like seed and fertilizers among small scale farmers, infrastructural shortages in roads, bridges and a lack of basic social services like clinics, schools and clean water sources. The agricultural sector has registered poor performance, despite the good rains received in most parts of the country in the 2013-14 agricultural season exacerbated by poor funding of the sector. The result is increased vulnerability of rural and resettlement communities.

In the urban areas, the economy has continued to be informalized as industries close and people lose their jobs. A recent survey by the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) showed that 9,000 people did not return to work in January 2014 as employers failed to reopen. The same report noted that a total of 2,065 people lost jobs from January to date across the country. There is no clear policy to deal with the informal sector or to integrate it into the formal economy. As a result, the government has not been able to receive any revenue from this potentially lucrative sector.

The Government, through the 2014 National Budget, announced proposals to amend the mining laws, thereby decriminalizing the operation of small-scale miners to allow more locals to participate in the exploitation of the country’s mineral wealth. This development has the potential to create more employment for a number of Zimbabweans. However, the lack of a coherent small scale mining policy, proper funding and training for the small scale miners has hampered efforts to grow this sector. The continued informalization and undercapitalisation of this sector has resulted in further loss of revenue for the government. At the same time, the informalized nature of activities in the sector resulted in the prevalence of underhand and criminal dealings that have exploded into serious conflicts and clashes among its key players.

The global financial crisis, liquidity crisis, accelerated de-industrialisation and economic decline have all increased the feminisation of poverty, and women in the lower socio-economic bracket have been particularly hit by the declining socio-economic conditions. Young women, both those who dropped out of school because of financial hardships and their counterparts coming out of school, who are trying to find space on the shrinking job market, have been particularly hard-hit by the worsening socio-economic conditions. Women’s burdens of production and caring for the family have also increased over the last few years of crisis due to increasing male migration and retrenchments. Many women are now taking care of families through their earnings in the informal sector where the majority are owners or employees in the flea markets that have come to replace formal industries and shops.

---


This increased role of women as household carers and providers has been a direct challenge to gender stereotypes in patriarchal Zimbabwe. Many Zimbabwean men have struggled to come to terms with this new socio-economic reality and the reversal of traditional roles between men and women. As a result, a growing number of men have responded by trying to assert their masculinity and ‘status’ in both the family and society through violence and other abuse of women and children. Unsurprisingly, cases of domestic violence have soared.\(^{27}\) Statistics from the Zimbabwe Republic Police indicate that from 2012 to the first quarter of 2014, 3,571 women and 7,411 young girls were raped by men.\(^ {28}\) Concerned about this increase in cases of sexual violence and abuse, at the beginning of 2014 the government set up a Cabinet Inter-Ministerial Committee on Rape to develop an action plan.

Going by the current political and economic trends, a number of Zimbabweans will remain unemployed while those in employment will continue to receive low wages insufficient to meet their household needs. The World Bank global economic prospects report predicted that Zimbabwe's economic growth rate will decelerate to one percent in 2015 and to 0.6 percent in 2016. The projection is based on current economic trends characterised by low foreign direct investment, weak growth in the mining sector and adverse effects from the global economy.\(^ {29}\) Poverty levels will remain high in both urban and rural communities, where large numbers of people are failing to find the means to raise an income and are suffering from the lack of markets for both their commodities and labour. A build up of all these political, economic problems could possibly result in a violent eruption with serious consequences for the future of the country and the southern African region. The possibility of such an eruption can, however, be averted through careful utilisation of a number of opportunities in the current context that can help to build inclusive and peaceful democracy and influence human-rights based development in Zimbabwe.

**Recommendation**

The above analysis indicates that the economy of Zimbabwe is on a downward spiral due to political and economic uncertainty and that a large number of people will continue to experience economic and social hardships. Increased economic and social vulnerability of the population is a threat to the achievement of Diakonia’s programme objectives of enhanced peace and democracy. Diakonia and its partners need to come up with programmes that help various communities and groups that they work with to be economically and politically empowered to initiate changes that can help to address their challenges. Diakonia and its partners thus need to help vulnerable groups recover their lost livelihoods through offering them assistance in the form of community/group organising skills, knowledge and rights awareness education.

Women, children and young men and women have been hardest-hit by the growing social and economic problems. They will need special intervention measures to deal with their challenges. Because economic and social challenges confronting Zimbabweans affect men and women

---


\(^{28}\) See ‘VP Mujuru launches anti-rape campaign’, *Chronicle*, 20 June 2014.

differentially, programming efforts to address them need to take into account their gendered context. The growing cases of violence against women, for instance, suggest Diakonia should increase its support in this area because violence against women not only seriously affects peace-building in the country but also democracy as it negatively affects their participation in politics and decision-making processes.

The informalization of the Zimbabwean economy, including mining, calls for Diakonia and its partners to focus more on groups and communities in the informal sector, mines and resettlement areas. In the past, the main focus for most CSOs has been on settled urban and rural communities. The bulk of the Zimbabwean working population is now found in these sectors rather than the formal factories and rural communities.

5. Key Challenges and Threats

5.1. Socio-Economic Threats

The majority of the people interviewed across disciplines agree that the most urgent threats to peace, democracy and enjoyment of human rights in Zimbabwe are located in the economic domain. The main threat identified by all those consulted is the downward spiral of the economy and its negative implications on people's ability to sustain their livelihoods. Many people are not only out of jobs but even those in jobs are struggling to survive. A growing number of people who were in informal and small-scale businesses and could make ends meet find it increasingly hard to do so.

Interviewees pointed out that there is despondency and considerable disenchantment with post-election Zimbabwe. There is growing despondency among civil servants whose salaries have been paid erratically and have not been increased substantially despite the promises made by the President during elections. The increase in poverty and suffering among a section of the population as well as a widening gap between the rich and the poor has resulted in growing disenchantment and frustration among citizens. The crisis of expectation is going to be a major feature of the future, and this disenchantment could result in growing inaction or become explosive. The upsurge in cases of violent crime in the country, especially armed robbery is partly connected to the hardships and high unemployment particularly among the youth. Recent statistics from the police show that cases of armed robbery increased by 37 percent countrywide from January to May this year compared to the same period last year.30 The recent militant demonstration by Chitungwiza Town Council workers who have gone without their wages for over a year now is a good example of what might be in store for the country.31

The deterioration in the economic situation has led to deterioration in service provision. A number of service providers like municipalities, schools and hospitals are increasingly struggling to provide basic services including affordable health care, clean water and working infrastructure. The obvious implication of this, as explained by analysts, is that more and more


Zimbabweans are failing to access their socio-economic rights. While access to water, electricity, health, adequate nutrition, shelter and education are enshrined in the new constitution they cannot be enforced because of poor government revenue, delivery problems and shortages.

Political analysts point out that the increased sense of despondency and deprivation is building up into political anger which, if not managed carefully, can lead to violent political protests which might result in political instability. At the moment, there are some signs of this anger building up among citizens but it is still expressing itself in isolated incidents of protest and citizens using the new constitution to protect their limited rights. Good examples of this are the recent residents demonstrations against the Town Clerk in Masvingo, victory by Chitungwiza residents in stopping demolitions of housing, as well as the recent Constitutional Court ruling that water cuts are unconstitutional. The decision by cotton farmers to withhold selling their cotton to traditional buyers, including COTCO, highlights this growing protest spirit. These pockets of anger might not remain isolated or localised and might become a serious threat to democracy and stability if they are not managed appropriately.

A counter trend is the number of Zimbabweans struggling to deal with the growing hardships who are turning to the churches, particularly the sprouting Pentecostal churches that preach prosperity gospel, for salvation. Analysts suggest that the increased popularity of these churches is connected to a growing sense of deprivation among various layers of Zimbabwean society where members seek to deal with their challenges in church solidarity. With their membership drawn mainly from young men and women who are frustrated with increased socio-economic hardships, it is worth tracking these Pentecostal churches as potential hotbeds of protest politics. The recent incident of crowd violence in Budiriro involving members of one of the apostolic churches, Johane weChishanu, might be a reflection of the dynamics at play.

The growing scarcity has increasingly led to an intensified scramble for resources among both elites and ordinary citizens. This scramble for resources has resulted in increased conflicts at both individual and group levels in both urban and rural areas. In resettlement areas, for example, the political violence of 2008 was used as a cover for the settling of local scores arising from intra communal conflicts over land and other resources. The competition for agricultural and grazing land, sources of water and other limited resources in communal and resettlement areas has continued to be a major problem in a number of provinces, especially the drought-prone southern provinces of Masvingo, Matabeleland North and South as well as parts of Midlands. The issue is likely to become a major problem in these provinces as labour migrants from these regions currently resident in South Africa trickle back due to the host country’s adoption of anti-immigrant policies in its bid to protect its dwindling labour markets from foreign competition.


34 ‘Masowe members run riot, beat up anti riot cops’ Newsday, 30 May 2014.
Communities living in mining towns have experienced intensified social pressure and competition for resources. The scramble for mining claims among informal miners (makorokoza) has resulted in growing cases of violent conflict in the former mining towns. In some cases, especially those areas where there is a concentration of migrants from different parts of the country, the conflicts have taken tribal and regional dimension. All this has implications for democracy and stability in the country if these conflicts are not managed and addressed carefully.

Closely related to the above threat is the growing issue of resource nationalism in parts of the country that have valuable resources like precious minerals and where citizens feel that they are not benefitting enough from those resources or economic activities in their areas. In Manicaland, for instance, communities have become increasingly agitated over what they view as the lack of benefit and marginalisation from the lucrative diamond mining activities. Those living within the vicinity of the ethanol producing project in Chisumbanje have voiced similar complaints about land dispossession and marginalisation from the project. Some members of these communities have threatened to sabotage the project if the government does not accommodate their wishes and demands.

The growing competition for economic space in the disorganised yet dominant informal sector poses a threat to Zimbabwe’s democracy, peace and stability. In Harare, for instance, the competition for trading space towards the end of 2011 when the economy began to slow down and economic hardships began to intensify resulted in growing cases of violent clashes among residents in the high density suburbs of Mbare, Mabvuku, Tafara and Highfield. This violence expressed itself as political violence as residents mobilised politics to advance their interests. Since then, there have been sporadic cases of economic driven clashes among groups of Zimbabweans in the different sectors of the informal sector. Such clashes are likely to become more frequent as economic hardships continue to bite and people scramble for the limited resources and spaces available in the informal sector.

