

**MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY**



**FACULTY OF ARTS**

**TOPIC: Prospects and Limits to Social Accountability Tools towards Enhancing Service Delivery in Bulawayo Urban**

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## **Abbreviations**

<b>BCC</b>	Bulawayo City Council
<b>BPRA</b>	Bulawayo Progressive Residents Associations
<b>CBO</b>	Community Based Organization
<b>CHRA</b>	Combined Harare Residents Association
<b>FGD</b>	Focused Group Discussion
<b>GoZ</b>	Government of Zimbabwe
<b>MURRA</b>	Masvingo United Residents Association
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>NANGO</b>	National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>NYDT</b>	National Youth Development Trust
<b>SA</b>	Social Accountability
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme

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# **Chapter 1: Study Background and Focus**

## **1.1.Introduction**

Demand-side governance and social accountability approaches have steadily gained prominence as a means of achieving and improving a range of development outcomes (Holland et al, 2011). A good number of local authorities across the world in both the developed and developing counties are investing in social accountability tools such as citizen participation, budget tracking and expenditure monitoring, community score cards and others to ensure that citizens have a voice in the planning and provision of services and also in finding ways in which service provision can and should be improved. Shah (2006) has pointed out that it is important to ensure that local authorities value public opinions and demands, strives to uphold their consumers' preferences,being also accountable to them.

This study defines social accountability as actions taken by citizens and CSOs to demand local authorities to account for their performance and actions. This can be achieved through civic engagement in formulation of public policies, social audits, community scorecards, citizen monitoring of services and Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys etc. The research analyses the use of social accountability tools, in a specific context of Bulawayo and assessing how the tools have been successful in improving service delivery in the process.

## **1.2.Background and Overview**

The main services provided by local authorities are housing, transport, waste management, street lighting, health, education, and water and sanitation. The concept of accountability has become

significant in the development field as it is emphasised as an important facet of improving governance of public institutions (Mary McNeil and TakawiraMumvuma (2006), Muchadenyika(2013). There is no universal definition to the concept of accountability it has different meaning to different people. The way social accountability is defined depends on the countries' ideology, culture and governance system. For the purpose of this research accountability is defined as 'the process by which public officials or duty bearers inform or account for their actions to the citizens' (UNDP Report 2010)pp 25. Concept of Accountability outlines the rights and obligation of citizens and public institutions like urban councils.

It can be argued that accountability has both political and operational objective that is to monitor the abuse of power by politicians and ensuring effective and efficient functionality of local and national government respectively. Goetz (2001) and Jenkins (2005) have defined social accountability as a form of accountability that is based on active citizens and Civic Society engagement taking national and local government to account for their actions. Malena (2009) has noted that lack of political will, can act as a great obstacle on social accountability. He argues that the public can protest on the misuse of resources by certain local authorities, however in politically unstable environments like the one in Zimbabwe, it is rare that the weaker people will be heard.

Zimbabwe, since 2001, has been going through political, social and economic challenges that have caused deterioration of provision of service by both rural and urban local authorities(Mushamba, 2010; Chatiza, 2010;Madhekeni, 2012). These challenges faced by Zimbabwe local government system have also weakened councils' accountability processes

which has had negative impact on provision of services especially to poor communities. Suffice it to say that there is currently a major urban crisis in Zimbabwe expressing itself in failures of water, electricity, medicines, transport, and housing provision (Ranger, 2007). The unsatisfactory and dysfunctional local government system is because of central government interference, corruption, polarisation, inadequate and inefficient resources and low citizen engagement, which all result in poor service delivery (Kamete, 2006; Jonga and Chirisa, 2009). The emergence of social accountability is of paramount importance as it allows for monitoring and assessing service delivery in an effort to provide ways to improve the provision of such services by local authorities.

Evidence shows the widening gap between the supply and provision of such service by local authorities in Zimbabwe this has led to low supply of these services in most urban and rural councils (Chatiza, 2012). According to the Medium Term Plan (MTP) the major catalyst to the deterioration and inefficient service delivery in the country are decaying service infrastructure, balancing between administrative, service delivery expenditure, out-dated systems, planning, and monitoring (GoZ, 2011). In addition, urbanization in Zimbabwe has not been associated with corresponding economic growth (UNHABITAT, 2010). As a result, there is massive under provision of urban services.

