
URBAN GOVERNANCE AND THE EFFECTIVE DELIVERY AND MANAGEMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES IN URBAN AREAS IN ZIMBABWE: AN APPRAISAL OF WATER AND SEWERAGE SERVICES DELIVERED IN RUWA

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The effective delivery and management of infrastructure services is a prerequisite for productive investment and economic growth in urban areas. Effective delivery can be achieved when service provision responds to effective demand and all residents have access to services provided. Efficient management ensures that the level and mix of services provided match the effective demand of all consumers (Dillinger, 1993). However, if well-functioning, sustainable environments are to be achieved, efficiency and effectiveness are not the only objectives of the process of urban service delivery; of equal importance is poverty alleviation and macro-economic stability.

Access to and the quality of urban services in most towns in Zimbabwe have been deteriorating, constraining productivity and the government's efforts to reduce poverty and improve urban living conditions. This has been exacerbated by poor management of municipal services and the structure of central-local fiscal relations, which affects the adequacy of resources or incentives for improving infrastructure and services (World Bank, 2000).

In all countries there are a number of players who have a role to play in the management of urban services; these include local and central government agencies, the private sector, non-governmental organisations and the community, but the functional responsibility for this management mostly falls to the local government level. Consequently there is a complex network of relationships and decision-making entities that affect the actual management of urban services. This relates to the interplay of activities

between the various organisations and institutions involved in its delivery, with those who receive the services.

As Churchill (cited in McGill, 1998: 464) states urban management "no longer refers only to the systems of control but rather, to sets of behavioural relationships, the process through which the myriad activities of the inhabitants interact with each other and with the governance of the city". The fundamental features of good management are efficiency, transparency, accountability and participation, and these are also essential features of good governance, which is now viewed as an important approach to managing development within towns and cities in Africa.

The central focus of this paper is to examine the way in which urban services are delivered and managed in Zimbabwe, through an appraisal of the water and sewerage services provided in the town of Ruwa. This will highlight the factors or constraints that affect delivery, management and levels of governance of urban service delivery in Zimbabwe.

ISSUES OF URBAN MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA— WITH REFERENCE TO ZIMBABWE

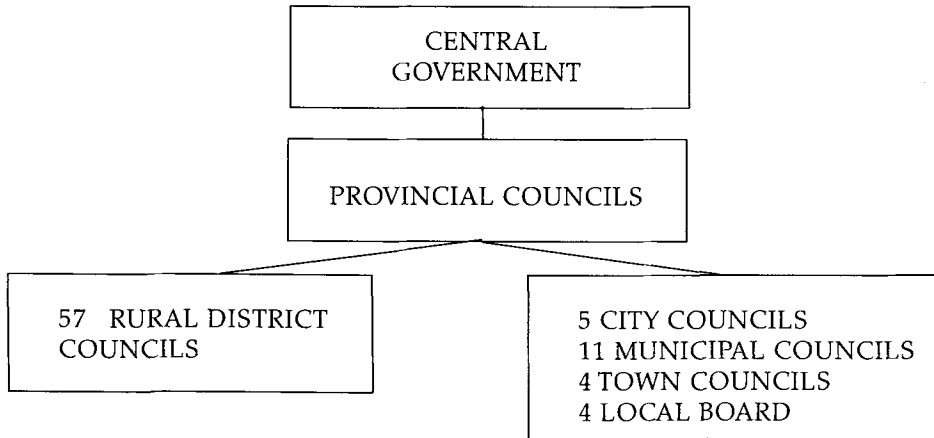
In Africa the concept of urban management, and in particular 'good' urban management and governance, has been compromised by Africa's increased marginalisation and impoverishment (Post, 1997). Despite increasing emphasis by donors e.g. World Bank and UNDP, on the effective management of urban projects or resources and public services management of urban growth, largely through the Urban Management Programme (UMP) (1989-95), the trend in most towns and cities has been that of an increasing crisis to provide services and attract new investment (Wekwete, 1996).

Part of the dilemma of urban management in Africa stems from the prevailing political climate that in many countries is characterised by authoritarian personalistic, clientilistic and corrupt practices which dilute or distort attempts to reform (Post, 1997). Also the lack of effective management has occurred because of the influence of centre-local relationships inherited from the colonial era and which have changed very little through the many years of independence of most African countries.

Zimbabwe is a typical example of an African country that remains with a system of government that it inherited from its colonial power, Britain, 20 years after independence. Town and city management is part and parcel of the public sector management system and operates through elected and appointed local government representatives who have the political and administrative mandate to provide and manage social and physical infrastructure services (Wekwete, 1996).

Figure 1

Intergovernmental Relations in Zimbabwe



Traditionally government in conjunction with local authorities has provided urban services through the Urban Council's Act (29:15,1996). This has given them powers to plan and administer the assets and services provided within municipal areas. These include: the provision of water supplies, sewerage systems, roads and transport-related infrastructure, low cost housing and housing related infrastructure, street lighting, health, and educational and welfare services. Urban management is predominantly operated through fiscal instruments, statutory controls and regulations with the Ministry of Local Government and National Housing monitoring the performance of councils.

Failure to provide services is related to the problems local authorities are experiencing as a result of rapid population growth, rising unemployment and lack of investment in the formal sector and stagnation or decrease of municipal budgets. The rate of population growth in the country in general and in urban areas in particular is higher than economic growth.

This has impacted severely on the resource base of municipalities who finance their services largely from user charges and levies. In addition, local government has been charged with taking on extra responsibilities from central government, i.e., health and education, as a result of initiatives to decentralise responsibilities in line with various policies put in place by the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) introduced in 1991. This has placed additional strain on the already inelastic resource base of most urban local authorities.

Financial Management

Financial management is an important feature of urban management; and, in Africa, centre-local relationships impact significantly on the management of local government financial resources. In Zimbabwe "over the years the main urban centres (city councils) have acquired significant autonomy in performing their functions, whilst the smaller authorities (such as Ruwa) have less capacity to perform theirs because of their inability to generate local revenue" (Wekwete, 1994 : 39).

In this respect larger cities can fund their capital budgets by raising loans from central government or the Local Authority Pension Fund, but only two local authorities, Harare and Bulawayo, are allowed to borrow on the open market and can issue stocks and bonds. Also they can obtain state grants and loans for services like low-income housing, health and education. The smaller urban centres, which have a limited ability to raise their own resources, rely more on state loans and grants for all capital development and some services. The grants and loans for housing and infrastructure are on a full cost recovery basis.

The ability of a local authority to generate revenue is indicative of its self-sufficiency. Revenue is derived from utility and service tariffs, rates (property taxes) rents, licences, fees. Except for the rate account, all other services, which include the water and sewer accounts, housing accounts and education and health accounts, are financed by tariffs, flat monthly charges and rent levied. In general the principle of cost recovery is applied to each account where users are obliged to pay for all costs for operation of services for benefits received. In relation to some services e.g. water and sewerage, the approach is modified whereby beneficiaries may have to pay increased tariffs due to the large scale of a development which would have large external costs. In such cases costs would be recovered through a comprehensive plan for revenue collection.

