



Zimbabwe Diaspora
Nation Building Initiative (ZDNBI)

A Review of the Government of Zimbabwe's Diaspora Policy Documents

**The Concept note and the 2016
Zimbabwe Diaspora Policy**

**Towards a New Symbiotic
Partnership & Greater Collective
Impact**

ZDNBI Review

September 2022

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The interest by Diasporans in participating and contributing to the review of the Zimbabwe Diaspora Policy Review was unprecedented. Many people participated in the consultations across boundaries, continents and time zones. Fittingly, we pay tribute to all the Zimbabweans who were able to participate and apologise to those who did not get a chance to submit or participate in the process. We hope you will see your voice in some of the comments and views that have been included in the review.

The Zimbabwe Nation Building Initiative (ZDNBI) conducted by far the most extensive and comprehensive consultative process by a Zimbabwean Diaspora organisation, of Diasporans, to date. A lot of data was gathered, and only a subset is analysed here. Although ZDNBI has the expertise to undertake the analysis, without any protected time for the people working on this work, this is not possible at present.

The ZDNBI is one of many Diaspora associations tasked by the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ), through its Diaspora Directorate, with reviewing the 2016 Zimbabwe Diaspora Policy and the Concept note, we are aware that there were groups who participated in the review through our platforms. We see you and we acknowledge you and reiterate that we are stronger when we stand together.

We want to thank all the Embassies for their positive engagement and involvement. A number of them assisted with names and contacts of Diaspora in their jurisdictions. It is our considered view that this consultation process has created a foundation upon which we can build and strengthen relations.

To the members of the working group who volunteered for the role and worked to compile this report, thank you. ZDNBI is committed to excellence and where possible will draw on expertise in the organisation to assist in delivering tasks.

The Diaspora can be active citizens in Zimbabwe, if policies and other conditions allow. Although there are still challenges, we applaud the Government of Zimbabwe for giving us the chance to consider the policy and respond to it. We see this as the first step in building mutually beneficial relationships with Government.

We acknowledge and thank the Young Zimbabwean Artist and Graphic Designer who designed the covers and the watermark for the report.

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ABOUT ZDNBI

The Zimbabwe Diaspora Nation Building Initiative (ZDNBI) is a relatively new Diaspora group which is an amalgamation of several groups that existed before and some recently formed. As a body our beliefs and principles are as diverse as the groups we represent. Although we present them here as a collection of statements made during the consultation, the mantra for ZDNBI is evolving with the organisation – For now;

We are committed to open and inclusive engagement. We really believe we are stronger together. We care about the environment and the future we leave behind. We take social responsibility in the host countries and at home seriously and do take action. Accountability and transparency are key values we hold in all our processes. We rely on evidence based knowledge to make decisions. Finally, we believe in lifting each other up, be it individuals, groups or country. We believe in harnessing our skills base and resources for the benefit of our community and country. Finally, we believe in maintaining strong connections to our home country.

ZDNBI is one several Diaspora groups that was invited by Government to participate in the review of 2 documents – the 2016 Diaspora review and the concept note to update the Diaspora policy. It is important to underline that the ZDNBI is;

- A coalition of Diaspora individuals and groups (called Apex Associations) in almost all the regions of the world. There are 14 Apex associations. Australia, Europe, UK, New Zealand, Botswana, South Africa, Ethiopia, Mozambique, UK and USA & Canada, China and South East Asia.
- It a non partisan actor
- It was NOT established by the GoZ and receives no funding from Government
- Its constituency group are members of the Diaspora, who see themselves as Zimbabweans and in some APEX associations this definition is quite broad.

The relationship with the Government is negotiated on the principle of mutuality of interest. We see the ‘invitation’ by Government as an indication to do the following;

- Recognition of the importance of involving the Diaspora in policy formulation
- A desire to build good will and confidence by opening up space for Diaspora participation and influence in policy making.
- Underlining the commitment to accommodate the interests and aspirations of the Diaspora.

Although co-production is costly, we hope future collaborations account for and cost Diaspora engagement realistically.

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY

This is by far the most comprehensive consultation ever undertaken with the Zimbabwean diaspora. By comparison to the government's previous Diaspora Policy consultations which resulted in the 2016 Diaspora Policy now under review (consultations were only in SA and USA), the ZDNBI's consultation involved the participation of at least 14 ZDNBI Apex associations and covered all regions of the world except South America. Multiple methods were used to give everyone a chance to participate. Zoom meetings were held with country groups or with regions and participation ranged between 15 to 58 participants. All consultations were open to anyone who identified as Zimbabwean. Repeat meetings in some countries were conducted where there was a request. As well as recorded data, there is survey data from an online survey and there is data from a WhatsApp group that had about 800+ members. People commented on the 2 documents presented by the Government of Zimbabwe as well as commented on the consultative process. The consultative process was conducted by a group of volunteers who constituted the Working Group. Although only a subset of the available data has been analysed for this report, there are plans to compile a detailed analysis of the consultations. Within the document there are quotes which represent the voices from some of the diaspora and there is also sign posting to underline some of the important points that were made.

The report is organised in 5 parts. The first part comments on the request to review and underlines the importance of Diaspora participation in policy formulation. The second part describes the process and emphasises the importance of using multiple methods to increase the participation of the Diaspora. Relying on one method of consultation leaves a huge proportion of the diaspora out. This consultation process used zoom meetings, key interviews, and an online survey. Diaspora could make individual or group submissions as preferred. The third part of the report responds directly to the 2016 Diaspora policy document. The review follows the layout of the report and comments are made against points and sections of the document. The fourth part considers the concept note and makes comments against the sections in that document. Because some sections in the ZDP and the Concept note will be similar, there may be overlaps in comments presented. The final part of the report presents a list of some of the ideas that have started to come out of the consultations. Some of these have been extensively discussed in think tanks that have been created to focus on specific issues. For example, there are thinktanks on investments, policy, on disaster response, philanthropy, women and youth.

The Diaspora have shown great interest in participating in the consultations and have put forward many ideas on what should be in a Diaspora policy. But a diaspora policy that works for the Diaspora needs to incorporate views of the Diaspora and where necessary create spaces where Diaspora and government can develop mutually beneficial relationships. The Diaspora also has a wealth of experiential knowledge and skill sets that can be harnessed to define a more robust and forward looking policy. The Diaspora as an organised group or groups presents as a legitimate partner for development with expectations that the government will invite it to the table to draft a framework of cooperation or partnership that benefits all. Building stronger trustful relationships with government is an important pillar of that policy. It is important that government recognise, that although there is a lot of interest and connection with Zimbabwe, it is one of the many investment

destinations there are for the Diaspora. In the long term, the government needs to develop programs to engage the youthful diaspora as the future remitters and investors in Zimbabwe.

INTRODUCTION

The Zimbabwe Diaspora Nation Building Initiative (ZDNBI) is one of the Diaspora groups approached by the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) following on from meetings between Deputy Minister Of Foreign Affairs and ZDNBI. The Diaspora Policy Review consultation request, was set out in a Government Of Zimbabwe Letter (Referenced CX/E/408) in August 2021. The request referred to two documents – ‘the Concept Note on the production of the updated Diaspora policy and the ‘2016 Diaspora Policy’. The letter states that both these documents are under review. The request to the Zimbabwe Diaspora Nation Building Initiative (ZDNBI) was to ‘mobilise stakeholder participation in the consultative process’ as part of the ongoing review that the Government of Zimbabwe was currently undertaking. Despite noting the challenges presented by COVID, the request is specific about a timeframe presented in the Concept Note. Although, the request implies an agreement to the timeframe, no provisions, resources or support was given to the ZDNBI to perform the task. Diaspora is used here as a broad category to include anyone and everyone outside the country who identifies as Zimbabwean, irrespective of period of residence.

The assumption that the Diaspora have resources and is able to financially support consultative processes such as these needs to be challenged.

The request underscores the GoZ’s “conviction that wider consultations with the Diaspora during this process of reviewing are part of the building blocks towards enhanced trust and confidence”. Although there is reference to a ‘wider’ consultation, there is really no indication of level of comprehensiveness and reach of the process. Furthermore, the request implies that outcomes of the consultations are an important ‘building block’ but there is no clear statement of intent regarding how the outcomes of the consultations will be incorporated or be part of the broader review process. Anticipating potential questions, ZDBNI formally approached the Zimbabwean Government with requests to clarify use of consultation outcomes and also made a suggestion for co-production. These requests were not responded to. It is the ZDNBI’s considered view that co-production, with the participation of the intended targets of the policy, not just with those in ZDNBI but with other Diaspora groups is a necessary step in producing a policy that works. The Diaspora must be seen as both the beneficiaries and partners in this policy review and development process.

Co-production is a necessary approach here, built on the principle that those who are affected by a policy are best placed to participate in its design.

The Diaspora participation is an essential pillar of policy formulation. Diasporans want Government to open up spaces to make a case for what we want in the policy, agree among ourselves what the priorities are and what our leveraging positions is. Once that is clear, the Diaspora wants to act in unity of purpose and rise above self interests and group politics to be involved. We want a commitment from the Government that the comments and views from the Diasporans will be incorporated or inform the final policies. Although the workplan of the concept note indicates a period where comments will be incorporated, it does not indicate how. Some of the Diasporans who participated in the consultations, were more pessimistic as regards incorporation of views, stating that;

- ✓ *“I am trying to be optimistic – I haven’t read anything in these documents that gives confidence. I hope the consultation goes well, but we need to have confidence in the process – what’s that level of confidence?” (Voice 1)*
- ✓ *“We tried to work with the Government before, nothing happened, what’s new?” (Voice 2)*
- ✓ *“We have the same issues, the same questions as we did before, we want to engage, but we also need Government to recognise and support that engagement.” (Voice 3)*

The consultation took the view that all voices matter, and each comment and contribution counts.

These are presented as anonymous voices as agreed under the protocols followed during the

consultation. Consequently, this

document collates and compiles a subset

of the data gathered during the

consultation process. An attempt has

been made to make the report come

alive with the voices of the participants.

This report may present answers that do not truly reflect what people want, rather it presents what people feel are possibilities because of the highly constrained environment.

But these two will be limited because of the desire to keep the report short and succinct. These data will be used to compile a larger report for ZDNBI.

The review is in 2 parts, part 1 considers the provisions of the policy as presented in the 2016 Diaspora policy section by section against the views and comments made during the consultation. Part 2 presents a review of the Concept note. Key messages are sign posted in each section. Part 3 presents some of the ideas that the Diaspora put forward during the consultations.

We see the invitation by the Government to ZDNBI to comment on the policy as an invitation to decide on what kind of stew is best to make for guests. We applaud attempts by the Government who are making the stew to find out what kind of stew they might want and what ingredients to use and not use. One agency official stated-

- ✓ *“Actually that was the purpose of this, so that the owners, the Diaspora can make comment. This creates a situation where Diaspora can work with Government, so this is a collaborative effort that can bring benefit to the country. but how organised is your Diaspora, here we have camps, for them to even come together its hard. I can be frank because we are on a journey to build Zimbabwe together. A document that bring this information can help” (Government Official)*

The policy is the stew. Information about preferences and ingredients are the input the Diaspora can legitimately make to the process that will guarantee that everyone will be happy with the stew. Just as the proof is in the taste of the stew, Diasporans want a result focused policy, but they have little confidence in the process.

ZDNBI CONSULTATIVE PROCESS

The consultative process to review the Concept note and the 2016 Diaspora Policy was led by a working group of 6 ZDNBI volunteers. This group was constituted of people with wide-ranging expertise and skills - supported by 2 members with extensive research and evaluation experience, 1 member with data mining experience. The objective from the onset was to deliver a comprehensive review not just to the Government of Zimbabwe, but also as an input to ZDNBI policy making processes as it starts to define itself as a Diaspora organisation. The process was open to all. The only criteria for participation was being Zimbabwean. The strength of the process was in the way it embraced various methods to get people involved. Due to COVID, many of the consultations occurred online. The review is based on a mixed methods approach. We were committed to opening up the process to increase participation, with consensus that, when we brought the voices into the review that we would consider what is said not who is speaking.

The intention was to design an Inclusive and comprehensive process where everyone who could and wanted to participate could do so.

A survey was hosted on the ZDNBI website in the middle of the consultative process to reach those that were not able to access Zoom to participate in online live consultations. Over 1,000 people visited the Diaspora consultation webpage. Of the 97 survey responses, analysed, 73% of respondents were male, 23 % women and 4 % preferring not to state their gender. Most of the respondents were based in the United Kingdom (28%) and South Africa (24%) but overall, there was widespread participation, including from those in East and West Africa, the Middle East, the United States of America, Canada, Australia and countries in the European Union such as Denmark. Diasporans who had lived outside of Zimbabwe for periods between 11 – 25 years, made up 69% of the survey respondents. Only 1% of the respondents were in the young people category (17-25 years of age. 70% of respondents were between the 40-60 age bracket. The core themes covered by the survey were the Diaspora vote (17%), investment (16%), agriculture (15%) and knowledge and skills transfer (14%), in that order.