Economic deprivation is beginning to negatively affect public interest and participation in politics. Zimbabweans are preoccupied with economics and finding ways to provide for their

---


families. This focus on day-to-day economic struggles and disillusionment with politics has had a significant effect on levels of citizen participation in issues of governance. The current difficulties faced by Zimbabwean civics, labour and, to some extent, political parties to mobilise the population for specific (political) activities are linked to this focus on material welfare. Diakonia partners working in communities of rural Matebeleland that have been hard hit by drought and food shortages report that it is increasingly difficult to incentivise people to participate in programmes that focus on political and civil rights. Many people are more interested in programmes that help them access their socioeconomic rights and provide for their material needs.

**Recommendation**

In order to deal with the potential for increased violence and conflict linked to the intensification of socio-economic threats, Diakonia and its partners will need to build on their focus on peace-building to begin work that encourages inclusive processes and the establishment of tolerant communities. The programming also needs to include areas which had previously not been adequately covered, such as the informal mining areas and resettlements where intra-communal conflicts over resources and opportunities are increasingly mounting. There is good opportunity for Diakonia and its partners to make an impact in these new areas because of the presence of thousands of men and women who were formerly employed in urban industries but have now gone to settle in these areas in search of new sources of livelihoods.

The current spate of public anger against authorities being expressed in some isolated spaces needs to be contained and channelled positively towards a revival of civic activism. CSOs working with Diakonia therefore need to link up with some of the residents and workers groups involved and find a way of building networks and joint programmes that can help to enhance democratic activism among these groups and communities.

At the same time, because economic deprivation is beginning to negatively affect public interest and participation in politics, CSOs need to develop creative ways of not only connecting with the people and their struggles but also mobilising them for meaningful citizenship participation. Zimbabwe’s current challenges around issues of democratic governance, corruption, accountability and local development require more active citizenship participation.

### 5.2. Political Threats

One of the most serious threats to democracy in Zimbabwe is the re-establishment of single party dominance after the 2013 elections and the consolidation of ZANU PF power in the aftermath of this victory. One of the key challenges to the building of democracy in Zimbabwe since independence, particularly after the creation of the executive presidency in 1987, has been the monopolization of political power by a single party-ZANY PF. MDC has been the most serious challenge to ZANU PF’s longstanding de facto monopoly on state power in the last decade and a half. The decline of the MDC as an opposition force in the country opens up the possibility of ZANU PF entrenching its powers in the political, economic and social spheres. The results from the July elections show that ZANU PF has been able to re-establish its power and influence in various parts of the country, including those areas where it had previously not had control such as the urban areas and many parts of rural Matabeleland which had historically voted for the MDC in protest against ZANU PF rule.
CSO partners consulted expressed the view that since the 2013 elections ZANU PF seem to be consolidating power in both rural and urban spaces and the country is in danger of becoming a de-facto one party state where there is no tolerance of political diversity and dissent, where the party in government is not pushed to deliver by the prospect of losing power to its rival or forced to be accountable through careful scrutiny by its competitors. Partners interviewed in Bulawayo pointed out that ZANU PF was not only making inroads in many of the rural and urban parts of Matabeleland but also making its presence felt in many of the public spaces it has not participated in, such as the dialogue forums convened by CSOs to discuss service delivery issues. The party has begun to bus its people to these meetings to try to influence the direction of the discourse and also disrupt the meeting if it focuses on issues that the party finds uncomfortable. Single party dominance of politics is a threat to multiparty democracy in Zimbabwe. To ensure that the country does not slide into a one party state, it is critically important for civics to implement programmes that help to maintain the democratic space opened up in the last few years and ensure that the culture of political plurality and open debate is kept vibrant and organised.

Another critical challenge to current initiatives to build democracy in the country is the reluctance by ZANU PF to reform policies and laws that restrict freedoms and access to political and economic rights. Many of the CSO partners consulted feel that while ZANU PF has been forced by economic circumstances to engage both national and international stakeholders, the party is still bent on maintaining its hegemonic control of (State) power. It is therefore not so keen to move fast to open up more democratic space and will use all loopholes to stall legislative reform processes. Since the adoption of the new constitution, the government has dragged its feet on legislative realignment to new constitution and establishing new commissions and structures provided for by the constitution such as provincial governments. The 2002 Public Order and Security Act (POSA) which criminalizes a range of activities associated with freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and freedom of association and the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) which limits access to information and media diversity are some of the laws that still have to be reformed.

Closely related to the above is the government reluctance or failure to dismantle institutional infrastructure responsible for structural violence and the culture of violence in the country. Many of the informants who work closely with grassroots communities expressed the view that while political violence has receded peace has not been established in most communities. A number of individuals and groups are still subject to subtle forms of violence and the violence infrastructure of the past, including war veterans and youth militias, has yet to be dismantled, while the culture of violence is still rife in some state institutions. In the absence of reform, the possibility of using such infrastructure to raise the spectre of violence or even perpetrate violence is therefore still strong.

The limited levels of dialogue and engagement between the key parties in the political landscape and former partners in the GNU-ZANU PF and MDC-T is another threat to democracy in the country. One of the issues which contributed to political polarization in Zimbabwe in the past few years was the attitude of mistrust between the parties. As the Diakonia Conflict Analysis of 2011 noted, while ZANU PF perceived MDC as a counter-revolutionary party and a puppet of the West, the MDC looked at ZANU PF as a violent non democratic party.

39 ZANU PF has won all municipal elections that have been held since July 2013.
mismanaging the country. These negative perceptions among party supporters were fuelled by non-engagement between the parties.

The GPA, despite its myriad challenges, opened up various platforms for dialogue and consultative politics among Zimbabwe’s political, economic and social players. This idea of constant dialogue between the country’s key political and economic players enabled Zimbabweans to develop some level of convergence on critical national issues. To ensure that Zimbabwe’s politics does not revert to the intensely polarised situation of the pre-GPA period, it is important for civics to create platforms for dialogue and engagement between leaders and supporters of parties from across the political divide which will enable them to discuss issues and resolve differences in a tolerant and inclusive manner.

The succession crisis and intraparty struggles over leadership in both ZANU PF and MDC-T threaten peace and democracy. Since the July 2013 elections both ZANU PF and MDC-T have been locked in factional struggles that have created political paralysis in both organizations. The succession battle in ZANU has intensified as President Mugabe’s health continues to deteriorate due to old age. The November 2013 provincial executive elections, which were important for candidates positioning themselves ahead of the December ZANU-PF annual conference and 2015 congress, revealed major rifts within the party. The intensification of the succession struggle has negatively affected policy making and implementation of government programmes. It could also lead to greater political destabilisation. On the other hand, factional fighting and succession struggles within the MDC-T have intensified following the heavy electoral defeat. These fights have effectively paralysed and fragmented the MDC-T into two groups- one led by Party president Morgan Tsvangirai and the other led by Secretary General Tendai Biti. The intraparty struggles have led to an increase in intraparty violence as competing groups seek to ‘discipline’ their opponents and purge them from the party. This intraparty violence has distracted both parties from focusing on key national challenges and has the potential to destabilise the country and threaten the prevailing peace. The ongoing infighting in both parties also complicates dialogue and engagement processes.

Closely related to the above is the threat of the increased consolidation of the position of ZANU PF hardliners and securolats in political and economic governance or their complete takeover of power. Securocrats have been an influential group since independence and managed to increase their leveraging power in the post-2000 period of increased political and economic hardship. A securocrat takeover of the country can happen under two conditions. First, if the economy continues to deteriorate and people begin to protest violently. The securolats could seize on the opportunity to increase their hold over power or take over government by justifying their action on the basis of guaranteeing national security. Second, if the succession struggles in ZANU PF and the MDC-T escalate, Zimbabwe’s ambitious securolats would find the perfect opportunity to consolidate their hold over power. Under the increased control of the securolats, Zimbabwe is likely to revert to being a more closed police state where citizens will struggle to enjoy some of the most basic political and socio-economic rights.

---

40 Diakonia, Conflict Analysis for the Zimbabwe Programme, 18 November 2011, p.17.

The unresolved questions of healing and reconciliation from the past, especially around Gukurahundi and the 2008 election violence, constitute a threat to sustainable peace in the country. Many victims of these episodes of violence continue to nurture grievances and feelings of hatred and resentment. In Matabeleland a number of the population still feel that justice needs to be done in terms of the Gukurahundi violence and killings and has fed the intensity of their feelings of marginalisation. Their feelings of marginalisation and resentment have built up rather than receded as the nation continues to face mounting socio-economic challenges.

Recommendation

ZANU PF’s consolidated hold over power within a context where the opposition is fragmenting and weakening constitutes a serious threat to consolidation of democracy in Zimbabwe. Diakonia programming needs to focus on strengthening Zimbabwean civil society so that it is not only able to voice alternative views but also able to effectively guard against the abuse of power by the dominant political party(ies). At the same time, Diakonia and its CSO partners need to focus on building resilient democratic communities that are able to withstand the pressures of dictatorial governance even if ZANU PF hardliners and securocrats consolidate their hold on political and economic governance.

The factional struggles in both ZANU PF and MDC-T have the potential to increase levels of political violence in the country, while the government’s reluctance to dismantle the institutional infrastructure of violence means that violence will continue to be a major issue in the country. Diakonia and its partners therefore need programmes that continue to shift the culture of violence in society and reform institutions used to perpetrate violence.

6. Key opportunities for development and democracy in Zimbabwe Looking Forward

6.1. Opportunities in Political Framework

There are a number of opportunities for influencing change in Zimbabwe today and in the next couple of years. First, ZANU PF’s quest for legitimacy and attempts at reengagement with both its domestic and international opponents is an excellent opportunity for civics to engage the ruling party and its government and try to influence processes from within. As most civic leaders interviewed conceded, the ZANU government has been ‘surprisingly open and receptive’ to engagement with CSOs since its victory in July 2013. In its efforts to revive the economy, the cash-strapped government has equally been keen to engage international governments and international development agencies and international NGOs.42 This positive attitude of engagement opens up a good opportunity for CSOs and NGOs involved in democracy and development to begin to link up with various government departments and find ways of involving government departments in their programming.

