IMANIFESTO
ZIMBABWE’S 2018 ELECTION:
An Analysis of Manifesto Promises

Sponsored & Produced by IMANI Centre for Policy & Education.

Supported by COALITION FOR MARKET AND LIBERAL SOLUTIONS (COMALISO), ZIMBABWE.
Zimbabwe has faced daunting challenges in its political and economic governance since the end of white minority rule in 1980. Though constitutionally Zimbabwe is a democratic nation, the governance system has also been considered as tyrannical. Though ex-president Robert Mugabe won election for the 37 years he was in power, his rule over the last 15 years was characterized by oppression and violence against political opponents. Further, droughts, liquidity crisis in the financial sector and a problematic land reform system have derailed Zimbabwe's economic growth in recent years.

The July 2018 election presents a new era for Zimbabwe as it will be the first ever election without Robert Mugabe at its helm. In the run-up to the 2018 election, the two major political parties have both launched manifests that highlight their plans to address the current development issues. This report seeks to assess the extent to which the manifesto promises of the Zimbabwean African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) and the Movement for Democratic Change Alliance (MDC Alliance) deals with the challenges Zimbabwe faces. In addition, it identifies the dissonance between policies proposed by the parties to solve the challenges of the country and offers some suggestions on the effective implementation of the promises. The analysis covers eight sectors: Economy, Agriculture, Job Creation, Governance, Education, Health, Energy and Infrastructure. In addition to the 2018 manifestos of ZANU-PF and the MDC Alliance, other data sources used include Budget and Economic Statements, World Bank reports and reports by developmental agencies among others.

Critical development challenges facing Zimbabwe within the eight sectors include difficulties in raising revenue, a dominating employment cost, weak expenditure management, poor business environment, corruption and an agricultural sector characterized by problematic land reforms and high post-harvest loses. Further, electricity supply to power industrial growth is inadequate and unreliable. Infrastructure in Zimbabwe is also ageing and has significantly deteriorated. Several promises have been made by the two major political parties to address these challenges in their manifests. Overall, both the ZANU PF and the MDC Alliance have demonstrated a considerable level of understanding of the critical challenges facing the Zimbabwean economy and have proposed plans and strategies to deal with them. It is noted however that, most of the promises lack clarity in terms of strategies and timelines for implementation thereby making it difficult to track execution of manifesto promises and demand accountability.

To put Zimbabwe on a path to recovery, the study recommends that the winning party focus on the following: initiate steps to widen the tax net through economic formalization and efficient addressing systems; provide an enabling environment through a continuous and deliberate reform agenda; streamline land title administration; strictly enforce anti-corruption reforms; increase infrastructure spending in education; rehabilitate and maintain infrastructure by eliminating inefficiencies in infrastructure financing; review the electricity tariff regime in order to sustain businesses and attract investments; and improve the working conditions of healthcare professionals in the country.
# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACBF</td>
<td>African Capacity Building Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AfDB</td>
<td>African Development Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DBI</td>
<td>Doing Business Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDI</td>
<td>Foreign Direct Investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCI</td>
<td>Global Competitive Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immune Virus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPP</td>
<td>Independent Power Producers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDC</td>
<td>Movement for Democratic Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MW</td>
<td>Megawatt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Public-Private Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMEs</td>
<td>Small Medium Enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOE</td>
<td>State Owned Enterprise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAT</td>
<td>Value Added Tax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZANU PF</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Africa National Union Patriotic Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZDC</td>
<td>Zimbabwean Development Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZIMRA</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Revenue Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZIMSTAT</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Statistical Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZMPMS</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Maternal and Perinatal Morality Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZINARA</td>
<td>Zimbabwe National Roads Administration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
24 ENERGY

24 Manifesto Promises Concerning Energy
24 Tariffs
25 Generation, Transmission And Distribution
25 Fuel Sources

28 INFRASTRUCTURE

28 Manifesto Promises Concerning Infrastructure
28 Financing Infrastructure

30 RECOMMENDATIONS

30 Economy
30 Agriculture
30 Unemployment
30 Governance
31 Education
31 Health
31 Energy
31 Infrastructure

32 CONCLUSION

33 REFERENCES
INTRODUCTION

Zimbabwe has suffered developmental and macroeconomic challenges to the point that it is often cited as an example of how ineffective governance can lead to the collapse of an economy. Hyperinflation experienced in the early 2000s was one of the worst in the world with inflation rates above 100% and rising to over 1500% annually from 2006. Inflation reduced the quality of life of Zimbabweans and ultimately led to the dollarization of the Zimbabwean economy.

Another key challenge was the fast track land reform programme implemented in 2000. The aim was to acquire lands from white commercial farmers and redistribute them to native Zimbabweans. This has largely not yielded its intended results. The attempt to redistribute lands resulted in unrest, lack of legitimacy in land ownership, a significant reduction in agricultural production and a general decline in socio-economic conditions. The governance system has also been considered as tyrannical. Though Mugabe won election for the 37 years he was in power, his rule over the last 15 years was characterized by oppression and violence against political opponents.

Elections have been the sine qua non of multi-party democracy in many countries. Political party manifestos have become a significant feature in this democratic practice as it gives an outlook of politicians’ plans and strategies on how they will govern a country if elected. Manifestos thus serve as a tool of accountability as political parties can be made answerable to promises made during the campaign season. Given the governance and developmental challenges in Zimbabwe, it is expedient for the manifestos outlined by key political parties to provide solutions to Zimbabwe’s challenges and set it on a path of sustainable growth and development.

An evaluation and assessment of the manifestos of political parties in Zimbabwe is essential to inform both political parties and the electorate on the extent to which promises made address challenges. It also serves to measure the feasibility of the promises. This analysis focused on the manifestos of the two major political parties in Zimbabwe; the Zimbabwean African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) and the Movement for Democratic Change Alliance (MDC Alliance).

The subsequent section will discuss in detail the present state of the country across eight main sectors. The ensuing section will analyse the key promises made by the political parties with a view to assess feasibility and identify critical areas of focus. The final section summarises the recommendations and gives the conclusion.
CURRENT STATE OF THE COUNTRY

The period of hyperinflation and weak economic management of Zimbabwe's economy significantly affected its growth. Nonetheless, between 2009 and 2012, the Zimbabwean economy grew by an average of 10.35% following dollarization. The gains could however not be sustained as growth declined after 2012. The economy grew by 10.6% in 2012, but fell consistently to a growth rate of 0.7% in 2016. Underlying challenges to the Zimbabwean economy included limited private sector activity, a large informal sector, and a less competitive manufacturing sector. Growth rates was particularly low in 2016 as a result of the El-Nino drought which adversely affected agriculture output, low domestic savings and a liquidity crisis in the financial sector among others.

However, favourable rains in 2017 revitalized the agricultural sector which greatly contributed to an increased economic growth. In 2017, the economy recorded real GDP growth of 2.9%. This growth was largely driven by agriculture, mining, and the electricity and service sectors. Given that majority of the rural people depend on the agriculture sector for their livelihood, a good performance of the agriculture sector is likely to have a positive effect on the overall prosperity of the country.

Post-grain harvest losses remain a major concern to many of the smallholder farmers in Zimbabwe and aggravate food insecurity. The losses are estimated at 20% to 30% in storage alone and can be as high as 40% when field, transportation, handling and processing losses are included. In addition, erratic rains and unpredictable weather patterns, low access to improve inputs such as fertilizers have also been identified as having an adverse impact on crop production and livelihood prospects. Also, the agrarian land reform which has been pursued since year 2000, is fraught with challenges negatively affecting land ownership and use.

