

CHAPTER 7: STUDY SUMMARY AND FUTURE DIRECTION

This chapter provides a summary of the study, the conclusions drawn and the recommendations made in relation to service delivery in the context of GCC. This chapter critically presents key issues raised during the study. It presents that GCC has been failing to provide adequate services as a result of financial capacity issues. This is largely linked to the issues of citizen participation and political decisions to slash debts. The chapter further presents other substantive issues in relationship to service delivery in Gweru. The chapter conclude the study paving the way forward with recommendations that focus on ways and approaches to improve service delivery in the City of Gweru.

The gist of the study was an assessment of service delivery in Zimbabwe with a specific focus on GCC. Informed and underpinned by a systematic analysis, the thesis was partitioned into eight chapters critically addressing different but interrelated themes. Chapter 1 was an introduction to the study. The chapter outlined the context and background of the study and giving the statement of the problem. The chapter also presented a comprehensive historiography of Zimbabwe's urban local government service delivery architecture. This was followed by an extensive analysis of the transformation of urban governance from the colonial era to date. The chapter identifies that projections highlight a 60% urban population globally by 2060 therefore giving urban local authorities to improve on service delivery. The chapter points on the significance of developing resilient urban areas and urban systems to fully benefit from the urbanisation rates and effects. This has been stifled in developing countries, for instance, in Zimbabwe; most local authority's substantial revenue is controlled by central government, financially incapacitating the institutions. This has seen various faces of urban problems coming up. The study problem therefore is derived from the evident reduced capacity of GCC to adequately provide services for its residents. From this position of understanding the research problem, the study methodology was also presented. The study was informed by the interpretivist design. As such, this study was largely qualitative. This was through in-depth interviews from key informants from the local authorities and relevant stakeholders. Justification of the qualitative approach is

discussed. The design adopted, the case study design, is discussed. The research questions and propositions are restated. The chapter also discusses the units of analysis, research instruments, population of study and sampling techniques and the data collection procedures. The chapter also discusses issues of data presentation and analysis. It concludes by presenting the architecture of the study.

Chapter 2 has presented the theoretical and the conceptual frameworks that the study is anchored on. The chapter looks into the existing local government and governance systems in the context of Zimbabwe. It presents the various capacities that the local authorities have in the context of service delivery. It identified that once the government fails to satisfy public and private interests, market failures occur. These market failures consequently lead to poor service delivery. As such, there is need to engage various management methods in reducing the potential of market failures. This is presented in feedback systems like systems approach, decentralisation, among others. The chapter provides problems riddling local authorities and service delivery in a broader perspective. As such, in understanding issues of service delivery, the study used four cases. These could be classified as two government systems; federalist systems (United States of America & Australia) and democratic systems (United Kingdom & South Africa).

Having laid the theoretical foundation of the study, chapter 3 focuses on the challenges of local authorities in their quest to deliver services. Firstly, it defines what a sub-national region is, demonstrating, in the process, that the concept has several definitions. The study however adopts the OECD definition of a sub-national region that defines the region as organisations that are legally declared, with own budget and staff and responsibilities that are in most cases defined by law and occur below the central government. From the definition, a discussion of the arguments that existed between advocates for centre and those for local in the context of IGR are presented. It is from this aspect that the first challenge of market failures is presented. Here, the common goods (services) are forsaken over central government interests. The study presents an example of the efficiencies of sub-national governments in United States of America. The study then presents various challenges and strengths of the four cases studies highlighted in chapter 3.

Having done that: the chapter narrows down to focus on the challenges in service delivery. The first aspect is the definition of services which are defined as both tangible and intangible goods and services like roads, transport infrastructure, roads, health, water infrastructure, sanitation, housing, natural disasters management, environment, public spaces, land-use management that are meant to satisfy human needs. It highlights existing challenges in countries like South Africa which range from issues of capacity (financial, institutional, technical and conceptual) and political interference among others. In Zimbabwe, service delivery covers aspects, such as; transport, land-use, health, housing, public services, the environment, water, health, sanitation, public spaces and parks. The chapter raises challenges like inefficiencies giving the case of Harare's waste collection systems, financial challenges, economic environment, under-pricing of services among others. From the challenges, the chapter presents an important aspect of this study that is what efficient service delivery is all about. It uses the World Bank (2016)'s performance indicators on service delivery. After that: the chapter offered approaches to which service delivery could be improved in.