The political environment in Zimbabwe can be seen as the biggest obstacle of all. Zimbabwe uses the bureaucracy system of management. The model was criticised for being vulnerable to manipulation in corrupt environments. The cancer of corruption flows from top to down which then makes it hard to trace its roots. Looking at this, many municipalities failed to utilise social

accountability tools in Zimbabwe because of the national ideology. Muchadenyika (2014) argues that local authorities and citizens lack the capacity to interact and fully engage. According to this scholar this is partly responsive for poor service delivery in most urban local authorities.

Disregarding of needs of citizens' needs by local authorities has led to bad governance in local authorities and decisions are made without consultations of citizens. Lack of popular participation in some municipalities at the end of the day makes them to plan and initiate programmes that do not meet the actual needs of people on the ground. The blame is however, two folded. There is also lack of public push on the way municipalities handle their daily affairs in Zimbabwe. Chatiza et al (2014) have pointed out that the use of budget consultations and councillor feedback to communities is not done in a participatory way as such citizens remain ignorant about the operations of the council. Most people in Zimbabwe are used to poor service delivery to the extent that they have developed a coping capacity rather than the capacity to call for change.

The study area of this research is Bulawayo, which happens to be the second largest city in Zimbabwe and is located in the South Western part of Zimbabwe. The estimated population according to the Central Statics Office (2012) is 677, 000 as of 2012. It is also important to note that Bulawayo is in a semi- arid region and the area is draught prone and usually gets 650mm average rainfall per annum. According to the Zimbabwean classification of towns, Bulawayo City Council was established as a municipality in 1897. There are three service departments in Bulawayo City Council namely engineering, health and housing and community (BCC 2014).

Mostly, the Bulawayo City Council has not been very successful in providing efficient and quality services to its residents due to various factors that range from economic, social and political. Ills bedeviling communities such as water shortage, dysfunctional street lights, budget mis-allocations and mis-prioritisation, mal-administration and top-down governance are the key impediments that the council has failed to adequately deal with. According to Bulawayo City's service self-rating contained in the Council's Corporate Strategy for 2013 – 2017 status of service is as follows:

**Table1:**Bulawayo City's Service Self- Rating

<b>Type of Service</b>	<b>Rating out of 100</b>
Social Services	25
Fire and ambulance	50
Health	60
Lighting	60
Road	25
Housing	45
Refusal Removal	45
Sewer	45
Water	40

Source: Bulawayo City Council Strategy Document 2013- 2017

According to the city's self-rating as stated in the Strategy Document all services are below 60% that is evidence of poor performance (Chatiza et al, 2013). These ratings can be very different if the residents were to be asked as the council is failing to fulfil the needs of the consumers.

Bulawayo Agenda a Local Non-Governmental Organisation (2014) also highlighted contentious debate does occur at the local community level where councillors meet with residents on a monthly basis to give feedback. A few councillors of the Local Authority have only exhibited the culture of accounting to residents (Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association (BUPRA), (2014). Despite this effort, residents still see council policies and budgets coming out without their input. The local authority undertakes its projects without bothering to explain these to the residents such that residents are often in the dark concerning the local authority's developmental initiatives. For example, tender processes are still characterised by anomalies and there is no transparency leading to lack of accountability.