Table 1

Rate of Population Growth 1965-1993

Zimbabwe	1965-70	1970-80	1980-90	1990-93	Ratio
Population Growth	3.2%	3.0%	3.15	3.2%	0.97
GDP Growth (Real)	6.8%	1.5%	2.9%	0.3%	0.4
Real Per Capita Income Growth	3.6%	-1.5%	-0.3%	-3.0%	-0.08

(Source: Zimconsult, 1997)

Table 2 shows revenues for all local authorities, in total, increased by 16 percent from 1994 to 1995, decreased 7 percent between 1995 and 1996 and increased again between 1996 and 1997. The largest single operating revenue source is user charges (fees) for services rendered by local authorities, these contributed to 35 percent of total revenue in 1997. Of interest is the local taxes which are mostly made up of property taxes these rose to 21.4 percent of total other revenue in 1997(World Bank, 2000).

Generally expenditure patterns for all local authorities show that recurrent expenditure levels grow much faster than revenue levels. Thus local governments are finding it difficult to provide efficient and cost-effective services to the public due to funding problems. Harare City Council showed that recurrent expenditure grew almost 82 percent from 1995 and 1997 whilst revenue grew only 50 percent for the same period. Ruwa Local Board recurrent expenditure grew 6.5 times from 1994 to 1997 whereas revenue only grew 3 times for the same period.

Table 3 shows that expenditure for local authorities are concentrated on recurrent activities (general public services and administration) this constitutes a major part of total expenditure. Wages are a major part of recurrent costs of all local authorities (36 percent in 1997) and are supplemented by government grants for education and health personnel salaries. The rest of recurrent expenditures are spread across the other sectors in the provision of services. This reflects the extent to which councils are able to provide an efficient service to the public (World Bank, 2000).

Table 2

Local Government Revenues (excluding loans) from 1994 to 1997.

Type	94	% of Total Revenue	95	% of Total revenue	96	% of Total revenue	97	% of Total revenue
Shared taxes	0	0	0	-	0	-	0	-
Local (own taxes)	359 000 000	16.9	508 000 000	21.9	519 000 000	22.6	630 000 000	21.4
User charges, fees	480 952 410	22.6	717 353 731	31	917 000 000	39.9	1 025 000 000	34.8
Other revenues	618 047 590	29	465 646 269	20.1	139 000 000	6.0	183 000 000	6.2
Transfers from CG	313 393 000	14.7	377 077 717	16.3	507 691 352	22.1	979 774 000	33.3
Total revenue (Excl. loans)	1 771 393 000	83.2	2 068 077 717	89.3	2 082 691 352	90.6	2 817 774 000	95.7
All loans	357 200 000	16.8	248 700 000	10.7	215 000 000	9.4	127 964 797	4.3
Total revenue	2 128 593 000		2 316 777 717		2 297 691 352		2 945 738 797	

Source: World Bank 2000.

Table 3

Local Government Recurrent Expenditures (Z\$) from 1994 to 1997.

Type	94	%	95	%	96	%	97	%
General public services (administration etc)	557 058 305	38	778 435 150	36	509 160 978	25	703 710 807	29
Education, (primary and secondary)	9 654 371	0.8	21 892 025	1	12 644 365	0.6	18 021 191	0.8
Health	42 221 145	3	53 725 959	3	70 331 875	3.5	95 604 948	4
Social security and welfare	17 444 951	1	33 508 635	2	23 555 582	1.2	27 064 488	1.2
Housing	94 177 158	6	153 440 059	7	215 213 917	10.7	22 316 573	10
Community amenities, Sanitation (& Waste Management)	303 594 644	21	473 036 551	22	518 818 359	25.7	673 320 509	28
Community amenities, Sanitation (& Waste Management)	124 055 880	9	165 737 346	7.9	222 355 582	11	282 634 696	11.9
Recreational, cultural, religious affairs (including liquor)	217 183 289	15	246 809 867	11	204 609 757	10	111 587 512	5
Economic services, transport (excl. roads)	82 091 432	6	223 915 725	10	238 332 842	12	233 850 797	10
Economic services, roads	1 436 370	0.2	2 961 851	0.1	4 313 922	0.3	2 271 736	0.1
Total	1 448 917 545		2 153 463 168		2 019 337 179	-	2 370 383 258	0
Of which wages	431 000 000	30	643 997 004	30	706 990 702	35	862 487 986	36

Source: World Bank, 2000.

Part of the problem of reduced revenue levels can be attributed to the dominance of central government in total public sector expenditure. Dillinger (1993, p. 16) notes that "the local share of total public sector expenditure in developing countries is well below 10 percent. This is in contrast to the G5 countries, where the local share ranges from 17 percent (France) to 33 percent (Japan)." Zimbabwe is typical of other developing countries whereby total public sector expenditure for the period 1994-1997 averaged 7.2 percent. This contradicts the trend whereby local authorities are assuming greater responsibility for services such as health and education, but without the requisite increased funding to meet these responsi-

bilities This has created hardships in many local authorities where they are finding it difficult to fund decentralised functions from their current revenue levels. This has resulted in less investment in capital development projects, (World Bank, 2000).

The collection of local tax revenue for local development has also decreased in recent years. This has been affected by the macro-economic situation in Zimbabwe which has negatively affected productivity and investment by the private sector and on the ability of central government to make timely and sufficient transfers of funds and subsidies to local authorities. This in turn impacts negatively on local authority service provision where local revenues are dependent on transfers from central government. Debt is also a major problem, especially from central government. This often sets off a cycle of mutual default so that local governments can no longer service their debts to other providers e.g. in Ruwa water supply has been cut off by the City of Harare through the failure of central government to pay for bulk water supply.

Another negative feature of the management of municipal revenue levels is their degree of regulation. In Zimbabwe in terms of the Urban Councils Act (29:15, 1996) the Minister of Local Government and National Housing has to approve some aspects of local authority budgets, especially when they relate to tariff and supplementary charges for high-density areas, where the majority of the lower-income groups live. The effect of this directive on local authority finances can be significant; for example, in Harare, where it is estimated that high density areas hold 70-80 percent of the total city population, this implies that any change to tariffs may have a significant influence on revenues collected.

The situation is exacerbated when there are delays in the approval of increases on tariffs, or local authorities are required to reduce increases under pressure from central government. This can throw the whole budgetary process into jeopardy. The City of Harare has been badly affected by this situation, as for the past two years it has not had its budget approved and has had to make do with tariffs and charges that are seriously out of step with costs and inflationary increases on services.

Another aggravating factor is that resources are also misused and often not even mobilised for the public good. There is a correlation between the level of development and the ability to assess, mobilise and employ resources for the public good. Municipal budgets that are already critically low are often managed and spent unwisely and inefficiently.

Figure 2

Traditional Urban Management Model vs Public-Private Sector Model

Model	Traditional Urban Management Responsibilities (Management Variable)	Public-Private Sector Responsibilities (Management Variable)
Central Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political and Administrative control of local government - Provision of grants and loans for all major utility provisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political and Administrative control of local government - Limited provision of grants and loans - Emphasis more on coordination
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development control particularly of land - Infrastructure development and management - Preparation and approval of master plans 	
Local Government, (Municipalities, Metropolitan Governments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Directly elected or appointed representatives constituting a decision making body (local government) - Direct provision of social and physical infrastructure - Maintenance of services and utilities - Development control; preparation of master and local plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formally more decentralised - Provision and maintenance of basic services - Development control; preparation of coordination plans - Limited direct provision of services
Non-governmental Sector (NGO) & Private Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local level interventions - Social services provision - Housing, sit and service schemes - Refugees and rehabilitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased local level interventions - Social services provision - Focus on poverty; informal activities; credit - Refugees and rehabilitation

Source: Wekwete, 1996 p.9 & 10

The role of politics and central and local government

The issue of local government autonomy remains a major issue in resolving the nature and character of urban management. This has seen local governments being called on to expand their management responsibilities, which require a redefinition of centre-local relationships and the inclusion of a variety of other actors in the process. (Wekwete, 1996).