A WhatsApp platform that was launched on 19 August 2021. Although the platform is still active, no more data is being collected. This platform yielded over 500 pages in comments. The group has 846 members although this number fluctuates as people join and some leave. Only a subset of the data on this platform was analysed.

A total of 15 Zoom online group consultations meetings were facilitated with the following groups – East Africa, West Africa, Botswana, Australia, South Africa 1, South Africa 2, United Kingdom, United Kingdom 2, European Union 1, European Union 2, Asia pacific 1, Asia Pacific 2, USA. There were focus group discussions for women, youth, and business people. These yielded subject-specific comments for the review. Some regions submitted comments as a group including East Africa and Asia. Members of marginalised were included based on key interviews conducted online or in person. During the consultations, there was evidence of some strategic behaviour, where respondents tried to be pragmatic rather than express what they wanted to see happen, they instead talked about what was possible under the present situation. This means that the comments and recommendations may not in fact reflect the real aspirations of the group. The common feedback from Diasporans was that there was interest to participate and this consultation process had been the most comprehensive they had ever seen.

PART 1: Review of the 2016 Zimbabwe Diaspora policy

GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE AND THE DIASPORA

There are many pertinent points raised in this section of the 2016 ZDP document. It is important to differentiate between Government obligations under the Constitution, as defined in sections [1.1; 1.2;1.7; and 1.8], and who have clear and recognisable vested interests the Diaspora as an entity or partner with who the Government collaborates [see 1.3; 1.5; and 1.6;]. With the citizen, the responsibilities of Government are clear and enshrined in the Constitution, but with the partner, there is a need for clarity in terms of who the GOZ is engaging with when they say they are working with the Diaspora.

There is also an assumption that ZDP document [1.3; 1.4; 1.5; 1.6] that Zimbabwe is the sole focus of Diaspora investment plans. The ZDP document should at least address the fact that [1.4], as a result of the need by Government to offer competitive terms of engagement to increase Diaspora investment, there needs to be an appreciation that in the aging population within the Diaspora, there may be a pull away from investing in Zimbabwe, as some look to their host countries as retirement options. People become risk averse and are more likely to invest where terms are more competitive and their investments are safe. The cost of moving back to Zimbabwe and the lack of clarity of rules were some of the factors cited as deterring retiree investment.

The Zimbabwe Investment and Development Agency (ZIDA) is the right place to channel questions about the role of the Diaspora ‘*without being passed on from pillar to post*’. But, there is still much suspicion between Diaspora and the Government. There are a lot of cases and stories of how Diasporas who want to do something but get frustrated. This is illustrated in the anecdotes below;

There needs to be clarity within Government of the Diaspora as a collection of citizens with rights under the constitution and the Diaspora as a partner and or Investor in development projects. The policy must be clear on how it deals with this dichotomy.

- ✓ *“I grew up in Bulawayo and wanted to do something for my community. I approached the community leaders to support a club for the youths. But I was shocked with the questions and the suspicions, who is funding you, you are against the Government, uri mwana waani¹, what do you want to do... and it all turned into a political thing, then back and forth until I was discouraged. What they say to us means we become political when we are trying not to be. I feel there is no trust right now, we are not trusted” (Voice 4) .*
- ✓ *“When I went to my old school the classroom had potholes, we started to rehabilitate the place. You get there and look at mwana arikudzidza² in those conditions – what chance do they have? I have been really lucky, because we needed to drill a borehole at school, we got that done, since January the school is now connected to electricity, from out of the blue we got money for the pump and electricity. When I came home, I whipped up support, mobilised fuel, and council to work on the roads, the councillor came to my house, she wanted me to go to council to ask for a grader – so I went to council and asked for a grader,*

¹¹ Translation. Whose child are you

² Translation : Child is learning

we got the roads done, but kumba kwacouncilor grader ngarisvikewo ndipo³. The local MP has refused to meet u. when they don't know you they paint you as opposition, he refused to meet. I have 2 kids in the Diaspora, they are not coming back. It is amazing how things have not changed – still more like rituals, and time has stood still, we are caught up in a time warp.” (Voice 5)

These experiences are at odds with the Government stated objectives of engaging with the Diaspora.

Another participant says as a Diaspora *‘it is not a mandate to chip in at home, we should not feel like we have to’* especially where we are getting suspected of all sorts of political agendas. As well as all the challenges the Diaspora face, there is growing apathy, and a lot of negativity about investing at home.

Another participant stated that when he is in airports he looks at other Diasporas coming back to their countries, they are welcomed back with big smiles. By contrast Zimbabweans are not and don't feel welcome to come back. But a participant with experience of Government stated *‘we cant avoid the politicisation’* and we must seek to address that and persevere. Generally, there was a feeling that its difficult to remain optimistic under current situations and given some experiences some have gone through. There did not seem to be positive stories of engagement.

³ Translation: can the Grader pass through or work on road to the councillor's house

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Although the Government in this section [2.3] indicates that the Government recognises that migration has become a feature of contemporary socio-economic life, the challenges to attaining documentation are remain significant for the Diaspora. The cost of obtaining a passport for the Diaspora is prohibitive, especially for the poor and undocumented, with the additional costs of accessing services to get passports, such as travel and accommodation.

- ✓ *“The Zim passport is the most expensive passport and it is so difficult to get it. We need someone who is dedicated to support us in the process, we just back in the dark ages, each time we start from the beginning, forms and more forms, you send them back yourself, they don’t tell you who to contact, its like you are on your own, just tell us the process, we will follow it. We need accountability and results. How can we get results?” (Voice 6)*

Not all Diasporas (even those with high qualifications) are doing well, and it is important to debunk the assumption that in general the majority of Diasporas are well-to-do.

The Zimbabwean Government recognises the international trends but without making the necessary and much needed policy commitments to their Diaspora. Many respondents are aware of the ‘Diaspora experience’ in other countries and wanted to compare it to Zimbabwe. The Government does not facilitate migration of skilled and unskilled workers as they do in Asia. The Philippines and Indonesia and India are case in points. Zimbabwe does not mention any other programmes in Africa from which they might draw lessons, instead the section simply presents global facts but not the practical experience on which to build the Zimbabwean experience. South Africa was mentioned with regard to its programmes to lure its skilled workers back, and the Ethiopian and Eritrean experience. Examples of Diasporan innovation on home soil were discussed. These are the international experiences that this Diaspora report should reference.

The contribution that the Diaspora makes to the Zimbabwean economy through remittances is indisputable, but the remittances are not the only axis on which the Diaspora is and can have an impact in Zimbabwe. The question is how does a Government build ‘sustainable partnerships’

with the Diaspora, an entity that is fluid and has no clear constituency and location. One important consideration is that direct Diaspora investment means Government recognising that the Diaspora is a partner, and as such there is a need to negotiate and develop mutually beneficial partnership arrangements.

The Government must move from the idea that wanting to keep ties equates to wanting to invest. The investment climate must be favourable, especially for retirees who cant afford to lose their money.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

There is insufficient current data on the location, size, and profiles of the Zimbabwean Diaspora (see 3.1). even within areas where ZDBNI is active, it is difficult to establish the number of Zimbabweans present. The Ukraine crisis is a case in point, where it was really hard to locate Zimbabweans in the areas affected by war. There are various estimates of migration statistics some more realistic than others, with a total number at up to 3 million people being made reference to. It may never be possible to really have reliable figures on the size of the Zimbabwean Diaspora. While the 2016 ZDP document defines the Zimbabwean Diaspora and the strategies with which to engage with it, it is debatable whether the GoZ has adequate information on the Diaspora in order to engage with it effectively. Sound Diaspora interventions should draw on relevant, timely and reliable information. The first step in the process is to understand how this group is constituted. In this regard, the establishment of national databases of Diasporas (through censuses and research) is considered necessary but is also resisted by Diasporans. Perhaps the more reasonable approach is not to focus on enumeration of the Diaspora, but focus on broader characterisations of groups and their locations.

More targeted engagement in response to group needs is crucial to achieve success especially with marginalised groups

Data collection should recognise that Diasporas are not homogenous, but comprise diverse categories of people who differ in terms of skills and qualifications, social, political, and religious persuasions, their reasons for migrating, as well as their intentions to stay in the host country or return home. Therefore, the various Zimbabwean Diaspora subgroups need to be identified for more purposeful and targeted engagement. The nature of the relationship and definition of terms of engagement should be mutually agreed upon and mutually beneficial.

The ZDP document should be clear that the policy covers all Diaspora groups, and with this inclusivity, some of the previously marginalised groups should be included. Responses during the consultations indicate that there should be concerted efforts to ensure that 'inclusive' means making sure that those 'uncomfortable' and/or challenging groups, whose recognition is sometimes problematic (for example, LGBTQ, white Zimbabweans, political activists, and such like) should be incorporated meaningfully in dialogue and other progressive engagements. Another group that was highlighted are the second/third generation Diasporas, young people who were born in or grew up in the Diaspora.

Without concerted engagement with young Diasporans the potential ramifications of diminished Diaspora returns in the future are huge.

- ✓ *"I am one proud Zimbabwean, we try to be positive in my generation, we raised children who have no connection to Zimbabwe, they didn't herd cattle like we did, they didn't go kudhibhi, and they are floating out there, these are the children we want to be involved, unfortunately they don't have the same ties as we do" (Voice 7).*

These young Zimbabwean Diasporas must be encouraged to connect with and take pride in their ancestral home, starting by creating spaces for them to participate (not in a tokenistic way) in conversations about Zimbabwe's history, culture, economic, and political issues. Engaging these young Zimbabweans means is critical as the aging Diaspora population is purged by the natural life cycle and replaced by generations of

young people born in the Diaspora. Without concerted effort and resources being invested in engaging with this important Diaspora group, one of the potential ramifications is that of diminished Diaspora returns for the country. Not only would this mean significant reductions in remittances and investments from the Diaspora, major sources of foreign currency, it could also mean a decline in skills transfers and philanthropy-related initiatives.

Although consultations that the Government conducted indicate a keen interest to invest, it is important to highlight that most of the consultations people in the Diaspora say they have participated in are not consultations where everyone or any Zimbabwean can attend. Most are organised around platforms or spaces where well to do Diasporans are found. The focus on investment and big business (see 3.2) is leaving out a sizable group of Zimbabweans, most of whom are interested in small projects and some are already invested in the informal sector. The undocumented migrants, retirees, incarcerated/trafficked Zimbabweans and young Zimbabweans are all groups who are missing in the current conversations.

There must be an awareness in the Government that Zimbabwe is not the only investment destination for people in the Diaspora. Cost and ease of doing business in other countries places a significant pull on a Diasporan investor. Transaction costs of doing business in Zimbabwe are very high compared to doing business in the host country. Although most acknowledge that they have become conditioned to doing things the *'Zimbabwe way'* we should not accept to be conditioned to do things the inefficient way. Although the Government, fully acknowledges the need to put in place policies, strategies, and an institutional framework to ensure effective Diaspora participation in national affairs and development, it is still difficult to develop programmes or projects in Zimbabwe. A significant number of Diasporans believe that it is only possible to do something where there are political connections. Many Diasporans are wanting to do things outside politics and find it hard to operate.

Although, Zimbabwe has suffered a significant brain drain (3.3) in all sectors of the economy, there is a lot of desire by Diasporans to go back home and give something back somehow. It is acknowledged that the efforts to harness and tap into this pool of expertise may be hampered by the absence of a database of Zimbabweans abroad by their location and skills. Further, there is a reluctance among local skilled groups to welcome foreign based expertise, seeing it as competition or privileging of individuals who are already doing well. Conversations about falling

academic or industry standards are difficult and become political quite quickly, so most Diasporans choose to not get involved. However, the fact that qualified people leave the country (2.3) does not mean they operate

But, brain drain can be brain gain if the Government is open to developing programmes that attract the Diaspora back under different arrangements.

in those professions in their host countries. People with other skill sets join the healthcare to gain entry to a country. There is data to show that people retrain, accept any jobs, and are not necessarily using their training. In many countries qualifications from Zimbabwe are not recognised. English teachers in China are an example. This is an area that needs to be addressed for the effective leveraging of the myriad Diaspora-based skill sets, which can positively impact the country's socio-economic and political progress.

Developing policies for the Diaspora (3.4) rather than with the Diaspora, will not yield positive results. Rather than merely commenting or reviewing the policy, the Diaspora should be involved from the ground up. The era of Zoom makes this an accessible and cost effective process.