From the discussion of challenges, policy and legislative frameworks that guide service delivery in Zimbabwe were presented as chapter 4. The first mother body of law to be discussed is the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment No. 20 of 2013. The chapter highlights that the Constitution provides various rights to the governments, both local and central. The Constitution provides local governments autonomy that is not fully classified. The chapter also highlights the acts that are used to manage and provide services like the Urban Councils Act [Chapter 29:15]; Regional Town and Country Planning Act [Chapter 29:12], the Public Health Act Chapter (15:09), the Education Act Chapter (25:04), the Shop Licences Act Chapter(14:07) and the Public Finance Management Act [Chapter 22:19]. All these acts give local authorities rights to manage and provide services for their jurisdiction and to collect revenue. The ambiguity in the degree of autonomy in local authorities implies that local authority continues to operate without the rights over finances in their areas. This has reduced the capacity of the local authorities as institutions in service delivery. The chapter also presents the various roles of councillors in local authorities and the role and powers of local authorities as highlighted by the Constitution. The chapter further

presented various rights and responsibilities of the local authorities in Zimbabwe as stipulated in various acts.

Chapter 5 has specifically focused on the institutional submissions in relation to service delivery in the City of Gweru. The chapter presents findings as to opinions on why GCC has been struggling to provide adequate services. The chapter presents a brief context of Gweru's presentation in the context of Zimbabwe and in the context of its province. Being the Midlands Provincial capital, Gweru is argued to be shouldering the populations and problems of the whole province. Arguments from the city authorities present that the GCC has been stifled by capacity issues largely because residents owe them as much as \$54 million dollars in revenue. The issues of revenue were also attributed to issues of capacity to collect the revenue. The GCC did not have adequate technology to collect its revenues. As such, most of their institutional capacity is depleted. The City Council has a 25-year-old Master Plan that no longer responds to the needs of the residents. The Council also operates with 2 refuse collection trucks for the whole city while in terms of water they have an unfinanced need to augment the two system. The city has only managed to resurface 27 km of their 1300 km road network. Furthermore, political battles between council and the administration have been pointed to as another issue in terms of institutional capacity. The GCC councillors pointed to the administrative unit as sabotaging their efforts due to political reasons. As such, the GCC was presented various capacity issues that could stifle service delivery.

Having understood matters from the institutional perspective, there was need to understand the residents' opinions on service delivery in Gweru. The study identified that the residents of Gweru were bitter in about the way GCC had been handling services delivery issues. Several residents raised issues of poor governance in GCC. They pointed out issues like corruption within local authority officials and this was supported by one of GCC's strategic plan documents (2017) that concurs with the public opinion. The public also blamed the city for misusing funds and overpaying its employees and not focusing on service delivery as its core mandate. This again was corroborated by the fact that the GCC had a wage bill of \$1.4 million while their revenue collection was \$1.2 million implying that they did not have even enough

revenue to pay employees. In return, residents were seen to be sabotaging the efforts as they retaliated by not paying their rates. This further incapacitated the local authority making service delivery hard, if not impossible, for the GCC.

Chapter 7 is constitutive of a synthesis of the whole study. It amalgamates the ideas from chapter 1 to the last chapter outlining relevant conclusions. It is presented through a recommendation matrix that highlights the key issues raised during the study. Issues of governance like budgeting, corruption and revenue collection, among others, were raised in the chapter. The discussions were done in the context and in relationship to existing literature. Possible meanings and potential problems and key indicators are raised in the chapter, the likely directions if change/no-change is taken in the management and service delivery in the GCC are presented as well.