Statistics on employment is one of the contentious topics in Zimbabwe, and usually contingent on which stakeholder provides it. It has been argued severally in the media that the country’s unemployment rate stands at between 80-90%. However, the most recent labour statistics carried out in the country was in 2014 and the results seem contrary to public debates; “81% of the working age population (age 15 years and above) was employed”. Out of this figure, it is worrying to note that “83% of the currently employed-population were unskilled, 18% reported working excessive hours and 13% were in precarious employment”.

The 2013 Zimbabwean constitution considers access to a high quality and relevant education for all learners as a basic right that lays the foundation underpinning the cultural, social, economic and democratic growth of the nation. Therefore, it is required of the government to promote “free and compulsory basic education for children”. Primary and secondary school enrolment increased slightly from 2011 to 2015, with gross enrolment rate of 107.9% in the primary schools. Net enrolment remains low and shows considerable variation across the country at both the primary level and secondary levels. However, while overall enrolment has been increasing over the years, more than 1.2 million children of school-going age between 3 to 16 years old are out of school. This is further exacerbated in the 2018 Zimbabwean budget, which stated that 175,000 “O” level students failed to proceed to “A” level, whilst 5000 of those who sat for “A” level failed to proceed to tertiary education as at the end of 2016.

Inadequate funding for education is another challenge facing the education sector. Although the percentage of the national budget allocated to the basic and secondary education continues to be high (USD 803.8 million or 23% of total budget in 2016), 98% of this goes to fund employment costs.

Health standards in Zimbabwe have started improving after years of decline. For example, although Zimbabwe has the sixth highest prevalence of people living with HIV/AIDS in the world, since 2010, new HIV infections have decreased by 49% and AIDS-related deaths have also decreased by 45%. Zimbabwe struggles to retain trained healthcare professionals. In 2010, there were only 1.6 physicians per 100,000 people and 7.2 nurses per 100,000. In the same year, there was also a vacancy rate of 50% for doctors, midwives, laboratory and environmental health staff.
This was mainly due to lack of staff for training and high dropout rates. In 2012, the vacancy rates for nurses had fallen from 31% to 14% and for pharmacists from 53% to 25%. However, the vacancy rates for doctors, environmental health workers and laboratory personnel had remained high at 52%, 53% and 50%, respectively. Despite these improvements, some key areas of the health sector, as well as the water and sanitation sector, should be addressed for continued progress.

The power sector of Zimbabwe, although bursting with potential, is experiencing difficulties that undermine its ability to serve the people of Zimbabwe. Domestic energy supply which currently stands at 1580MW including power imports of 450MW is inadequate to meet energy demand of 2200MW. As at 2017, only 40% of Zimbabwe’s total population had access to power. Electricity is supplied chiefly from the Kariba hydropower station (716MW), the coal-fired Hwange Power station (506MW), Harare Thermal (0MW as at 2017), Munyati Thermal (16MW) and Bulawayo Thermal (12MW). Power is also imported from Congo, Zambia, Mozambique and South Africa to augment domestic supply.

Infrastructure in Zimbabwe, in the years after independence flourished as its design and maintenance benefitted from research, experience and appropriate technical standards and skill. The over 3000km railway network of Zimbabwe, which plays a major role in trade, connects all major mining, industrial and agricultural areas. It also interconnects with other national networks across Zambia, South Africa and Tanzania. The 90,000km road network is extensive and facilitates the movement of goods and people. There are also strong road connections from Zimbabwe to the SADC region that strategically position the country to benefit from the attendant economic opportunities. Unfortunately, road and rail infrastructure in Zimbabwe have deteriorated rapidly over the past 20 years due to very little routine maintenance.
ANALYSIS OF MAJOR POLITICAL MANIFESTO PROMISES

Economy

To achieve economic transformation critical reforms and policies must be implemented in order to enhance revenue mobilisation, ensure prudent expenditure management, promoted an enabling environment for businesses to thrive and ensure sound monetary and systems.

Revenue Mobilisation and Funding Mechanisms

The main revenue sources for the Zimbabwean economy are income tax which accounts for about 36% of total taxes and trade related taxes such as custom tax, excise tax and VAT which constitute about 54% of total tax revenue. While revenue collection, between 2014 and 2017, has been, on average, about 26% of GDP, total expenditure was on average about 29% of GDP. The new government’s ability to fulfill manifesto promises will primarily depend on their ability to increase revenue generation. This is particularly important as employment expenditure accounts for about 68% of total expenditure and about 76% of total revenues.

ZANU–PF does not provide a clear revenue mobilisation plan in its 2018 manifesto. It merely states that it will utilise domestic revenue sources, investments from Zimbabweans in the Diaspora, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), international loans and support from development partners. Other funding mechanisms proposed by ZANU–PF include, the privatization and commercialization of parastatals, leveraging Zimbabwe’s natural resources, local private sector participation and domestic credit. It does not provide many details on exactly how it intends to utilise these avenues to mobilise enough resources to implement their promises and support Zimbabwe’s development agenda. For instance, to what extent does ZANU–PF intend to rely on domestic credit and what effect will this have on private sector credit? Further, though ZANU–PF intends to leverage on local private sector participation and FDI to implement some of its promises, it has not provided a clear path to enhance the ease of doing business in Zimbabwe.

The MDC Alliance on the other hand provides clearer promises on how it will mobilise revenue and funding to implement its growth and development agenda. It promises to strengthen tax administration by modernising the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA), to widen the tax base through formalisation of the informal sector, re-engage the diaspora community by allowing them to participate in the Zimbabwean Development Council (ZDC) and direct revenue surpluses from mineral resources to infrastructural development. However, it is not clear what modernising ZIMRA means and how it will enhance revenue mobilisation. Though formalization of the Zimbabwean economy is meant to widen the tax net, the MDC Alliance does not provide the specific actions it will take to achieve this goal. Other promises include the use of Public Private Partnerships (PPPs), securitisation of natural resources and overseas development assistance.

A sound revenue collection plan will be necessary to support any serious developmental agenda especially in the area of infrastructural development which is currently in a poor state.
Expenditure and Public Debt Management

Zimbabwe is currently in debt distress as debt/GDP levels is not sustainable. Zimbabwe recorded a debt to GDP of 86% as at end of March 2018, up from 70.6% at December 2017. In addition, total debt was estimated to be about four times the total revenue in 2017. Further, at the end of 2017, about 71% of publicly-guaranteed external debt was in arrears. As such, fiscal policy options are severely limited as the country’s ability to attract investment and access fresh capital is constrained. Additionally, Zimbabwe has a dominating public sector. The central government’s wage bill accounted for about 68% of total spending in 2017. As a result, prudent expenditure management will be crucial to achieve sustainable deficit and debt levels in order to increase Zimbabwe's attraction in the international financial markets.

Fiscal reforms proposed by ZANU–PF in its 2018 manifesto emphasises strong fiscal discipline, accountability, transparency and increased funding to national development projects. It however does not specify what national development projects will be prioritised, nor does it provide fiscal deficit targets as points of reference. In relation to accountability, ZANU–PF promises to improve the Auditor General’s Department in order to efficiently exercise its oversight role. Again, it is not specific on how it will achieve this. In addition to strengthening the Auditor General’s office, there must be commitment to an effective sanctioning mechanism to serve as a deterrent to fiscal infractions. Several malpractices including unsupported expenditure were reported in the 2016 Auditor General’s report.