RATIONALE FOR THE ZIMBABWE DIASPORA POLICY

The rationale on 4.1 seeks ‘maximise mutual benefits for all stakeholders’ without really identifying who constitutes the ‘stakeholder’. But seeking mutuality of benefits is a good start. There however, needs to be more articulation on this point, so that there is clarity on what mutual benefit means. Currently, the government has provided a comprehensive listing all the ways Diaspora can help Zimbabwe, but have not provided another list for what they will give to the diaspora. Further 4.1 states the intention of Government to ‘mainstream the Diaspora into national dialogue and development agenda’. How will this be achieved and who is ‘the Diaspora’? We know the Diaspora is highly fractured as evidenced by the number of Diaspora groups that have been formed and their disparate interests. Who will Government work with and what is the basis on which they will decide who or how many groups to work with? This is something Diaspora groups are working to address.

The most important thing for the Diaspora is to organise and be a cohesive body that stand out as an entity or Network of groups that the Government can readily engage with

In the consultation, phrases like openness to progressive ideas, non-tokenistic and depoliticized engagement were used to describe engagement by the Diaspora with Government. In general, countries that have had successful engagements with their Diasporas have dealt with issues of trust that can hinder Diaspora engagement. Trust building rests on a mutual recognition of the needs and aspirations of all stakeholders in the Diaspora engagement equation. To quote a statement during the consultations;

- ✓ *“The relationship with the Diaspora is difficult, there are a lot of mine fields and negativity, and I would say jealousy too, a professionalism is missing so that engagements faces also the big challenge of how to build relationships of trust”. (Voice 8)*

For example, there is a feeling among Diasporas that their relationship with the Government is one-sided, with the Government being eager to reap Diaspora remittances (which are quite substantial), which at the same time it (the Government) is unwilling to bestow the Diaspora with such rights as voting and property rights, lowering of remittance transfer costs, tax incentives for Diaspora investors, etc that could build trust and facilitate engagement. Although the Government acknowledges the Diaspora as a ‘huge untapped potential’ the size of this potential is unknown and needs to be realistically considered by accurately profiling the Diaspora, But the Government cannot appreciate the potential without creating conducive well resourced spaces to dialogue. Submissions made during consultations were varied, some suggesting Diaspora representatives elected from the Diaspora population and that these or at least one would be a designated Member of Parliament. Another suggestion was that a multi actor platform be created and constituted by of a cross section of Diasporas from high level officials/academics leaders of industry to the undocumented migrants and personnel, from the Diaspora Directorate. Attempts to work with the Diaspora Directorate have been difficult because of the turn over of staff and other staffing challenges. Another suggestion was for the Diaspora to develop its own policy and then engage with Government on those areas where interests intersect.

There are so many stories of real estate fraud and other investment scams, that the scale of the problem warrants a study or indeed a commission of enquiry.

The loss to the Government of Zimbabwe in terms of missing out on expertise (4.4), resources is phenomenal. For example, among the leading experts for COVID-19, were Zimbabwean researchers, among leading climate scientists some of the top people are Zimbabwean. Government needs to go beyond acknowledging the wishes and find creative ways to reengage with these Diasporans. For example:

- The rationale would be stronger if it was prefixed by a desire or demand or call from Diaspora groups for such a policy. It should not be one sided.
- It would also be stronger if the framework or TOR for what should go into the policy was discussed with and agreed with an adequately representation of the Diaspora.
- It would be stronger if there was stronger more meaningful participation by the diaspora or if the Diaspora were the dominant actor groups in the development of the Policy. Development science everywhere around the world demonstrated the tremendous value of having intended beneficiaries of a policy participate in it. Co- production would do a long way to building trust with the diaspora.
- Although unusual, perhaps the policy could go further and include Diasporans in the implementation.

OBJECTIVES OF THE ZIMBABWEAN DIASPORA POLICY

The stated Zimbabwe Diaspora Policy's broad objective is to *"formally mainstream the Diaspora into national development agenda by creating an enabling framework in which the Diaspora is effectively engage"*. The framing of the objective 5.1a which states 'harness and maximise' underlines the belief long held among Diasporans, that the relationship and policy is being developed to benefit the Government rather than the Diaspora. A wealth of case studies were shared to underline that while Government may want to harness potential, Diasporans have lost a lot while trying to contribute to development. The experience of some groups is important here as they describe the kind of euphoria with which they embraced Government stated intentions about land only to be disappointed when a few years later they have not acquired the land and the project ideas have not taken off. Other cases of a businessman who lost over 2 million USD in a project and regretted his decision. Yet another example was given of a Diasporan investing their retirement funds in an agricultural project, but facing difficulties with regards to paperwork over land, clearing pumps or selling produce. She wrote about the endless hoops and hurdles one must deal with. She is now in debt and facing lots of challenges with the project.

Getting help or assistance or service from the embassies should not have to be because of someone in the embassy does one a favour, there should be a standard of service given to all.

However, most respondents are sceptical of the intention of the Government to [5.2b] *"meet the needs and expectations in order to develop mutually beneficial relationship"* as nothing presented in the policy shows a willingness to go beyond the words. The big issue here is the relationship between the Diaspora and Embassies. Granted that the relationships are variable, but the general consensus is that quality of service is from Embassies is generally low and or just barely acceptable. The participation of some of the Embassy staff in the consultations meant in some regions comments were not as open, but by and large there is need to change the way Embassies serve the Diaspora. Two big issues of crucial significance – Personal documentation and documentation for repatriating the dead. All currently difficult to do. Some Diasporans in in some countries find themselves sandwiched between Embassies, they try to get passports from one country but failed and then tried to get them through another and still failed. This experience meant people lost money to scammers in between and it was only with the intervention of one of the Ambassadors that they were able to get help. Feedback from some of the people involved indicates that they were lucky the Ambassador helped them. Getting a service should not be so hard. Arrangements for countries should be clear as regards who covers which country.

We know what good service is, our host countries provide a good backdrop against which we consider what we get from the Embassies. We should not have to rely on the good manners of an individual to get good service.

Very little of what the Government says in 5.3c; 5.3d, 5.3e; 5.3f is being done. The challenges being faced by migrants both documented and undocumented in South Africa, in the health sector in England, in stranded people in China or trafficked people in the middle east, translate into stories of hopelessness and abandonment. More specifically, challenges of students in universities around the world for example in Russia or Cyprus, who post about being hungry, being homeless, not having fees or and other countries

who have become victims to middleman need to be assisted but currently get little assistance from the Government. The recent Ukraine Crisis highlighted some of the big challenges Diasporan students are facing and continue to face. Students who participated suggested establishing a platform where students can connect and highlight their issues.

Although there is a stated intention to assist Diasporans in distress, this is not happening yet, perhaps there needs to be an appreciation of the issues and the scale of the problems. The Diaspora can assist and compile a special report on this.

The repatriation of dead Zimbabweans is a big issue and one where there are so many go-fund me campaigns. In situations where Embassies should lead, often another Zimbabwean facilitates the repatriation with donations from well wishers and go Fund me campaigns. 5.e is a really important area where the Government and the Diaspora must work together to define mechanisms that work. There is already a lot of experience among Diasporans with regard to how these mechanisms and lessons can be shared with the Embassies and be the basis for developing more effective mechanisms. In truth, many Diasporans are frustrated by the services from the Embassies as transaction costs of doing business are really very high.

Comparisons such as these are inevitable and are a big part of informing decisions about investing in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe must seek to offer more or better conditions to pull the Diaspora investor away from other opportunities in places where more robust property rights, guaranteed extraction of investment dividends, and property security, among other considerations, are known to exist. Although, the Government in 5h and 5k mentions remittances and pensions, there is need for Government to develop favourable conditions to make this possible. The Western Union Example was presented where if relatives sent money they got a little extra. Such incentives are welcome, but the big challenges remain that not all Diasporans live in countries where there are choices for sending money and the charges are still so high.

Ideally, the GoZ meeting its obligations to provide services to its citizens should be separated from a relationship where the Government wants to collaborate with Diasporans as investors and tap into Diaspora resources (5h). The policy document should be like any other bi-lateral agreement and or a framework document, where parties/Diaspora group negotiate and agree on terms of engagement. These are the 5.3a opportunities mentioned although this should be made in a way not create situations where local Zimbabweans resent Diasporans further. Does the question then become, who does the Government work or negotiate with to develop such an agreement? How have other countries done it? The Israeli and Ghanaian experiences may offer some useful insights into how this may be achieved. Current experience is that the Diaspora organise themselves into consortia and do business as a defined business entity. Establishing 'necessary institutions' for Diaspora issues must be involve Diasporans and include those that have Diaspora experience (returnees who are familiar with issues and challenges).

The Government must develop a framework that provides for negotiating agreements with Diaspora groups in the same way they negotiate with other investment entities and or countries. Time to bring some professionalism and transparency into the relationship.

The objective 5f, which seeks to encourage Diasporans to *'form country specific umbrellas association and think tanks'* has occurred with very little Government support or resourcing. There are many Diaspora associations and groups and this has become one of the challenges. Many respondents saw ZDBNI's open invitation to the consultation as a good start for coalescing the Diaspora into a more distinct entity that can be an effective vehicle for Diaspora advocacy and projects. Many Diaspora organisations have generally remained

'briefcase' undertakings, lacking robust governance and accountability. With no proper records of membership, organisational standards, robust accounting procedures for funds and

Without any resources or funding dedicated to support the development of viable, inclusive platforms for Diasporans, the performance of associations will continue to be low.

other resources donated by well-wishers, many potential and initial members are often disillusioned and fall away. Unhelpfully, this makes them highly likely to be sceptical of any future initiatives of similar nature. Without a large Diaspora constituency behind them, many of the Zimbabwe Diaspora organisations have struggled to become powerful lobby groups, with the capacity to impact and influence changes in various thematic areas. Being aware of the challenges, means that organisations such as ZDNBI need financial support to properly set up and run their programmes.

The submissions gathered suggest that the specific ZDP objectives should be formulated as follows;

- Provide a framework and development strategies that formally mainstream the Diaspora into national development processes.
- Provide opportunities for Zimbabweans in the Diaspora to vote in national elections and participate in and contribute to national development.
- Develop measures that enhance the protection of Zimbabweans in the Diaspora to safeguard their basic rights, working conditions, and living standards through engagement with host Governments, to follow up with agencies that are working on employment and labour affairs to ensure safety of employees.
- Provide effective follow-up and support in cases of emergency (the Ukraine Crisis being an example).
- Develop mechanisms for dialogue and cooperation with the Diaspora through informing and expanding services offered by Embassies, including the processing of official documentation and co-creation of nationally significant cultural celebrations.
- Encourage the Zimbabwean communities abroad to form country-specific umbrella associations and think tanks.
- Establish and or enhance (the capacity) of necessary inclusive institutions for the coordination and effective administration of Diaspora issues.

THE POLICY MAKING PROCESS

Although the document refers to its process as ‘highly consultative’, comments were received during the consultations about how the Government selects targeted groups in places deemed to have high populations and neglects those with less people. So when the Government states that the consultations were both ‘intensive and extensive’ it is not clear how they achieved these since even in those countries where Government have consulted there were comments that ‘people were not aware’ of the process, that ‘they didn’t understand that the meetings they had attended were about forming a policy’. The Diaspora engagement workshop or indeed the road shows who gets invited to these, where does one get information about these. These were questions people were asking, implying that these platforms are rather exclusive and some people were feeling left out. Suggestions were made for Government to use a multi method approach to reach groups especially those marginalised and those who see themselves as ‘forgotten groups’. Among the forgotten groups include those in the LGBT, white Zimbabweans, young Zimbabweans and students. Although these platforms were held, no information is publicly available about what was discussed in these meetings. For example, how does one get a copy of the Kariba Draft of the stakeholder meeting held in Kariba in 2014 (6.5) or reports from subsequent meetings held in Kariba (see 6.6). Finally, in 6.7 there was a validation workshop in 2015, but no reports are publicly available and it is not clear how many Diaspora groups are represented or participating in these platforms. Our own experience this past year indicates that although there is a stated intention by Government to involve the Diaspora, it always comes down to whether or not there is funding to support Diaspora participation.

Although policy making is the responsibility of Government, effective engagement of the Diaspora in the process is a necessary requirement that needs to be properly resourced and given adequate time.

Although the request by Government provides a timeline for comments from the consultation, this timeline was rendered redundant due to various factors. During the consultations, the working group sought to give as many groups a chance to contribute to the process, with the result that in some regions, more meetings were offered while groups were given time to organise in their regions and submit as a group.

Who should pay for Diaspora participation in the interactions with Government? Without dedicated support for Diaspora participation, the level of involvement will minimal or at the very least only enough to tick the box...