Having raised the key issues discussed in the summary section, this section is dedicated towards making the conclusions of the study. Global developments have been steering towards a 60% urbanised environment in the next 40 years. The predictions imply a close to 40% increase in urban populations thereby exerting pressure on services. Service delivery has been an issue in developing countries. This can be seen in the context of Gweru, Zimbabwe. Services like waste management, water and sewerage systems, road networks among other services continue to be in a dismal state leading the Minister of Local Government Public Works and National Housing (Government of Zimbabwe) to call Gweru as the worst city in terms of service delivery in Zimbabwe in the year 2018. Local authority officials blame the politicians for cutting rates and incapacitating the local authority financially. Furthermore, issues like government control over most significant sources of revenue have also been blamed. This does not go well with the residents that point out to issues of poor governance with council officials being implicated in corruption, issues of budgeting being done in a less transparent manner. From this state of affairs, it can be seen that service delivery issues in Gweru are linked to a multiplicity of factors. Human factor decay within the GCC is one of the greatest dangers facing service delivery in Gweru. This has faced retaliation by residents through mistrust reducing the revenue sources. Furthermore, the government's central system has also taken

the Local Authorities' major sources of income leaving financial incapacitation as the major problem in service delivery in Zimbabwe.

With the problems and issues raised in the last seven chapters, it becomes essential for one to present opinion as to how the challenges can be managed to improve service delivery in the situation like that of GCC. The recommendations are a fusion of various ideas ranging from those given by research participants to those derived by the researcher from literature and scholarship. This section will proffer the recommendations of how service delivery can be improved in GCC. These range from improving the governance systems to strengthening the financial capacity of the local authority. Within this section, a recommendations matrix will also be presented, tackling issues as they are identified. Issues like corruption, participation, budgeting and citizen trust are highlighted and presented. However, before the presentation of the matrix, four specific recommendations are given which focus on capacity building. The issues of capacity then lead to the development of a more specific issue recommendation focus.

In the context of evident local government, institutional, organisational and strategy laxities, the study recommends structured capacity building programming targeting different grades at council. This should follow a comprehensive capacity needs assessment and mapping to ensure the building and development of requisite capacities that should trigger policy and administrative competence of council. Admittedly, many capacity building programmes have been developed and implemented. However, the extent to which such programmes improved council efficiency is yet to be scientifically proven. It is equally important to argue that much has been written about the essentiality of capacity development in the public sector but little empirical testing of the yields of capacity development has been conducted. GCC in particular and Zimbabwe's local government in general has been a beneficiary of many capacity building programmes inter alia, urban 1 and 2 and RDC Capacity Building Programmes. However, this study contends that the evaluation of the practical inputs of these programmes in the service delivery matrix has not been comprehensively undertaken. This study, therefore recommends structured formative and summative evaluation

of capacity development underpinned by a systems model with a clear definition of inputs, processes and outputs. This ensures that not only is relevant capacity targeted but that the results of the efforts should be scientifically tested.

There is a critical need to strike a balance between the demand for local autonomy and discretion and central government's transparency and accountability expectations. This study could not establish a positive correlation between the widening of local policy spaces and improved local policy and administrative competences. Central government should therefore retain a substantial role in the determination and execution of local public policies to ensure that local public policy passes the litmus test to satisfy the three fundamental values (traditionally framed in the three E's; efficiency, effectiveness and equity.) As such, there is need for the government to cede the revenue collection rights to the local authorities to ensure that they are capacitated enough to execute their core duties.

Political contestations around devolution are at the centre of a seemingly controversial political parties-led discourse that appears to lack an underpinning ideological and economic development agenda. The study strongly argues that the conception of devolution in Zimbabwe's political discourse sounds erudite and scientific. It seems the only available framework to achieve it then becomes federalism. However, it is empirically tested that young states often suffer the vagaries of 'over-devolution' which not only dislocates existing unitary infrastructures, as in the case of Zimbabwe, but may lead to state failure drugged either through secessionism or provincial parochialism. This argument becomes more critical considering that the current state of devolution in the Constitution seems more of a federative agenda morphed into the Constitution carrying the baggage of secessionism. While consequentialist and deontological arguments were submitted by scholars such as Ncube (2011) to justify the dividends of devolutionary frameworks, this study revealed that devolution in Zimbabwe is intoxicated by regionalised scholarship which appears to divorce it as a universal national development aspect. A broad modelling paradigm should therefore seek to give devolution a national emblem which soaks it in national value system

while framing it to promote equalisation, promote allocative and productive efficiency which are all hallmarks for national development.