The traditional urban management model used in developing countries has central and local government as the dominant actors in the provision of services, with other agencies and the community playing a limited role. The lack of adequate resources at central government level and the move away from a centralised model of government through the introduction of economic structural adjustment programmes led to the development of the public-private sector management model.

In Zimbabwe up to the 1990s few urban management problems were experienced by towns and cities in the functioning and delivery of services. However, all major urban centres continued to record high levels of growth, with Harare growing at an average rate of 6.05 percent between 1969 and 1992. The 1990s showed more deterioration as a result of this growth and macroeconomic factors which were characterised by rising unemployment, rising prices, low investment, growing levels of corruption and poor governance (Mubvami, 2000).

In order to strengthen the capacities of local levels of government there was a move towards the public-private sector model of governance. Thus central government undertook a number of initiatives—the improvement of financial accountability, human resource capability and infrastructure, through World Bank Urban 1 and 2 assisted programmes, decentralisation of functions, although with limited provision of grants and loans, promotion of public-private partnerships, and promotion of community based initiatives. Despite these initiatives, urban services have continued to deteriorate, exacerbated by the decentralisation of decision making under a one-party system that largely focuses on deconcentrating authority to lower levels. This tends to encourage corruption in the functioning of the urban economy (Wekwete, 1996).

To improve management of urban areas, moves were made to change the structure and function of urban municipalities and the calibre of leadership. In line with other developing countries, Zimbabwe in 1995 amended the Urban Councils Act to introduce the office of the executive mayor to head the council. This redefined the political and administrative relationships that prevailed, as significant powers were given to the mayor. A new executive committee was established around the mayor with powers to override council decisions (Mubvami, 2000).

This has far-reaching consequences for the management of urban areas. The power base has shifted from the council to the mayor and his executive committee. Of significance is the role of the executive mayor, who is usually a political figure and therefore tends to concentrate on achieving short term goals in order to ensure political survival. For example, the change has given mayors powers to transfer funds from one account to another; in Harare millions of dollars were diverted, under instruction of the executive committee chaired by the mayor, from the water account to the controversial building of the 'mayoral mansion'. This resulted in a water crisis when contractors working on pumps were not paid (Mubvami 2000).

At independence, the system of local government included an elected council as the decision-making body with a mayor who was largely a ceremonial figurehead chosen by councillors among themselves. Decision making by council was vested in committees with specific sectoral responsibilities, specified in terms of the Urban Councils Act 1980. The power of the executive was derived from heads of departments who had full jurisdiction over their areas. The executive was led by the town clerk. This model worked for Zimbabwe, as it had important checks and balances necessary for good governance (Mubvami, 2000).

Under the old structure of local government there was a high degree of involvement by councillors in decision making; this created collective responsibility and therefore accountability amongst councillors. Under the new system accountability is compromised as councillors tend to lose interest in council affairs because they are merely rubber stamping the decisions of the executive. This results in poor outputs. Increased political interference has rendered many cities and towns unmanageable; for example, budgets have to be referred to the ruling political party. This has resulted in dissolving of councils around the country (for example, Harare) and replacing them with commissioners because they are not working in the interests of their people.

Central government control is also evident in many developing countries over the recruitment of local personnel and the number of positions that each local authority can maintain, their grades, salaries and processes for dismissal and appeal. Zimbabwe is no exception to this. It amended the Urban Councils Act to introduce the Local Government Board, which now manages staff recruitment, discipline and human resource development in general. This board has resulted in unnecessary delays in recruitment of top staff of councils and through its control over salary scales and conditions of service compromises the recruitment of well qualified personnel from the private sector. This impacts on the management and delivery of services as it gives increased powers to the ruling party to manipulate recruitment, which is not always in the best interests of the electorate.

From the preceding discussion it is clear that the problems and constraints experienced by communities in urban service delivery are often not the sole responsibility of local government, or municipal authorities. In Zimbabwe in particular the performance of local government is influenced strongly by central government regulatory and financial controls. Therefore an appraisal of water and sewerage services must take cognisance of this relationship and the level of control in the system. In addition, the system of management must be appraised in terms of the organisational structures in place and how resources are used to respond to the needs arising from urban growth.

In order to determine the level of efficiency of the services provided McGill (1995, : 340) says that “the acid test of efficiency in the management of cities is the state of the infrastructure provision. If there is a “bottom line” to the urban management process, it is argued not to be the narrow perception of a council’s financial performance. That merely illustrates the internal financial condition without reference to the council’s impact on its development environment, its town or city. Thus the need is to recognise the concept of infrastructure provision to support urban and subsequently national economic development. The converse is the consequence of the infrastructure not being provided”.

In order to determine effectiveness of a local authorities urban management Davey(1993) identifies the following issues that need to be evaluated:

- Its responsiveness to the needs of its community. This will be assessed through policies and programmes in place to provide equitable access to basic services to all residents.
- Its ability to plan the development of its urban area and services ahead or at least in pace with demand.
- Its use of resources, financial, human and physical, through budgeting, project appraisal, personnel management and programme execution.
- Financial viability based on a council’s ability to execute operational programmes and activities in a cost-effective manner. This will translate into accumulated surpluses and deficits on the budget. Successful management would be having surpluses after the infrastructure has been provided. Any backlog in provision or a lack of services or intermittent services would indicate failure in the management system (McGill, 1995).

In addition, the level of interaction of a local authority with other agencies and service providers, both formal and informal, in the development process and its interaction with the community in service provision will be assessed. The level of the interaction will indicate the extent to which the local authority is responsive to the needs of its residents and how accountable it is to the community it is serving.

MUNICIPAL WATER AND SEWERAGE SUPPLY AND MANAGEMENT

The adequacy of water and sanitation infrastructure is a key element in national development in terms of diversifying production, expanding trade, coping with population growth, reducing poverty or improving environmental conditions. Developing countries (including Zimbabwe) are characterised by poor quality or collapsing infrastructure. (World Bank, 2000). The national policy on water and sanitation in urban areas in Zimbabwe requires municipalities to provide all low-income residences with individual water, sewerage and electricity supply, for example in Bulawayo in 1990, 96 percent of low-income households had individual water and waterborne sanitation (Nel and Berry 1992, : 414). However, most of the urban infrastructure is old, and the handling capacity of both water and sewerage services is now overstrained because of rapid population growth. There is need to replace existing infrastructure, which has outlived its designed life span, and where upgrading and maintenance is needed this is affected by lack of information on the size of pipes and their capacities in some local authorities. In addition there are constraints to investment in new infrastructure because in many local authorities where returns on water and sewerage services are supposed to make a profit and be self sustaining, profits from these accounts are often used to subsidise other loss-making accounts like health and social services.