The MDC Alliance focuses on improving the expenditure mix, introducing measures to reduce debt, and reform State Owned Enterprises (SOEs). The Alliance however does not provide any clarity on how these will be achieved. In addition, the MDC Alliance promises to rationalise the public service and eliminate ghost names in order to reduce employment cost to 30% of total expenditure and to pursue zero primary balance from 2019 to 2028. Given the huge public wage bill, achieving primary balance and making significant capital investment and infrastructural expansion will be difficult unless revenue mobilisation is sufficiently increased.

PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

The business environment in Zimbabwe continues to suffer from soaring financing costs, a restrictive regulatory framework, deteriorating infrastructure, inadequate electricity supply and a liquidity crisis in the financial sector. These concerns have greatly affected Zimbabwe’s global competitiveness and the country’s ability to attract and sustain investment. Zimbabwe ranked 124 out of 137 countries in the 2017 Global Competitive Index (GCI) and ranked 159 out of 190 countries in the 2018 World Bank Doing Business Index (DBI). To improve the business environment and to enhance private sector development, a combination of structural reforms and large scale investment in the short to medium term will be crucial. The ruling party, ZANU – PF, and the main opposition, MDC Alliance, both recognise the importance of the private sector in Zimbabwe’s recovery process in their 2018 manifestos and make several promises in this regard. It is observed generally that the promises are too broad and in some cases there are a myriad of promises which makes it difficult to identify priority areas especially in light of resource constraints.

ZANU – PF promises to facilitate access to finance for Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs), incentivise the large informal sector to formalise and provide skills development and training among other things. The challenge is that most of these promises are rather broad and lack the elements of measurability and accountability. In order to provide clarity for voters, important questions to ask include: how will ZANU – PF facilitate access to credit? What schemes will be deployed? Have these avenues been employed before? How successful were they? What type of skills will be provided for businesses? Which sectors of the Zimbabwean economy will benefit and what timelines will be employed? It must be noted that, there are existing programs in Zimbabwe that seek to facilitate access to finance and to develop skills of business – How will the ZANU–PF expand these in the next 5 years?

With regards to creating the right business environment, especially given Zimbabwe’s current rank on GCI and World Bank’s DBI, ZANU–PF promises to expedite doing business reforms. Though it promises to accelerate the harmonisation of investment laws and provide a one-stop shop for processing and administration of investments, it does not provide any specific timelines for these reforms. The promises made by the MDC Alliance with regards to the business environment does not vary from that of ZANU–PF. Like ZANU–PF, the MDC Alliance promises to accelerate ‘ease of
doing business reforms by promoting policy coherence and a one-stop centre in trade facilitation. It also does not provide any specific timelines. Zimbabwe is in need of quick and sustainable reforms in the areas of starting a business, registering property, paying taxes, trade facilitation among others, if it is to attract investments (foreign or domestic) to re-industrialise the economy, enhance infrastructure, support its health care sector and create jobs for its citizens. Given the urgent need for a sound and predictable business environment for private sector development, promises in this regard must be clear, specific and time bound.

Further, formalising the large informal sector is one commitment made by both parties in their 2018 manifestos. ZANU–PF promises to provide fiscal incentives to the informal sector but does not specify what these incentives will be. The MDC Alliance on the other hand promises to increase access to finance in the informal sector, develop skills, strengthen the representation of workers in the informal economy and implement an enabling legal framework among other things. MDC Alliance however does not state the specific actions it will take to achieve these goals. It is also not clear the extent to which MDC Alliance will expand on existing frameworks put in place to facilitate the formalisation agenda. According to the Zimbabwe Statistical Agency (ZIMSTAT), in 2011, about 84% of the total labour force in Zimbabwe was in the informal sector. Given that majority of the labour force is in the informal sector, efforts to formalise should be more specific in order to enhance tracking and measurability of actual improvements made. Other promises made in the 2018 MDC Alliance manifesto include offering tax incentives to businesses, provision of contracting opportunities in public work programmes and launch a Growth and Innovation Fund along capital firms to encourage innovation and new business ideas.

**Monetary and Financial Sector**

Large external payment arrears limit Zimbabwe’s access to international markets. As a result, a chunk of Zimbabwe’s fiscal deficit is financed domestically by local banks. In 2016, government borrowed an amount equaling 11% of GDP to finance the fiscal deficit and to pay arrears. Though the profitability of banks were increased (as a result of the large interest rate spreads and the purchase of treasury securities), it created severe liquidity shortages in the financial sector. This led to restrictions on cash withdrawals. The Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) therefore issued notes in November 2016, and promoted the use of electronic payments to supplement the cash in the system.

To resolve the prevailing cash shortages, ZANU–PF promises to re-engage the international community to help unlock access to credit lines, frugal public expenditure management, promote the use of other currencies in the multicurrency basket aside the US dollar, ensure efficient circulation of cash and establish a gold-backed bank.

Like ZANU–PF, the MDC Alliance promises to strengthen the multicurrency regime, but in contrast, the MDC Alliance intends to scrap the bond notes. It also promises to reform the central bank and create two additional institutions to perform some of the functions of RBZ; the MDC Alliance promises to establish an independent regulatory authority and a financial ombudsman to oversee compliance in the financial sector. To address the liquidity challenges, the new government should prioritise the adoption of a sustainable currency regime.
Agriculture

The critical issues that require urgent attention in the agriculture sector among other things are; addressing all land ownership issues, reducing post-harvest losses, improving access to inputs and investing in irrigation.

Land Ownership

Land ownership continues to be a challenge after years of implementing the much talked about land reform. Most people who were giving lands during the redistribution of farmlands were only given offer letters from the Ministry responsible for Lands and Rural Resettlement without any proper and secured Land title documents. This made it difficult for farmers and landowners to access credit or be confident to fully utilise the land without fear of losing their investment. Therefore, it is expedient for any party, desiring to win political power, to lay down a clear strategy on how to deal with the aforementioned problem.

The MDC Alliance in their manifesto promises to bring finality to the land issues by issuing newly resettled farmers with land titles to enhance land use value and access to credit. They also among other things seek to strengthen and resuscitate the land market.

The incumbent ZANU PF on the other hand also pledges to broaden access to land for all Zimbabweans. They aim to consolidate land ownership and security of tenure and recompense former white farmers who lost their lands during the land reform process in accordance with the provisions of the national constitution. A critical review of the promises from both sides reveals an impetus to deal with the challenge. However, both parties failed to furnish voters with a detailed information on how the process will be carried out and most crucially, no timelines for completion has been given. The failure to outline in detail how such a process will be carried out and the lack of a clear plan, makes it difficult to track progress and demand accountability.

Access to Credit and inputs

Before 1990, Zimbabwe was self-sufficient in most of its fertiliser requirements. However, inimical macroeconomic factors such as foreign currency shortages and hyperinflation, low demand among others have undermined the performance of the industry as most fertiliser manufacturers since the late 1990's have been operating below capacity. The country has also become a net importer of most fertiliser products despite the abundance of phosphate rock deposits. The country also continues to experience sporadic fertiliser shortages. Nonetheless, there is a growing need for fertilisers in order to increase productivity and to increase production, especially in smallholder farms.

The MDC Alliance promises to provide incentives for local production of both seeds and fertiliser and explore long-term opportunities for cheaper and more sustainable domestic production of agricultural inputs. They also seek to ensure that financial support for seed and fertiliser production is provided in a transparent and inclusive manner. Providing incentives for local production may be useful but such incentives should aim at stimulating increase demand. It should also provide local producers with a leading advantage over importers. Since the country's fertiliser industry operate at around 60% its capacity and has the potential to increase if more foreign currency is secured and less fertiliser is imported.