It is also alleged that corruption has deeply entrenched itself in the council operations. The allocation of houses and residential stands is unscrupulous, at inflated rates and remains unchecked. Council employees are on the record for awarding themselves residential and business stands at the expense of the ordinary residents. Residents are, to a larger extent, ignorant of the structures and processes that the City Council employs to fulfil its mandate of governing the city while providing residents with quality service. As a result, residents are also not able to input and monitor council's budgeting for example to ensure that council upholds the 30% salary and 70% service delivery protocol. The status quo leaves enough room for councillors and technocrats to manipulate the systems and structures for personal advantage since the ignorance of residents means none will monitor and evaluate Council initiatives. Various forms in which corruption and decay have manifested themselves at local government level have included bribery, fraud, embezzlement and extortion, abuse of power and conflict of interests. All these dimensions of corruption have seriously compromised the efficiency of service delivery and

hindered good local governance. Corruption has eroded stability and trust while damaging the ethos of democratic developmental local government. This has also negatively affected the confidence of potential investors and has also contributed to the dearth of business and entrepreneurship. There has been a long-term erosion of public confidence in public institutions, which has also been extended to parastatals.

Ideally, the Bulawayo City Council (BCC) is responsible principally for delivering services that include water, sanitation, sewer and social services. Corruption and lack of transparency is still rampant which can be linked to lack of popular participation in the municipality initiatives. Moreover, there is still poor service delivery in the city of Bulawayo. Many attempts were done to ameliorate this problem; however the gap between the actual plan and implementation tends to be huge; hence the study will look at the reason why there is still poor performance in service delivery in Bulawayo. There is therefore the need to assess whether the Social Accountability Tools have been effective in contributing towards improvements in the delivery of services in Bulawayo specifically in Cowdry Park High Density Suburb.

### **1.3.Statement of the Problem**

Local authorities are a sub-tier of government established to deliver services to communities and residents within their areas of jurisdiction guided by good governance and accountability principles and practice. The efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery is largely determined by the extent to which local authorities interact, incorporate and respond to the needs and demands of the communities and stakeholders. Evidence from World Bank Report (2004) has

revealed that weaknesses in accountability between citizens and local authorities are the main cause of ineffective service delivery in local government.

The concept of Social Accountability can be defined as the efforts of all stakeholders who are users of services to demand accountability for the provision of public services or goods from the local government and other service providers. It seems there are arrays of tools, which are used in demanding accountability by the public in different countries because of their differing contexts. The extent to which social accountability tools conform and influence the practice of accountability in service delivery in Bulawayo has not been established. This study seeks to assess the extent to which social accountability tools have been used in Bulawayo in a bid to improve service delivery. Cowdry Park will be used as a unity of analysis in this research. This research will provide information on the nexus between service delivery and accountability and practitioners and communities can use the information in this research to improve service delivery in local government.

#### **1.4. Research Question**

This study seeks to answer the focal question: Has increased access to traits of good governance through the use of social accountability mechanisms by citizens enhanced service delivery in urban local authorities, and in this case, Bulawayo?

#### **1.5. Aim of the Study**

This study aims at investigating the relationship between social accountability tools in local government service delivery and good governance in a better to inform practice for the goodness



of enhancing trust between the governors and governed in urban local authorities in Zimbabwe in general and Bulawayo in particular.

### **1.6 Objectives of the Study**

The specific objectives of the study are to:

- i. Establish the meaning(s) of social accountability in urban service delivery.
- ii. Evaluate the determinants for quality of service delivery in urban areas.
- iii. Examine the form(s) and pattern of application of social accountability tools in service delivery in the case study area.
- iv. Assess the extent to which intention and practice inform each other in the case study area.

### **1.7 Research Questions**

- i. What meaning(s) do stakeholders have on social accountability in urban service delivery?
- ii. What tools are used in assessing service delivery by urban stakeholders and why? Which ones work best, where and when?
- iii. In which form(s) do social accountability tools in service delivery manifest? What is the resultant pattern on the ground?
- iv. To what extent (and by what degree) is practice informed by intention of application of social accountability tools and vice-versa?