Infrastructure provision is influenced by a variety of factors internal and external to urban local authorities. The regulatory framework defines who should plan and decide, and the degree of freedom to execute duties and raise resources for the plans or the projects. Whilst local authorities are responsible for providing sewerage within their areas of jurisdiction, the shared responsibility for water provision between ministries gives rise to serious operational problems which are evident especially in small towns, for example, Ruwa.

Institutional Background

There are many ministries and government departments involved in water and sewerage provision, these are:

- 1. Ministry of Rural Resources and Water Development (MRRWD)**

This ministry is the custodian of the Water Act and seeks to provide for planning of optimum development and utilization of water resources of Zimbabwe. It assumes responsibility for the financing and development of bulk water resources (dams only) for the municipal and agricultural sectors, through the Department of Water Resources (DWR). The DWR supervises and approves designs of dams constructed by local authorities in partnership with the private sector. In terms of the Water Act (1998) all municipali-

ties must apply to the ministry for bulk water supply and water rights. Most supply projects are initiated by municipalities, which are responsible for projecting needs, demands and consumption patterns and for their bulk infrastructure and conservation of water. The Ministry is responsible and accountable for any inadequacies in bulk water supply.

2. Ministry of Local Government and National Housing

This is the parent ministry for local authorities. It enforces the provisions of the Urban Councils Act (1996) which gives local authorities powers to:

- plan, develop and maintain water and sewerage infrastructure within their areas of jurisdiction,
- enter into agreements for the purchase and sale of water and any other thing necessary in connection with the maintenance of the supply of water.

3. Urban Councils/Local Authorities

The 1998 Water Act made provision for local authorities to be catchment councils and plan for the utilisation and development of water in accordance with the provisions of the Urban Councils Act; for example, Harare City Council prepared its own Water Master Plan. Urban Councils also provide and plan for their sewerage works and reticulation in terms of the Urban Councils Act.

4. Ministry of Health

It is responsible for borehole drilling complementing DWR; its operations are mainly rural.

5. Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA)

The Water Act 1998, came into effect in January 2000, and places river systems under the control of a catchment council supervised by ZINWA (Water Act 1998, part II). Water development requires the permission of this council. The MRRWD can confer powers of a catchment council to a local authority after considering their financial resources and consulting MLGNH (Water Act 1998, sections 60 and 66). This gives powers to local authorities to plan for their own water development under the supervision of ZINWA. ZINWA has not been established yet, but once established it will undertake most of the current functions of the DWR and the River Authority and will coordinate and supervise all the partners involved in catchment planning. DWR is currently responsible for policy issues of water development.

6. Sewerage Regulation

Central government plays a regulatory role over sewerage services through the MRRWD, Ministry of Health and the Minister of Tourism, Environment and Natural Resources. The monitoring of the quality of sewage discharged is regulated under the Water Act.

7. Non Governmental Organisations

These are mainly involved in providing funding for infrastructure projects:

- In rural areas they are : European Union, Care International, Norad, SIDA, UNICEF, DFID and the Japanese
- In urban areas:
World Bank (Urban I & II), DFID, Japanese and Africa Development Bank.

Source of Funds

Where municipalities wish to develop their own bulk water resources they have to get funding from central government through the Public Service Investment Programme (PSIP) or they may be given ministerial approval to borrow from the domestic market in terms of the Urban Councils Act. Where foreign funding is involved, central government must provide credit guarantees for municipalities. In terms of the Urban Councils Act large-scale water projects are undertaken by the MRRWD. For small towns the DWR is responsible for building and contracting out works.

The water account is the main source of income for most local authorities and water tariffs are based on the actual consumption per cubic metre. However full cost recovery is made difficult because of; high inflation, which affects the cost of treating and distributing water; leaking and burst pipes, which leads to loss of treated water; it is difficult to determine the amount of water used by unmetered users because a large number of households share one tap (World Bank, 2000).

The sewerage account also provides substantial amounts to urban councils. Sewerage tariffs are divided into fixed and variable fees. Again full cost recovery is difficult because of inflationary increases and ageing and overloaded systems that are constantly breaking down. To develop sewerage services local authorities use external loans to finance new projects or central government may assist councils to access bilateral and multilateral finance such as that provided by the World Bank Urban II programme. Otherwise councils are wholly responsible for capital expenditures as well as operation and maintenance.

Regulation of water tariffs: Tariffs for bulk water generation are set by DWR for all the dams owned by them and for any other public water body, such as a river. DWR operates a 'blend price' tariff for bulk water, which is intended to ensure that water is supplied at the same price irrespective of individual or water station cost of producing the water. Those stations that are viable therefore subsidise those that are not. Where DWR also treats and sells water directly it also sets end user tariffs. Most urban local authorities buy bulk water (raw water) from DWR and treat it before water is sold to the consumers. The tariff set for final delivered water is the responsibility of the local authority.

Tariff setting: Tariffs are set for both water and sewerage by local authorities with approval from MLGNH, except with water where DWR supplies directly to consumers, in which case DWR sets the tariffs. Costs for capital works, operations and maintenance are included in tariff structures. Local authorities are responsible for cost recovery, but their capacity to fulfill this responsibility depends on approval of the required tariff levels by MLGNH.

All local authorities set tariffs by subtracting the estimated current revenue from the estimated current expenditure (this always gives a negative answer) and then bring the budget up to a surplus position by multiplying past years performance by a percentage in order to get the new tariff. If the increase is more than 35 percent it requires Ministerial approval. This is further complicated by the community that always resists any increase proposed; the combined effect is a subsidised tariff. At present consumers are only paying 50 percent of the development costs.

This lack of autonomy in the setting of tariffs is one of the most critical constraints on improving utility performance in urban water and sewerage supply as government-set tariffs do not reflect the full cost recovery of service provision resulting in significantly subsidised tariffs. Therefore, despite the independence that large and small municipalities have for planning and developing their own water and sewerage infrastructure, in practice they are dependent on central government for funding. Thus central government strongly influences the nature of investment in municipal bulk supplies for water and for sewerage works as it determines which plans actually get implemented and when.

Operation and Maintenance

For large cities and towns, for example Harare, Bulawayo and Gweru, the transmission of raw water from the source to the treatment works is the responsibility of the particular local authority. For local boards and other smaller stations and growth points transmission is done by the DWR or other local authority, as is the case with Ruwa, which buys bulk treated water from Harare. However, the local board is responsible for billing and collecting revenue. Thus the local authority deals with consumer relations and complaints, even in situations in which the DWR is the major supplier. The local authority therefore is the first line of fire and has to take complaints from the consumers.

The operation and maintenance of primary infrastructure and distribution networks is the responsibility of the local authority. The responsibility for the extraction from the source lies with the DWR, which undertakes maintenance works in some urban local authorities and in all rural local authorities. In urban areas, where the DWR provides treated water directly into the settlement it is responsible for maintenance works, for example, DWR offers maintenance works to Norton's low density suburbs where it provides water. In Ruwa, it is not responsible for maintenance because it only owns the connecting line with the city of Harare, which provides water to Ruwa.

The DWR does not have programmes for maintenance work, rather it responds to problems. Similarly urban local authorities do not have opera-

tion and maintenance programmes and are not proactive but tend to react to problems as they arise. Another problem is the shortage of engineers in some local authorities.