Clearly, timeframe for such consultations needs to be wider to allow for more reach. The language of the documentation presented for comment was also an issue (for example in China). In the future, the use of other languages like Shona and Ndebele should be considered to make the documents more accessible. Some comments related to the inaccessibility of Embassies as effective middlemen in these processes, while some respondents lauded the efforts by their Embassies to facilitate the review.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES IN THE DIASPORA

There is little awareness of what policies or initiatives on the Diaspora that are being run by Government (7.1). Some talked about access to land for Diasporans, while others talked about real estate. Most felt that it was a real challenge to access these opportunities. A Diasporan had been waiting on land since he completed the forms in 2018. Another gave examples of how they have moved from office to office to try and get the paperwork and left frustrated as they had not achieved anything. Despite the presence of the Diaspora directorate navigating through all the paperwork and requirements of doing something in Zimbabwe is still a really big challenge.

Sadly, there is no website or platform where Diasporans can validate information that they receive about investment opportunities and end up being scammed. In any cases agency officials tend to have their own interpretations of the provisions of some of the policies and regulations. Suggestions were made for Government officials to be invited for face to face meeting with Diasporans to discuss some of these challenges. Some respondents also felt that there was confusion in interpreting those same initiatives when the Diaspora tried to pursue them where an official had a different explanation to what is stated by the Government through their policies.

The Reserve Bank policies (7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5) are presented in language that most Diasporans are not sure they understand. Communicating this information in a simpler way will make people understand what the opportunities are. The big issue especially among retirees is protections of the value of the currencies they bring into the country. Many have complicated arrangements where they come home but leave their money in the host countries because the risks are assessed to be too high because of the frequent changes in Government monetary policy.

On paper there are products and programmes for Diaspora, but the reality is that few have benefited or know about them> Tokenistic programmes must give way to real programmes that benefit more people.

In 7.7 the Government takes credit for the formation of the Zimbabwe Diaspora Network of North America although it is not clear how they facilitated this process or if they allocated resources for it. Notwithstanding, how that association was formed, most of the groups in consultation indicated a willingness to work with Government but not be seen as too close to Government. The desire for independence is understandable where people want to feel they have agency in how they create and support their programmes. Collaborations with Government through Embassies is something that was emphasised during the collaborations.

There was agreement that the Diaspora needs to start seeing Embassies as a partner on some issues and as an essential agency and service provider. Rather than bypass or avoid interactions with Embassies, there was agreement that it is important to

Although the Diaspora is sympathetic to some of the challenges Embassies face and some want to assist, they are reluctant to fully commit to assisting, when they have no say in how the Embassies deliver services or develop programmes.

reconfigure relationships and work on building trust with Embassy staff. The Diaspora are aware of the limitations that face the staff and how these can affect service delivery. Good relationships with the

Embassy could mean that the Diaspora works with the Embassies to find solutions to some of their immediate challenges. A Diasporan who travelled to Belgium highlighted how Diasporans can assist to make Embassies places we can be proud of. Also, the GoZ seems to focus a lot on South Africa and the United States of America. It's not clear why other groups in other parts of the world are not mentioned as there are now new ways of communicating without the heavy reliance of face to face meetings. Diasporans called for a change in the way that the GoZ approaches its Diaspora engagement initiatives. Engagement strategies should recognise Diasporas as self-defining stakeholders, able to organise themselves and harness resources to support their active participation in processes. True partnership should therefore recognise the need for the effective representation of the Diaspora at all levels in the Policy making process. Diasporans want to be part of delegations to explore models of engagement in other countries (7.12).

The relationship between the Government and the Diaspora is a complex one, and often contradictory. People pointed to the 'lack of love for the Diaspora when you land at the airport' to some negative comments by Embassy staff, and political statements which paint the Diaspora as an undifferentiated block and 'an enemy of the country'. Trust is at a low level, with the Diaspora feeling that although there is acknowledgement of remittances, there is little else the Government values. The need for continuous dialogue is urgent to build trust. Although the Government lists the consultative meetings it undertakes 7.9; 7.10; 7.10, 7.11, suggesting high engagement, the sentiment is at odds with the stated efforts indicating perhaps the reach of these meetings is too restricted and not enough Diaspora participation is being seen. As such, it was felt that the Government should implement strategies aimed at enhancing constructive dialogue and conducting civic education between the Zimbabwean Diaspora and other stakeholders to create better understanding and common ground, as the basis for mutual engagement.

Diasporans want to engage, they want to invest, but they want assurances that their investments are protected and safe - they want to be able to trust the process.

CHALLENGES TO EFFECTIVE CONTRIBUTION BY DIASPORA TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This is a really important aspect (see 8.1). Two key points that speak to mechanisms of representation of and effective national development participation by the Diaspora are pertinent here. Firstly, an effective and sustainable mechanism to represent the Diaspora is needed. Although there are many associations, groups, and bodies, coalescing the global Zimbabwean Diaspora is likely to be an organic process that will emerge away from Embassies and Party politics or Government entreaty as the Diaspora recognise the need for a unified voice and position. The emergence of the ZDNBI is an example of this. Discussions have also revolved around selecting Diaspora MPs, and Diaspora-based people sitting on local boards and or organisations. If anything, the COVID-19

global pandemic has ushered in a new way of working where physical presence is not always required, and boundaries are giving way to issue based organisations. The Ukraine Group coordinating rescue of Zimbabweans

was a case in point and demonstrated emphatically the importance of a new kind of institution, one where people coalesce around an issue or challenge irrespective of location and where symbiotic relations with actors groups and agencies are brought to bear. In the case in point, the complementary capabilities within the Diaspora and the Embassy were harnessed to run a successful rescue programme. Whatever organisation is developed, the Diaspora must define for themselves as they are doing in other projects too. One of the proposals to emerge from the Diaspora, which can enable this, is that of Hometown Associations where Diaspora jointly initiates projects in their home communities.

The big question is what kind of organisational model works in the Diaspora. If outcomes are what we seek, then the Ukraine Crisis group model is worth considering.

Points [8.2, 8.3;8.4;8.5;8.6;8.9;8.12] all relate to the difficult conditions or environment that disable Diaspora economic activity participation and or investment. There are many cases recounted relating to how people lost investments and their pensions trying to invest. Diaspora need assurance that their money and assets are protected. Discussions about creating investment funds and related instruments, all hinge on the presence of these assurances and necessary protections of resources and assets. This is critical. Such kinds of Diaspora-led interventions have precedence. China, India, and Israel are best-known examples of countries, whose development has been spearheaded by their nationals abroad. In these cases, Diaspora communities have gone beyond the traditional support for home countries via remittances, goods and equipment. Diaspora investors and entrepreneurs have been instrumental in attracting foreign direct investment (FDI), setting up joint ventures, and promoting the export of domestic companies. Points [8.7; 8.8; 8.10; 8.11] relate to the efficiencies of the Embassies. Result-focused delivery for Embassies would improve current practice.

The number and scale of challenges facing Diaspora engagement are disheartening and make it to believe that any positive outcomes are achievable.

Some suggested creating a performance appraisal system for the Embassies which would see them operate more as if ‘Diasporas matter’. Currently attitudes and behaviours or Embassies reflect a wider reaction by Zimbabwean institutions towards the Diaspora – which can be summed up as being mainly ambivalent and oftentimes not supportive. The use of surveys and focus groups with their respective Diaspora constituents could provide the Embassies with useful insights into what is working well and can enable them to glean views on opportunities for improvement across the whole gamut of services they provide.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles need to be updated to include overarching concepts and philosophies that underpin how Zimbabweans look at their country and their obligations. The notion that one is the daughter of the soil or *Kumusha/Kanyji/Muzi* or home underline the importance with which Zimbabweans view ties with home. Further, many grew up with the idea that where you are is only temporary and that ‘home is home’. As such there is a tendency to think about one’s roots or where you come from. But home is not just a place you go when you die, it a place that reconnects and renews. There are of course other important concepts that have been used to explain why Diasporans look out for each other – there is the idea of “*wangu*’ where you see another Zimbabwean as your kin, and so you do right by your kin. Another is the idea of *ubuntu* which underlines our connectedness and interdependence.

The pull of home is quite strong and for most that is a key factor in where they decide to invest.

Looking at the list presented there are a few principles that were mentioned as needing to be added:

- Trust and mutual respect for our interdependence as currently there is a trust deficit.
- The idea of corporate responsibility especially for investments -Environment and social justice are really key tenets in investment plans to ensure sustainability in the long term
- Science-driven decision making where research informs action - Result or performance focused where policies are assessed are also evaluated by their beneficiaries.
- Alignment of laws with the constitution is really urgent with respect to citizen rights,
- Open and clear processes for oversight and Respect for the rule of law
- Co-production and Accountability
- Equality and no discrimination

Although, the principles include inclusion, there were groups in the Diaspora who felt they were excluded from the Diaspora policy. Inclusion must therefore be explicit in its desire to include all Zimbabweans, irrespective of race, sexual orientation or age. Young people born in the Diaspora do not have strong links with the country and active programmes must be developed to harness these future Zimbabweans. A lot of Zimbabweans investing in host countries are subject to conditions and principles that guide their investments. Some who borrow money know about the seriousness of these conditions. Consequently, if the Government want to harness Diaspora money, they may need to be ready to renegotiate or discuss some of the key principles that are attached to the investment. Although

Ideally consultation should be as open as possible and involved as many as possible of the key groups.

there is a tendency to often rush to talk about inclusion in relation to these groups, there is another type of inclusion where as a Diaspora are arguing for. The

inclusion of Diaspora in policy making processes. One of the words that has been banded about in the Policy is ‘consultation’ yet it has not been defined. In development circles they talk about the ladder of participation where each rank represents degrees of participation from low to high. Just asking the Diaspora to comment on the policy fits a co-optation model rather than a collaborative model. The ideal is to move levels of consultation to the top of the ladder, where the Diaspora will feel connected to the policy, know what is in the policy and own it.

POLICY STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS CHANGES

There are clear result areas that the Government can and should address as a matter of urgency. While the Government suggests the 'setting up of a platform' 10.1, there was general scepticism about the value of such a move given that agencies are only as good as the resourcing and power that they get. As with other agencies the Government previously set up to focus on a group, real and tangible change is difficult to achieve. The changes in the Diaspora Directorate and the list of challenges they face makes it difficult for them to achieve desired outcomes.

It is important that the Government is aware of the differential treatment (10.2) and the need to realign the laws to address this. 10.5 is a really important component of the Diaspora policy where any changes to improve the process would influence the attitudes towards the Embassies and Government. But the area of documentation pricing is one area where the differences are clear. Differential policy affects a lot of undocumented Diasporans and students, mainly due to the fact that both Zimbabwean Diaspora subgroups are of limited financial means and are often at the margins of the labour market. Even with the differential pricing getting documentation is still a big challenge.

- ✓ *"The cost of the passport is prohibitive. We need to calculate the real cost - for people in countries without an embassy its costs(passport) + air ticket+ hotel+ costs on the ground for someone to go and pick it up. Second, why are we not being treated the same as other Zimbabweans, the constitution is clear. Raising the cost of the passport prices leaves a lot of poor and undocumented migrants out" (Voice 9)*

Some Diaspora complained about discrimination in other spheres as well like

- ✓ *"If you have a foreign registered car and you book into a hotel, they refuse to let you pay with local currency to park your car, but you cant swipe , there is differential pricing for the Diaspora. When you go to a hotel they ask for an ID, you produce and complete a form, you will pay a different amount , they will want to use the foreign card, we are in Zimbabwe, why cant we pay same price as other citizens, they differentiate the Diaspora". (Voice 10)*
- ✓ *"5 years ago I took my family on a trip around Zimbabwe national parks. It was really hard to book as because one had to prove that you are local. In Victoria Falls, the lady getting the entrance fees was really rude and reluctant to let us pay local fees, she even tested the children's Shona skills and subjected them to a mini impromptu interview. All very embarrassing and unnecessary. When we got to Chinhoyi caves it was a similar experience, but this time the kids couldn't be Zimbabwean because they were mixed race. You cant make this up so they rudely demanded fees for foreigners which of course I contested" (Voice 11).*

Most nationals get preferential treatment in their home country, but not in Zimbabwe. Some felt they were on occasion treated like 'enemies of the state'. Perceptions and attitudes need to change.

10.2 sets out 'processes to define mechanisms' for Diasporan to exercise their constitutional rights (10.9 and 10.15). Government says they will set up a 'formal platform', then in 10.9 they will set up a 'one stop shop' and in 10.15 they will form a 'formal platform' . Although the creation of these agencies is welcome, there remain worries about viability of these platforms and the additional weight of bureaucracy that

comes with having so many organisations. This is a welcome statement of intent but the question is have these structures worked for the Diaspora.