## **1.8 Significance of the Study**

The significance of the research is two folded, that is the practical and theoretical or academic components. This research is significant in that it provides factual information and evidence about importance of Social Accountability and how it contributes to improved service delivery. The study also interrogates participation in local government as an important ingredient in the provision of service delivery. The research also provides evidence of how social accountability is a critical force in good governance. Lastly but not the least this study is also significant in that it proved a stepping stone for further research for participation, access to information and responsiveness in local government. The research also attempts to cover the theoretical gap that exist in knowledge on the on how Social Accountability (SA) tools or mechanisms have been implemented in a bid to improve service delivery in Bulawayo City Council. Moreover, the research has practical significance to citizens in general because it focuses on the importance of raising awareness of residents of their rights, entitlements and responsibilities to demand and contribute to improved quality, efficiency and effectiveness in delivery of services in their cities. This leads to civic engagement, which empowers citizens and community groupings to participate in the planning, implementation and monitoring of the service provision mechanisms. The research also highlights the importance of having interface meetings between local authorities and residents, which promote or facilitate joint actions for service delivery benefiting both the rights holders and duty bearers. The research will also benefit Bulawayo City council in that it also allows the City to conduct self-evaluations of the quality of services they deliver and performance. Civic Society Groups and Residents Associations will benefit from gaps identified in the research regarding Social Accountability and service delivery in Bulawayo city council. This will present opportunities to strengthen advocacy work for improvement in service delivery

in the City. The nation of Zimbabwe as a whole can benefit from this research as it generally focuses on ways to improve service delivery in general that will result in promoting the right of people to a life of dignity, democratic governance, the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and promotion of human development .

### **1.9 Organisation of the Study**

The study is organised in five chapters described under the following headings:

Chapter 1: Study Background and Focus

Chapter 2: Analytical Framework and Review of Literature

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

Chapter 4: Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

Chapter 5: Lessons Learnt, Recommendations and Conclusion

## **Chapter 2: Analytical Framework and Review of Literature**

### **2.1.Introduction**

Social Accountability has recently emerged as a very topical issue in development work with many scholars and practitioners advocating for transparency, participation and empowering communities to demand answers to service providers. The concept of Social Accountability is implemented in different ways in different context, which shapes the mechanisms, and tools and tailor make them to respond to the specific operating environment. The theory of Good Governance is closely linked to social accountability, which can be best practised at a local government level. It is important now to look at the concept of social accountability in more detail and analyse how it can lead to improvement in local government service delivery.

### **2.2.Conceptual and Theoretical Frameworks**

Accountability has now been considered as an important element in governance of public institutions. The concept of accountability has its roots in public financial management (Posner, 2007). This concept has now been extended to touch on the way authorities and institutions make decisions and take actions on behalf of the public. The central aspect of accountability being checking against corruption and abuse of power and exercising with the objective of improving efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of services to communities especially the poor and marginalised groups in society.

Accountability is broadly defined as the rights of citizens or users of services to demand explanations from duty bearers or service providers with the objective of improving service delivery to communities. Accountability can also be seen as a relationship between rights holders

and service providers where duty bearers account for their actions in resource allocation and implementation of policies and provision of services. Rights holders on the other hand hold the service providers to account for all their actions and inaction. Thus accountability implies that duty bearers must justify to citizens why they do what they do(answerability).

It is also argued that it should be possible to punish or reward service providers for their performance thus enforceability( Brown et al , 2008).It is important to note that citizens must have the freedom of expression of their views and priorities when it comes to service delivery. They should be able to demand their rights and entitlements to better services from any service provider. These rights and demands can be expressed through participation in local decision-making processes. The voice of citizens must be met by the responsiveness of service providers who must be willing to take the views of citizens into consideration and modify their actions accordingly.

Within the context of local government in Zimbabwe,three types of accountability can be defined. First one isvertical downward accountability which is a method used by social actors like citizens, civil society organisations and media to hold their central and local government to account. They can do this through petition, participatory mechanisms and public debates (IDEA, 2011). The second one is horizontal accountability whereby the council official are accountable to the executive i.e. councillors.

Horizontal accountability is a mechanism of checks and balances within a system or a local authority which are purposed to oversee other council departments. Horizontal accountability can

be practised through political oversight and judicial accountability (Jelmin, 2011). The third type of accountability is what is referred to as political accountability. This is implemented through the use of elections, parliamentary portfolio committees and political parties to demand accountability from different sectors of government and also monitor and track actions of the executive arm of government (IDEAS, 2011).