Contemporary planning theories acknowledge the value of community participation in the urban development processes, suggesting that community involvement has the potential to achieve a more sustainable outcome. Research in this field supported by the findings of this study indicates that citizen participation can generate trust, credibility and commitment regarding the implementation of policies. The essential consensus among policy analysis professionals in the study is that the rational model of public policy-making represents the standard normative approach for developing and analysing public policy. The entrenched position now taken by participatory planning in urban planning practice has made the call for community participation in the planning process now higher than ever. Evidence of low participation in key council processes such as strategic planning and budgeting has rendered the outcomes mere management tools and less of community development instruments. Residents and experts raised a strong argument that councils seek participation to ensure compliance of processes with the law. It appears the community lack ownership of council budgets as the processes in developing such are exclusionary. The study recommends a standard input-output framework for community participation that is measurement-oriented with marked threshold per process. Table 8.1 provides a snapshot of the issues emerging and the recommendations needing to be implemented to achieve the desired outcomes.

Table 7. 1: Issue-Recommendations-Action Matrix (Author, 2019)

Issue	Description of Issue	Responsibility	Desired Outcome
Corruption	Local authority employees have been implicated in corruption. This has had an effect on the resident trust reflecting on the revenue and rate payment sheets.	GCC needs to improve on the ethics training of their employees.	Improved residents trust and increased revenues and payment of rates.
Budgeting	Budgeting has been largely focused on payment of local	GCC needs to improve on budgeting and focusing on core-	Citizen oriented and responsive budgets.

	authority employees' wages leading to negligence on the provision of services. Local authority failing to disclose their budgets to residents and has a clear lack of transparency.	business.	
Public Participation	The local authority has been blamed for failing to engage residents in planning and budgeting. Most developments are done with council authorities without the people.	GCC needs to start engaging the residents in all planning and budgeting related issues.	Public opinions and contributions fostering sense of ownership as such improving public trust on local authority.
Revenue collection.	The GCC has been failing to collect revenue from the residents and ratepayers leaving the local authority being owed up to \$54 million.	GCC needs to improve on revenue collection strategies and improve on budgeting to enhance trust.	Improved revenue and income for the local authority.
Devolution	Local authorities are de-capacitated to collect revenue in the areas of jurisdiction with essential revenue taxes like roads being taken by the government.	Government of Zimbabwe needs to develop a devolution framework that empowers local authorities and give them autonomy over their areas of jurisdiction.	Financial and administrative autonomy leading to improved revenues and service delivery.
Ratepayers' Trust	The residents and ratepayers of Gweru have lost trust in the local authority thereby not paying the local authority what they owe.	Residents and ratepayers in Gweru need to respond to their debts to improve on the revenue and increase local authority funds to capacitate them into delivering services.	Increased clearing of debts and reduced council debtors.
Capacity	The GCC has been operating with two refuse collection trucks for the entire city	The GCC has to improve on its technical capacity	Improved service delivery.

The recommendations matrix presents six issues that are presented in this section. The first is the issue of corruption. Corruption has been pointed as

one of the major drawbacks in service rendering in the GCC. From this synopsis, there are many inefficiencies that have been attributed to corruption. The issuing out of permits, the failure to account for 2000 litres of fuel given to them for the rehabilitating of roads all highlights a huge issue around corruption. This was also highlighted in the GCC 2017 strategic plan. To manage this issue, there is need to manage issues of corruption through introducing human factor improvement programmes. Furthermore, there is dire need for the tightening of financial and all possible systems weakness to reduce the chances of corruption. Paying council employees in time and adequately can also solve the problem of corruption.

The other issue that was raised was that of budgeting. The GCC has had serious priority issues when it comes to budgeting. It was highlighted that on the local authority budget, there was a focus on payment of salaries than the core business of the local authority that is service delivery. The government was forced to give conditions on the local authority grants of 30/70 ratio salaries/services respectively. In this regard, the GCC needs to reorient their efforts towards improvement of the budgeting process. Budgets should respond to citizen needs. This can be done through citizen engagement in the budgeting process rather than keeping budgets secret like they have been blamed for by some of the residents.