ZANU PF, on the other hand, adopted a ‘freebies’ approach by promising to provide an adequate and timely supply of inputs at zero cost to farmers for the next five years. This promise must have been borne out of the series of delays and shortages that have characterised similar programmes in the past. Though providing free inputs to farmers is not entirely negative, a more efficient and sustainable manner is to equip farmers to be able to purchase their own inputs in a free market system. Nonetheless, government’s assistance will be a needed in access to credit, technical advice and improved markets.
Irrigation

Zimbabwe’s farmlands are divided into five zones with majority of the lands located within the arid and semi-arid zones. As a result, irrigation schemes are very necessary for serious agricultural activities due to the sporadic nature of rainfall in most part of the country, coupled with the fact that about 80% of the rural population who are largely small-scale farmers live in these areas.

The reigning ZANU PF government as part of their plans to enhance agricultural productivity promise to support investment in small-scale farmer irrigation schemes targeting at least 200 hectares per administrative districts. Though providing quantifiable data for tracking is commendable, it would have been useful if the Party had detailed the form the support was going to take, whether financial or technical?

The opposition MDC Alliance propose to make “massive investment in irrigation to make agriculture a 365 day business” by creating what they termed “SMART irrigation infrastructure” and reviving decrepit and obsolete irrigation infrastructure. The idea to design an infrastructure master plan which will include every infrastructure including irrigation for proper co-ordination is commendable, it should however include a realistic funding strategy and followed with proper implementation and monitoring.
Generally, the Zimbabwean economy has not been able to create adequate jobs for the teeming youth. It has been argued that the country’s capacity to generate jobs began to weaken in the mid-1970s when various sanctions took a huge toll on the economy. Also, the unstable growth of the economy has worsened the unemployment situation. The business environment is also not relatively favourable to attract private business and sustain them. For instance, Zimbabwe is ranked 159th out of 190 countries of the 2018 World Bank Doing Business. For the individual indicators, it is ranked 180th for starting a business, 175th for dealing with construction permits and 161st for getting electricity. The general lack of jobs has forced most citizens to seek greener pastures in neighbouring countries such as South Africa.

The main focus for political parties should be on skills training, entrepreneurship and providing an enabling environment to attract private investments that will create the much-needed jobs. The MDC Alliance recognise the need to enhance entrepreneurial activities in the country. As a result, the party promise to launch a growth and innovation fund to encourage innovation and develop new business ideas. When given the mandate, the party plans to promote and support business incubators and establish an entrepreneurship bank. Also, the party seeks to pursue a labour-intensive reconstruction agenda with the hope of directly and indirectly creating hundreds of thousands of jobs for the people of Zimbabwe.

The ZANU PF in its manifesto recognise the agriculture sector as the biggest employer in the country. Therefore, the party promises to increase demand for locally produced agricultural products and promote industrial development which they anticipate to create additional investment and jobs. Similar to the promises made by the MDC Alliance, ZANU PF pledges to also support entrepreneurial activities and skills training.

A review of the two parties’ promises reveals their understanding of the unemployment situation in the country. However, the onus lies on whoever wins power to ensure proper implementation.
ZIMBABWE'S 2018 ELECTION: An Analysis of Manifesto Promises
Zimbabwe’s democratic system has undergone several phases after independence which has affected the country’s governance system. The country is still battling with public corruption. Zimbabwe has performed abysmally on the Corruption Perception Index; the country was ranked 157 out of 180 countries in 2017.

Corruption

Corruption has been identified as one of the most pressing challenges facing the world today. According to the Africa Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF), African countries could be losing USD 100 million annually through corruption. Zimbabwe, is of no exception. According to the Corruption Perception Index by Transparency International, the country scored 22% in 2017. Zimbabwe lost USD $15 billion diamond revenue in 2017 as a result of public corruption. Also the lack of proper asset declaration regime for public officials and lack of transparency in public procurement process continues to fuel the problem.

The two popular political parties, ZANU-PF and the MDC Alliance have both declared their intentions to fight corruption in Zimbabwe. ZANU PF aims to create a corruption free environment in Zimbabwe in both the private and public sectors. However, the party failed to demonstrate how such an ambitious goal will be achieved. The lack of a clear strategy makes cast doubt in achieving a “corruption free Zimbabwe”.

The MDC Alliance on the other hand pledged in its manifesto to increase access to information for citizens. Such information will include publication of terms and conditions of contracts. They also, among other things plan to enforce a mandatory asset declaration for public officials and set up special criminal courts to deal with corruption and economic crimes. Though the decision to enforce a mandatory asset declaration may be useful, such a regime must have provisions that allows public disclosures in circumstances where public interests dominates private concerns. Secondly, the decision to establish special corruption courts is not a novel solution given that two anti-corruption courts were inaugurated in March 2018.

The MDC Alliance aims to combat corruption by strengthening transparency in state procurement through public bidding. There have been several reports of corruption and bribery due to public procurement in Zimbabwe. The promise to ensure public bidding is not a novelty in Zimbabwe. However the abuse of procurement system in the country is largely due to the fact that there is limited law enforcement and bids are rigged in favour of some bidders.
For Zimbabwe to attain the objectives of Zimbabwe’s Education Sector Plan 2016-2020 and the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), the critical education concerns that must be addressed by the political parties are access to quality education, cost barriers and inadequate infrastructure.

Access to Quality Education

Zimbabwe’s education reform in 1980 aspired to provide free and universal education to all children through the Zimbabwe Education Act; however, tuition fees and education costs have accumulated over time making access to quality education challenging. According to the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC), 42% of children in rural areas were not in school as a result of financial constraints, while at least 63% of the children in rural areas have been turned away from school for non-payment of school fees in 2017. In addition to the cost barrier, inadequate infrastructure has also negatively impacted on the access to quality basic education. This has been as result of the persistent under-funding of the capital budget resulting in a deficit of 33,636 classrooms nationwide.

Addressing this challenge, the ZANU PF plans to invest more in school infrastructure development and proper resourcing of schools through the construction of 2,000 schools by 2023. The MDC-Alliance with its SMART pledge makes a lot of promises to address the challenge. For instance, the MDC Alliance plans to build schools to reduce walking distances of travelling students, provide free primary education and construction of new classrooms to reduce the teacher to pupil ratio. While it is encouraging that both parties plan to address the infrastructure problems in the education sector, little attention is paid to the financing strategy. The capital expenditure allocation to the sector has averaged less than 1% of total allocation to the sector over the last 5 years. It is therefore imperative the budget is prioritised. The current expenditure mix is in itself a source of inefficiencies and presents a difficult situation in achieving the infrastructure developments that both parties are promising. Hence, an improved expenditure mix in the case of non-wage component should be a key policy for the winning party in the 2018 elections. That is non-wage allocation should be increased above current 1% of total allocation.
HEALTH

Critical issues that merit attention in the health and sanitation sector include maternal and infant health care, recruiting more healthcare professionals and improving their working conditions, improving sanitation infrastructure and expanding access to improved drinking water sources.

Maternal and Infant health

Zimbabwe has made a concerted effort in recent years to improve the maternal and infant health of citizens. Maternal mortality rates have improved from 960 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2010/2011 to 614 per 100,000 live births in 2014. However, this is still higher than the Sub-Saharan average of 514 deaths per 100,000 live births and higher than the target Zimbabwe set for itself during the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of 174 deaths per 100,000 live births. Similarly, neonatal mortality has improved from 29 deaths per 1,000 live births to 23 per 1,000 live births.