Second, ZANU PF is much more confident politically after its decisive victory over the MDC than it was before the July 2013 election results when it was confronted by a strong opposition and was not prepared to open up space for democratic reform or engagement that could be utilized by the opposition to take over power. This renewed political confidence has expressed itself in the way ZANU PF has opened up to engagement domestically and internationally. Now that the opposition is at its weakest since 1999, ZANU PF is no longer primarily focused on the threat of an alliance between MDC and civics. It is therefore not as sensitive to engaging with civics

which it has regarded as an extension of the opposition in the past. This has presented civics with a perfect window of opportunity to influence change within the political and economic governance spheres, and some CSOs have already started to do that. For example, the women’s movement in the form of the ZWLA and WLSA, have partnered with the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, Gender and Community Development to work on aligning the existing laws with the new constitution’s provisions on gender.

Third, the internal leadership struggles within ZANU PF present a good opportunity for engagement. In the absence of a strong political opposition, the ruling party has increasingly turned its guns to itself and the factional fights over leadership and succession have intensified. In their attempt to position themselves for leadership succession, the different factions within the party have not only turned to the party for recruitment of supporters and allies but also to outsiders, including civil society. The alliance-making process has presented CSOs with a good opportunity to build bridges with a party whose leaders had previously looked at CSOs as opponents rather than potential allies and partners in development.

Fourth, the leadership restructuring processes within ZANU PF have created opportunities for reform. In their attempt to outdo each other in the fierce competition for power which has intensified since the elections, various ZANU PF leaders have tried to position themselves for power by projecting themselves domestically, regionally and internationally as the more ‘rational and natural leaders’ while depicting their opponents as the ‘unreasonable and corrupt’ other. The growing number of accusations and counteraccusations about corruption among ZANU PF and government leaders that have been in the public media, for instance, are happening within the context of these restructuring processes and intensified struggles for power. These struggles around and the exposure of corruption present CSOs with a good opportunity to bring to the fore issues of transparency, accountability and democracy and mobilise communities around these key issues.

Fifth, the reduced polarisation of the current context and weakening of opposition political parties, as some independent analysts noted, has created opportunities for civics to play a more active role in development, peace and democracy building without the ‘burden of political labelling’ that had come to constrain their organisational independence. Civics can take this chance to implement programmes more effectively through strategic engagement with ZANU PF and government. The heightened political polarisation pre GNU meant that most CSOs struggled to mobilise certain communities or implement programmes in contested parts of the country because of the constraints of political labelling. CSOs also struggled to engage ZANU PF or get government support in the implementation of their projects because of being labelled an ‘extension of the MDC’. Members of communities in some cases would also not be able to participate freely in CSO programmes and projects because of the same fear of being labelled. Without the burden of being associated with the agenda of a single oppositional political party, it has become easier for civics to work more freely within communities and partner with government in the implementation of programmes.

43 A good example of this is the recent engagement efforts of MISA by the Ministry of Information and the recent appointment of a number of media people from the independent press into the Information and Media and Public Inquiry (IMPI) by the same ministry.

44 Interview with independent Analyst, Harare, June 2014.
**Recommendation**

The reduced polarisation of politics in the current context creates space for civics to strengthen their autonomy from both the ruling party and opposition. As such the current context has created space for Zimbabwean CSOs to rebrand within a framework where they are guided by the philosophy that “CSOs do not have political opponents, rights-holders belong to many parties.” CSOs also need to reconnect with grassroots citizens and to go back to the basics of community mobilisation and constituency building by focussing on the needs and interests of the communities they seek to represent. Many of the independent analysts interviewed, as well as some CSO leaders themselves, expressed the view that one of the major weaknesses of Zimbabwe’s civic movement is that CSOs tend to speak on behalf of communities and design their programmes without consultation with or input from the communities. As a result, few members of communities take an active interest in civic activism. Furthermore, because of their embededness in political party politics, Zimbabwean CSOs have generally failed to engender the growth of independent and autonomous constituencies that are able to stand on their own and articulate their issues independently without being appendages of either ZANU PF or MDC. The current environment presents CSOs with an opportunity to focus on issues-based politics and build constituencies/communities through mobilising people around specific rights-based or socio-economic delivery issues. 

The current public disillusionment with politics and national political parties presents CSOs with the greatest opportunity to re-establish their connections with grassroots communities. Having been disillusioned by the failure of elections to deliver meaningful change in their lives most Zimbabweans are focussed on local governance and social delivery issues. Based on their proximity to communities, Zimbabwean CSOs are in a much better position to mobilise communities around such issues than in the past when public hopes about transformation and change were entrusted mainly in political parties. 

**6.2. Opportunities in the Legal and Institutional Framework**

The enactment of a new constitution with a number of democratic provisions presents a perfect opportunity for both civics and citizens to use the constitution to advance their democratic and socio-economic rights. In the past, the constitution, particularly its weak provisions around the issue of checks and balances, was cited as a serious impediment to the attainment of democracy and a driver of violent conflict. The constitution was also seen as one of the key issues that divided the parties. The new constitution, on the other hand, was produced through negotiation and agreement, and was endorsed by the larger parties. The parties therefore have a responsibility to promote, protect and uphold the constitution, and see that its provisions are implemented. In this respect, the implementation of the constitution is a point of national convergence that should bring civics, government, parties and the people together. As part of its international re-engagement plan, crucial for economic recovery, ZANU PF is keen to show the world that it is a reform minded organisation which conforms to its laws and constitution.

The new constitutional provisions, especially the Bill of Rights, also provide an important opportunity for civics to press for those themes in their programming agenda that government has previously ignored or not prioritised because they were not part of its policies. 

---

Rights is an important entry point in the broad civic agenda for the reform of some of the restrictive legislation that has negatively affected the attainment of people’s individual rights and impacted on the operations of civics.

At the same time, the establishment of new Chapter 12 commissions, such as the Anti-corruption Commission, Human Rights Commission (HRC), the Gender Commission, National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC), has created entry points for the consolidation of improved governance, respect for human rights, democracy, peace and gender equality. The recent decision by Parliament, as provided for in the new constitution, to call for public nominations of candidates for the positions of commissioners created space for civics not only to participate in the process but also to ensure that independent individuals with integrity and expertise were nominated.

While the country adopted the new Constitution last year, its provisions need to be in tandem with a number of pieces of legislation whose clauses contradict the new constitution. It is imperative that an alignment process be undertaken to bring the laws into harmony with the new constitution. The process of alignment of laws creates an opportunity for CSOs to influence legislative change in a way that promotes human rights, democracy and development. The ultimate responsibility for the alignment lies with government, particularly the Attorney General’s Office, and the government has already compiled its own list of laws that it wants to align. However, CSOs and other national stakeholders have the space to influence the alignment by either inputting their views on any draft bills, developing alternative bill drafts and using test cases to challenge sections of existing laws that are inconsistent with the new constitution. Through the engagement of their MPs, individuals can also influence the alignment process by helping them introduce new bills in parliament.

Another important opportunity arising from the changes in the legal and institutional framework of the country is found in the media. The gradual openings in the country’s restrictive media and communication environment, particularly changes in the country’s broadcasting laws which have led to an increase in the number of both independent and state broadcasters, has created more space for unrestricted information flow. The imminent issuing of licences for local commercial and community radio stations will create space for advocacy in both rural and urban communities. An equally important opportunity for CSO advocacy in the current context is the growing increase in the use of social media among Zimbabweans. CSOs will need to use these openings to intensify their advocacy campaigns around specific rights-based issues. The same openings can also be used to network and mobilise communities around specific agendas. All this will help to build and consolidate democratic values in communities.

**Recommendation**

The wide array of opportunities opened up by the recent institutional and legislative reforms, have created important strategic entry points that Diakonia and its CSO partners need to effectively utilise to enhance the democratisation agenda. To realise their goals, Diakonia and its partners will need to organise a series of programmes and activities that assist citizens and communities realise their political and socio-economic rights through the various entry points. This includes programmes that assist in the implementation of the provisions of the new Constitution and enhance citizens’ understanding of and access to their constitutional rights and obligations. Such programmes and activities will facilitate the entrenchment of
constitutional democracy in Zimbabwe and enhance citizens’ capacity to realise their democratic rights through the Constitution.

7. Key Actors

7.1. Political Movements/Parties

ZANU PF

ZANU PF derives its power from its absolute control over Government and more than two thirds Parliamentary majority which, coupled with its control of the security sector, gives it exclusive control over the state. The party, though still struggling to win over urban voters, has popular support, especially among its loyal supporters in rural areas. ZANU PF, some political analysts argue in trying to explain its victory in 2013, have retained a substantial social base in the country as was evident even during the generally accepted first round of the Harmonised Elections in March 2008. The maintenance of this social base has not been solely through the use of violence and coercion but also the use of persuasive ideologies of political and economic liberation. Since the 2013 election, ZANU PF has tried to consolidate its support on the ground by reasserting itself in those areas where it had either previously had no support or lost support, such as the urban areas and the provinces of Matebeleland and Manicaland. Regionally, ZANU PF has increased its leveraging capacity by re-establishing its respect after managing to hold a peaceful election. The country’s recent election to the position of deputy chair for both SADC and the AU confirms the party’s new status. Internationally, the party has also been working hard to get international legitimacy through its reengagement initiatives.

However, ZANU PF’s popularity and attempts to consolidate popular support continue to be undermined by its failure to deliver on election promises. As one of the CSO leaders interviewed in Bulawayo expressed: “Even ZANU PF supporters are beginning to ask critical questions around the economy. Some of the youths here in Bulawayo are beginning to ask questions about where the million jobs promised during the elections are”. ZANU PF’s political confidence and ability to keep its support base intact is increasingly undermined by failure to turn around economy. Moreover, its ability to entrench its power in both rural and urban areas, using various forms of patronage linked to irrigation, farm inputs, food aid, education and electrification in the rural areas, has been undermined by the worsening economic crisis which has eroded the resource base of the party and government. This presents the party with challenges in maintaining its popular base in the period leading to the 2018 elections, thus creating opportunities for the current opposition to regroup and stage a political comeback or a new opposition movement to emerge that mobilises both disenchanted supporters of ZANU PF and the two MDC parties.

ZANU PF’s organisational unity and strength is weakening due to the succession battle which seems to be reaching a peak ahead of the 2014 congress and 2018 national elections. The party continues to be divided between two main factions, mainly differing over succession to Mugabe’s leadership and party preservation strategy. The division, which also often takes the

form of regionalism and ethnic divides is between the Pragmatists/Reformists (who believe in preservation of the party’s power through limited reforms, co-option and adaptation) and the Authoritarian Hardliners (who subscribe to retention of power through unrestricted use of force and primitive accumulation methods to preserve their own political and economic interests).