Public participation has also proven to be an issue within the jurisdiction of the City of Gweru. This was linked to issues of budgeting, permits and other processes that the local authority carries out. Local authority has done many the planning processes that require consultations but have been done within closed doors. This has left residents losing trust in the local authority and acting against council efforts. As such, to improve on services, the GCC has to engage the residents in the process of development. This can be done through holding consultations and actually engaging residents through various residents trust organisations. This will improve on the way the residents perceive the local authority. This has the potential of improving the rate payment on the part of residents and ratepayers and citizen responsiveness.

Furthermore, revenue collection seems to be a serious challenge in GCC. This is reflected through the levels of debtors that the City Council has. The local

authority can solve most of its rehabilitation projects if the residents and ratepayers pay what they owe to the city. This, however, is not materialising because the city does not have enough capacity to adequately collect their revenue. Furthermore, the history of the local authority in abusing funds has also been pointed as the reason behind the unresponsive nature of the residents and ratepayers. As such, there is need to capacitate the local authority to be able to collect its debts. The first is the increase of staff members and improvement on technology. While the issue of amount of money owed is clear, the distribution of debtors is not clear. Furthermore, the GCC needs to focus on restoring confidence as it is one of the reasons behind non-compliance from the residents and ratepayers. Residents and ratepayers are reluctant to pay for services that the local authority is failing to provide.

Another issue that affects service delivery in local authorities is the issue of capacity to raise finances to fund for the delivery of the services. The Constitution of Zimbabwe provides for devolution but does not give the disaggregation of power mechanisms. As such, financial powers are all centralised particularly of the significant sectors like roads. This has seen significant amounts that can be useful in the delivery of services going to the government. Consequently, this reflects on service delivery. As such, there is need to develop a proper framework as to how devolution should be done in Zimbabwe. This will help in improving the revenue in local authorities and also on the service delivery of the same jurisdictions.

One important element that the GCC has lost is citizen trust. Residents in Gweru do not believe in the local authority due to failure to provide services. With waste lying everywhere, sewage flowing into rivers and potholes all over the roads, the residents have no reason to trust the local authority. This has reflected through reduced participation both in terms of meetings and payment of rates. This has seen the council debtors increasing their debt by 2.4 million in a year. This implies further lag on services. Therefore, there is need for the local authority and the residents to work towards improving their trust and interaction. The local authority has to provide services and reduce focus on payment of salaries while the residents should trust the local authority.

Capacity building is another important area of focus for GCC. While financial capacity and institutional capacities have been discussed in the context of budgets and governance, GCC needs to work on the technical capacity as well. This can be seen through the machinery and equipment that GCC has. GCC has been operating with two refuse collection truck for the whole city. The city has also been failing to service other trucks that are not working proving how technically incapacitated GCC is. As such, there is need to improve on the technical capacity of the local authority through purchasing relevant machinery and equipment. Focus should also be on ICT to improve towards e-governance.

Following the discussion and recommendations made on how to develop a service delivery system that operates smoothly in the context of Zimbabwe, the following model was developed. It places service delivery as the duty of the local authority but under the spotlight of the citizens and government. This entails improving public participation and adding participatory budgeting. After that: local authorities should be capacitated in all aspects. Politicians should also be given the powers to monitor but not of overriding decisions (Figure 8.1).

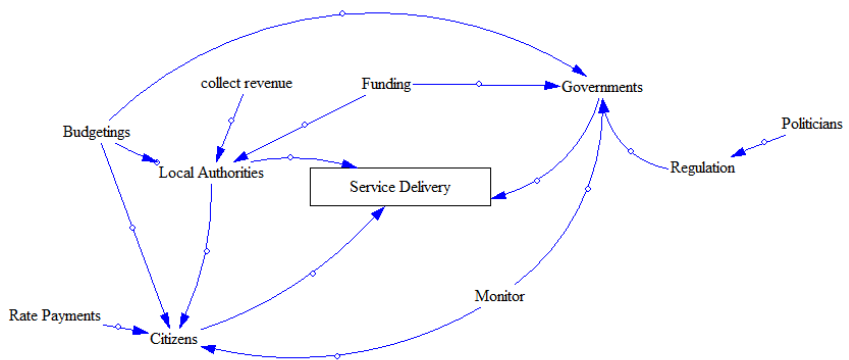


Figure 7.1: Sub-national Level Service Delivery Model (Authors, 2019).