Recognising a need for improvement, the National Health Strategy for Zimbabwe 2016-2020, named ‘Reproductive, Maternal New-born, Child and Adolescents’ as one of its four priority areas. Despite this, additional work still needs to be done to address the challenges affecting maternal and infant mortality rates.

In order to tackle this problem, ZANU PF has stated that it will ‘ensure proper coordination of reproductive, maternal, new-born, child and adolescent health programmes through the new National Health Strategy’. Meanwhile, MDC Alliance has promised the ‘provision of free maternal health and establishment of state of the art maternal and paediatric facilities at all institutions including rural clinics’.

Neither party are particularly specific with regards to how they plan to implement the programmes to improve maternal and infant mortality rates. More needs to be said to assure the voters that the main challenges that led to these high mortality rates are addressed, such as the lack of access to necessary services. Although there is an official policy that pregnant mothers and children under the age of 5 are not supposed to be charged user fees, this is not commonly implemented, with these protected groups forced to either get private health insurance or pay for services out of pocket. The Zimbabwe Maternal and Perinatal Morality Study (ZMPMS 2007) found that the successful treatment of the direct causes of maternal death, such as haemorrhage, sepsis and pregnancy induced hypertension, could reduce the maternal mortality rate by 46%. Neither party specifically explain how they will ensure the proper implementation of the policy of not charging user fees.

Healthcare Professionals

As with other sectors in Zimbabwean economy, there is a capacity gap with regards to healthcare professionals. Zimbabwe struggles to retain trained healthcare professionals. In 2010, there were only 1.6 physicians per 100,000 people and 7.2 nurses per 100,000. In the same year, there was also a vacancy rate of 50% for doctors, midwives, laboratory and environmental health staff. This was mainly due to lack of staff for training and dropout rates. In 2012, the vacancy rates for nurses had fallen from 31% to 14% and for pharmacists from 53% to 25%. However, the vacancy rates for doctors, environmental health workers and laboratory personnel had remained high at 52%, 53% and 50%, respectively. As at March 2018, doctors in public hospitals embarked on an industrial action in protest of poor compensation and working conditions, highlighting dissatisfaction with issues such as broken promises from the government in 2014 to increase the allowances of doctors on-call from the current $1.50 to $10 an hour.

To address this issue, ZANU PF stated that it will support the training of medical professionals in countries such as India, China, Cuba and Russia, as well as review the remuneration structure. MDC Alliance’s promises to focus more on the provision of quality health care throughout the country.

Neither party seems to adequately address the problem of retention of health professionals with any type of specificity. Given that there is an apparent lack in confidence that the government will actually amend the remuneration structure and working conditions for healthcare, clarity should have been provided on the issue, to incentivise health workers to ensure that the number of health professionals in the country actually increases.
After independence in the 1980s, Zimbabwe developed their water supply and sanitation infrastructure, which successfully increased their service coverage rates in the 1990s to one of the highest in Sub-Saharan Africa. However, very little additional investment has been made to maintain or improve the water supply and sanitation infrastructure in the country thereafter. Access to improved drinking water sources, although relatively high, has been declining in recent years, decreasing from 79.4% of the population with access in 2000 to 76.92% of the population with access in 2015. The proportion of the population using improved sanitation facilities has also declined from 39.24% in 2000 to 36.83% in 2015. This was made evident with the cholera outbreaks in 2008-2009, which led to 100,000 cases and the death of over 4,200 people.

To address the challenges of water, sanitation and hygiene in Zimbabwe, ZANU PF and MDC Alliance have both made a number of promises. ZANU PF has pledged to pursue a National Rehabilitation Programme of all water purification plants to increase water supply, provide water infrastructure throughout the country, engage private sector to develop infrastructure and operationalise the National Sanitation and Hygiene Strategy. On the other hand, MDC Alliance has promised to harness water and other low-cost productive water technologies, harmonise all legislation that deals with water, ensure that local authorities have full control over the provision and management of water in their jurisdictions, ensure the protection of wet lands and all catchment areas, as well as construct a number of water infrastructure projects.

It is encouraging that both parties recognise the constraint in water and sanitation access. However, the approaches taken by both parties differ in that ZANU PF emphasises the need for private participation to ensure water supply, while MDC Alliance focuses on strengthening the capacity of government agencies such as Zimbabwe National Water Authority and local authorities. Whichever party wins the election should have a sense of urgency to improve water and sanitation and prevent another outbreak such as cholera.
ENERGY

The main challenge facing the power sector is broadly, the inadequacy and unreliability of power supply. Generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure are ageing and deteriorating and expansion of energy infrastructure is highly required. Apart from the ageing generation infrastructure, the water level of the Kariba dam, the main source of power, has been at its lowest level since 2015. High generation costs and unreliable supply of coal have made the operation of the Harare, Munyati and Bulawayo thermal plants sporadic at best. Further, electricity tariffs are very high and at the same time not cost reflective. While generation costs stand at an average of $0.14/kwh, average tariff for on peak usage is $0.13/kwh and on the prepaid meters is an average of $0.10/kwh. The electricity sector is also plagued by Transmission and Distribution (T&D) inefficiencies including collection inefficiencies, low investment in infrastructure, and vandalism of distribution infrastructure.

Manifesto Promises Concerning Energy

The ZANU PF considers energy under the broader infrastructure framework in its 2018 manifesto and seeks to address infrastructure deficit in the energy sector by promoting infrastructure investments. The party proposes to expedite investments in the energy sector via public institutions and Independent Power Producers (IPP) in order to facilitate the provision of efficient and affordable energy. In this vein, the ZANU PF seeks to improve the IPPs framework in order to ease the implementation of current and future IPP projects. The party also committed to implementing other power generation projects to buttress power supply.

Concerning the development of fossil fuels, the ZANU PF proposes to encourage investment in methane gas, to establish a coal to liquid fuel plant and to set up petro-chemical industries that will assist in the provision of Ammonium Nitrate, energy and gas. The main aim of these initiatives is to reduce cost of energy and fertilisers in the country. The Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) Alliance manifesto focuses on improving and expanding energy infrastructure. The MDC Alliance promises to increase generation capacity in five years at a cost of $4.33 billion. It seeks to encourage private sector participation in the power sector adopting the IPP framework. The Alliance also promises to develop a green energy policy that will promote the adoption of renewable energy and cleaner fossil. Electricity access in the rural areas will be improved through the Production of Rural Energy and Power (PREP) initiative which will facilitate the mobilisation of financial and technical resources to build solar farms.

Tariffs

The main issue of concern which should immediately be prioritized by the party that has the interest of Zimbabwe at heart is the issue of electricity tariffs. Electricity tariffs in Zimbabwe, an average of $0.10/kwh are high and at the same time, are not cost reflective. This is problematic because, it discourages the much needed investment in power generation and distribution capacity. At the same time, it negatively impacts the growth of the economy given that local businesses and households cannot afford electricity.