Constraints in the System of Delivery

The main constraints to delivery of services include the lack of autonomy in the setting of tariffs, which impacts on the ability of local authorities to ensure full cost recovery of their services; dependency on central government for funding of capital infrastructure projects and the influence of centre-local relations which determine what infrastructure is developed and when. It is also unfortunate that operational and maintenance programmes are not available in many local authorities nor is there adequate manpower to manage these networks. In addition some councils lack information on existing infrastructure networks.

The main constraints, however, relate largely to water supply, an area in which there are several pieces of legislation and operating authorities. This impacts on the overall development of water resources, which remain fragmented and uncoordinated, and this in turn inhibits effective management. In this respect shared responsibility for water provision between ministries gives rise to serious operational problems because of a lack of clear policy with regard to financing, demand management, subsidy, pricing mechanisms, planning framework, supportive legislation, etc. This also encourages political interference in the management of resources.

Of significance is the new Water Act, which empowers ZINWA to manage or supervise water development in urban areas, but no mechanisms exist for it to report to MLGNH; for example DWR is willing to sell its non-viable schemes like Norton and Ruwa. However, this is being delayed because it is not in line with MLGNH policies. This indicates that there are a number of underlying differences between the two ministries about how water resource development should take place. In addition there is a conflict of interest between the role of the DWR and the potential role and obligations of local authorities. Thus the DWR retains the power to control water supply development but without accountability for the consequences of failure to supply the services, which is borne by councils.

Another consequence of these differences is the lack of clear government policy regarding the introduction of the private sector into the water sector. In this regard no local authority has involved the private sector in the delivery of water and sewerage services. Some initiatives have been taken in this regard, for example, the City of Gweru has signed a memorandum of agreement with a private firm for the operation of water and sewerage services but at this time there is no legislation that can accommodate this involvement.

CASE STUDY: RUWA LOCAL BOARD

This case study area has been chosen to illustrate the variety of issues that affect governance and the effective delivery of water and sewerage services in urban areas in Zimbabwe.

Background

Ruwa is a fast-growing satellite town located about 30km east of Harare within the Goromonzi Rural District Council area (Mashonaland East Province). Ruwa was established in 1986 through the initiative of Mashonaland Holdings Private Ltd. The centre covers an area of 3188.6 hectares, of which 90 percent is owned by Mashonaland Holdings with the remaining 10 percent owned by Ruwa Local Board (RLB) and Goromonzi Rural District Council.

The Ruwa Local Board is an urban local authority established in terms of the Urban Councils Act Chapter 29.15 It came into existence on 19th October 1990 for the purpose of administering Ruwa, after it was excised from the administration of the then Bromley-Ruwa Rural Council and conferred growth point status in 1986 in terms of the Sales Tax Act. Previously the Board comprised of appointed representatives from the community and officials from the Ministry of Local Government and National Housing, as provided for by the Urban Councils Act. However, Ruwa is in a transitional period as it is being upgraded to a town council and in August 1999 urban council elections resulted in the election of board members by the residents of Ruwa.

Ruwa Local Board has the following committees: finance, health and housing and environmental. These committees have delegated responsibilities. For purposes of management the board has the following departments: administration and housing, works engineering and housing, treasury and liquor. The local board employs 82 people and the top officer is the administrative secretary. It is important to point out that the Minister of Local Government and National Housing has almost unlimited powers to control the local board in terms of budget and tariff increments approval

Ruwa Local Board's mission statement makes a commitment to guiding and facilitating the development of Ruwa in the provision of the following services: infrastructure, housing, water and sanitation, education and health, community and welfare. However, the board is constrained from providing adequate infrastructure by the shortage of plant and equipment, financial resources and manpower.

Population

Ruwa is one of the fastest-growing urban settlements in Zimbabwe. The 1997 population estimate of approximately 18 000 for the centre is anti-

Table 4

Summary of Growth of Ruwa's Housing Provision

Year	Population	House Holds	Supply of Stands	Rate of Supply Per Year	Deficit Per Year	Ideal Rate of Supply	Envisaged Supply in 5 yrs.	Accumulated Deficit in 15 yrs.
1997	18450	3690	3690	462	250	712	3690	3750
2013	53400	10680	10680	712	-	712	10680	-

Source: Ruwa Local Board

pated to reach approximately 53 000 people by the year 2013 (Local Development Plan). This will have a great impact on the provision of housing and services in general. Table 4 indicates that the board will be unable to provide enough housing to satisfy the centre's growing demand. In addition, the current population of 18 000 is higher than was initially envisaged and has resulted in water consumption exceeding that projected for 2013 by 12 percent (Ruwa Local Board).

Land Ownership and Existing Development

Land owned by the board is inadequate for infrastructure development because the majority of land is owned by private developers. Consequently the sewerage treatment works is located within the neighbouring Epworth Local Board area.

Table 5 shows existing development according to the percentage of the area they cover within different phases of the board area. The ranking illustrates that low-density residential development constitutes the largest area covered, though this can be attributed to the size of the stands. RLB has tended to favour low-density residential development as it lessens the pressure of demand for water and sewerage services. This is because house owners on bigger plots can provide their own septic tanks, and on some occasions they drill their own boreholes. Industrial use is ranked second, signalling the potential for development of the area.

THE PROVISION OF WATER

The Ruwa Local Board's (RLB) water policy is "to encourage, facilitate and ensure an adequate supply of water to the planning area." On top of its

Table 5

Existing Development

Existing Development	Area (ha)	% of Total	Rank
Low Density residential	439.9473	40.74	1
Industrial	265.9092	24.62	2
High Density residential	257.1035	23.01	3
Active Open Space	66.0915	6.12	4
Institutional	26.8034	2.48	5
Commercial	24.0593	2.23	6
Total	1079.9142	100	

Source: Ruwa Local Board

agenda is private sector development of the area whilst the local authority provides the conducive environment for development guided by the local plan.

Strategies for Water Delivery

The strategy is mainly a public service provision of water with no private sector participation. Harare City Council) and central government (MRRWD) are the two actors involved in provision in addition to the Local Authority. The Harare City Council provides the treated and purified water for sale to the MRRWD. The MRRWD provides the infrastructure and reservoir for storing the water in waiting for use by Ruwa Local Board, to whom it also sells, adding its own mark up for the administration charges, etc. (normally 25 percent).

All water supplies or delivery comes from the city of Harare’s Ventersburg Reservoir through an 11km pipeline. This draws water from the Ministry of Rural Resources and Water Development (MRRWD) mains and booster pumps. Zimre Park, a recent private housing development, negotiated for its supplies with the Harare City Council from the Donnybrook Reservoir.

The private sector only provides the infrastructure in terms of initially installing to the specifications and satisfaction of Ruwa Local Board the water reticulation lines through which the water will be transported. These are subsequently handed over to the local authority on completion of the development, and it therefore becomes responsible for the maintenance of the infrastructure and for the replacement of ageing infrastructure or where there is a fault as a result of breakage. In addition, the local authority ensures that water supplies every corner of the water reticulation network under its jurisdiction.