It is important to note that all the three forms of accountability have the potential and capacity to improve service provision in local authorities when the operating environment is open and democratic and the political and public institutions are functional. UNDP (2008) points out that accountability can be upward, downward and outward.

- Upward Accountability happens when duty bearers are answerable to a higher office e.g. local authorities are accountable to the Ministry of Local Government.
- Downward Accountability is when a higher authority is accountable to a lower level authority e.g. Councillors are answerable to their electorate or citizens.

Goetz (2005) points out that in most countries retrospective accountability is practised, thus office holders account when they have already taken action and further argues that is the purest form of accountability. In this also practised in Zimbabwe where citizens react to action of the duty bearers after they have implemented policies or they have taken action.

The relationship between government, citizens and service providers is a complex one as seen in illustration provided by the World Bank Report , Making Services Work for the Poor (2004). The three main actors in the World Bank Framework in service delivery accountability are as follows:

- Service Providers, which include line ministries and local authorities.
- Policy Makers who are the councillors and council staff and staff from line ministries who regulate and implement policies.
- Citizens or clients are residents and other consumers of services provided by local authorities.

The relations of the three actors are illustrated in Figure 1.

**Figure 1:** Accountability Relationships



Source: World Bank 2003

Politicians legislate policies and council staff implement the policies and Parliament Portfolio Committee subject the politicians and council staff to horizontal accountability. Council staff

ensures that public services are provided to the communities. Citizens exercise right (voice) as they demand explanations from councillors they can do so as individuals, organised groups and civil society. Citizens can use their client power to demand delivery of services from service providers, thus residents can demand accountability from local authorities through their residents associations.

Service delivery and service performance depend upon these accountability relationships, that is councillors and council staff should be accountable to citizen taking the concerns of citizens and their priorities. As pointed out in the Taylor et al (2008) failure of these accountability relationship has resulted in communities having a little say in service provision, they usually do not get relevant information to monitor performance of service providers flouting the long route accountability. Citizens also lack information on budget and policies, which limit citizens' voice and their ability to build networks and coalitions to demand accountability.

In a bid to overcome such challenges, social accountability has proven to be a very strong mechanism for improving responsiveness and accountability of duty bearers in service provision. Social accountability is thus as a mechanism of accountability, which is strongly dependent on civic engagement of individuals, communities, and civic society organisation who participate effectively to demand accountability from service providers (World Bank 2004).

Malena (2004) defines social accountability as a mechanism for establishing accountability that relies on democratic public participation whereby ordinary community members and stakeholder like civil society organisation directly or indirectly demand accountability from service



providers. According to the above definitions, social accountability initiatives are usually demand driven, take the bottom – up approach and employ participatory methods.

Social accountability also thrives on the existence of community structures, and legal frameworks that spell out citizens' rights and how far they can go in facilitating accountability of the providers of services. Effective social accountability requires the availability of engagement platforms where community members, CSOs, media and service providers collaborate and work hand in hand to ensure that local authorities are responsive to the needs of local communities

Malena (2004) points out that Social accountability is the response to weaknesses that have arisen from mechanisms of the conventional accountability, which are adversely affected by absence of the rule of law limitations in the checks and balances and non-separation of powers.

In both horizontal and vertical accountability, public civil servants should make proactive efforts to provide information and explain their course of action and performance. It is important however to note that in social accountability citizen participation strengthen horizontal accountability mechanisms. There social accountability is highly linked and complementary to conventional horizontal accountability Thus, maintaining effective social accountability relationships is important in achieving participatory democracy and good governance. Sheikh (2011) has pointed out that social accountability principles of transparency, participation and voice goes a long way in achieving good governance and effective provision of services by local authorities.

Malena (2004) has identified the following as social accountability building blocks:

- Establishing an entry point this can either be rating of service providers' performance or analysing or analysis of public participation in budget allocations.
- Compiling data from the communities and service providers to gather public information for evidence
- Collaborating and establishing networks and coalition for collective action
- Lobbying and advocating for reforms and change with service providers

It is therefore evident from above that social accountability needs skills data gathering and analysis, budget formulation and tracking lobby and advocacy expertise. To a large extent most of the community members who are expected to spearhead social accountability lack these skills therefore limit their effectiveness.