The ZANU PF hopes to expedite infrastructure development in the energy sector but fails to critically consider the role and impact of tariffs in attracting and sustaining investment. The manifesto therefore makes no commitment to reorganise the tariff structure through a robust tariff policy. The MDC Alliance also makes no commitment towards the needed tariff restructuring. However, it purports to raise an amount of $4.33 billion to expand generation capacity over 5 years. Given the current collection inefficiencies, it will be myopic on the part of the Alliance to rely on the current tariff regime to raise this amount. It is estimated that Zimbabwe loses $255 million per year due to inefficiencies in the power sector mainly through poor revenue collection. Critical reform that would improve efficiency across generation, transmission and distribution, in tandem with a robust tariff structure, will be required to facilitate the rehabilitation and expansion of electricity infrastructure.
**Generation, Transmission and Distribution**

The main challenge facing the power sector is broadly, the inadequacy and unreliability of power supply. Generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure are ageing and deteriorating and expansion of energy infrastructure is highly required. Apart from the ageing generation infrastructure, the water level of the Kariba dam, the main source of power, has been at its lowest level since 2015. High generation costs and unreliable supply of coal have made the operation of the Harare, Munyati and Bulawayo thermal plants sporadic at best. Further, electricity tariffs are very high and at the same time not cost reflective. While generation costs stand at an average of $0.14/kwh, average tariff for on peak usage is $0.13/kwh and on the prepaid meters is an average of $0.10/kwh. The electricity sector is also plagued by Transmission and Distribution (T&D) inefficiencies including collection inefficiencies, low investment in infrastructure, and vandalism of distribution infrastructure.

**Fuel Sources**

The ZANU PF considers energy under the broader infrastructure framework in its 2018 manifesto and seeks to address infrastructure deficit in the energy sector by promoting infrastructure investments. The party proposes to expedite investments in the energy sector via public institutions and Independent Power Producers (IPP) in order to facilitate the provision of efficient and affordable energy. In this vein, the ZANU PF seeks to improve the IPP framework in order to ease the implementation of current and future IPP projects. The party also committed to implementing other power generation projects to buttress power supply.

Concerning the development of fossil fuels, the ZANU PF proposes to encourage investment in methane gas, to establish a coal to liquid fuel plant and to set up petro-chemical industries that will assist in the provision of Ammonium Nitrate, energy and gas. The main aim of these initiatives is to reduce cost of energy and fertilisers in the country. The Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) Alliance manifesto focuses on improving and expanding energy infrastructure. The MDC Alliance promises to increase generation capacity in five years at a cost of $4.33 billion. It seeks to encourage private sector participation in the power sector adopting the IPP framework. The Alliance also promises to develop a green energy policy that will promote the adoption of renewable energy and cleaner fossil. Electricity access in the rural areas will be improved through the Production of Rural Energy and Power (PREP) initiative which will facilitate the mobilisation of financial and technical resources to build solar farms.

The main issue of concern which should immediately be prioritized by the party that has the interest of Zimbabwe at heart is the issue of electricity tariffs. Electricity tariffs in Zimbabwe, an average of $0.10/kwh are high and at the same time, are not cost reflective. This is problematic because, it discourages the much needed investment in power generation and distribution capacity. At the same time, it negatively impacts the growth of the economy given that local businesses and households cannot afford electricity.

The ZANU PF hopes to expedite infrastructure development in the energy sector but fails to critically consider the role and impact of tariffs in attracting and sustaining investment. The manifesto therefore makes no commitment to reorganise the tariff structure through a robust tariff policy. The MDC Alliance also makes no commitment towards the needed tariff restructuring. However, it purports to raise an amount of $4.33 billion to expand generation capacity over 5 years. Given the current collection inefficiencies, it will be myopic on the part of the Alliance to rely on the current tariff regime to raise this amount. It is estimated that Zimbabwe loses $255 million per year due to inefficiencies in the power sector mainly through poor revenue collection. Critical reform that would improve efficiency across generation, transmission and distribution, in tandem with a robust tariff structure, will be required to facilitate the rehabilitation and expansion of electricity infrastructure.

A key thing that the government that comes into power needs to address is upgrading existing generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure and adding on capacity. This is directly related to attracting capital investments through a favorable policy structure. The World Bank estimates that the power sector will require $1.4 billion per year to install new generation capacity, interconnector capacity and around $0.3 billion for rehabilitation of the electricity network. In this light, the MDC Alliance’s proposal to increase generation capacity at a cost of $4.33 billion over 5 years is underestimated. The true cost over 5 years will amount to approximately $7 billion. There is the need for the winning government to prove, through a comprehensive financing plan or strategy, how funding for energy infrastructure expansion will be raised.
Given the declining reliability of hydro generation, the country is increasingly moving towards the use of thermal generation. It would be prudent in this case for the government to make a strong commitment towards securing reliable fuel sources for thermal power generation to ensure the security of power supply. The ZANU PF commits to the encouragement of investment in methane gas and to establish a coal to liquid fuel plant. Greater focus should however be placed on harnessing the country’s abundant coal resources (Up to 26 billion tons in situ) which will be a cheaper source of fuel to boost thermal generation in the short to medium term (to take advantage of existing but idle capacity and new capacity to be added on), while the country develops its renewable energy capacity.
Concerning the development of fossil fuels, the ZANU PF proposes to encourage investment in methane gas, to harness the country's abundant coal resources (up to 26 billion tons in situ) which will be a cheaper source of fuel and to establish a coal to liquid fuel plant. Greater focus should however be placed on the development of alternative sources for thermal power generation to ensure the security of power supply. The ZANU PF commits to the encouragement of investments in methane gas and to establish a coal to liquid fuel plant. Greater focus should however be placed on the development of alternative sources for thermal power generation to ensure the security of power supply. The ZANU PF commits to the encouragement of investments in methane gas and to establish a coal to liquid fuel plant and to set up petro-chemical industries that will assist in the provision of Ammonium Nitrate, energy and gas. The main aim of these initiatives is to reduce the cost of energy and fertilizers in the country.

A key thing that the government that comes into power needs to address is upgrading existing generation, transmission and distribution, in tandem with a robust tariff structure, will be required to facilitate the rehabilitation and expansion of electricity infrastructure. The ZANU PF considers energy under the broader infrastructure framework in its 2018 manifesto and seeks to expedite investments in the energy sector via public institutions and Independent Power Producers (IPP) in order to address infrastructure deficit in the energy sector by promoting infrastructure investments. The party proposes to work in order to ease the implementation of current and future IPP projects. The party also committed to implementing a policy to encourage private sector participation in the power sector adopting the IPP framework. The Alliance also seeks to encourage private sector participation in the power sector adopting the IPP framework. The Alliance also promises to develop a green energy policy that will promote the adoption of renewable energy and cleaner fossil.

Electricity access in the rural areas will be improved through the Production of Rural Energy and Power (PREP) initiative and distribution infrastructure. At the same time, it negatively impacts the growth of the economy given that local businesses and households cannot afford electricity. The main challenge facing the power sector is broadly, the inadequacy and unreliability of power supply. Generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure are ageing and deteriorating and expansion of energy infrastructure is highly required. Apart from the ageing generation infrastructure, the water level of the Kariba dam, the main source of power, has been at its lowest level since 2015. High generation costs and unreliable supply of coal have made the power sector mainly through poor revenue collection. Critical reform that would improve efficiency across generation, tariff regime to raise this amount. It is estimated that Zimbabwe loses $255 million per year due to inefficiencies in the power sector mainly through poor revenue collection. However, it purports to raise an amount of $4.33 billion to expand generation capacity over 5 years. Given the current collection inefficiencies, it will be myopic on the part of the Alliance to rely on the current tariffs in attracting and sustaining investment. The manifesto therefore makes no commitment to reorganise the tariff structure through a favorable policy structure. The World Bank estimates that the power sector will require $1.4 billion per year over 5 years. Given the declining reliability of hydro generation, the country is increasingly moving towards the use of thermal generation in the short to medium term (to take advantage of existing but idle capacity and new capacity). The ZANU PF promises to develop a green energy policy that will promote the adoption of renewable energy and cleaner fossil. The Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) Alliance manifesto focuses on improving and expanding energy infrastructure, and impact of tariffs in attracting and sustaining investment. The manifesto therefore makes no commitment to reorganise the tariff structure through a favorable policy structure. The World Bank estimates that the power sector will require $1.4 billion per year over 5 years. Given the declining reliability of hydro generation, the country is increasingly moving towards the use of thermal generation in the short to medium term (to take advantage of existing but idle capacity and new capacity). The ZANU PF proposes to encourage investment in methane gas, to harness the country's abundant coal resources (up to 26 billion tons in situ) which will be a cheaper source of fuel and to establish a coal to liquid fuel plant and to set up petro-chemical industries that will assist in the provision of Ammonium Nitrate, energy and gas. The main aim of these initiatives is to reduce the cost of energy and fertilizers in the country.