Comments from the consultations point to Zimbabwe being a challenging country to invest in 10.7, 10.9, and 10.11. In particular, transaction costs are very prohibitive. A simple way of massively improving Diaspora Investment would be to make transaction charges (including fees from lawyers, banks and other Government institutions) lower, and preferably more comparable to those found in other countries. Without resolving this issue, and making it easier to do business in Zimbabwe - capital will flow more towards where transaction costs are lower and where it is easier to do business. Furthermore, views of those interested in investment were summed as by a suggestion made by a Diaspora policy review survey participant, who suggested that;

The Government needs to make Zimbabwe more competitive as an investment destination in comparison to other countries.

- ✓ *“Investments opportunities should first be presented and circulated to Zimbabwe Diaspora networks whose investments are sustainable instead of handing over strategic national resources to foreign powers who will expatriate all the profits back to their nations”. (Voice 12)*
- ✓ *“The Government should offer Diasporans who are keen on investing in the Zimbabwe economy, incentives, just like they give foreign companies wanting to invest in the Zimbabwean economy. There is a lot of potential in that approach, many Zimbabweans end up investing in their countries of residence, yet they could equally invest that money into the Zimbabwean economy.” (Voice 13)*

Banking transactions noted in 10.10 or 10.14 with Zimbabwe are difficult. Even some of the money changing platforms have Zimbabwe on some list and one sends money after a rigorous review process.

Government has embraced the spirit of devolution and that too could be reflected in how much power Government passes on to Diaspora related agencies for them to be effective

Another topical issue relates to the creation of a data base (10.12). While some support the idea of a data base, there is also resistance to the idea. Even among those who see the importance of a data base, there is fear that information might be used for other purposes.

One consideration for Government through the Embassies is to consider partnering with the Diaspora to run some of the structures in the host countries. The Ukraine Response Group is a good example of how the diaspora can partner and complement Government. However, diaspora groups that do work with the Government can and should when possible charge fee for service.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF AGENCIES INVOLVED IN THE POLICY

There are so many GoZ institutions involved, a situation that causes confusion for the Diaspora engagement-wise. What is the role of Embassies vis a vis all these other departments? To make it easier for the Diaspora, there must be a clear division within the policy in terms of who deals with what and where the entry point for the Diaspora is. There are many overlaps, and some confusing points. For example the Ministry of Macro Economic Planning and Investment Promotion has the responsibility to develop a data base 13.2, while Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for registering the Diaspora 15.1 in conjunction with Ministry of Information communication and Technology 23.1. or 14.3 and 15.4. Such kind of overlaps, which are present in other areas too, cause confusion and create a burden to Diaspora, who feel there needs to be more clarity on who is in charge of what.

Synergies become clear when Diaspora and Government respect each other's complementary capabilities and desired outcomes are achieved much quicker.

The excessive disaggregation of roles evident increases the costs of transacting with Government. By contrast other host countries have all their systems streamlined on websites where one may not even need to leave home to do a transaction, and often these also take very little time to complete. The multi-agency involvement can also result in differences in the way Government staff interpret rules and procedures.

The Diaspora can be a valuable source of knowledge and experience on how to develop governance arrangements that work

- ✓ *“Government agencies – they all have different policies, you can go to the border, when you leave they say they are EMA or that one, what am I paying for, I don't know. In the website the information is there but they change it. We would want to see alignment of the rules and regulations” (Voice 14).*

We can't ignore the power dynamics evident as ministries jostle for scarce resources and power.

Perhaps the government can even consider diasporans working in some of the structures in their host countries. The era of Covid has made remote working a real possibility. 28.2 provides an opening for Government to find ways to involve Diaspora in policies and programmes. The important thing to underline is that Government needs to shift from the traditional approach of 'doing service for the Diaspora' to one where 'they do service with the Diaspora'.

Government has embraced the spirit of devolution and that too could be reflected in how much power Government passes on to Diaspora related agencies for them to be effective

That way the Diaspora becomes a participant rather than a passive recipient of beneficiary. More importantly, the Diaspora needs to argue to be involved in the performance assessment of those agencies that provide services to it.

THE ROLE OF THE DIASPORA

The important statement in the policy is the directive where the Government states in 29.1, that the 'members of the Diaspora shall' as if Government has the prior agreement or the power to direct. Although it is important to define the scope of the Diaspora involvement, experiences with Ukraine Crisis Rescue Group suggests that some roles may emerge unexpectedly so it is important to leave room to leave other areas where the Diaspora might be active. The statement must be adjusted to state that the Diaspora 'shall participate' in all the sectors listed and much more if it benefits them as investors to do so.

Statements from 29.2, 29.4 and 23.5 identify areas where the Diaspora can be active. There seems to be an expectation that the Diaspora is available and able to do things for free. Government must accurately costs engagement of the Diaspora in its programmes and provide support where needed to facilitate the kind of active involvement it is seeking. Where money and resources are not available, the Government must find ways of giving recognition for efforts done in service to the country by those in the Diaspora. For example, in promoting tourism, those involved could get points to stay at particular venues or discounts in recognition of their efforts. There are many schemes that can be developed that would interest the Diaspora and encourage greater participation.

Regarding 29.2 is important but there needs to be recognition of the attitudes and views of local expertise. Providing technical expertise, know how and entrepreneurial skills cannot happen in a vacuum, arrangements need to be in place to facilitate Diaspora involvement at home. Many complain about the excessive red tape when they try to get involved while others have faced rejection because Diasporans are perceived to be taking opportunities that those at home really need. This Diaspora involvement can be seen by local experts as encroachment rather than a positive thing. Mechanisms to facilitate technical exchange exist but are difficult to navigate.

The big challenge with supporting philanthropic efforts has been to get the assurance that philanthropic efforts get to where they are intended and that procedures and paper work are made simpler when they are needed. Bottlenecks in agencies as one moves from office to office affect interest. For example an attempt to send a container from Scandinavia proved very costly for the sender,, when the agencies deemed that duty had to be paid for what were donations. Transparency and accountability could be improved in this area so those involved feel assured and can also assure those in the host countries that donations get to their intended beneficiaries.

During the consultations, the essential elements of an effective Diaspora were defined. One was to recognise that although there is diversity and difference, there are things that unite us – and these

There is a perception that Government readily pays consultants and or external experts but wont pay Diaspora Zimbabweans

can be understood in the way we look at citizenship and our connection to home. There is a recognition too that individually we are weak but a united Diaspora is strong. To engage effectively with Government, there is need to consider the Diaspora as a legitimate partner group. It was important to establish what our strength or bargaining chip was.

IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE

The national Diaspora policy coordination and implementation structure is a flow diagram that shows the connection between agencies that are involved. The interesting box on the flow chart is the Diaspora Associations which connect to the Government through the Zimbabwe Diaspora Unit (ZDU), so really getting involved at the tail end of Government, in a department that is responsible for policy implementation rather than policy formulation. We know from the consultations that Diaspora is calling for 'real presence' in some of these institutions.

For the structures for the Diaspora to work strong relationships underpinned by trust are needed

Staffing in these departments should require Diaspora experience or exposure, so we have people with a high familiarity with Diaspora issues. By contrast the Zimbabwe Diaspora Advisory Council will provide technical advice on critical issues. This is an important organ where real presence of Diaspora can be put. What is less clear on the diagram is the relationship we as Diaspora associations have with Embassies. The indication that Government is engaging with Diaspora Associations begs the question, which ones and is there any requirement for accreditation.

Opening up spaces within agencies to real presence by Diaspora will make these agencies more focused and streamlined.

Many Diaspora associations including ZDBNI have been actively forming relationships with Embassies and see them as a logical bridge with the Government. Roles and responsibilities will need to be more streamlined for there not to be confusion or duplication.

During the consultation, there was little awareness of the institutional arrangements around Diaspora issues. Although there were a few who mentioned the Diaspora Directorate, there was little awareness of its presence or role. However, there were indications that directorate staff were willing to be on zoom platforms with Diasporans to begin to talk about the Governments Diaspora policy. Some who had been to the directorate found no one to help them and 'had gone' in circles not quite sure where and how the department works. A few people testified to the assistance or information they received. A suggestion was made that consideration be given to the establishment of a state ministerial post for the Diaspora and appointments of technical advisers to work on a panel that works closely with the Diaspora directorate. Although there is high-level leadership within the Government, the important pillars for success would be a good policy, strong involvement by the Diaspora and a trustful relationship with Government.

Part 2: Review of the Concept Note on the production of an updated Diaspora policy

INTRODUCTION

This section presents comments and views from the consultation related specifically to the concept note, but noting that there will be areas of overlap resulting in repetitions when Part 1 and part 2 are considered together. We have chosen to present them independent of each other. The justification for the concept note is that the Government has ‘expressed renewed interest’ to work with the Diaspora and that ‘the current policy does not include the aspirations of the new dispensations’. This renewed interest is justified given the growing importance that Diasporas are being given around the world as the new ‘type of Donor AID’. Yes the Diaspora are the ‘new donors’ and many countries are starting to develop new institutional arrangements to attract even more of this funding. The Government approach is based on what it calls ‘*rapprochement, engagement and reengagement*’ but to the Diaspora these are words. Some did not see the engagement by the Government under the 2016 Diaspora policy and thus do not understand the intention to reengage when there was no engagement before. ‘*Rapprochement*’ if it means ‘to re-approach’ is understood to be what the Government is trying to do through the invitations to Diaspora associations and groups. The concept paper states clearly, that a new shift from the 2016 Zimbabwe Diaspora Policy is that the Government is making ‘an invitation’ to the Diaspora to invest in Zimbabwe.

- ✓ *“Investment should be viewed as bringing in seeds to sow, in order to eat the fruits when ripe. It is not conducive to eat the seeds. It is therefore recommendable, and in the interests of all, that investment from the Diaspora, sourced from funds earned in the Diaspora, easily accesses the Zimbabwean economy, not only but notably, regarding means of production. It is the net investment which really matters” (Voice 15)*

The paper states that ‘*once reviewed therefore the new policy*’ shall be a key tool for facilitating re-engagement. This statement is confusing, as it is not clear how the reviewed how the new policy will be formulated. Although the review is in line with section 708 of the national development strategy but the invitations or requests to Diaspora associations/groups to undertake the review do not come with any financial support. It will provide ‘different avenues’ for the Diaspora to extend maximum support to Zimbabwe. But as the Government intensifies its ‘aggressive economic diplomacy’ what is on offer to get the Diaspora to invest.

After the elections in 2019, we were one of the first groups to meet up with the President. We decided to engage him and tell him the things that are important to us. We thought we were in a unique position to do this because of the size and proximity to Zimbabwe. We highlighted the following

- ✓ *“A lot of people who cross borders don’t have permits and this includes prominent people- when the new dispensation came into power, a lot of people wanted to come back home, but can I be allowed to come home , if I don’t have the permit or proof of purchase. We understood we would be given special consideration. Because of COVID I have been stuck back at home, and that allowed*

me time to test the sincerity of Government overtures on a number of promises. On land, I lodged an application in 2006, but so far nothing, but the president said we would be given special consideration – public pronouncements but on the ground nothing. Hakuna chandirikuona chinofavour⁴ anyone in the Diaspora- there is just information gathering for a policy but no action – where is the Diaspora, murikupihwa chii⁵ even those who have expressed an interest to come home. They say ZIDA, have you been home, not directly, I stayed in contact with my Diaspora group, no interactions with ZIDA, we were given forms through the embassy but nothing, it's a very nice form- we got them 12 months ago. You can come and test the system too – you get nothing. For the land application I put in in 2006, this is my 3rd district administrator, same district land officer, but no answer. I have lost faith in the process” (Voice 16).

This is not an isolated case, there are many more cases where people have tried to engage but have failed. They understand the importance of the Diaspora, but there does seem to be a level of resistance towards real engagement. Another participant states

They know who we are, they know we are an important stakeholder, but they are afraid to engage us substantially because it would mean giving in. so Government says how do we treat them, they dangling a carrot so high we cant reach it while they carry on with business as usual. It is important that we continue “building the house from the roof” we want to be part of the process to participate – but *kumachonyonyo*⁶. *Hapana chinyowani apa*⁷. (Voice 17)

PROPOSED CONTENTS OF THE NEW ZIMBABWE DIASPORA POLICY

Zimbabwe should draw lessons from a wider group than that presented. Countries with well developed Diaspora policies and experience also include Israel, Indonesia, India, China, Ghana and Nigeria. The wider the experience we draw on the more robust the policy conversation will be. As well as the ‘other country experience’, it is important for Government to recognise that they are not the sole target/beneficiary of Diaspora investment. Host countries offer competitive and enabling frameworks too to attract investment from all including from Diaspora.