Social Accountability provides many benefits which include the following:

- Achievements of development impact such as improvements in provision of services, efficiency in resources management and utilisation and attainment of good governance. Malena et al (2004) highlighted that social accountability is the bedrock of good governance and a necessary condition for effective democratic governance. With the emergence of social accountability, citizens have moved from taking a confrontational approach when expressing their demands to constructive engagement with service providers and elected officials and this is yielding better outcomes in the provision of services.
- Social accountability results in improved development effectiveness which is achieved through enhanced public service provision. Social accountability advocates for improved access to information and empowerment of communities through strengthening their

voice and promotion civic engagement through constructivedialogue. The impact of all these efforts is seen in participatory and transparent decision making processes and enhanced effectiveness of service delivery.

- Effective institution management e.g. local authorities, checks and balances in council operations through community monitoring and reporting, encouraging open communication between rights holders and supply side, multi stakeholders' interactions

In most of developing countries like Zimbabwe, public institutions are not responsive and accountable to poor people but only to the powerful authorities. Thus providing information to poor people on their rights and entitlement through social accountability tools empowers the marginalised. This reduces social exclusions through emphasis in greater community participation in service delivery. Since women are the main users of public services, social accountability tools can be used to enhance participation of women in local governance service. Using bottom up approach, e.g. gender budgeting, inclusive participatory and demand driven nature of accountability tools, women's ability to be heard is more enhanced.

- Social accountability provides a framework to uphold and monitor the rights of the marginalised and excluded in service provision (Martin van Vliet ( 2010)

The pillars for social accountability are transparency which includes access to information and participation (World Bank, 2004). Access to information from both the supply side e.g. line ministries and local authorities and demand side (citizens) is very important in building evidence to hold service providers accountable. The level of transparency of the supply side in providing

information about policies and budgets is also very important in the usage of social accountability mechanisms.

Transparency enhances access of information to the citizens that allows them to be aware of how local government decisions and procedures work. It is important for citizens to be aware of the rights and entitlements, resources allocation and expenditures regarding service delivery. Transparency and right to information strengthens empowerment of citizens that in turn allows for active participation of citizens in demanding accountability from local authorities.

Citizen participation is another pillar or building block in social accountability. For any development process to be effective and efficient, citizens and communities should actively participate in the development of their locality. Lisk (1985) defines local level participation as the involvement of all stakeholders especially communities in making priorities, implementation and monitoring of developmental programmes to raise the standard of living. Makumbe (1996) has also pointed out that active participation is only meaningful if the poor are part of the policy making process and if local government addresses the concerns of the poor in service delivery processes.

Social accountability tools are participatory in nature which enables communities to take part in decision making that are appropriate to their locality and satisfying the relevant community needs. Thus local democracy local democracy and good governance is achieved when communities are empowered in making decisions in issues that impact their lives (UNDP, 2008). Reliance on active participation in social accountability means that citizens exercise their right to

influence decision ion making regarding policy formulation, implementation and monitoring of council operations in service provisions.

Service delivery should be people centred to an extent that all processes should exhibit principles of transparency, access to information and active participation that enable citizens to demand accountability from service providers (Mulgan, 2004; Shah, 2006, UNHABITA, 2010). The framework of citizen-centred governance as put forward by Andres and Shah (2006) is premised on Empowerment of Citizens as a right to provision of quality services that promote life of dignity, bottom –up accountability. The citizens-centred approach is a governance system that gives opportunity to communities to debate and monitor how services are provided.

### **2.3.Meaning(s) of Social Accountability in Urban Service Delivery**

Social Accountability framework provides direct link to the theory of Good Governance. According to the World Bank Report (2003), social accountability of public officials both political and administrative is a rock bed for attainment of good governance. It is important for one to understand the general meaning of governance first before elaborating more on the concept or theory of good governance. According to the World Bank governance is the exercising of power or authority in policy formulation and resources management and utilisation.