Also important in the ZANU PF power matrix is Mugabe. Interested in maintaining the privileges of being at the top and worried about his own security when he leaves office, Mugabe’s strategy is to become Life President of both ZANU PF and Zimbabwe. His plans to remain life president of his party are likely to succeed as long as there is no consensus among ZANU PF factions on his successor. President Mugabe’s ambition for Life Presidency has the potential to prolong Zimbabwe’s crisis, given the extent of opposition to his continued rule both inside and outside the country, and further weaken his party because of the protracted succession struggle.

**Recommendation**

ZANU PF is still the most powerful domestic power-broker whose dominant control over the state and substantial popular support on the ground makes it an indispensable actor to be engaged in any initiatives aimed at bringing change. The party’s ability to maintain its power and leveraging capacity in the next few years however largely depend on its ability to turn around the economy and deliver public goods and services. Its inability to deliver on economic and social services presents both its opponents and friends with some leveraging capacity to extract important concessions from the party. ZANU PF will thus be opening up certain spaces in order to get support from both domestic and external partners while trying to block major political reforms and keep strategic spaces of its power, such as the security sector, closed.

Civil society and political parties are strategic partners that can play an important role in deepening democracy and enhancing development in Zimbabwe if organised around a common agenda. The political and economic context in the country offers better opportunities for strategic engagement between civics and the ruling party than before. Diakonia and its CSO partners will need to take advantage of the new window of opportunity to engage ZANU PF and government officials more actively in almost all their programmes around democracy, governance and inclusive community development.

To increase effectiveness in programming, Diakonia and its partners therefore need to engage ZANU PF leaders and supporters strategically at both the national and community level. It is important to identify the key influential people within the party and then target them for advocacy and programme buy-in. The identification process will need to focus on reform minded individuals and hardliners because both are important for the success or failure of programme implementation. The increased involvement of ZANU PF leaders and supporters in Diakonia’s democracy building and governance programmes will give CSOs the opportunity to transform both ZANU PF politics and national politics. At the same time, partnering with ZANU PF party and government officials in some programmes will give CSOs the opportunity to monitor these officials and hold them accountable. In the past, the confrontational relationship between CSOs and ZANU PF has militated against their critical engagement on issues of national significance. However, given the hegemonic nature of ZANU PF politics, it is critical for Diakonia and its partners to ensure that in such engagement civics do not get sucked into party politics. They need to focus on issues that advance citizens interests.
MDC-T
Until the July 2013 elections, the MDC-T was one of the most formidable domestic political actors whose support on the ground, as confirmed by the results of the March 2008 elections and other elections since 2000, rivalled that of ZANU PF. Though its power in the GNU of the last five was constrained by ZANU PF’s dominant control of the critical levers of state power, it continued to have influence and its ability to leverage nationally, regionally and internationally remained substantial.

The fractious infighting within the MDC-T since the July 2013 elections has negatively affected its effectiveness as a strong opposition party that has capacity to hold and exercise checks and balances on the ruling party and to mobilise masses for elections. The party has lost all local government elections since the July 2013 elections and in some cases it has even failed to field candidates because of factional politics. The organisational strength of MDC-T has also been undermined by lack of funding since the 2013 elections.

Despite these challenges, the MDC-T and its leader remain important forces in the future of Zimbabwean politics. The party, as attendance figures at some of its recent rallies have shown, still has grassroots support across the country. Its leader remains the most popular grassroots leader within opposition politics. However, its ability to influence democratic change and to tilt the balance of power towards itself in the next couple of years is now doubtful.

Though it has reduced power to push reforms because of limited numbers in parliament, the MDC-T still has enough numbers and space to push for reforms through offering attractive alternative policy positions, to strategically utilise space in parliament, the new constitution, the courts and negotiations outside formal structures of governance. MDC-T could exercise its influence in the governance of the country through Local Government where it controls the municipalities of Harare, Bulawayo, Gweru, Mutare and Masvingo. The MDC-T also has leverage in the new Provincial Councils in some of the provinces where it has representation such as Bulawayo.

Recommendation
The MDC-T’s status as the biggest opposition party in the country makes it an important factor that ZANU PF cannot afford to ignore. The MDC-T’s power to push for reforms can be strengthened by forging strategic alliances with local stakeholders, through negotiations with ZANU PF and strategic lobbying of regional groups like SADC and the AU. The MDC-T is therefore still a critical power-broker with some limited power to make a difference on a number of issues. It is still a vital partner for civics to engage because of its interest in legislative reform that open up more democratic reform and enhance its chances of gaining power.

To be effective in their advocacy, especially around governance issues, Diakonia and its CSO partners will need to engage the MDC-T as a strategic partner and alternative powerbroker which can be influenced to push for increased citizen participation in decision making and to implement an alternative way of governance and service delivery, especially in those spaces where it has control such as Local Government. The MDC-T has in the past not been able to strategically utilise this space, but there is still a good opportunity in the current context for the MDC-T and opposition to work together for transformation. However, given the history of political embeddedness of some CSOs with the MDC-T and previous attempts by the MDC-T to
subordinate CSOs to its political agenda, the new partnerships will have to be structured in a way that guarantees the independence of CSOs and avoids the subordination of CSO agendas to those of the party. The engagement with the MDC-T will therefore have to be done in a non-partisan manner, and CSOs should retain their right to be critical of MDC-T policies and politicians even where they are working on projects together.

MDC and other Opposition Parties
Although it had limited seats in parliament, the MDC led by Professor Welshman Ncube was the second biggest opposition party during the GNU. Lacking in national popular support, the party mainly sought to exercise its influence in parliament, where it held the key to the balance of power in Zimbabwe’s hung parliament and the political negotiations over the GPA. Its politics were characterized by the forging of temporary alliances with both the MDC and ZANU PF, on issues of strategic interest to itself.

MDC’s capacity to influence national politics is weakened after their poor performance in the 2013 election garnering just two seats in Parliament. This has diminished the party’s leveraging capacity in both Parliament and outside. The effectiveness of the MDC in Zimbabwe’s political landscape has been further weakened by withdrawal of some of its top leadership from politics, defections and expulsions after the election. It has also been hit by a lack of funding. Since November 2013 the MDC has been facing a major financial crisis that has seen the closure of a number of its offices nationwide.

The many other opposition parties that participated in the July 2013, including ZAPU and Mavambo, and others formed after, such as the NCA, struggle to maintain a sizeable support base. Their capacity to mobilise and become influential at the national level remains limited. They might, however, be able to make their mark at local government level where they might be able to mobilise grassroots structures around specific social service delivery issues like water and electricity.

Recommendation
Whilst having no realistic chance of forming a government or winning parliamentary seats, Zimbabwe’s minor opposition parties can prove to be influential in electoral outcomes as was evident in the July 2013 election where ZANU PF’s victory in a number of seats in the provinces of Matabeleland South and North was due to the split vote between the MDC and the MDC-T.47 By representing a broad ideological spectrum, these parties represent the plurality and diversity of ideas among Zimbabweans. Where they are represented in the structures of power at both the local and central government levels, they constitute an important force to establish checks and balances against the abuse of power by the dominant parties.

Diakonia and its CSOs partners will need to engage, rather than ignore, Zimbabwe’s smaller parties because they further the nurturing of Zimbabwe’s democracy. It is therefore essential for Diakonia and its partners to include/engage these small parties, alongside the dominant parties (ZANU PF and MDC-T), in their programmes. As in the case of the other parties, this engagement will have to be guided by principles of non-partisanship. It will also have to be

47The split vote between the MDC, ZAPU and MDC-T cost the opposition 17 seats in the two Matabeleland north and south provinces, meaning that ZANU PF’s majority in Parliament would have been reduced to 67 percent, instead of its current 79 percent. See Solidarity Peace Trust, The End of A Road.
engagement based on an issues-based approach to politics, whereby Diakonia and its partners might consider supporting these parties more actively on specific causes that are in line with Diakonia’s causes/programme themes.

Securocrats:

A key factor in the contemporary politics of Zimbabwe is the leadership of the security structures (Securocrats) who are an influential grouping in Zimbabwe’s power matrix. Because securocrats have come to play an increasingly prominent political role, the division between them and ZANU PF is often blurred, and the factionalism affecting the latter has also at times split the former. Although they identify themselves with ZANU PF and often work with ZANU PF politicians to advance their converging interests, securocrats are an identifiable power group on their own who have distinctive interests but are able to exert critical influence on ZANU PF politicians. Their influence over politicians is mainly derived from their control over the coercive power of the state and their ideological association with the liberation war legacy. Securocrats have since the beginning of the post-2000 crisis firmly entrenched their grip on vital sectors of the economy, state bureaucracy, Parliament and ZANU party machinery to an extent that they have now become the domestic anchor class of the ZANU PF-led government. By the time of the GPA and during the course of the GNU, they significantly increased their hold over government through the careful deployment of their members into strategic positions in government, government parastatals, commissions and parliament.

Recommendation

Although Securocrats seem to have taken a backseat on governance in the post-GPA environment, they represent a powerful bloc in Zimbabwe’s politics and economy which can stall progress towards democratic reform. As a group, they do not trust the limited transitional processes unfolding in the country. Any attempts to build peace and democracy in the country not only need to take their needs and interests as a group into consideration but also to engage them at the strategic level. In this respect, both the programmes and the advocacy activities of CSOs need to find a way of including/engaging members of this sector as part of a broad strategy aimed at building some consensus and confidence with them about a transitional framework which can help the country achieve sustainable peace.