A system whereby a private water company or utility will supply and maintain water infrastructure in an urban local authority in Zimbabwe is yet to prevail and is probably unlikely. This was indicated clearly at one meeting of the northern property developers in Ruwa where such a scenario was dismissed. It was believed that private water utilities would charge exorbitant fees for making water available to residents, as their focus is primarily profit making. The argument was that water is a public good and can best be provided by a public agency. This is because a public agency can be approached and negotiated with much more easily, when there are problems, than a private institution that operates according to the dictates of the market. Thus a private company would have little regard for social or political issues attendant to such a sensitive issue as water.

Water used to be delivered to Ruwa residents at a slightly subsidised rate, rather than at the rate at which it was brought from the MRRWD (true up to early 1999). However, this has since been changed, and water is now delivered at cost to residents despite the political sensitivity of the issue. In addition, the elimination of middlemen will smooth the delivery process by bringing water tariffs for Ruwa to almost par with other local authorities like Norton, Chitungwiza and Epworth who also buy water from Harare City Council

System of Delivery

A bulk water meter located after the bulk water reservoir records the amount of water passing from the MRRWD water reservoir to Ruwa Local Board reticulation system. The local authority is billed by the MRRWD on the basis of the bulk water reading, while the local authority in turn bills the local residents in terms of meter reading consumption figures as read by the meter readers monthly. A bulk water reading is installed just before Zimre Park for purposes of recording water received, and the local board bills the for the consumption as indicated by the bulk water meter to Harare City Council.

The pumping mains were designed in 1986 to deliver 133 cubic meters per second. The present water supply is 1900m³/day, leaving a deficit for water demand at 3369m³/day. This shortage is expected to reach 15649m³/day in 5 years i.e. 2002. The middleman role played by MRRWD has resulted in high prices being charged to residents (about double those of Harare). Water tariffs are mainly divided into connection fees, deposit fees and water consumption charges. Ruwa has a detailed tariff structure separating the different consumers and as at October, 1999 these were as follows:

- Residential \$6.58/m³
- Commercial \$202.14/m³ (basic fee)
- Industrial \$300/m³ (basic fee)

A comparison of the rates as at October 1999 with rates being charged by Harare City Council (HCC) for residential use is shown in Table 6:

Table 6

Residential Water Tariff Structure

Date	Harare City Council	MRRWD	Ruwa Local Board
1 JANUARY 1999	\$4.4	\$5.34	\$6.58
1 MAY 1999	\$6.25	\$8.13	\$10.17
1 AUGUST 1999	\$9.5	\$12.35	\$15.44

Source: Ruwa Local Board

HCC has been increasing the price of water twice a year. This has caused deficits in Ruwa’s water account because the RLB did not anticipate these increases.

In addition problems occur when there is a difference between the water passing through the bulk water meter and actual consumption, as RLB bases its billing amounts on the bulk water reading. The unaccounted for water is either as a result of water leaks or through stealing by illegal connections.

Procedures in Place for Operation and Maintenance

The main water reservoir is manned by a water supervisor on the payroll of the Ministry of Rural Resources and Water Development. He checks on the daily levels of water in the reservoir and provides early warning to the Local Board of impending water problems should the levels drop down to critical levels. If there are problems with the water situation in terms of low tank levels, the water supervisor and the senior plumber team up, usually making use of the Ruwa Local Board vehicle, to do spot checks along the line to the Ventersburg reservoir to establish where the problem could be.

It could be that the Harare City Council could have closed the pipe, which feeds to the MRRWD reservoir, because of non-payment by the ministry to the city of Harare. Such problems indicate a serious lack of management resulting largely from the multiple number of players in the delivery process. Meanwhile the local board drafts notices to residents informing them about the problem and assuring them that the situation will be addressed in as short as possible a time.

The maintenance of the water reservoir is solely the responsibility of the MWRRD since it owns the facility. Ruwa Local Board is responsible for

maintenance of the reticulation lines from the bulk meter point onwards and attends to leaking or burst water pipes in its area of jurisdiction. The plumbing section is responsible for repairs as well as new water connections, disconnections and reconnections as and when clients request the service and have paid the stipulated fee to Ruwa Local Board.

Water problems

Ruwa is serviced by infrastructure, which is relatively young considering that the area started developing in 1986. The problems afflicting the system of distribution do not primarily relate to ageing of the system but rather to demand, which has outstripped supply. In times of water shortage the high-lying areas have problems of water supplies reaching them. In response to this a borehole was sunk in 1999 as a joint venture between Ruwa Local Board and Mashonaland Holdings.

The Ministry of Rural Resources and Water Development has failed to augment the water infrastructure to accommodate the water shortage. However the Ruwa Local Board has been under pressure from the community to solve the shortfall of water. This has prompted the Board to embark on upgrading the reservoir, from 2 megalitres to about 11,4 megalitres, in partnership with residents, developers and the business community. In addition, RLB has introduced a policy whereby preference is given to applications for industrial stands, those in which the industry will be a dry one, as against wet industries, until the water situation improves.

Table 7 shows examples of water supply disruptions; for example, disruption caused by non-payment by one provider to another, power failures or burst pipes resulting in delays in the noting, reporting and early attendance to problems. The many agencies involved in the provision of water create problems when disruptions to supply occur. The water problem in Ruwa is such a big problem that it has hindered the development of the area. For example the water accounts and bills resulted in an accumulated budget deficit of \$2 million created in 1998.

THE PROVISION OF SEWERAGE

The Ruwa Local Board sewerage policy is as follows: "To encourage, facilitate and ensure the putting in place of an efficient off-site sewer network that is accessible to all properties in the planning area".

The whole system is based on a sewerage-reticulated delivery system, and the bulk of Ruwa stands are connected to the sewerage system, which currently feeds into either Chiremba pump station or the main pump sta-

Table 7

Examples of Water Supply Disruptions

YEAR/DATE	SUGGESTED CAUSE	LENGTH OF DISRUPTION
1995 to date (average 4 burst per month)	Caused by people i.e. foreign objects like spoons, pots, cups etc	Addressed urgently. Restore first priority so as to restore supplies to residents as soon as is feasible.
1998	Electric fault, non-payment by MRRWD to HCC.	3 days
1999	No payment by MRRWD to HCC	2 weeks
1999	HCC repair works at Warren Hills Pump Station	2 weeks
1999	HCC repair and maintenance works at Warren Hills pump station	1 day

Source: Ruwa Local Board

tion near Ruwa River. The sewerage is pumped to the sewage ponds located in Epworth Local Board area, where it is treated and some of the waste water is used to irrigate the farm pastures nearby while the treated water is then discharged into Ruwa river.

The infrastructure is constructed by private developers to Ruwa Local Board's satisfaction. Prior to the issuing of a development permit by Ruwa Local Board, an agreement on the sewerage arrangement between the developer and local authority is negotiated and agreed upon. All the works pertaining to sewerage will require the consent and approval of the local board, including detailed engineering drawings of the network as well as the pump station should it be deemed necessary. After the maintenance period, the local authority will take over the responsibility for maintaining the infrastructure.

All pump stations are built taking into account the capacity of raw sewage that will be generated from the proposed development. The actual

construction is done by private consulting firms. After completion of the works a one-year maintenance period is observed. If any deficiencies are found during this period the developers are asked to rectify the problems before handing over the infrastructure. After this period maintenance and upgrading or replacement becomes the obligation of the local authority and all stand owners are charged monthly sewer charges to offset these costs.