Further, it is crucial that Government understands how the population of the Diaspora is constituted and where the investment funds reside. Although, there is a widely held conception that Diasporans remit because they can afford to, for some they remit even though they can't afford it and work several jobs to earn enough to support families at home. There is a category of Diasporans that are near or already retirees, this group may have funds but want to be careful with their funds and tend to worry when there are too many challenges or uncertainties. There is a group of well to do Diasporans, who as individuals or groups are able to harness resources to invest in projects in Zimbabwe. Re-approachment efforts must carefully target this group. There are other Diaspora who invest in little projects and some become big projects and this is a viable group. The final group is what we talked about as the future investor. These are children of Diasporans who hold Zimbabwean citizenship but have little connection with the country.

⁴ Translation: I see nothing that favours...

⁵ Translation: what are you getting...

⁶ Translation: difficult place/situation

⁷ Translation: there is nothing new here

Although Diaspora contributions are projected to increase in the long term, engagement with this group will likely influence the trend.

It is important that the new policy document specifically draws on the collective Diaspora comments, issues and aspirations not just lessons from other countries which are not stated in the document. These could be reflected in a document describing the terms of engagement. Without knowing how many Diaspora groups were involved in the review and how many made submissions, it is really important that processes of consultation be wide and thorough.

- **INTRODUCTION AND SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS** - must give an overview of past and present relations between the Government and the Diaspora.
- **POLICY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**
- **STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES** - this is missing in the new policy
- **DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES**
- **OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE IN ZIMBABWE FOR DIASPORA**

The Diaspora is aware of and wants to invest in the many opportunities in Zimbabwe. But current policies are characterised by inconsistencies and at times seem contradictory. For example at some border posts, ‘as you move towards the border post you don’t know what to expect’. Policies militate against the Diaspora investing- there are challenges from currency fluctuations, will finances be safe in Zimbabwe, how does Government deal with corruption and scams and the rule of law.

a. Investment

Comments from the consultations point to Zimbabwe being a challenging country to invest in. In particular, transaction costs are very prohibitive. A simple way of massively improving Diaspora Investment would be to make transaction charges (including fees from lawyers, Banks and other Government institutions) lower, and preferably more comparable to those found in other countries.

As an example, setting up a limited company costs £12 and takes less than 24 hours to successfully complete the registration. The applicant does not even need to leave their house as it is all done seamlessly online. The registration process also automatically registers the company with the tax office. There is also a postal option which costs £40 and takes up to 10 working days.

In the UK for instance, setting up a limited company costs £12 and takes less than 24 hours to successfully complete the registration. The applicant does not even need to leave their house as it is all done seamlessly online. The registration process also automatically registers the company with the tax office.

Without resolving this issue, and making it easier to do business in Zimbabwe - capital will flow more towards where transaction costs are lower and where it is easier to do business. As an example, setting up a limited company costs £12 and takes less than 24 hours to successfully complete the registration. The applicant does not even need to leave their house as it is all done seamlessly online. The registration process also automatically registers the company with the tax office. There is also a postal option which costs £40 and takes up to 10 working days. Furthermore, views of those interested in investment were summed as by a suggestion made by a Diaspora policy review survey participant, who suggested that;

- ✓ *“Investments opportunities should first be presented and circulated to Zimbabwe Diaspora networks whose investments are sustainable instead of handing over strategic national resources to foreign powers who will expatriate all the profits back to their nations” (Voice 18).*
- ✓ *“The Government should offer Diasporans who are keen on investing in the Zimbabwe economy, incentives, just like they give foreign companies wanting to invest in the Zimbabwean economy. There is a lot of potential in that approach, many Zimbabweans end up investing in their countries of residence, yet they could equally invest that money into the Zimbabwean economy.” (Voice 19)*

Government must consider appointing investment Ambassadors among Diasporans who will work with and assist Embassies on economic issues.

- ✓ *“As Zimbabweans we need to be on business platforms and see what other nationalities are doing – they are united. They work together – same with Chinese, Pakistanis, Indians, Nigerians and Jews etc. to be effective we need to think about new ways of working together, we need to cause some disruption on a business sense, join hands and work together. We are very jealous as Zimbabweans, few people have bribed into the system, high time we take charge and come up with business models that work for us and for our country”. (Voice 20)*
- ✓ *“As a group we are powerful. Even if we contribute 100USD each to an investment fund it can be a lot, how many people in South Africa, how many around the world. We are strong together.” (Voice 21)*
- ✓ *“In previous years people have rushed back to invest but a lot of people lost their investment. We have lost trust in investment at home, we want to come home and invest but we need to increase the confidence” (Voice 22)*

Although there is interest to invest, trust is low. There is need to build investor confidence. The impact on Diaspora individuals or as a body is not fully understood.

- ✓ *“I tried to do business, it was one of the worst experiences of my life, it almost took me out as an individual – most of my business life was in the Diaspora, and I decided to invest back home. I lost more than 2 million USD for not being on the ground. People took my product, refused top pay, despite going to legal route, to Embassies, high offices, everything, I lost everything in Zim. There needs to be a higher level of engagement to bring my experience to the fore, maybe even create a portal where Diaspora submit such cases so that policy formulation becomes evidence based” (Voice 23).*

We need to make a stronger case to review individual and collective experiences of investment.

There were discussions within the economic-investment working group about setting up a Zimbabwe Diaspora Investment Fund, which will be based outside Zimbabwe and focused on investing across the globe, not just Zimbabwe. Controlled solely by Diasporans, suggestions were made of having the Fund floated on the London stock exchange. Initial figures banded about were between 20-50 million US dollars, depending on level of interest. Energy, especially renewable energy supply was one of the investment areas highlighted as a possible priority.

The Fund was preferred over a potential diaspora Bond. Issues of trust/confidence in government management and track record were raised as part of discussions on risk and investment in Zimbabwe.

b. Trade

It is generally accepted that Diasporans can play important roles in facilitating trade and investments between their countries of origin and countries of residence. Already, there are well connected Diaspora who are actively facilitating meetings with investors and organising investment platforms in their host countries. This role is not recognised or supported. As such Zimbabwean Diasporans may present a hidden strategic resource to promote trade and development and to catalyse innovation, investment and the development of new markets. For example, through their demand for what may be referred to as ethnic, nostalgic and identity goods, thereby providing an important bridge into new markets.

- ✓ *"I think infrastructural development should be considered through constructions of better roads and bridges including railway line as this will attract more foreign investors into the country. It boosts trade too due to fast delivering of goods from other countries. This should also apply to rural areas to allow entrepreneurs to reach markets on time as well". (Voice 24)*

Furthermore, the progression of members of second- and third-generation Diaspora communities in diverse UK sectors can provide bridges to understanding, market insight and access to their countries of origin.

Increasing opportunities are available for Diaspora entrepreneurs who can play important roles in facilitating trade and investments between their countries of origin and countries of residence given the role of trust in business facilitation, especially in a globalised world. The potential of changing demographics and business Diaspora progression, coupled with increasing opportunities in higher-growth markets in their countries of origin is seldom recognized, let alone linked to trade strategy. This should be part of a new imperative for the GoZ's trade approach going forwards.

c. Knowledge and skills transfers

Submissions by Diasporans on this critical theme transmitted concerns with the GoZ's inability to attract qualified and skilled human resource from Zimbabweans in the Diaspora, largely due to the lack of a mechanism and financing for skills transfer and capacity building- the net effect

of which is inhibited reverse transfer of intellectual capital. Submissions suggested that knowledge and skills transfer is power and can be transformative for Zimbabwe.

- ✓ *“The new Diaspora Policy should articulate and underscore the importance of relevant knowledge and skills transfer from the Diaspora to Zimbabwe, to contribute to the socio-economic and political development of the country. Furthermore, it should spell out mechanisms through which this can be effectively and transparently done. This transfer will begin to also add to other efforts, aimed at reversing the brain drain that resulted from over 3 million Zimbabweans going into the Diaspora. Also, models of successful knowledge and skills transfer from other Diaspora communities should be studied to enable the design of a suitable one for the Zimbabwean context”.* (Voice 25)

Correspondingly, the issue of brain drain, as highly skilled professionals leave Zimbabwe for lucrative markets outside Zimbabwe’s borders, was highlighted as a significant drawback to the country’s development by those who made submissions on the Diaspora policy review. However, it was noted that the growth of the digital revolution with its ease of access 24/7, innovative opportunities for ‘brain circulation’ have developed, building on the Diaspora’s desire to give back to their communities of origin.

Some of these innovative approaches have seen professional associations of Diasporas working out programmes and projects where there is mutual exchange of skills and expertise between home-based practitioners and their Diaspora counterparts. These have seen the signing of Memorandum of Understanding among these groups opening structured partnerships that brings win-win benefits to all involved stakeholders. Diaspora members who share their views feel that opportunities abound in areas like Higher Education, where partnerships can cover areas such as joint supervision of higher degrees, joint research and publications as well as hosting of thematic Conferences that speak to the needs of the partners. Diasporans noted that although work in these areas has started, this can nonetheless be scaled up across the Higher Education landscape.

Impactful work has already been taking place among health professionals with accredited points for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) being gained, when professional online seminars and webinars are held. More opportunities for both short-term visits and long-term returns need to be explored for the mutual benefit of all stakeholders. Twinning arrangements at institutional and municipal levels can also be arranged for mutual benefit. There were also strong views shared relating to Diasporans forming Think Tanks that can give a fresh brush in Policy formulation and create communities of Zimbabwean thought leaders.

The Diaspora sum input on this important theme is that the Government should develop structures, programmes, and incentives to attract and utilize qualified and skilled Human Resource drawn from the Zimbabwean Diaspora. Develop mechanism and measures to promote transfer of knowledge and skills virtually through online support to build local capacity of the Zimbabweans nationals. In this regard, it was suggested that information be made available to the Zimbabwean Diaspora through Embassies and Missions, on skills shortages and corresponding employment opportunities in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, it was suggested that the Government also introduce and operationalize an award and recognition scheme for Zimbabweans abroad, who have excelled in their areas of specialization or contributions to country Zimbabwe.

d. Philanthropic works

Diaspora philanthropy has been described as “*the private donations of Diaspora populations to a wide range of causes in their countries of origin*” (International Organisation of Migration 2012:187). Often, the desire to maintain a cultural identity and contribute to society provides the foundation for the link between philanthropy and development. In an effort both to maintain roots in their host countries and contribute to the development of Zimbabwe, Diasporans expressed a deep desire to see a structured mechanism that will enable current Diaspora-led disparate philanthropic work, to be upscaled dramatically.

Submissions generally referred to Diaspora philanthropy as low-hanging fruit, as it is largely initiated by the Diaspora, and is thus easy to disburse on account of it being usually borne on the back of established community networks between the Diaspora and receiving communities. Some of the philanthropic donors include celebrities, entrepreneurs, industrial magnates, and international sports stars. However, there were vociferous submissions that allude to the fact that there is great scope for innovative philanthropic work through well-organised hometown and alumni associations, that can draw support from less affluent members of the Diaspora.

Around the world, non-profit and international organisations have already begun to lead the way in developing innovative partnerships with HTAs in order to promote development. The ZDNBI can become a key facilitator of Zimbabwe focused HTA work. Drawing on the Haitian experiences, a Zimbabwe Hometown Associations Resource Group can be facilitated to take shape by the ZDNBI, with Government support. The Haitian Hometown Associations Resource Group works to make resources available to organisations working in and for Haiti, while facilitating and solidifying relationships between the International Donor community, and financial and Government sectors for the purpose of development initiatives in Haiti.

The Resource Group is also a place for investors, social enterprises, and leaders in the business world to learn more about investment opportunities in Haiti. Opportunities for donors and Governments, international organisations, foundations, Governments, and the private sector have the potential to link their development priorities to the work of Zimbabwean HTAs, helping them define their goals and better implement their strategies. Contributions can be both in material and human resources. In other countries, research indicates that both non-Governmental (NGOs) and international organisations have already formed innovative partnerships with HTAs in other countries in order to promote development.

Diaspora have suggestions about how to facilitate more efficient systems to sending donations at home which include streamlining the entire value chain.

▪ AUXILIARY ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE DIASPORA

Comments were received where Diaspora expressed disquiet about the use of the phrase ‘*auxiliary issues*’ for issues that are core to citizenship rights and should just be titled ‘*citizen rights*’. Although not mentioned, there have been conversations every now and again about taxing the Diaspora in various ways. The Government does not currently facilitate or assist citizens

who want to migrate or assist citizens in any way when they are in the Diaspora – each to his own. What are the taxes for? There have been conversations where suggestions have been made about the Diaspora helping to payback the foreign debt. How does this conversation possible? What are the real conversations the diaspora should be having with government? Where should these conversations be taking place? Is the diaspora well represented?

e. Dual citizenship

Although in the constitution, this has not been operationalised, submissions on this major issue, urged that the Acts of Parliament be aligned with the Constitution to make it explicit that dual citizenship is permitted. Many Zimbabweans have adopted citizenships of their countries of residence for various reasons, the main being the easiness of running their daily business. In some cases one must travel to other countries which have visa requirements for Zimbabwean passport holders, in their jobs or businesses, which would limit their operational flexibility, thus, in turn, limiting their remittance to Zimbabwe. It is therefore noteworthy, that the Zimbabwean economy actually benefitted from the adoption of foreign citizenship by part of the Zimbabwean Diaspora. Albeit void of any concrete statics, it could even be assumed, that a large majority of those Zimbabweans who reside in the Diaspora who haven't yet adopted the citizenships of their countries of residence have only not done so, due to constraints of the immigration laws of the host countries.