---


50 A number of both serving and retired members of the security services were appointed into positions of Permanent Secretaries and Directors in ministries, including those that had MDC-T and MDC Ministers, while others were deployed to head government parastatals or to become members of Chairpersons of Boards overseeing these parastatals. Many of them have remained in these positions in the post-GPA phase. See J. Muzondidya (2011), ‘Zimbabwe’s Failed Transition? An Analysis of the Challenges and Complexities in Zimbabwe’s transition in the post-2000 period’, in T. Murithi and A. Mawadza (eds), Zimbabwe in Transition: Views from Within (Johannesburg: Jacana), pp. 24-27.
To ensure that Diakonia’s programme objectives related to democracy and peace-building are effectively embraced by securocrats, Diakonia and its CSO partners will need to develop platforms and programme activities that increasingly involve and target both senior and junior members of the security sector. Such programmes could focus on rights awareness, community peace-building, democracy and governance. The increased involvement of members of the security services in these CSO programmes will not only help to build their confidence in the transitional democratic processes evolving in the country, but also to transform some aspects of their institutional cultures that continue to block the country’s transition to democracy. Through their increased involvement in the programmes of Diakonia and its partners, the security services can begin to play a more constructive role in Zimbabwe’s political and economic transformation and the current distance between security services and civilians is may be effectively bridged. The hope is that Zimbabwe can develop security services that primarily serve the interests of citizens rather than political leaders. This way, the country will also substantively manage to have the kind of security sector reform that has been a necessary requirement for long.\(^{51}\)

### 7.2. Governance Structures

#### 7.2.1. Government Bureaucrats

Government bureaucrats at national, provincial and district levels have developed into powerful and influential figures in their departments and constituencies. Many partners interviewed pointed out that bureaucrats who include Provincial Administrators and District Administrators have so much power and influence that they can act as gatekeepers who can deny CSOs direct access to communities. Some of these bureaucrats have used their influence to deny civics access to communities even in cases where organisations that had signed MOUs with relevant ministries or government departments at the national level. Bureaucrats, many of whom are connected to the ruling party or strongly acquiesce to ZANU PF, continue to be an influential power broker that needs to be engaged and involved by CSOs at both advocacy and programming level in order to make meaningful impact on the ground.

**Recommendation**

The engagement of bureaucrats to ensure that they become actors in the democratisation agenda requires a two pronged strategy that at one level targets them for advocacy/change as duty bearers and at another level targets individual citizens in their areas for education/awareness programmes around their constitutional rights. A number of bureaucrats have managed to get away with the abuse of power because people are not aware of their rights or the limits of bureaucratic power. Citizen awareness programmes will empower citizens with knowledge about both the duties and responsibilities of these bureaucrats as well as the rights enshrined in the constitution and applicable legislation such as the Local Government Act.

\(^{51}\)One of the key weaknesses of Zimbabwean civics’ and opposition movement’s approaches towards security sector reform has been their emphasis on the removal/replacement of key individuals at the helm of the security services rather than an approach that focuses on institutional cultural transformation of the security services. For more detailed discussion on this issue, see Zimbabwe Institute, *Towards a Resolution of the Security Challenges/Issues around the Political Deadlock in Zimbabwe* (ZI Transitional Framework Workshop, Pandhari Main Conference Centre, 18 October 2012); Muzondidya, ‘Zimbabwe’s Failed Transition’, p.27.
To ensure that bureaucrats become stakeholders in Diakonia’s political and transformational agenda, CSOs will need to include them in their programmes. In a context where issues of public delivery are increasingly important a number of bureaucrats are more forthcoming to strategic partnerships with CSOs. Others will also need to be educated on some of the new provisions so that they become aware of their responsibilities as duty bearers. For those bureaucrats who continue to be reluctant to engage CSOs and continue to frustrate the implementation of programmes, Diakonia and its partners will have to consider engaging higher authorities to ensure buy-in.

7.2.2. Parliament
Parliament, as one of the key state institutions in a democratic system of governance, has a critical role to play in promoting democracy and good governance. In the performance of their key functions of legislation, representation and oversight parliaments can actively engage in the development and implementation of laws, policies and practices that promote democracy and good governance. Zimbabwe’s parliamentary portfolio committees are important forums for oversight and accountability and have played a leading role in highlighting inefficiencies, malpractices and corruption in government departments, parastatals and private companies.

Recommendation
Parliament’s capacity to play an effective monitoring and oversight role is often constrained by lack of capacity of some of its members and an overbearing Executive expecting Parliament to rubberstamp decisions. Through a clear separation of powers between the Executive and Parliament, the new constitution has tried create some space for Parliament to play a more oversight focused role. The Parliament of Zimbabwe can be transformed into a critical space where citizens can actively participate in decision making processes and democracy, human rights, accountability and transparency can be institutionalised through the strengthening of its representational role and capacity. CSOs and international NGOs can influence democratic change through carefully crafted networks and collaboration strategies with Parliament, Parliamentary Committees and individual MPs. Given the strategic importance of Parliament in the democratization process, CSOs can facilitate capacity building for Parliament through working closely and training of members of its various Portfolio Committees and the setting up of Parliamentary Liaison and Research offices that help to generate important information for parliamentarians.

7.2.3. Judiciary
The judiciary plays a important role in the struggle for democracy because of its ability to check the abuse of power by the Executive. Although its independence has been compromised by executive influence and ZANU PF’s unrelenting attempts to stuff it with individuals considered to be politically pliant, the judiciary represents an alternative space in which to wage the fight for democracy and accountability. Since 2000, the executive’s influence on the judiciary has compromised judicial independence and public confidence in the judiciary has been eroded. Public confidence in the judiciary has also been eroded by the inability of the courts to force compliance with their orders, particularly in cases where the targets of those orders are the other branches of government or senior government officials.

52 The recent establishment of the Human Rights Commission, a body set up to investigate and monitor human rights abuses, and the appointment of some progressive judges to the High Court and Supreme Court, including former civic activists,
creates hope of a movement towards a more transparent and accountable judiciary which can become an ally in the fight for human rights.

**Recommendation**

Although some CSOs such as the Human Rights NGO Forum, ZWLA, LHR and WOZA have used litigation against government to push for reform of undemocratic laws, what has been lacking are sustained and coordinated efforts aimed at proactive use of the courts as an alternative site of struggle for justice and equality. At the same time, attempts to utilize alternative space found in the judiciary for the struggle for rights have been hampered by the general lack of knowledge of legal rights among many Zimbabweans, particularly the poor and marginalized groups. The enactment of a new constitution with a number of progressive, democratic provisions creates important opportunities for the entrenchment of democracy and good governance in the country through strategic utilisation of the courts to apply and enforce the newly opened up provisions. Diakonia will need to work more closely with some of the organisations that are experienced in litigation in order to make strategic use of the judiciary in the enforcement and realisation of citizen rights. Diakonia’s other existing CSO partners will also need to pick out strategic issues from their programme areas that need to be pushed through the court system in order to enhance democracy and development.

### 7.2.4. Traditional Leaders

Traditional leaders, i.e., chiefs and village heads have continued to play an important role in the lives and governance of most rural Zimbabweans. They command respect and fear. Their power is derived from both tradition and the previous constitution that empowered them to administer customary law in their communities. In the highly polarised politics of post-2000 Zimbabwe, ZANU PF also mobilised the support of chiefs as agents to help it maintain its political control over rural spaces. Although the new constitution has curtailed their powers, traditional leaders have remained important power brokers in rural communities because of their continued ideological control and their gate keeping powers derived from their administrative functions. Government public service programmes like food aid and agricultural inputs schemes continue to be channelled to rural communities via traditional chiefs and this gives them a hold over the rural population’s access to resources.

**Recommendation**

Given their now constitutionally limited albeit continued power and influence over rural communities, CSOs will need to find ways of engaging Traditional Leaders as partners in development, democracy and peace-building. The GPA created space for increased engagement between CSOs and chiefs and civics need to expand the networks and relationships built to increase the scope and impact of their work. Much more importantly, Traditional Leaders feel marginalised by politicians in critical political and economic processes, such as indigenisation deals and community share ownership schemes, and this has created opportunities for shifting their political embeddedness. Diakonia and its CSOs partners need to consider targeting chiefs and village heads as partners in community engagement programmes around inclusion, peace and democracy. Traditional leadership has remained largely undemocratic and patriarchal, and CSOs working on democratising local governance in the rural sphere cannot successfully do so without the transformation of its governance systems. Diakonia and its partners will need to pay more attention to community advocacy programmes on various provisions of the new constitution that have a direct bearing on rights and governance issues for rural communities.
7.3. Social Actors

7.3.1. Civics

Zimbabwean civics provide an alternative platform for the fight for transparency, accountability, human rights and democracy. The role of civics in fighting for rights became particularly important during the GPA when the opposition parties became part of the government and there was no strong opposition movement to play the watchdog role over government. Civil society has however been experiencing serious problems since the unexpected results in 2013. The MDC-T loss left many civil society organisations, which had become increasingly embedded in political party politics and aligned to opposition political parties, shocked and disoriented. The decline in international funding for CSOs and opposition parties and ZANU-PF’s dominance of the political arena has also negatively affected the capacity of civics to implement their programmes. A major strategic dilemma for civil society in Zimbabwe is that it has not been able to bridge the divide that has emerged between constitutionalism and human rights on the one hand and, and socio-economic rights on the other - the rights/redistribution dilemma. With unemployment and socio-economic challenges growing by the day, CSOs have also struggled to mobilise an apathetic population.

Recommendation

Despite its growing list of challenges, Zimbabwe’s civil society movement remains a critical stakeholder in political, economic and social development because it has played and continues to play an important role in the fight for democracy, human rights, women’s rights, children’s rights and the empowerment of marginalised groups. Because of its close links to the people, civil society has an important role in mobilising communities for political and economic development. A vibrant civic movement is specifically needed now that the opposition parties are considerable weak and there is no strong movement to hold politicians and the government accountable to the people. Civil society will thus need more strengthening, especially around both its human capacity, in order to enhance its ability to play an effective monitoring role. Closely related is the need to strengthen the capacity of those CSOs working in rural communities or working with rural CBOs which have tended to be neglected over the last few years of focus on urban areas. The new openings to CSO operations in rural communities create a good opportunity for Diakonia and its partners to open up more rural communities for transformation. In the absence of a strong political opposition civil society assumes a more important role in providing checks and balances to the establishment by playing a more active watchdog role.

More critically, civics will need to play an active role in popularising the new constitution and entrenching the culture of constitutionalism among Zimbabweans, especially the implementation of provisions of the new constitution by various duty bearers in government, local municipalities and the private sector. The process of popularizing and entrenching constitutionalism in Zimbabwe is one which requires a multipronged inclusive approach, and


[54] Part of the problem has been ZANU PF’s successful ring-fencing of rural communities against the influence of CSOs and opposition parties.
Diakonia and its partners will need to do long term, rather than short-term, programming around this.

CSOs are best positioned to move an inclusive participation agenda because of their experience with peace building. The opportunity for civics to play a role in democracy building has been created by the growing willingness of government to engage CSOs as part of its reengagement/rehabilitation plan and the thawing of relations with civics following the election victory and the decline of opposition. Diakonia and its partners will need to invest in inclusive practises and processes now when the country is relatively calm because the peace infrastructure put in place will be instrumental for conflict management and resolution of political tensions soar in tense times like elections. The deterioration of economic and social conditions in the country is increasingly contributing to conflicts in Zimbabwe’s communities, making continued investment in peace by Diakonia and its partners a priority for the next four years.