Sewerage tariffs provide substantial amounts to the local authorities budget. Tariffs are divided into: fixed charges, blockage clearance, septic tank emptying and sewerage connection fees. Ruwa divides its tariffs into residential, industrial and commercial consumers and bases these on fixed and variable fees. The variable fee is based on the amount of water consumed. RLB calculates its sewerage tariffs so that they cater for the cost of the service, labour and administration. It is one of the few local authorities that has achieved this (World Bank, 2000).

Current state/condition of sewerage

A number of problems have affected planning for sewerage infrastructure, these include:

- Shortage of land. The increase in population of the centre means more land is required for sewerage treatment works but such cases require the consent of Epworth Local Board where land is available. For example, the proposed Zimre Park development of 2567 residential stands will generate additional waste of 3 800m³/day. Thus there is a need to construct a third pump station with a grit channel with a capacity of 500m³/day.
- Pump capacity. The existing pump station cannot cope with high sewerage inflows, especially during the rainy season (i.e. peak wet weather) due to stormwater entering into the system. As a result, pumps face problems of flooding which causes damage and stoppages to the system.
- Equipment wear and tear. Lack of capacity means the continuous non-stop running of all the pumps which increases their wear. These pumps are designed to alternate and not run continuously as they are currently doing. This has an adverse effect on the life and performance of the pumps.
- Financial constraints. These preclude the purchase and installation of additional pumps.
- Burst pipes. From 1995 to date there have been on average 2 sewer pipe bursts per day. A common cause is the disposal of foreign objects into the system, for example, stones and spoons. Generally the RLB will attend to these problems within 12 hours.

Programmes for New Development

RLB resolved that no more pump stations will be allowed in the Ruwa Local Board area of jurisdiction. This is because of the high maintenance costs of pump stations in terms of electricity bills, costs of manning the sites (manpower), costs of repairing frequent breakdowns of pump equipment and problems of raw sewage overflowing into the Ruwa River. The RLB has been the subject of an outcry from the public because of these pollution problems.

Therefore the long-term plans are to link the sewerage system to the Mabvuku-Tafara Sewage treatment works that will be located on the Twentysdale property. Thus the existing ponds will be phased out and the pumping works will no longer be necessary because effluent will gravitate along the Ruwa river to the new Twentysdale sewage treatment works. The local board together with the city of Harare and Epworth Local Board has agreed on a pro-rata basis of financial contributions to the project, which has already begun works. However in March 2000 work stopped on this sewage works due to non-payment of the contractors by the City of Harare.

Programmes for Operation and Maintenance of Sewerage

In the event of a sewer breakdown, if it occurs along the main sewer line, the local authority fixes the problem at no direct charge to any stand owner. If the fault occurs within the stand connection it is therefore directly attributable to the stand owner, who will pay the costs of fixing the problem. Attendance to sewage blocks just like water burst pipes is as soon as the report has been made. The pump stations are manned by a senior sewerage pump attendant who has an assistant as well other labourers to assist in ensuring the smooth flow of sewerage as well as facilitating the carrying on of sewage tests to monitor pollution levels that might occur in the system. They also ensure that the pumps are all operating. If need be these are sent for repairs or replacements. Their duty is to avoid the problem of overworking pumps or at worse have the pump station fail to pump so that raw sewage can flood into the nearby Ruwa river which is located in the upper Manyame catchment area basin.

Maintenance is carried out once a breakdown occurs. When repair is needed and the cost is greater than \$50,000 it is a requirement of the board that a minimum of three quotations must be given before any repair can be carried out. The lowest and normally most reliable bidder will be awarded the job. Although this procedure can ensure that the best job is done, it can cause unnecessary delays in the repair of equipment, especially if the delay in getting quotations is not carefully monitored. This in turn can cause problems with the efficient delivery of services.

*Operational characteristic of the delivery process
for water and sewerage infrastructure*

The success of operating and delivering these services efficiently depends on qualified and experienced staff. Waterworks fall under the auspices of the engineer and the senior plumber. The senior pump attendant supervises the smooth operation of the pump stations.

The above staff complement is not adequate since the board depends on consultants when any major technical problem occurs. In water provision, the Board has been consulting a firm of engineers since 1983. Dependence on consultants affects sustainability of the infrastructure since board staff will remain unaware of how to operate the system.

PERFORMANCE OF WATER AND SEWERAGE SERVICES

The main problems that affect the efficient and effective delivery of water and sewerage services in Ruwa are:

- i) Many agencies are involved in the provision of water to Ruwa; these include Harare City Council(HCC), Ministry of Rural Resources and Water Development (MRRWD), and Ruwa Local Board (RLB). Thus Ruwa has little autonomy in the management of its water supplies.
- ii) This is also the case with sewage; Harare City Council, Ruwa Local Board and Epworth Local Board (ELB) are partners in the development of the Twentysdale Sewage Treatment Plant. The long-term impact of this partnership is the phasing out of the existing pump stations in Ruwa.
- iii) The drawback of multiple agencies and partnerships is that the board cannot set realistic tariffs that will ensure full cost recovery of services. Also it affects the effective management and operation of services because RLB is not directly liable for failures in the water and sewerage systems. This hinders the quick identification of problems and the solving of them, which compromises the issue of accountability in service provision.
- iv) There is a lack of technical management capability and shortage of skilled, experienced staff. This is largely a result of a lack of financial resources, poor working conditions and the control of salaries and appointments by the Local Government Board; for example, all senior posts have to be approved by this board.
- v) This has led to reliance on private sector expertise. The lack of an engineer in Ruwa led to a reliance on consultants. One of the problems related to this is that it is more likely that anomalies, regarding recorded maintenance programmes in place, will arise when infrastructure is handed over to board staff.
- vi) There is a shortage of land for institutional facilities such as cemeteries, and the expansion of infrastructure such as sewerage works (hence the need to locate the sewage works outside the Local Board Area in Epworth). It should be noted that Ruwa Local Board grew out of a private initiative, and hence

- the land owned by the Board is either land donated by private developers or part of the land given as endowment through permit conditions for the subdivision of land.
- vii) Co-ordination of infrastructure services provided by different developers tends to be difficult. Infrastructure service provision in Ruwa is relatively high because of the involvement of the private sector. In this respect the local authority has commissioned the preparation of a water and infrastructure master plan to address the issues and problems attendant to managing *ad-hoc* development by a myriad of private developers.
 - viii) The delay in budget approval by government reduces the value of funds before they have been put to use. Also delays are caused when borrowing powers have to be approved to the Ministry of Local Government and National Housing detailing the projects and funds required which must then be advertised in a local newspaper.
 - ix) Lack of autonomy in the setting of tariffs and other taxes because of central government control results in RLB running short of funds to provide adequate services to its growing population.

FINANCE

The Local Board's financial policy is as follows: The authority will endeavour to work with locals in raising funding for both capital and recurrent expenditure and facilitate the funding of the same by capable investors of the planning area. The present economic environment of rising inflation and the depreciation of the local currency severely affects the success of the above policy. In addition this has been constrained by central government shifting responsibility for the provision of education and health in line with the policies of ESAP and ZIMPREST, but without corresponding funding. This has been exacerbated by falling financial assistance from donor agencies like the World Bank and USAID.