A key thing that the government that comes into power needs to address is upgrading existing generation, transmission and distribution, in tandem with a robust tariff structure, will be required to facilitate the rehabilitation and expansion of electricity infrastructure. The ZANU PF considers energy under the broader infrastructure framework in its 2018 manifesto and seeks to expedite investments in the energy sector via public institutions and Independent Power Producers (IPP) in order to address infrastructure deficit in the energy sector by promoting infrastructure investments. The party proposes to work in order to ease the implementation of current and future IPP projects. The party also committed to implementing a policy to encourage private sector participation in the power sector adopting the IPP framework. The Alliance also seeks to encourage private sector participation in the power sector adopting the IPP framework. The Alliance also promises to develop a green energy policy that will promote the adoption of renewable energy and cleaner fossil.

Electricity access in the rural areas will be improved through the Production of Rural Energy and Power (PREP) initiative and distribution infrastructure. At the same time, it negatively impacts the growth of the economy given that local businesses and households cannot afford electricity. The main challenge facing the power sector is broadly, the inadequacy and unreliability of power supply. Generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure are ageing and deteriorating and expansion of energy infrastructure is highly required. Apart from the ageing generation infrastructure, the water level of the Kariba dam, the main source of power, has been at its lowest level since 2015. High generation costs and unreliable supply of coal have made the power sector mainly through poor revenue collection. Critical reform that would improve efficiency across generation, tariff regime to raise this amount. It is estimated that Zimbabwe loses $255 million per year due to inefficiencies in the power sector mainly through poor revenue collection. However, it purports to raise an amount of $4.33 billion to expand generation capacity over 5 years. Given the current collection inefficiencies, it will be myopic on the part of the Alliance to rely on the current tariffs in attracting and sustaining investment. The manifesto therefore makes no commitment to reorganise the tariff structure through a favorable policy structure. The World Bank estimates that the power sector will require $1.4 billion per year over 5 years. Given the declining reliability of hydro generation, the country is increasingly moving towards the use of thermal generation in the short to medium term (to take advantage of existing but idle capacity and new capacity). The ZANU PF proposes to encourage investment in methane gas, to harness the country's abundant coal resources (up to 26 billion tons in situ) which will be a cheaper source of fuel and to establish a coal to liquid fuel plant and to set up petro-chemical industries that will assist in the provision of Ammonium Nitrate, energy and gas. The main aim of these initiatives is to reduce the cost of energy and fertilizers in the country.

A key thing that the government that comes into power needs to address is upgrading existing generation, transmission and distribution, in tandem with a robust tariff structure, will be required to facilitate the rehabilitation and expansion of electricity infrastructure. The ZANU PF considers energy under the broader infrastructure framework in its 2018 manifesto and seeks to expedite investments in the energy sector via public institutions and Independent Power Producers (IPP) in order to address infrastructure deficit in the energy sector by promoting infrastructure investments. The party proposes to work in order to ease the implementation of current and future IPP projects. The party also committed to implementing a policy to encourage private sector participation in the power sector adopting the IPP framework. The Alliance also seeks to encourage private sector participation in the power sector adopting the IPP framework. The Alliance also promises to develop a green energy policy that will promote the adoption of renewable energy and cleaner fossil.
Road and rail infrastructure in Zimbabwe have deteriorated rapidly over the past 20 years due to very little routine maintenance. According to the Zimbabwe Road Condition Survey, only 14% of total classified roads are in good condition and 50% of classified paved roads are in poor condition and require maintenance. The World Bank estimated in 2011 that $2.9 billion would be needed to rehabilitate the entire classified network of Zimbabwe. The African Development Bank (AfDB) places current rehabilitation costs at $4 billion. The country has failed to secure adequate resources for road maintenance and there has been a shortfall of about 50% between recent spending on road maintenance and the requisite amounts for rehabilitation and maintenance.

The ZANU PF in its manifesto proposes to rebuild a world class road network and to rehabilitate roads in the urban and rural areas. The party when elected into government will also facilitate the development of a robust and efficient railway network system as well as rehabilitate and resuscitate the railway infrastructure.

The MDC Alliance proposes to raise funding for Zimbabwe’s infrastructure development through; the resolution of the country’s debt crisis, securitization leveraging the country’s mineral resources, through infrastructure bonds and through Public Private Partnerships. Concerning the road and rail network, the MDC Alliance pledges to rehabilitate and expand roads over a five to ten year period, to facilitate the construction of new railway lines and restructure the National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ) among others.

The ZANU-PF duly acknowledges the critical need for rehabilitation and maintenance of the road and rail infrastructure. However, its manifesto little clarity on how these will be achieved, especially in terms of financing these initiatives. The MDC Alliance manifesto identifies the crucial underlying problem undermining infrastructure development in Zimbabwe, which is funding, and outlines a strategy to tackle it. The main strategy of the MDC Alliance includes the prioritisation of debt resolution in order to obtain access to development finance from the World Bank and the African Development Bank. The key question is, over what period of time will the debt crisis be resolved and would Zimbabwe’s infrastructure development be put on hold for such a period of time?

According to World Bank simulations of infrastructure targets for Zimbabwe, it is estimated that it will cost the country $1.7 billion annually to meet rehabilitation needs and a modest level of investment for infrastructure in general and $0.2 billion for the transportation sector in particular. A total of $188.1 million and $323.2 million were allocated through the 2017 and 2018 budgets respectively towards the rehabilitation and maintenance of road infrastructure pooling funds from three main sources; fiscal resources, the Road Fund and from Development Partners. It is reported that the Zimbabwe National Roads Administration (ZINARA) collects about $130 million annually (into the Road Fund) from road access fees, vehicle licensing fees, transit fees and fuel levy, among other streams of revenue for the routine maintenance of roads. According to the World Bank’s analysis, these amounts should be adequate to resolve each year’s road maintenance and rehabilitation issues. However, the improvements in road infrastructure has not been commensurate. This points to an underlying problem with the overall financing framework coupled with the debt crisis that undermines infrastructure development.

The winning political party must critically think through and formulate a structured plan to progressively pool and efficiently disburse the finances required for road and rail rehabilitation and maintenance as well as investment in the development of road and rail infrastructure. The World Bank suggests that additional finances could be recovered year on year by improving efficiencies particularly eliminating under-recovery of costs, in order to finance rehabilitation, maintenance of and investment in new infrastructure.
The financing gap for infrastructure may also be reduced through encouraging private sector funding example through the use of comprehensive Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) or the award of infrastructure contracts to the private sector. The MDC Alliance manifesto indicates that such an initiative will be pursued. The winning government may also leverage its new found goodwill, resulting from the improving geopolitics and political risk, to source Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) or Official Development Assistance (ODA) to facilitate infrastructure development.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Economy

1. Given the informal nature of the Zimbabwean economy, widening the tax net through formalisation is one of the important ways to increase revenue mobilisation for developmental purposes. Political parties must provide clear and viable paths to achieving this. For instance, there should be clear plans to improve the addressing and identification systems.