7.3.2. Labour

Though weakened by state repression, structural changes in the labour force, internal divisions and loss of leadership to the MDC, labour remains an important power broker in Zimbabwe’s politics because of its historic role in building the protest movement and fighting for workers’ rights. A strong labour movement is particularly important in the fragile political economy of Zimbabwe to fight for poor people’s rights, to protect workers against unfair labour and business practices, unfair pricing and to hold both government and business accountable to the people. Like CSOs, the labour movement has the potential to influence processes deriving from its closeness to communities. However, with trade unions weakened by the continued closure of factories and informalization of the economy, the power of workers has shifted to the informal sector where they control the national economy but remain unorganized. Future engagement of this sector will therefore need to take this into consideration when it comes to both programming and mobilisation.

Recommendation

To help it to become an important agency protecting the rights of the workers and capable of defending the interests of the nation against cheap exploitation of its natural resources by both local and foreign elites, the labour movement will need help to reorganize itself so that it once again becomes a powerful civic movement which is able to stand up for workers and to hold both business and government accountable to the people. The labour movement specifically needs to play a critical oversight role over both government and capital at this particular juncture when the economy is at its weakest and the government is desperate to negotiate loans and Foreign Direct Investment deals which might be detrimental to both labour and national interests. Economists and policy analysts argue that suggested plans by government to securitise the country’s minerals in order to acquire desperately-needed funding for infrastructural projects and its latest economic blueprint, ZimAsset, will be detrimental to the welfare of future generations because government is trading on unseen and unexploited resources and this weakens its negotiating powers.\(^{55}\) What is needed in Zimbabwe is a powerful labour movement capable of protecting workers against unfair treatment in the workplace in these years of economic fragility and with the technical capacity to scrutinize government

---

negotiations and deals with both foreign and local capital in order to see if such economic deals do not come on terms that prejudice national interests.

Given the strong connection between democracy and transparency and accountability, Diakonia’s democracy building programme could benefit from working closely with workers and their organizations to enforce transparency and accountability at both the workplace and national levels. Diakonia and its partners will need to consider introducing programmes focusing on the country’s massively restructured labour movement or establishing some joint/support programmes with some of the country’s labour organizations such as ZCTU and GAPWUZ as well as organizations representing workers in the informal sector.

7.3.3. Business

Business remains a power broker but it has not played a key role for a number of reasons. First, the economic hardships not only resulted in massive retrenchment of workers but also weakened business as an organized constituency. Second, business has remained divided along the lines of race and political loyalty, with the majority of those businessmen and women who benefited from ZANU PF patronage maintaining uncritical support for the ZANU PF-led government, while those who are critical of government policy are projected as MDC supporters. Third, the restructuring that has occurred in the ownership of businesses has affected business participation in politics. The ZANU PF patronage system has resulted in many businesses being owned by its own leaders and sympathisers. As a result, many of the new business owners are politically aligned and compromised by their position as neo-patrimonial clients of the state. ZANU PF control and patronage has even extended its reach even to the leadership of apex organisations for business, such as ZNCC, which are now under the control of its loyalists.56

Despite the above challenges, business has potential to influence political and economic processes in Zimbabwe because of its linkages to regional and foreign capital and positioning in the national economy. Business is critically important as a source of much needed revenue for the government, economic funds for investment and reco and jobs for workers. Business can also play a constructive and effective role because of its influence and reputation as an independent actor.

Recommendation

Democracy building initiatives will need to engage business because its active interest in national prosperity. Business exercises some direct and indirect influence on public policy. CSOs will need to lobby, and in some cases work with, various business interests to influence policy change. CSOs need to build awareness in business and involve business in their advocacy campaigns and democracy and peace-building activities by urging business to invest in democratisation work such as community gardening projects in polarised communities and economic empowerment projects aimed at reducing unemployment and restlessness among the youth. At the same time, CSOs need to ensure that business does not collude with politicians in perpetuating bad governance practice through a well managed CSO-business engagement process designed to promote transparency and accountability in business-government dealings. Diakonia and its partners can also ensure that Zimbabwe’s businesses

56 The current president of the ZNCC, Keith Guzha, is a well known ZANU PF loyalist who cut his leadership teeth as president of the ZANU PF radical economic empowerment group-Affirmative Action Group.
play a more active role in enhancing democracy and development in the country by running advocacy programmes meant to increase business’ levels of involvement in corporate social responsibility and the economic upliftment of communities.

7.3.4. Churches

Churches are another important power broker in Zimbabwe’s politics of development and democracy, because of their great influence in the lives of Zimbabweans and their ability to reach out to people without much interference from the state. However, their full potential as an agency for community mobilisation has not been exploited in the last decade of the crisis. Churches, across the spectrum, have also preferred to adopt a more pastoral rather than prophetic role in the face of state oppression. In this regard, the church is one of the few platforms that can be used to coordinate not just community development programmes and humanitarian assistance to vulnerable groups but also to spearhead civic education around people’s rights. The church can be the vehicle for the moral regeneration of Zimbabwean society after years of corruption, decay and the destruction of the nation’s moral compass. Given the legacy of violence experienced in Zimbabwe in the last decade, the church can also be a useful platform for national healing and peace.

Recommendation

Some political parties, especially the ruling ZANU PF, have successfully mobilised the churches, particularly African Independent Churches, to grow their support and spread their political ideology. Zimbabwe’s civic movement has not fully utilised opportunities presented by the churches to influence change processes. Diakonia and its CSO partners need to involve the church more in their democracy and community building initiatives because of its commanding presence among Zimbabwean communities. The process will involve working with faith-based organisations to build and strengthen democratic culture. In some cases, it will have to involve establishing links with some key individuals within church structures and then using their church structures to run advocacy campaigns around specific issues. The constitutional literacy programme, for instance, can be organised successfully through church structures. What is needed is for CSOs working on those issues to engage apex church organisations like the Catholic Bishops Conference, ZCC and EFZ to discuss coordination strategies on issues identified by citizens.

7.4. Regional and International Actors

Externally, the most important influences on political and economic developments in Zimbabwe are the European countries and the United States, Southern African regional powers, the African regional blocs, SADC and the AU, and the Eastern bloc countries of China and Russia.

7.4.1. SADC and AU

SADC has some leveraging capacity on Zimbabwe derived from its role as the REC body and shared regional concerns about the need for stability. SADC’s involvement in Zimbabwe helped the country’s parties to sign the GPA in 2008 and form the GNU in 2009 which helped to stabilise the political and economic situation in the country averting explosion. However, SADC’s leverage as a broker in Zimbabwe’s domestic politics is limited by developments in both Zimbabwe and the region. First, the relative stability of the economy and politics and the

holding of peaceful elections, though disputed, in 2013 led SADC to remove the country from list of priorities for intervention and mediation. For SADC and South Africa in particular, as some analysts have argued, the major priority in settling the Zimbabwe crisis was to ensure stabilization and not democratisation. The holding of peaceful elections as opposed to 2008 when widespread violence discredited the process, allowed SADC and the AU to endorse the process and welcome the resultant government into the regional community of nations. Second, the Zimbabwe crisis has dragged for too long and there is now regional fatigue over Zimbabwe. SADC is therefore less prepared to entertain Zimbabwe’s domestic problems unless they threaten regional stability. Third, Zimbabwe’s position as deputy chair of SADC and the AU as well as imminent takeover as chair means that the Zimbabwean government will for the next couple of years have influence over the agenda of SADC and the AU.

Both SADC and the AU are still important bodies that can be relied on to facilitate and support domestic initiatives aimed at political reform, especially where such reforms are in line with SADC & AU principles. But these bodies cannot push hard on reform, especially if such action can be interpreted as interference by the Zimbabwean government.

**Recommendation**

The Zimbabwe government continues to respect regional organisations like SADC and the AU. The government values the continued support of these African regional bodies because it is important for continued political legitimacy in the face of criticism and questions about legitimacy from the domestic opposition and the international community. To ensure that the government does not renege on its constitutional commitments or introduce policies and laws that violate the SADC facilitated constitution, CSOs will need to run a coordinated advocacy and lobbying campaign aimed at ensuring that SADC and the AU are not only kept in the picture about developments in Zimbabwe but are also influenced to intervene when the situation begins to regress. The CSO regional advocacy campaign can also be more effective if it is organised within the framework of regional protocols signed by SADC and AU countries.

### 7.4.2. International Community/Western Powers

Western powers, particularly the EU and US, have been actively involved in the Zimbabwe crisis at different levels since its beginning. The strategy has been to apply pressure on ZANU PF to reform, while providing political and material support to the opposition and CSOs fighting for political and economic change. The EU and US strategy did not change much during the GPA as they continued to apply diplomatic and economic pressure on the ZANU-PF led coalition government. While Western pressure partially helped to force ZANU PF to agree to limited reforms and to engage the MDC within the GNU, the strategy of confrontation and isolation through sanctions and travel restrictions has not yielded effective results. This confrontational strategy allowed ZANU PF to project itself as a victim of Western imperialism, a situation that enabled it to gain political sympathy domestically, regionally and internationally.

Since the July 2013 elections the ZANU PF government has actively sought to normalise relations with the West. The ineffectiveness of sanctions and isolation in bringing political and economic reform meant that a number of Western countries have begun to engage the post-
July ZANU PF government. A few countries like the UK and US have maintained a hard-line stance of non-engagement and refuse to consider removing sanctions. \(^{58}\)

Although the US, the UK and other Western European powers remain important power brokers in Zimbabwe because of their economic leveraging power derived from control over international credit lines and investment, this capacity is limited by a number of factors. The first is the decline of the MDC-T which acted as a domestic ally in their fight against ZANU PF. The second is the division within Europe about the maintenance of sanctions. The third is national and regional resistance to continued sanctions. The fourth is the limited economic support for Zimbabwe from China and Russia which enables the government to limp on economically.

**Recommendation**

There is a need to remove sanctions and normalise relations between Zimbabwe and the West because of the consequences of continued non-engagement. The terms of such engagement, however, need to be worked out through a consultative process with various national stakeholders, including CSOs, so that there is greater clarity on the role that the different stakeholders can play in the engagement and normalisation process.

