

## **Submissions from Zimbabwe Women Against Corruption Trust**

### **Submitted By Sandra Matendere**

#### **1. What are the main challenges identified in your country/ region in relation to public service delivery? Please address both institutional and practical barriers in your response.**

Access to public service delivery is hindered by corruption and informal payments. Women and girls are the ones who are affected the most when public service delivery is marred with corruption. The following are examples.

Access to healthcare - Corruption barricades women from accessing basic health care services in public health institutions. For instance, some pregnant women have highlighted that they have been asked to pay bribes in order to get preferential treatment in public health institutions. According to the report by Zimbabwe Women Against Corruption Trust 2022, women's access to sexual and reproductive health care services in public health institutions is hindered by corruption. The challenge is that many of the victims suffer in silence, they don't report due to fear of victimization or retaliation.

Access to quality education- Education sector corruption has dire consequences on the development of learners. Teachers are reportedly requesting money for extra lessons from learners. The challenge is that, learners who are coming from poor families are being deprived equal access to education. Corruption in the sector is fuelling discrimination amongst pupils and understanding the right to education for all.

The right to clean water and sanitation - access to clean water and sanitation remains a challenge in both rural and urban areas in Zimbabwe. In some urban areas, it is difficult to get tap water for example in Epworth Harare, residents rely on water from wells and some of them are unsafe. Some boreholes were drilled but sometimes women spend more time on queues to get the water. There are some reports where some women fell prey to water barons who demand sexual favours in exchange for water. (Sextortion)

#### **2. What are the examples of good practices and approaches taken to overcoming identified challenges to the provision of public services.**

Government has engaged partners who are implementing projects on Water and Sanitation, drilling boreholes in communities where water challenges is worse. At health care facilities, the challenges are still there, patients are facing challenges to access quality services. There is poor monitoring system which leaves room for corruption.

In the education sector, parents are being left at the mercy of teachers and the challenges are still not solved comprehensively.

Government has made efforts to introduce Basic education program popularly known as BEAM where less privileged learners receive support from the government. However, the money takes long to be disbursement to schools.

#### **3 To what extent does corruption play in excluding individuals and households from accessing public services? How does corruption affect the delivery of public services.**

To a greater extent, corruption is excluding individuals and households from accessing public services. Most of individuals and households are financially unstable making it difficult to access public services like in the health, educational or industry sector. In most health care institutions, drugs are being diverted to private pharmacies owned by medical personnel. This actually compromise individuals who are not financially stable. Women pay bribes during the labour period to get assistance or to be attended, thus many may fail to get the services.

Favouritism plays a bigger role in most public offices. Public office personnel favour their relatives, friends and compatriots making other people fail to get services. To get a birth certificate or license without anyone you know is a challenge.

Conflict of interest is seen as a factor that hinder other individuals and households from accessing residential or commercial stands that they want. People with authorities are the ones who first makes choices on land issues and makes decisions that negatively affect others.

Sextortion is limiting other individuals and households be able to get job opportunities. This is when women fail to provide sexual services to male counterparts who will be in position. Taking for instance, an undergraduate intern might fail to provide sexual services during internship has higher chances of not getting a job at the same institution after graduation.

However, corruption helps other people to get services. Taking for instance, transport department allows other cars that are not allowed. This makes transport cheaper as compared to when limited transport is allowed on the road.

### **What is the main corruption affect delivery of public services to population groups in your country**

Corruption affects different population groups but more to people with disabilities, women and youths. People with disabilities are more reliant on public services and have limited finances to look for other alternative private services. This leads to deteriorating of their well-being as they may fail to bribe. Embezzlement of fund to benefit people with disabilities affects even the promotion of good health and well being. This also lead to the construction of infrastructure that does not accommodate people with disabilities.

Garbage collection is not regularly done with local authorities due to diversion of resources like cars to other issues. This affects women who does most of unpaid work at home even more the areas are not safe for survival.

All citizens have the right to access public services to which they are entitled such as education, healthcare, water and sanitation, documentation, access to economic opportunities as enshrined in the constitution of Zimbabwe but however a percentage of the population is not accessing these services.

Nepotism is a barrier hindering other citizens in Zimbabwe from accessing public services such as health care, education, documentation and economic opportunities. Every citizen in Zimbabwe is entitled to rights of accessing public health services as enshrined in the Constitution of Zimbabwe but however a great percentage of citizens can't access these services and opportunities. Researches done by other personnel shows that due to the economic meltdown of Zimbabwe those who holds power gives opportunities and first preference to their relatives and friends hence this disadvantaging other citizen and end up not accessing services. To eradicate this there is need for a strong policy implementation which ensure that duty bearers are providing services to all who are entitled to despite them not related to them.

Corruption is also hindering poor households from benefitting from the public services in which they are entitled to. There have reported cases of duty bearers asking for bribes in exchange of public services which in turn disadvantage those who live below the poverty datum line. For example, when women are looking for placements for their kids in better schools, they are asked to pay a certain amount for them to get a placement. This will disadvantage marginalized women as they fail to give a bribe for a service and then asked for a sexual favor (sextortion). The situation is so disheartening as it infringes on women's rights. Also, corruption is taking part in all public services hence poor families end up not benefitting from the services they are entitled to. To eradicate this the government bodies such as Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission should follow up and arrest corruptionist and Civil society organization should continue educating citizens to report, deny and resist corruption as it happens as they try to access the services.