2. Greater focus should be placed on increasing revenues and efficient spending of scarce resources. In addition to strengthening the Auditor General’s office, the winning political party must show commitment to prosecuting cases of malpractices often raised in the auditor general’s report.

3. Prioritise doing business reforms as the private sector is key in Zimbabwe’s development and re-integration into the global market. Proposed doing business reforms should be specific with key performance indicators to ensure measurability and enhance accountability.

4. The winning political party must adopt policies that will reduce Zimbabwe’s risk premium in addition to strong fiscal discipline. Reducing the risk premium will improve the government’s access to affordable financing and reduce the burden on the domestic market.

Agriculture

1. Design and implement a feasible plan that will eliminate all the challenges relating to the land reform program. Such a plan must state clearly how people can have valid land titles to maximise land use and facilitate access to credit.

2. Capacity exist within the country for local fertiliser manufacturers to produce and even exceed demand. Therefore, the winning political party should implement policies that will stimulate increases in local demand and export. Doing so, will not only enhance agricultural productivity but will also create employment opportunities and improve the overall growth of the sector.

3. Irrigation infrastructure should be a key priority of government expenditure. Such investment can be financed through public-private partnerships.

Unemployment

Findings from the recent National Skills Audit as well as information in the National Qualifications Framework (NFQ) should guide the party that wins power to design programmes that will improve the skill set of the populace. Such programmes can be in the form of change of educational curricular and vocational and technical training especially in the area of agricultural mechanisation and technology.

Governance

The winning party should ensure strict enforcement of procurement laws so that bids rigged in favour of some bidders would be eliminated and officials caught in such acts punished.
**Education**

It is imperative for the winning party to increase investment in education. Increasing the spending on infrastructure from the current 1% of total sector expenditure gradually will help achieve the education sector plan and accelerate the achievement of the SDG goal on education.

**Health**

1. There should be strict monitoring under the free user-fee policy in order to ensure pregnant mothers and children under the age of 5 are not charged user fees.

2. The winning party must incentivise health workers and improve upon their working conditions to ensure that the number of health professionals in the country increases.

**Energy**

1. Review of the tariff regime and restructuring of tariffs is needed to ensure that tariffs are cost reflective enough to attract investment and affordable enough to sustain local businesses and households.

2. Improving collection efficiency to eliminate loses in the power sector and to make available funds to improve generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure is very key to the power sector's overall development.

3. The security of power supply needs to be bolstered by ensuring the availability and reliability of fuel required for thermal generation. This will include making efforts, through well-structured policy and the creation of an enabling environment, to attract the needed investment for exploitation of coal resources.

**Infrastructure**

1. Additional finances can be recovered to fund rehabilitation and maintenance of infrastructure through the elimination of inefficiencies, particularly under-recovery of costs.

2. Funds can be sourced from the private sector through Public-Private Partnerships to finance infrastructure expansion. The new found goodwill of the country due to the changing political scene could also be leveraged to attract Foreign Direct Investment or obtain Official Development Assistance to fund infrastructure development.
CONCLUSION

This manifesto analysis was carried out to examine the promises of the two dominant political parties in Zimbabwe prior to the 2018 election with the aim of assessing how the viable and realistic the promises and commitments are. On a whole, both the Zimbabwe African National Union - Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) and the Movement for Democratic Change Alliance (MDC) have demonstrated an appreciable level of understanding of the critical challenges facing the country and have provided an array of promises and plans on how they will deal with them. However, most of the promises provided lack clear strategies and timelines for implementation thereby making it difficult to track and demand accountability.

The assessment revealed that the numerous promises made to revive the ailing economy have the potential to cause a positive change. However, a sound revenue collection plan will be necessary to support any serious developmental agenda. Most of the promises made with regards to corruption and efficient management of resources, were generic in nature hence unlikely to tackle the root causes of the problem. Transparency in the public bidding process is expected to reduce procurement-related corruption.

Promises made by the political parties towards the health sector reveals their desire to address one of the most critical challenge within the sector; maternal mortality. However, specific promises to address the main causes such as inadequate access to essential services were not clear. It is encouraging to note that both political parties made promises towards improving infrastructure within the education sector. Realistic financing strategies will be needed to translate the promises into action.

Concerning energy, the promises made indicate an urgency to address the inadequate and unreliable power supply in Zimbabwe. Electricity tariffs are generally high and not cost-reflective and demand urgent attention from any political party who intends to attract and retain investment. Unfortunately, both political parties made no commitment towards tariff restructuring. The lack of routine maintenance has resulted in the deterioration of most road and railway infrastructure in Zimbabwe. The country is in dire need of a structured plan to progressively pool and efficiently disburse finances required for road and rail rehabilitation and maintenance as well as investment in the development of road and rail infrastructure.

ZIMBABWE’S 2018 ELECTION: An Analysis of Manifesto Promises
REFERENCES


African Development Bank(2018) Zimbabwe Economic Outlook


Ibid

Ibid


Ibid


Ibid


Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority, ZESA Holdings. Available at http://www.zesa.co.zw/ Accessed 11th July 2018


Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority, ZESA Holdings. Available at http://www.zesa.co.zw/ Accessed 11th July 2018


Ibid


2018 ZANU - PF Manifesto


2018 ZANU - PF Manifesto

2018 MDC Alliance Manifesto


2018 MDC Alliance Manifesto


2018.
2018 ZANU - PF Manifesto
2018 MDC Alliance Manifesto


Ibid
Zim Fertilizer Crises Looms (2017). Available at: https://www.theindependent.co.zw/2017/10/13/zim-fertiliser-crisis-loom/

FAO (1999), Fertilizer Strategies. Available at: http://www.fao.org/docrep/009/a0395e/a0395e01.htm#TopOf-Page
ZFMA wants ban on finished fertilizer imports. Available at: http://businessdaily.co.zw/index-id-business-zk-38189.html

The Conversation (2017): After coup will Zimbabwe see democracy or dictatorship. Available at: http://theconversation.com/after-coup-will-zimbabwe-see-democracy-or-dictatorship-87563


Transparency International, Corruption Perception Index. Available at: https://www.transparency.org/news/featu-re/corruption_perceptions_index_2017


African countries losing 100 billion dollars annually? ANI. Available at : https://www.aninews.in/news/world/others/african-countries-losing-100-billion-dollars-annually201801282013050001/

Corruption Perception Index – Transparency International


Is Wealth Declaration a Means to an End or an End in Itself in Curbing Corruption? Available at: http://kippra.or.ke/is-wealth-declaration-a-means-to-an-end-or-an-end-in-itself-in-curbing-corruption/

Anti-corruption courts officially open. Available at: https://www.newsday.co.zw/2018/03/anti-corruption-courts-officially-open/

I Harare (2018) ZPC Company Secretary In $20 Million Fraud Storm. Available at : https://iharare.com/zpc-company-secretary/


Inter Press Service (2014). For Zimbabweans, Universal May be Unattainable Goal. Available at : http://www.ips-news.net/2014/12/for-zimbabweans-universal-education-may-be-an-unattainable-goal/


Budget Statements


“Electricity tariffs do not reflect the actual cost of power generation or electricity supply”

Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority, ZESA Holdings. Available at http://www.zesa.co.zw/ Accessed 11th July 2018


ibid


ibid

“Zim Spends $45m on Road Rehabilitation” (27th April 2017). Available at https://www.dailynews.co.zw/articles/2017/04/27/zim-spends-45m-on-road-rehabilitation Accessed 13th July 2018