Given that the international community is moving towards normalising its political and economic relations with the Zimbabwe government\(^ {59}\), Diakonia and its CSO partners need to find a way of ensuring that they are not just part of the reengagement process but that they shape the reengagement process in a way that backstops the current initiatives around democratisation, development and peace are not compromised by the unfolding processes. At the same time, the proposed changes in the way that EU countries are going to fund CSO operations and relate to government in the post-reengagement era calls for some adjustments in the CSO strategies of government and community engagement. Zimbabwe’s relations with the international community seem to be moving from an era of confrontation to one of compromise and engagement, and CSOs need to make the necessary adjustments and find a way of working with both government and the international community as partners for democracy and development.

7.4.3. **Eastern Bloc and Emerging Powers:**

Economically and politically powerful Eastern bloc countries like China and Russia as well as the emerging powers, like Iran and India, have seized on opportunities presented by Zimbabwe’s desperation for economic aid to increase their influence and exploit the country’s resources. However, like the West, these countries have been cautious about investing in the high-risk environment of Zimbabwe. Their bilateral aid and investments has therefore been limited. Even Zimbabwe’s erstwhile political and economic ally, China, has in the last few years been careful about investing heavily in the economy because of political risk considerations, the country’s reputation of defaulting and the high levels of corruption and abuse of funds by the ruling elite. Worried about the political and economic uncertainties surrounding the post-July

\(^{58}\) The US has retained its position on the sanctions maintaining that the serious irregularities in the 2013 elections have provided no incentive to change its stance.

\(^{59}\) See ‘EU changes tack on Zimbabwe as Mugabe comes in from the cold’, *Business Day* (SA), 25 June 2014.
2013 government, both the Eastern bloc countries and emerging powers of the South have been reluctant to offer loans to the government or increase levels of investment in Zimbabwe. Without the full support of these countries, Zimbabwe’s economy will struggle to recover.

**Recommendation**

Because of their position as alternative sources of political and economic support for the ZANU PF government, BRIC countries are an important actor in Zimbabwe that need to be engaged constructively to ensure that they play a positive influence in the country’s democratic transition. In the past, both Zimbabwean CSOs and other stakeholders working to influence positive change in the country, including Western NGO, have not sufficiently engaged these powers at both advocacy and programme implementation level. The tendency has been to criticize rather than engage. It is therefore important for CSOs to actively target and engage the Emerging powers and Eastern bloc countries with advocacy focused on improving engagement processes between both government and business representatives from these countries. The aim would be to raise awareness about the concerns and interests of Zimbabwean citizens and how CSOs can help emerging powers to address the country’s challenges.

**8. Conclusion- Operational Environment and Pointers to Programming**

The national context in which Diakonia seeks to influence change through its programme intervention has altered over the last year. There has been a shift in the balance of power since the July 2013 elections in which ZANU PF gained more than a two-thirds majority in parliament. The economy has deteriorated in the last two years, and a growing number of individuals and communities have become more vulnerable and marginalized. The fragility of the political and economic environment necessitates innovative and creative strategies for engagement with and among the key political and economic actors in the country in order to ensure that peace, democracy, good governance, human rights, transparency and accountability remain at the forefront of the national agenda.

For Diakonia and its partners to make any significant impact in this transitional context, it is important to adopt a double-pronged strategy that seeks to influence the key actors or powerbrokers through sustained engagement rather than confrontation, while simultaneously organising groups and communities of active citizens who are not only aware of their rights but also use their knowledge and skills to change their political, economic and social conditions. A number of Diakonia partners, such as CCMT, Musasa and HZT, have been doing advocacy work around gender and peace-building. The same dialogue and advocacy structures on the ground, such as dialogue groups, action teams and peace committees, can be utilised to influence change around the themes being prioritised in the new context. Opportunities for this increased engagement in the current context arise from the new Constitution, the independent Commissions it legitimises, the government’s need to normalize its relationships with both domestic and international stakeholders as well as a the need to find partners to rebuild the economy and deliver on its promises to citizens.

**Operational Environment**

The overall conclusion of this analysis is that although Zimbabwe is politically and economically fragile, the current operational context presents a good framework for processes of transformation and democratization; political and economic re-engagement between advocacy groups and their partners on the ground; and the mobilization of poor and vulnerable groups for their social and economic empowerment.
One, the gradual openings have created more space for advocacy work, and there is now some room for CSOs to be involved in both humanitarian and development assistance.

Two, the politically confident ZANU PF government is more receptive to CSOs than it has been since the MDC emerged in 1999 as CSOs had played a crucial role in the birth of the MDC.

Three, the cash-strapped government is more receptive to CSOs and NGOs because they view them as potential partners to fill gaps that the government cannot fill. While it is not their responsibility to meet the public service delivery obligations of the government, CSOs and NGOs can use this opportunity to not only complement government efforts but also to organise communities to advocate for improved service delivery.

Four, the ongoing reforms in policies and structures of governance, ranging from the enactment of a new constitution to the establishment of various regulatory commissions such as the Human Rights Commission, Peace and Reconciliation Commission, Gender Commission, the Electoral Commissions and the Media Commission, have all created new entry points for advocacy work.

Five, the GNU and institutions like COPAC and JOMIC created important platforms for CSO engagement with both government and political parties. The culture of engagement started and networks created through these platforms are useful as building blocs for future inclusive reform processes.

**Pointers to Programming**

The changes in the balance of power in Zimbabwe and fragility of the political and socio-economic environment call for innovative strategies of intervention and engagement by both CSOs and international NGOs. For instance, the shifts in the balance of power between government and civics in the post-July 2013 scenario require the civic movement to focus on rebuilding and strengthening processes that will enable it to leverage effectively when it engages with government. All analysis points to a pressing need for civil society to reconnect with the people and establish a relevant social base. This rebuilding exercise will require civics to rebuild and reconnect with their structures, and in some cases establish new structures, on the ground. Given some of the identified challenges in Zimbabwe’s civic movement, CSOs will need support in the area of rebuilding and strengthening their advocacy capacity, and international organisations like Diakonia will need to play a facilitating role in all this. Given that capacity building is one of the key pillars of Diakonia support to CSOs, it will need to build on its existing work to strengthen both its existing and new partners.

The increased vulnerability of communities and growing apathy among citizens make it challenging for citizens and communities to effectively organise to fight for their socio-economic and political rights. To remain relevant and effective, CSOs will have to develop creative strategies to help address people’s vulnerabilities and reenergise communities in a way that helps them feel empowered to engage peaceably and effectively with others in the sustainable development of their communities. It is through inclusive programming that helps communities to become empowered both economically and politically that Diakonia can realise its goal of changing unfair political, economic, social and cultural structures that generate poverty, oppression and violence.
CSO programming in the current context of increased fragility and vulnerability will have to move from the narrow focus on political rights to a broader focus that tries to address both civic rights and socio-economic rights. CSOs that will continue to be relevant are those that focus on the articulation of the complementarity between civil and political rights and socio-economic rights. For Diakonia, what is important is to support partners in creating linkages between socio-economic rights and civic rights in their programming. Such an approach, based on the realisation that both approaches are mutually reinforcing, will ensure that there is holistic transformation of society and the development of a culture of democracy.

This context analysis points to the fact that women, children and youth are among the most vulnerable groups in Zimbabwe. Diakonia will need to work more closely with organisations that focus on these groups, while Diakonia’s CSO partners will need to ensure that their programmes specifically include/target these groups at all levels in order to help them develop into active citizens with sufficient knowledge, attitude and skills to contribute to their political and social upliftment as well as building a democratic society.

Diakonia emphasises that the ownership and capacity of processes for change should belong to local actors. This requires the incorporation of the views, participation and influence of the rights holders (women, men, boys and girls equally) at the local level. One of the major weaknesses of Zimbabwean CSO’s democratisation project over the last few years has been their focus on national processes at the expense of local processes. The focus on national processes has negatively affected efforts to build democracy and accountability at the community level but also created a disjuncture between local and national politics. Without viable and strong democratic local communities and movements, Zimbabwe’s democratisation project has largely remained elitist and unsustainable. To ensure the viability and sustainability of Zimbabwe’s democratisation processes, there is need for a strategy that aims to build and strengthen democracy and accountability in local communities. Diakonia partnerships will need to incorporate local community organisations working to address the day to day issues affecting different communities. Such a strategy will help to develop resilient communities with strong institutions of transparency and accountability that are instrumental in the achievement of sustained democracy and development. CSOs will need to work more closely with CBOs in local communities in order to influence change through them.

Given the importance of safeguarding peace and stability in order to realise democracy, it is critical for Diakonia to develop its peace-building work and partnerships into programmes that focus on the design and use of inclusive processes for collective action. Diakonia’s work in this area can be enhanced if it creates linkages with government institutions like Organ on National Healing a, Reconciliation and Integration and the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission. What is crucial at this point in time is for Diakonia to support sustainable peace-building initiatives that aim to develop communities’ capacities to maintain their own peace.

Mainstream civics have been event-focused in their programming. There is need to realise that elections are a process and not an event. What they need to do is to move away from this narrow approach towards a broad-based approach that builds democratic values and in so doing locates elections within a democratic cycle. Diakonia programming should focus on building resilient communities and institutions for responsive governance which can sustain themselves in the face of any political and economic change.
9. References


Diakonia (2011) Conflict Analysis for the Zimbabwe Programme, 18 November 2011


Newspapers

‘Makorokoza Clubbed to death by Rival Gang, Bulawayo24 News, 19 May 2014; http://bulawayo24.com


‘EU changes tack on Zimbabwe as Mugabe comes in from the cold’, Business Day (SA), 25 June 2014.


‘Masvingo Residents stage demo against council”, The Herald, 27 May 2014.

‘ZANU PF wins Chegutu Ward 11 By-Election’, The Herald, 2 June 2014

‘Chisumbanje villagers land quandary’ The Herald, 24 April 2014


‘Masowe members run riot, beat up anti riot cops’ Newsday, 30 May 2014.

‘Masvingo Residents in demo, hold Town Clerk Hostage’, Newsday, 26 May 2014.


‘Parly to conduct public hearing on Electoral Amendment Bill’, Newsday, 30 April 2014.