The bulk of revenue for the board is raised locally through rates and tariffs. The Government also contributes funds through the Public Sector Investment Programme, though this continues to dwindle. For example, out of the total sum of \$6 million requested from Government in 1997, the Board only received \$1 million

Cost Recovery

The principal focus in terms of service delivery is that of cost recovery. Every supplied service must be able to support or sustain itself. This takes into account the cost of providing the service i.e. paying employees, fuel if required, etc., plus 25 percent administration charges. This has been the case with almost all accounts of Ruwa Local Board except for the water account, which has been problematic. The reason for this is the recent mark-

ups by Harare City Council and The Ministry of Rural Resources and Water Development, which made the local board subsidise the residents as the water issue is politically sensitive. This sensitivity is greater because of the proximity of Ruwa to Harare; consequently, residents compare water tariffs in Ruwa with Harare and wonder why they are paying more. This has also been complicated by the frequent water disruptions and shortages as a result of either power failure or being cut off by Harare City Council because of late payment or non-payment by the Ministry of Rural Resources and Water Development to the City of Harare. The lack of autonomy of RLB to set tariffs and its lack of independence to ensure full cost recovery is a major impediment to the management of water services.

Budget: Management

The treasurer determines budget estimates in consultation with the board. The treasurer periodically provides Heads of Departments with up-to-date information on payments and income into the approved budget. However this process is constrained by government intervention in the approval of budget decisions and tariffs. This lengthens the whole planning process and may make tariffs lower than open market rates. The centralised approval system delays the levying of new rates for high-density suburbs since they have to be advertised and gazetted, although for low-density residential areas, industry and the business community a full council's resolution suffices for implementation purposes of tariffs.

Other problems of the budget include the fact that the transfer of health and education facilities to local authorities by central government was not carried out gradually and was not accompanied by resources. In the health sector the Social Dimension Fund has not met its obligation to pay local authorities funds for those treated "freely" in council clinics and hospitals. The RLB states that this led to failure by local authorities to meet their infrastructure financing and resulted in reduced services to residents, reduced credibility and ultimately to slow development of their areas.

In addition the current finance system is not sustainable because it relies on the good will of donors and an unpredictable central government. This has created a backlog in investment. Whilst the rates of borrowing on the open market are so high small local authorities like Ruwa cannot access them, the lower interest loans from central government (i.e. at 1.5 per cent) are often not available. High beer sales, which were a major source of revenue in the 1980's, now suffer from private sector competition following the removal of council monopoly to sell it within its area. All these factors affect budget preparation and management, with the result that funds are inadequate to meet demands.

Budget Estimates

The Ruwa Local Board is unable to raise 100 percent of its budget. In the 1997-98 financial year, only \$28 068 421 (i.e. 89 percent) of the total proposed budget revenue of \$31.5 million was raised. The capital expenditure for the same year was \$11.4 million (30 percent). Twenty percent of the budget was raised externally whilst the rest was raised internally. Like other local authorities its recurrent expenditure levels grew faster than revenue levels consequently RLB has been experiencing huge debts. In 1997/8 financial year alone \$4 million was held up in debts. This has greatly affected the Board's ability to implement all the planned capital projects.

Table 8 shows the following:

- Water contributes the greatest income and has the greatest expenditure and allocation for capital.
- Civil works and sewers follow this.
- It should be noted that in all the three accounts stated above, capital projects have the lowest budget. This indicates a dwindling investment for infrastructure growth at the centre.
- The wage bill seriously affects the budget. In 1999 the wage bill of 27.5 percent, was an increase on the amount given in the budget of 1997-8 of 26.04 percent for wages. As with other local authorities a major component of recurrent expenditure is wages.

The biggest problem of the budget is its failure to meet the demands of the centre.

Effectiveness of Ruwa Local Board to Manage its Urban Services

From the appraisal undertaken the following was found:

- RLB's financial records are up to date, and information on the operation of all departments is readily available.
- There is a training strategy in place to address performance gaps and improve staff performance, and new technology has been put in place to assist with management of development in Ruwa.
- The Board has introduced an annual appraisal system to monitor individual performance of staff and identify training needs and the suitability of staff for the current job.
- There is a system in place for analysing internal procedures, particularly for the budget and incidences of fraud.
- A manpower audit is carried out annually.

Despite the above shortcomings in the delivery of water and sewerage and other urban services, the management levels of Ruwa Local Board appear to be relatively good. This is evident from the fact that effective management structures have been put in place for the smooth implementation of policies and programmes and day to day operations. The policies do provide for equitable access to basic services for all residents, and the existence of a development plan, which prioritises different programmes for the implementation of infrastructure and other services, indicates an ability to plan ahead. There is also evidence that the Board interacts with the community, especially through its efforts to keep the community informed about problems with the water supply and its action to enlist the help of the community in the upgrading of the water supply system. However the fact that the Board is unable to provide services in keeping with demand indicates that its management systems are not totally effective.

As McGill (1995) stated, successful management is indicated by a local authorities' ability to execute its operational programmes in a cost effective manner. If not this will translate into accumulated deficits on the budget, (RLB had a debt of \$4 million in the 1997-98 financial year). He also said that any backlog in provision or lack of services or intermittent services would indicate a failure in the management system, (RLB has a housing backlog of 250 housing units per year and water and sewerage services are unable to keep up with the growing demand, for example water consumption exceeds the supply by 12 percent). As highlighted above, this failure in the management system is not only attributable to RLB alone.

Factors such as the intervention of central government in the approval of budget decisions, the increased responsibilities of the board to deliver additional services without commensurate funding from central government, an unstable macro-economic environment, political interference and the multiple players in the delivery of services all reduce the ability of the Board to manage its affairs in a successful manner. This reduces its credibility and its ability to respond to demands. This has resulted in a failure to effectively manage the infrastructure services in its area and the resultant slowing down of development of the area.

CONCLUSION

Lack of services, maintenance of infrastructure and virtual collapse of traditional models of government are clearly evident in most major African cities. This is largely the result of political interference, demographic pressure, lack of investment and lack of management. Politically and economically towns and cities lack autonomy in decision making which means that

effective management of local resources and revenue and human resources and key personnel are a major problem. This is aggravated by a lack of suitably qualified managers with competence and vision to manage cities. (Wekwete 1996).

The dominance of central government and parastatals in service delivery means that policies and programmes often do not respond to local demands. The lack of autonomy over expenditure or revenue levels means that the authorities cannot be fully accountable to their electorate. The decentralisation of responsibilities from central government has not resulted in decentralisation of authority; consequently, those elected to manage towns and cities are not fully empowered to take responsibility for their actions.

Before effective urban management can take place in Africa and Zimbabwe it is vital that the political base shifts from central government to local government. There is a need to strengthen the role of democratically elected authorities and civil society generally so that the system of urban service delivery is efficient and responsive to its constituents. Rondinelli (in Dillinger, 1993 : 8) says "rarely do incentives exist for central government ministries to perceive citizens as their clientele". This occurs when the locus of decision making moves away from the beneficiaries.

Thus the role of central government should be to provide (a) macro-stabilisation, i.e. the provision of a stable economic environment for the public sector as a whole and (b) income redistribution, i.e., the reduction of poverty. The role of local government is resource allocation—influencing the allocation of resources where markets fail to do so efficiently—through ensuring a level and mix of services in response to local needs and requirements. In this respect local constituencies can reveal their preferences through the local political process to ensure that local public services are delivered fairly and efficiently.

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