Ignorance is also the biggest challenge among other citizens and why they can't benefit from public services they are entitled to. Some citizens especially from marginalized and mining areas are not aware of their rights and this also contributed by lack of access to information. They are not aware of their rights to benefit from public services that are stationed in different spheres. Free public services are sometimes available but some citizens lack information on where they can access these services. Hence educational programs must be done targeting marginalized areas where citizens have no access to internet connections.

Some citizens live in deep rooted marginalized rural areas and inaccessibility of these services is hindering them from benefitting from public services they are entitled to. Some services are available far from other communities. Citizens have to travel 100 km to access health services so in turn some citizens end up not accessing these services. For documentation citizens have to travel to provincial center towns which might be far from their homesteads hence this distance acting as a barrier for citizens to benefit from public services they are entitled to. Government should ensure public services are within reach to citizens to access them without barriers

Lack of funds/resources is also acting as a hinderance henceforth citizens not claiming or benefitting from public services they are entitled to. Currently 90% of the public services in Zimbabwe needs service user to pay a fee. There is about 40% of children dropping and not attending school in rural areas as they fail to pay their school fees and purchase other school necessities hence not able to benefit and claim their rights to access to education. Other citizens are not benefitting from the health services though they are entitled to the health care rights as they can't afford to pay hospital bills and get the services. Unfortunately, all this menace disadvantages the population that live below the poverty dactum line. The government should ensure public services are given for free

**4. What percentage of eligible individuals and households do not claim and or benefit from public services in your country and what barriers are hindering them from accessing these services in which they are entitled to and how these can be reduced.**

N/A

**5. Please refer to challenges and good practices of public services delivery to persons belonging to groups in situation of vulnerability and marginalization including persons living in poverty, women girls, children youth, ethnic, national and linguistic minorities, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, migrant and older persons.**

### **Challenges**

Poor service delivery affects women because of their roles in the families because they interact with service providers where corruption is prevalent for example in the health care

sector and education. Access to public services is a challenge for people living with disabilities because they usually face discrimination. For instance, when seeking sexual and reproductive health care services. The same applies to adolescent girls who face challenges to access sexual and reproductive health services because of family beliefs and stigma. Some conservative parents are failing to accept that adolescent girls are engaging in sexual behaviors hence they should be given sexual and reproductive health care. Some public offices are not accessible to people living with disabilities especially those with mobility challenges who use wheelchairs. Language barrier is a challenge which hinders deaf and dumb patients to access health care services. Especially when they are women in need of sexual and reproductive health care. Distance barrier- in rural communities where health care facilities are very far, it is not easy to have access to sexual and reproductive health including SRHR.

**6.Are public services digitalized in your country? Provide details including challenges and good practices in digitalization of public services that ensures transparency and accountability and efficiency in the delivery of public services.**

Public services in Zimbabwe are largely accessible manually, however there are some efforts to introduce digitalisation to some sectors.

**Education** - Education system is slowly digitalising through the e-learning program most schools including in rural areas have received computers to make education accessible through ICT.

**Access to documentation** - Getting documentation like birth certificates and national identity cards is still a challenge because the application process is largely manual and people spend hours in long queues to have access to their crucial documents.

Healthcare services - Healthcare system is manual and there is limited use of information technology in the health sector.

**Good practices.**

Access to passports in Zimbabwe has been digitalised and the system is so efficient and free from corruption. There is limited face to face interaction and people get their passports in a very short space of time.

Although there's progress in digitalization in the education sector, this system is widening the gap between learners from poor families and those who come from better ones. Some rural schools have computers but they don't have access to electricity and internet connection.

**7. How is the participation of private actors in public service delivery regulated and monitored in your country/ region? Please share best practices.**

Private actors in public service delivery are licenced by the government. For example, in the health sector, there are private pharmaceutical companies, private clinics and hospitals who offer services to the public. The challenge with private actors is that their fees are too high as compared to government institutions.

The best practices of private actors in public service delivery are that they thrive to give quality services that is value for people's money.

**8. Describe economic policies, legislation, promising practices or strategies and national, regional or local processes aimed at:**

**Increasing social spending**, the health ministry aims to target the 15 percent budget allocation from the fiscus in line with the Abuja declaration however each year the budget for health ministry falls short of this target.

National health strategy 2021 - 2025. To ensure sustainable public health system.

**Addressing structural discrimination in the provision of public resources.** Zimbabwe has launched disability policy to ensure inclusivity and equitable accessibility of public resources by people living with disabilities

**Maximizing available resources for the provision of public services.**

N/A

**Preventing Corruption and associated illicit financial flows in the provision of public services**

Prevention of Corruption Act Chapter 9:16

Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (Chapter 12 Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Number2 of 2013)

**Reallocating public expenditure to the provision of public services.**

Public Finance Management Act (Chapter 22:19).