‘War vets, Chinese clash over gold claims’ Newsday, 6 March 2014;


‘Women hit hardest by Hwange Colliery woes’, Southern Eye, 10 December 2013;


‘Unpaid Chitungwiza workers down tools’, New Zimbabwe.com, 3 June 2014

‘Mayor flees as Chitungwiza workers protest unpaid wages’, SW Radio, 4 July 2014

‘Banks hit by panic Withdrawals’ The Financial Gazette, 2 May 2014;


“Clashes at Chisumbanje Ethanol Plant politically motivated’, The Zimbabwean, 6 September 2013


‘Chinamasa Panics over meltdown’, *Zimbabwe Independent*, 22 May 2014.

“Securitization of minerals ‘desperate, risky’ decision’, *Zimbabwe Independent*, 20 June 2014

‘No to mortgaging minerals, *Zimbabwe Mail*, 16 June 2014.
ANNEX 1
INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP GUIDES

INTERVIEW GUIDE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category of respondent (tick all that apply)</td>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>CBO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parliament</td>
<td>Executive Branch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How long have you worked for this particular organisation?

CONTEXT
1. What have been the major political and socio-economic changes in Zimbabwe in the last 18 months and how is the political and economic scenario likely to develop until 2018? (Probe - to what extent have these political and economic shifts in the last 18 months changed the landscape for intervention in the country?)

2. (If not already touched on in the first answer or to probe further) To what extent has the legal framework and/or national planning environment shifted in the past 18 months and how does it affect the rights of citizens and the potential realisation of those rights?

3. What are the key opportunities, challenges and threats to peace and democracy in Zimbabwe’s current and future contexts?

4. (If not already touched or to probe further). Who are the key power brokers and stakeholders in Zimbabwe today and what is the extent of their leveraging capacity? (Probe – how is power maintained?)

5. How do rights-holders and duty-bearers need to be understood in this new context and where are the gaps in terms of need and violation? (Probe – which groups are most vulnerable? Who falls through the cracks?)

RELEVANCE & STRATEGY
6. What are the key priority issues in democracy and peace-building in Zimbabwe today? (Probe - what have been the major shifts in government priorities and policies around issues of democracy and peace-building?)
7. What are the best ways to approach changing attitudes and institutions in the current context? (Probe - What seems to have worked? What hasn't been tried? Are rights-holders open to engagement? Are duty bearers open to engagement?)

8. Have you or your organisation had any engagement with citizens on issues of peace-building or democracy? Do you see any opportunities or spaces for such engagement with citizens?

9. Have you or your organisation had any engagement with the state on issues of peace-building or democracy? Do you see any opportunities or spaces for such engagement with the state?

For Partners/other Funders

10. How relevant is the support provided by Diakonia in terms of the prioritised issues for partners and rights-holders in Zimbabwe?

11. How relevant are the approaches being followed by Diakonia when compared to other role players in the field and what linkages exist between Diakonia's programmes and those of its partners and other stakeholders in the field? (Probe - Have any new and innovative approaches or strategies been developed by others and how adaptive has Diakonia been to these?)

12. How well have Diakonia and their partners responded to the political, economic and social changes we discussed previously? (Probe - To what extent do the activities of Diakonia and its partners fill gaps in the Zimbabwe context? Is there any overlap or duplication?)

In closing - Is there an element of the current context or your engagement with it or a stakeholder within it that you feel we haven't touched on and you would like to mention?
FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

This focus group discussion is comprised of 4 modules of open-ended questions to probe the changing nature of the social, economic and political context in Zimbabwe, the needs and challenges facing marginalised groups within the context and, entry points for constructive engagement.

To note:
There are no right or wrong answers
It is important that everyone must participate. What counts are your views and opinions.
It doesn’t matter if your views differ. Being honest about your ideas is more important. The key is to differ with respect.
We have only 2 hours so we will have to cut discussion short at times, please don’t take it personally
Thank you for your time

START (10 mins) – pair off the group for introductions. Tell you partner – your name, where you work, what you wanted to be when you grew up and your favourite thing about being Zimbabwean. (Or do map, get them to draw where they work and tell us who they work for, what they wanted to be etc)

SECTION I (15 mins)- perceptions of life in Zimbabwe since the GPA and the 2013 elections. The year 2013 marked the first elections since the Global Political Agreement and the formation of a government of national unity. I want you to think about the past 5 years and how things have evolved

13. Looking back at 2009, do you think things have got better, have stayed the same, or have got worse? Why?
14. What about changes that have affected you and your organisation in particular. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the changes in your work-life/the context for your work since 2009?
[For non-partner session: What about changes that have affected you in particular. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the changes in your life since 2009?]
15. How have the changes we have discussed compared to what you expected to happen?
16. Looking forward, what do you think the situation will be like in 2016?

SECTION II (20 mins) – Community
 Suppose your area has a problem with accessing clean water.
 – What would people like you do about it? (Take it to the local councillor or a community organisation or sort it out yourselves?)
 – Now suppose one of your neighbours began to sell alcohol from their house and this caused noise and made the area less safe for women. What would you do about it?

In some areas people join organisations that help to solve problems in the community. These include residents associations, street committees or neighbourhood watch.
 – Do you think these organisations generally do a good job? Why/why not? (Probe efficacy)
Why do people join these organisations? Why do other people not join?

What should the role of people in the community be – how can people become more involved in the community?

[Probe – what stops people getting involved? Fear?]

SECTION III (15 mins) – EMPOWERMENT

Split into 5 groups – identify a stakeholder for your group/ a rights-holder/ a marginalised person (options could include - child head of a household; young university graduate who has just tested positive for HIV; a woman who was a victim of gender based abuse during 2008 violence; a young member of a militia).

Who has power over you? What do you have power over?

What does empower mean to you?

Share outcomes with the group.

- What mechanisms do you know of that can empower people? How do we act to change power relations in our personal lives, our communities or our nations?

SECTION IV (15 mins) – ACTING FOR CHANGE [PARTNERS]

We would like to get your opinions on the work your organisations do to empower and assist citizens and decision-makers. In particular, we are interested in how Diakonia's support enables that work and how the work undertaken with their support enhances the broader work of your organisations. To start, can I ask you to take 2 mins to think for yourself:

- What role do you play in your organisation? How does it add to the whole?

Then, moving to think about the support given to your organisation

- What is your experience of Diakonia support and how it has impacted your work?
- Now thinking about your organisation as a whole, impact of Diakonia work?
- Has the organisation taken time, in the last 12 months, to reflect on the situation post 2013 elections? Have you changed the way you are working or your focus as a result?

SECTION IV (15 mins) – ACTING FOR CHANGE [NON-PARTNERS]

We would like to get your opinions on the work your organisations do to empower and assist citizens and decision-makers. In particular, we are interested in what you have changed about what you do in the last 12 months or what you would change about what you do given the current political and economic situation. To start, can I ask you to take 2 mins to think for yourself:

- What role do you play in your organisation? How does it add to the whole?

Then, moving to think about the support given to your organisation

- What is your experience of support from funders and donors and how it has impacted the work of your organisation? And of civil society as a whole?
- Has the organisation taken time, in the last 12 months, to reflect on the situation post 2013 elections? Have you changed the way you are working or your focus as a result?
## ANNEX 2

### LIST OF INTERVIEWS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diakonia Partners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sithembile</td>
<td>Mpofu</td>
<td>CCMT</td>
<td>Harare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas</td>
<td>Tigere</td>
<td>SCMZ</td>
<td>Harare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netty</td>
<td>Musanhi</td>
<td>Musasa Project</td>
<td>Harare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucy</td>
<td>Mazingi</td>
<td>YETT</td>
<td>Harare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Godwin</td>
<td>Phiri</td>
<td>Intsha.com</td>
<td>Bulawayo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danisa</td>
<td>Kumalo</td>
<td>DHPI</td>
<td>Bulawayo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph</td>
<td>Hungwe</td>
<td>DHPI</td>
<td>Bulawayo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumisani</td>
<td>Ngwenya</td>
<td>Grace to Heal</td>
<td>Bulawayo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rasheed</td>
<td>Mahiya</td>
<td>Heal Zimbabwe Trust</td>
<td>Harare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patricia</td>
<td>Kasiyamhuru</td>
<td>ZIMCODD</td>
<td>Harare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jestina</td>
<td>Mukoko</td>
<td>ZPP</td>
<td>Harare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Donors & Peer Organisations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fambai</td>
<td>Ngirande</td>
<td>ICCO (Act Alliance)</td>
<td>Harare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juliana</td>
<td>Manjengwa</td>
<td>Heks Epper (Act Alliance)</td>
<td>Harare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda</td>
<td>Kalenga</td>
<td>European Union</td>
<td>Harare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blessing</td>
<td>Muchemwa</td>
<td>SIDA</td>
<td>Harare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucina</td>
<td>Machanzi</td>
<td>Oxfam International</td>
<td>Harare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fadzai</td>
<td>Chatiza</td>
<td>Oxfam International</td>
<td>Harare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnus</td>
<td>Carlquist</td>
<td>Swedish Embassy</td>
<td>Harare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revai</td>
<td>Makanje</td>
<td>UN Women</td>
<td>Harare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Civil Society Stakeholders
Virginia Muwanigwa Women’s Coalition Harare
Kuda Chitsike RAU Harare
Rumbidzai Dube RAU Harare
Reverend Cele ECLF Bulawayo
Bishop Ambrose Moyo ECLF Bulawayo
Joy Mabenge Crisis Zimbabwe Coalition Harare

Independent Analysts
Brian Raftopoulos Solidarity Peace Trust Cape Town
Ibbo Mugadza SAPES Harare
Teresa Masunungure Gender Expert Harare
Eldred Sachikonye Political Economist Harare
Lloyd Ngwenya Gender Expert Bulawayo
Thandekile Chitiga Development Consultant Harare

Political Party and Commission Representatives
ZANU PF Women’s League Official Harare
ZANU PF Deputy Minister Harare
Priscilla Misihairabwi-Mushonga (Sec. Gen, MDC) Harare

Diakonia Staff (Regional & International)
Anna Akerlund Stockholm
Annika Andersson Stockholm
Luz Baazstrup Nairobi
Elvira Kamau Nairobi
Regis Mtutu Harare
Grace Mugebe Harare
Sostina Takure Harare
Wonder Phiri Harare

Focus Groups
Women working for Partner Organisations (5) Harare
Mixed staff working for Partner Organisations (6 men, 5 women) Harare
Mixed group young people working for Civil Society Non-Partner Organisations (4 women, 6 men) Harare
Partner and non-partner organisations (4 men, 2 women) Bulawayo