From the model, the citizens have the duty of paying rates, monitor developments and assess the extent to which services are rendered. The citizens are also expected to participate in budgeting and through payment of

rates and giving input on programmes to be implemented. The Government has a duty to provide funding through grants, monitor local authorities, regulate the operation of local authorities. The politicians play a part in managing regulatory frameworks and operate within the vicinity of the government away from local authority business. The local authority then delivers the actual services, fund for services, collect revenue and budget with the residents.

The issue of handling complaints is an important part of service delivery in local government. From the FGD results, the respondents indicated that they have not managed to institute complaints to council due to limited interaction with the council on pertinent service delivery issues that affect them. It is therefore pertinent for urban local authorities to put in place robust mechanisms to handle complaints from their stakeholders to champion inclusive service provision and enhancing citizen participation. Handling feedback and complaints is an essential part of any organisation's commitment to being accountable to its stakeholders. The process is, however, a learnt skill whose judicious application is a mammoth and daunting task. From the study results, of the marginal proportion of the respondents who had managed to register their complaints with the councils limited feedback was given to the residents rendering the complaints non effective and not relevant to the community needs for improved service provision. The study recommends the development of a software application to be used as an interactive application. This should provide a virtual platform for council to interact with residents and at the same time residents can institute their complaints on the application. Follow up tracking can then be used to track solutions on the application.

The study recommends council to review its budget framework in the context of the guidelines of the International Budget Partnership, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank guidelines. The ideal open budgeting process should encompass open citizen participation, accountability and transparency mechanisms that allow for the unfettered access to decision-making in the budgeting process continuum.

It is recommended that a study on measuring the efficiency of council be conducted. Local authorities, through their associations, have been ranking

councils in terms of their effectiveness in key service areas. However, experts have argued against the criteria as both unscientific and aprotic. This study recommends that a research should seek to develop a scientific instrument to measure and rank local authorities for effectiveness.

A study should be carried out to develop a model for intergovernmental fiscal equalisation. The model should be the basis upon which the national government should anchor its fiscal decentralisation. The model should seek to balance the objectives of devolution as provided in terms of section 264-266 and the low fiscal capacities of sub-national governments. The argument underpinning the desirability of this model is that vertical fiscal imbalance is a structural issue and needs to be corrected by reassignment of revenue and expenditure responsibilities among different levels of government. The vertical fiscal imbalance is descriptive of the variance between central government's revenues and expenditures against those of sub-national governments. Typically, the variance is in favour of the central government and is bridged by a framework for vertical equalisation. Furthermore, the existence of horizontal fiscal imbalances across provinces and local authorities within Zimbabwe results in capacity variations in the provisions of public services. The model should therefore be derived from a juxtaposition of the fiscal needs and fiscal capacities of sub-national governments against the national GDP in the context of key demographic factors as stated. The following 5 variables are recommended parameters within which the model could be developed: (i) Total amount to be allocated as declared in the national budget (ii) Poverty index (considered here as the equivalence of the Poverty Prevalence Rate), (iii) population of the area and (iv) the size of the local economy measured as a proportion of the national GDP (determined using the revenue/GDP ratio) and (v) estimated value of the natural resource endowments of the area.

It is further suggested that research to test the level of customer satisfaction with council services be carried out. Public services are rarely tested to determine customer satisfaction using scientific instruments as is the case with private entities. Private organisations, in pursuit of profit and as a mechanism to shrug competition, subject their products to a scientific check for customer satisfaction as the basis for product differentiation. With

increased calls for good governance, public managers are pursuing their organisational, professional and personal goals within an agency world characterised by tight money, uppity workers and cutting-edge competition that is threatening and, in some cases, breaking monopolies over traditional exclusive public service areas (refer to Chapter 3). The instrument should, therefore seek to measure the extent to which services provided are complying with minimum standards, for instance in health and meeting the quality and quantity specifications