- ✓ *“While the adoption of a foreign citizenship makes it easier to live and work in the host country, in no way does it break the bond between the citizens and Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe remains home”. (Voice 26)-*

Thus allowing dual citizenship can encourage greater Diaspora participation in Zimbabwe by among other things, facilitating travel, avoiding the constraints foreigners face on some transactions (for example, temporary work or land ownership), and providing access to public services and social benefits.

Returning residents face many challenges when they come back home. It looks like there is no proper policy or immigration officials interpretations of the provisions vary causing confusion and end up costing the Diaspora more.

A lot of people are cheated when they try to process passports and there is no recourse to justice. The scams are both in the Diaspora and in the department and in places where one is getting documents. Digitalisation of documents would really help curb some of the problems Diaspora are facing. Passports and IDs and paperwork for the deceased should be done by Embassies. We are aware that Embassies had this capability before and thus this is not a new task. Its not just a request to reinstate Embassies in this role, it is also a commentary on the quality of service Embassies should be delivering. For example, an exasperated participant noted –

1. *‘the problem with Embassies and documentations, it just seems like we are so terribly inefficient, looking at other Embassies or host countries and how people get documents, you get embarrassed, we want to cut or reduce the red tape’. (Voice 27)*

f. Diaspora voting

It is good that the issue of the Diaspora vote is on the table. The current Zimbabwe constitution does not mandate the setting up of constituencies outside Zimbabwe's borders. As a result, there is no legislative framework that regulates voting by citizens in the Diaspora. Anyone who wants to vote has to be registered in a constituency in Zimbabwe. Those who contributed their views demanded that this policy be addressed urgently as it is disenfranchising all those eligible to vote who are in the Diaspora. One participant said;

- ✓ *"We want to be treated as equal citizens. The right to vote is guaranteed to all citizens in the constitution. We would be happy to increase our remittances and investment in Zimbabwe if we feel valued and treated like other citizens. This is what other countries that have benefited from their Diaspora communities have done. It appears that the Zimbabwe Government is just interested in Diaspora remittances and investments but at the same time denying us the right to vote. You take us for fools. We are not stupid. We will give you very little because you disrespect and don't value us". . (Voice 28)*

Given the input of Diasporans, on aspects such as those relating to financial (remittances and investments for instance) and philanthropic contributions to Zimbabwe, it was noted from the submissions that it's important that the Diaspora vote is afforded the right to vote. It is strongly felt that voting is a right and form of empowerment, aspects that translate into a greater sense of ownership and accountability.

It was, therefore, suggested that this is an opportune time, through a revised Zimbabwe Diaspora Policy, to underscore this right and advocate the creation of necessary legislative enabling instruments that enable the Zimbabwean Diaspora can start exercising this right. Possible templates of how this can be mainstreamed abound and come with their merits and demerits.

From the Consultations with the global Diaspora and as also attested to by written submissions from the Tanzania Diaspora Apex Council, issues of Dual Citizenship and Diaspora Vote were most topical, with some of the submissions providing templates for successful implementation. There are several options that could be explored with respect to how the Diaspora Vote can be mainstreamed. One such template proposes the establishment of External Constituencies that can be set up in the areas/conurbations with greatest concentration of Zimbabweans. In the first instance, these External Constituencies can be in the following Areas/Regions:

1. SADC
2. East and Central Africa
2. West Africa
3. United Kingdom and Europe
4. Americas
5. Asia and Australasia and Pacific.

It is proposed that the election of Parliamentarians will follow the Constituency system in Zimbabwe with designated Embassies in each Area/Region being the Polling Stations where votes are cast, counted, and published for both Constituency and Presidential Elections.

In true testament of partnership between Home and Diaspora, Polling Officers will be drawn from both Diaspora and Embassy staff working together under the aegis of Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC). Prior to the elections, a process of Voter Registration will be conducted with electronic Voters Rolls being availed to contesting Parties. Apart from being Party Representatives, the Offices of the duly elected Diaspora Parliamentarians will also have the remit of being one of the main focal points to articulate shared Diaspora interests, aspirations, and investment projects. Diaspora in the designated external constituencies will cast their votes for their preferred Presidential candidate and Parliamentary Constituency member respectively in the Embassies where constituencies have been formed. Rather than being held at arm's length, the Diaspora needs to be embraced with them participating at every level in the decision-making process.

g. Safeguarding their rights

Those of the Lesbian Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, Transvetite (LGBTQ+) persuasion who submitted their views felt that they were not welcome and unsafe in Zimbabwe. This is in stark contrast with the inclusiveness they feel in the Diaspora. This lack of inclusivity was noted as a key reason why some can't invest in Zimbabwe, without the guarantees associated with the rights needed. There are also some investment implications when a group of Diasporas who often have the financial muscle, are inhibited from participating. One participant highlighted their hesitation to venture into farming in Zimbabwe, saying;

- ✓ *"I am prepared to spend part of the year in Zimbabwe, however, as a member of the LGBTQIA community with a family of my own, I know it would be risky. I'd like to participate in the development of my nation while also having the freedom to have my family with me if that's what we decide. I would like my Government to remove laws barring my relationship. Zvecommunity perception is something the Government can't control and I recognize that. But I want to be able to live my life without fear of being imprisoned". (Voice 29)*

Pursuant to the Constitution of Zimbabwe, the Government commits to protect its nationals both within and outside the country. To this end, the Government should adopt measures; strengthen the regulatory framework for employment agencies, especially for Middle East countries; conduct pre-departure training for migrant workers and students going for further studies abroad; conduct awareness creation for Zimbabweans going abroad through travel advisories, and facilitate registration of Zimbabweans abroad through Zimbabwe's diplomatic missions; and, revamp the existing labor recruitment system to make it more professional and accountable.

Generally, Diaspora have been cautious about interacting with Embassies, only going when it was absolutely necessary. Few had good stories about their interactions. One stated;

- ✓ *Let me reconstruct the emphasis during my stay in the Diaspora. Embassy was meant for the elite , to see embassy going down and reaching out to all and getting issues from the people, trying to interact with the people and telling us about opportunities to interact, that is new. Embassy can do greater work,. In a nutshell, of late I finally had access to the high office, its not easy to get that access, I see now there is a criteria for interaction, it is*

like a discovery, I just made a small connection and that can take you there, a simple guy who is just a layman. Yes they are willing to go down to the people, they call and there is an open door policy now. . (Voice 30)

Among young Zimbabweans, this really is a forgotten population. Aside from having little connection to Zimbabwe, some have no documentation. One young person in this group had this to say

- ✓ *It is important to engage with the youth, we don't get the voices of the youth in these platforms in Government meetings, 60% of the population of the Diaspora in south Africa are the youth. The majority have been overseas all their lives and are asking, who is my nation, what is home, what can we do there and where do we start. It is not all of us who will go back or want to go back. All of us including the youth can contribute something. . (Voice 31)*

Some regions of the world are hostile to Africans in general and within countries some are especially hostile to Zimbabwe. Challenges of poor and undocumented migrants are played out in the media and sometimes the reaction or support from the Government really takes long.

▪ INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR OFFERING SERVICE TO THE DIASPORA

Despite the existence of the Zimbabwe Diaspora Directorate, it was felt by those who made submissions on this issue, that the current GoZ institutional framework is not fit for purpose. Starting with the ineffective coordination of efforts by various Diaspora-facing ministries, it was highlighted that their initiatives remain scattered and that without a mechanism to harmonize their policies and initiatives, the status quo is unlikely to change. There are strong arguments for the Government to 'have a Diaspora desk manned by Diasporans, we can and need to become part of the implementation'.

Diaspora submissions on this aspect intimated that there are consequential capacity constraints in terms of both budgetary allocation and personnel at the diplomatic missions in the Diaspora, restorability to offer effective and efficient consular services to Zimbabweans in the Diaspora, especially where there are significant conurbations of Zimbabweans. As a result, for example, some Zimbabweans working in the Diaspora (Middle East region), both skilled and unskilled, are exposed to unsuitable working conditions, in part due to the lack of a national labour migration legal framework that can be mobilised by the embassy of consular staff to protect and defend Zimbabweans working in this region.

- h. Ministry of Foreign affairs and international trade
- i. Zimbabwe foreign missions abroad
- j. Department of immigration

▪ INFORMATION PORTALS

Premised on the understanding that ICTs now underpin much of all socio-economic and political activities globally, submissions underscored the development of ICT infrastructure as being critical to the GoZs attempts to harness the Diaspora potential. The linkages ICT's enable to other sectors

of the economy, including manufacturing were noted as important. Many noted that ICT infrastructure development was not visible in the way that services were accessed in Zimbabwe, not just by the Diaspora but all Zimbabwean citizens. Accessibility of ICT was also raised as important in order that no one is left behind. The stark message was, to improve ICT infrastructure or Zimbabwe is left behind. “We (Zimbabwe) need to invest in IT solutions”. The challenges of not doing so were highlighted as evident in the current Government systems, including information portals.

Speaking specifically about portals some lamented the poor and or inaccurate information found on Government information portals such as websites for the Zimbabwe Customs Authority. Examples were given of people arriving at border posts with their equipment and vehicles, expecting to pay x amount of money as duty and other import charges, only to be told by the officials that the rate or band had changed and that they needed to pay much more. Diasporans consulted underscored the fact that is not just updating the websites and information, but also about retraining of staff that is required.

It was also highlighted at times there are no GoZ platforms at all for communication. Instead, external ones are used. For instance, some ministries do not have websites, with email providers such as google mail being used to set up email accounts for official Government representatives. This was flagged up as not engendering confidence in the efficient operations of Government systems.

✓ *“Sometimes even when you have information (from a Government portal) that information is discounted and the official interprets it in different ways”. (Voice 31)*

- k. Zimbabwe websites
 - l. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
 - m. Social Media Platforms
- EVALUATING POLICY OUTCOMES

This is a new section missing from the contents list which we feel is needed for countability and measuring progress. Although implied in the introduction of the concept note, the absence of a statement of evaluation or report about the 2016 policy document, makes it important to consider a mechanism to understand performance against aspirations expressed in the current, 2016 Diaspora Policy. Some in the WhatsApp chat were saying;

✓ *“I want to hear from the horse’s mouth” as if that makes a difference in getting real answers? What mechanisms are planned or are in place to ensure the Diaspora can check delivery on promises and targets set (if any are)”. . (Voice 32)*

Also, it was highlighted by some that learning and the dissemination of associated data should be a key consideration in the monitoring, evaluation and learning framework adopted for the revised Diaspora policy. As part of this, the use of learning cycles was suggested as an important mechanism to ensure learning was garnered and mobilised in the operationalisation of the policy.

COMMENT ON THE WORKPLAN

The concept note proposes to appoint a consultant to facilitate the consultative process. In letters of request to Diaspora groups, the Government does not indicate how such a consultant might be accommodated in the process or indeed the likely challenges that might arise. Having a consultant do a consultative process and ask Diaspora groups to do the very same without paying them can affect commitment to the process. If someone is being paid, why should Diaspora groups do the same for free. Who will integrate the Diaspora contributions? Are they an input to this consultant?

The workplan presented was unrealistic if the point was to get wider participation by the Diaspora. Although the figures of Diaspora population are disputed, targeted sampling is important, use of mixed methods and a long time line will increase the levels of participation.

The consultative process defined within the work plan was really limited. There is a decision to limit focus to only 4 countries of destination with large Diaspora populations. Based on the Diaspora review we know that the target countries for Government remain the same and even within these countries consultations are limited to known hubs or contacts. The process is not open to the wider Diaspora despite the commitment to inclusivity. A methodology that shifts Government approach to repeated privileging of the same groups needs to be adopted.

The method of consultation mentioned in the workplan is workshops without indicating numbers of workshops that will need to be conducted or the scope of the consultation in terms of targeted numbers of participants or groups. It also mentioned 2 additional workshops in Zimbabwe to incorporate views of the hosting agencies, but does not state whether 'stakeholder' includes the Diaspora groups and who pays for their participation.

Although, the workplan presents timing of the consultations and expected deliverables, none of these dates have actually worked. Even when it became clear that the consultation process would be delayed and go for longer than expected there was no revised timeline received from Government or any communication updating the Diaspora of direction of travel.

REVIEW OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Although the Government recognises the importance of the Diaspora, they need to take that recognition further and see the Diaspora as a legitimate entity to be negotiated with. Part of that includes the Government putting in place a review process that is 'beneficiary driven' as the target group of the policy. This is important because Diaspora participation will make it possible for Government to streamline and identify key result areas for the Diaspora. In the words of one participant-

- ✓ *The policy document needs to be our document, we must contribute so we can own it as much as the Government does. You are made to feel you don't believe, you are on the edge of everything, a different tribe, our strong participation will be key in this process- where we can freely speak. it will be a big struggle to make things work. . (Voice 33)*

Despite some questioning whether the willingness of the GoZ to negotiate with the Diaspora, some participants saw the ‘invitation’ to review the Diaspora policy documents as an important first step. One said,

✓ *“we have never experienced anything like this before, we have not been invited to anything”.. (Voice 34)*

It is important that the Diaspora be inserted into the review process, in a way that makes participation matter. Our aspiration is to co-produce the new Diaspora policy. How do we insert ourselves into the terms of Reference?

Terms of Reference	Comments
1. Cooperating with the ministry of Foreign Affairs and international trade in all stages of the Diaspora policy development process	How does a consultant cooperate with the Ministry? Instead of cooperating the TOR should say ‘reporting to’ the ministry at all stages of the process presented in an agreed but realistic timeframe.
2. Drawing up a budget for activities and requirements involved in the production and launch of the Diaspora Policy	Based on the workplan proposed, the consultant costings are easy to do but the question is what is the standard that we set for how wide and comprehensive the process should be. The more participation we want in the process the more costly the process. The question is what is the minimum amount of participation that equals good or adequate participation. We would argue that based on the requirements stated in the workplan, the expectation for participation are really low. Further, this TOR should also cost the involvement of Diaspora groups which is missing at present.
3. Capturing information during workshops and liaising with stakeholders to obtain relevant information for the Diaspora policy	Data collection from activities listed in the workplan is a given, however, there needs to be more clarity on how the consultant will gather data presented by the Diaspora associations. Data collection is costly and comes with requirements for recognition and co-production.
4. Compiling the collected information into the first draft of the Diaspora Policy using the most expeditious method	What is the most ‘expeditious method’ for compiling the draft Diaspora policy. The framing of this TOR is worrisome and implies a desire to tick boxes rather than do a thorough job, synthesizing and analysing all data.
5. Presenting the draft Diaspora policy to stakeholders and incorporating comments	Although this is clear, leaving the compilation process in the hands of a consultant goes against current policy making practice, which argues for co-production of policy with the intended beneficiaries. Diaspora should be involved in writing their policy. The participation must be adequately costed.
6. Developing the final draft of the Diaspora policy as well as facilitating its production	The Diaspora should validate the policy and co-write it with the consultant. The participation must be adequately costed.

THE INDICATIVE BUDGET

The costing for the consultation process was indicated as 500 000USD but the concept note only mentions the consultant and not supporting the Diaspora groups who would be at the heart of the consultation process.. For the type and scope of activities listed, this seems like a very expensive process. What ever the process, the costing should include Diaspora participation.

Part 3. Way Forward

Although many of the ideas presented here came from the consultations, the whatsapp group and the survey, some were also discussed in the special focus groups that were created. There were groups for Youth, women, investment, disaster response, and Policy.

Although alluded to in the introduction to the concept note, the absence of a statement of evaluation or report on the implementation of the 2016 Diaspora policy note, makes it important to ask about this process. Some in the WhatsApp chats were saying. *'I want to hear from the horses mouth'* as if that makes a difference to getting real answers? What mechanism are planned or in place to ensure we can check delivery on promises and targets set (if any are) .

Although not mentioned in any of the 2 documents provided, there are pronouncements made by Government with regards to taxation, dual citizenship etcetera, that are in the public domain that are causing confusion. These need to be clarified.

There has been suggestions that as a block, the Diaspora should be seen as the 14th estate, or an 11th province. Already the UK is considered as Harare North while south Africa is seen as Harare South in popular idiom.

Many Zimbabweans are aware of the value and benefit of other citizenships, the inevitability of that comparison means that a Diaspora policy must seek to create spaces for co-production so these aspects can come through clearly, including,

- Acknowledging the inter-relatedness of issues.
- Relationship with the Diaspora – we want to go beyond assurances and see tangible changes in attitudes and behaviours among staff and organisations involved.
- What does working together involve in terms of Diaspora's real involvement – how do we craft protocols that streamline ways of working so that Zimbabwe becomes a competitive destinations of our investments.
- We want to be careful that the Diaspora policy does not become an instrument to differentiate Zimbabweans as the constitution provides and make Diasporans an elite group capturing resources and opportunities from other Zimbabweans. We want to be treated equally.
- Recognition of the differentiation among the Diasporans – retired or about to retire, future Zimbabweans, optimistic Zimbabweans, and disillusioned and exiled Zimbabweans, difficult to reach Zimbabweans. Needs differ and the Diaspora policy must reflect that.

RECOMMENDATIONS DRAWN FROM THE ZDNBI CONSULTATIONS FOR REVISED POLICY

Creation of a Ministerial portfolio for the Diaspora

Consideration should be given to the establishment of a state ministerial post for the Diaspora. Examples of this approach exist in other countries, with Kenya being the latest to move towards that direction. Such a mechanism will enable high level representation of the Diaspora

constituency and more purposeful and focused engagement with Diaspora issues, as well as the rallying of the Diaspora towards national development.

Create viable platforms to facilitate continuous dialogue with the Diaspora

The issue of improving dialogue with the Government, will benefit from mechanisms that are fully functional and efficient. Expectations of Diasporans in terms of communications are different from those of people in Government. Improving dialogue may mean exploring ways of getting a stronger Diaspora presence in organs dealing with Diaspora issues. There is mistrust amongst Zimbabweans in the Diaspora, Zimbabweans at home and the Government. This is due to inadequate efforts to create an ideal engagement platform through which Zimbabwean Diaspora, Government and other stakeholders can dialogue on issues of mutual benefit. The Government should implement strategies aimed at enhancing constructive dialogue and conducting civic education between the Zimbabwean Diaspora and other stakeholders to create better understanding and a common ground as the basis for mutual engagement.

Develop a investment incentive framework to promote Diaspora participation in national development

One of the most important findings coming out of the submissions data is the negative cost of investing in Zimbabwe. The transaction costs are equally high and satisfaction with processes and services although is largely negative. Is the Government aware of this cost? How does it compare with doing business in other countries? The Government should develop incentives and tailor - made investment packages to encourage Zimbabweans in the Diaspora to direct their remittances towards productive ventures both at the National and Regional levels. The Government should: harmonize investment promotion and facilitation initiatives targeting Zimbabweans in the Diaspora; undertake policy advocacy on targeted investment opportunities in partnership with umbrella bodies through the Zimbabwean Diaspora Associations; establish intermediary facilities to provide investment management services; and develop specific investment products and incentives that specifically target Zimbabweans in the Diaspora such as the Government securities and Public-Private Partnership engagements and establish a mechanism of assisting and protecting the investments by the Diaspora. The idea for an investment fund created by Diasporans, managed by Diasporans outside the country was also flagged. The working group on Investment has started to explore some of these ideas.

Zimbabwe Cultural tourism

The Government should establish the Zimbabweans Ambassadors Program to provide a framework for empowering professional and registered associations or groups of Zimbabweans abroad to promote Zimbabwe's tourism, investment, culture, and artist among others. However, this program would be incentivised so that the people participating also get benefit. The scores\miles system used by airlines was put forward as an idea for rewards for those who participate.

Develop an integrated database on Zimbabweans in the Diaspora

Although there is need for it, its not something all Diasporans want. For those that want to be in the data base Government should be aware of the conditions and guidelines for holding private information in other jurisdiction, therefore conditions to access to the data bases might apply.

To improve access to timely and quality information on Zimbabweans in the Diaspora and thereby enhance their engagement, the Government can develop and implement an Integrated Diaspora Information System. Zimbabweans' Diplomatic missions will sensitize Zimbabweans in the Diaspora to create awareness on benefits of registration.

Enhance mechanisms for protecting Zimbabweans abroad

Pursuant to the Constitution of Zimbabwe, the Government commits to protect its nationals both within and outside the country. To this end, the Government should adopt measures; strengthen regulatory framework for employment agencies especially for Middle East countries; conduct pre-departure training for migrant workers and students going for further studies abroad; conduct awareness creation for Zimbabweans going abroad through travel advisories; and facilitate registration of Zimbabweans abroad through Zimbabwe's diplomatic missions; and, revamp the existing labour recruitment system to make it more professional and accountable. The Ukraine response was a good example of how the Diaspora can complement Government efforts in a response abroad.

Develop an up-to-date inventory of Diaspora expertise and skills

It is incumbent upon Government to involve the Zimbabwean Diaspora in the transfer of some of the necessary skills, knowledge gained outside Zimbabwe. This can be achieved by the GoZ developing structures, programmes, and incentives to attract and utilize qualified and skilled human resources drawn from the Zimbabwean Diaspora. In addition, the use of ICT tools, can be utilised to promote transfer of knowledge and skills virtually through online support to build local capacity of the Zimbabweans nationals. In this respect, information should be made available to the Zimbabwean Diaspora through Embassies and Missions on skills shortages and corresponding employment opportunities in Zimbabwe. The Government can also introduce and operationalize an award and recognition scheme for Zimbabwean abroad who have excelled in their area of specialization.

Promote participation in democratic processes by Zimbabweans Abroad

The Constitution of Zimbabwe laid a firm foundation by entrenching Diaspora fundamental rights to participate in the country's democratic processes. In particular, the Constitution guarantees Zimbabweans Dual Citizenship (and the right to vote during national elections). Holding dual citizenship provides an important and sustainable connection between Zimbabweans in the Diaspora and their host country. The Government should endeavour to start and increase registration coverage with a view to enhancing voting by Zimbabweans in the Diaspora;

conducting voter education; training ZEC and mission staff on conduct of voter registration and elections exercise.

Establish the National Diaspora Council of Zimbabwe

The Council will play an advisory role to the Government on issues of Zimbabwean Diaspora. The Council will also carry out research and benchmark with countries with best practices Diaspora policies with a view of improving policies, programmes and institutional arrangements for the mutual benefit of the country and the Zimbabwean Diaspora. The Council with strong\dominant Diaspora representation in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and other stakeholders should be charged with the responsibility of organizing annual home-coming conferences by Zimbabweans in the Diaspora, organizing an annual award scheme for the recognition of outstanding performance of Associations of Zimbabwean Diaspora and individuals and any other activities, within and outside the country. The Council can operate through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

Establish a Zimbabwe Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (ZIEBC)

The ZIEBC will work towards fulfilment of constitutional provisions by providing a policy framework for the realization of progressive registration of Zimbabwean Diaspora. The ZIEBC will work with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and Ministry of Home Affairs (Census) as well as build partnerships with stakeholders to implement the provisions of the Constitution of Zimbabwe. In this regard, the Commission, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will update the voters' database for the Zimbabwean Diaspora.

Support bottom up Diaspora led national development initiatives through policies promoting Hometown Associations (HTAs).

It is essential to establish structured ways in which Diaspora can give back to communities working with local partner groups. Through Hometown Associations, a combination of financial and human resources can significantly complement Government and non-Governmental efforts and potentially transform Zimbabwean communities in relatively short periods of time⁸. Around the world, non-profit and international organisations have already begun to lead the way in developing innovative partnerships with HTAs in order to promote development. The strategic positioning of the Zimbabwe Diaspora Nation Building Initiative, at the nexus between the global Zimbabwean Diaspora and the Zimbabwean Government, including associated developmental agencies, is uniquely placed to direct the implementation, management, monitoring and impact evaluation of a Zimbabwe Hometown Associations Programme.

⁸ For example, structured fundraising can be initiated where members of Diaspora raise donations of books, equipment, and help in building and stocking of community libraries that serve larger sections of communities.

Zimbabwe students platform/Network

There is a need to establish a platform for Zimbabwean students in the Diaspora, for students and run by students.

Future Zimbabweans program

There is need to develop young people's programs to engage young Zimbabweans in programs at home, through cultural programs, internships and attachments and other programs.

Philanthropy

There is need to think creatively about how we can best support through Philanthropy. How do we streamline the value chain so goods get to where they are going efficiently? What arrangements can be made with agencies to make it easier to donate.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

An effective Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning system is critical for the successful implementation of any policy. To this end, monitoring and evaluation of this Policy should be put in place and be undertaken with the establishment of a framework of an Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System. The Framework should provide for regular consultation and feedback between Agencies entrusted with the implementation of this Policy.



Zimbabwe Diaspora
Nation Building Initiative (ZDNBI)



**Prepared by The ZDNBI Policy Working Group
Zimbabwe Diaspora Nation Building Initiative
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