The Global Governance Report (1995) defines governance as the systems used by individuals, private and public enterprises to manage their affairs it usually includes accommodating different interest groups' views .Good governance is the respect of a set of values through which governance is achieved and the way in which different social actors in any given context

interact. Lister (2010) defines the term 'governance' as the principles that regulate relationships between governments and different groups in society. This mainly focuses in the poor communities participate in governance processes and how diverging views are reconciled according to the rule of law.

The following are the principles of good governance that encompass full respect of human rights through recognition of:

- rule of law,
- effective participation of citizens in all their affairs of life
- multi stakeholder partnership
- transparency in decision making
- accountable processes and institutions to the public
- effective and efficient public sector

Good governance recognises that rule of law is achieved through an effective legal system which is impartial; it also focuses on protection of the marginalised groups in development priorities and equal access to justice.

Effective participation of all people in decision-making process is another element of good governance. World Bank (2004) supports the concept of popular participation in local development agenda, which strengthen effectiveness of development, ownership, capacity building of rights holders, transparency and accountability. Participation has been defined by Chatiza (2008) as citizens engaged meaningfully and voluntarily in development processes

and structures that exist in their communities. This can be through elected or appointed officials and institutions that represent their interests. Active participation of citizens can be as a result of citizens' agency or local authority laid down rules and values and other informal channels (UNRISD, 2014).

Participation should recognise the roles and importance of different gender groups in any given context to ensure that there is gender equity and equality. Impersonality in the decision making process and equal and uniform application of laws and social justice is created by transparency and accountability. Accountability as an element of good governance implies that public and private service providers, CSOs must be accountable to the public. This involves analysing and questioning decisions taken by these service providers. Transparency, on the other hand means that, information is readily available and accessible to community members and ensures that decision-making and enforcement of those decisions is done following laid down rules. Transparency and accountability are important and key aspects of good governance (Hallak and Poisson (2006) and Sebudubudu (2010).

World Bank 2004, states that effectiveness and effectiveness of public institutions looks at the technical dimension of good governance. These two elements of good local governance ensures that processes in local authorities use the resources in the best way in order to meet the needs of the local communities ensuring sustainability and environment protection. It is important that these elements do not work in isolation but are intertwined to achieve local democracy. A responsive local government ensures that all these elements are upheld to achieve effective communication with its citizenry.

Human Rights Agenda is also an element of good governance and provides direction to values and pillars that directs the work of governments, be they local or central and also outlines the standards that should be followed in governance systems. A right based approach to development in local authority governance analyses whether resources allocation criteria is used to satisfy the needs of the communities. This information can only be obtained by engaging communities to identify and define their needs and how best to meet them – strong civic engagement and public participation. The elements of good governance have been argued as the critical ingredients in any society to human development.

The concept of good governance is directly linked to Social Accountability in that public institutions as local authorities should conduct their operations in a way that takes into account all the elements of good governance that are listed above (UNDP, 2008). Mechanism to achieve good governance may include using accountability and transparency tools. Some scholars like Chatiza(2010); Mushamba (2010) and Muchadenyika(2013) argue that through active participation of communities in implementation of the tools, there is a guarantee that services are accessible and accepted by all.

The litmus test for good governance in local authorities is seen in the way they promote or stifle human rights, i.e. rights of citizens to participate in decision-making processes, right to adequate housing, access to quality water and sanitation, public transport and health facilities. Muchadenyika(2013) has also pointed out that poor governance results in poor service delivery and access to services by the poor and marginalised groups in societies.



World Bank (2004) has noted that five components are a pre- requisite for social accountability to be effective in local governance and these are:

- Existence of a clear mandate of the responsibility and functions of a local authority which is known by all parties.
- Availability of resources for services providers to carry out their obligation and mandate.
- With the existence of a clear mandate and sufficient resources local authorities should provide the necessary services
- Communities and users of service should have the capacity and right to monitor, assess and demand accountability from duty bearers vis-à-vis their mandate.
- Operating environment should allow free participation and involvement of non-state actors in local governance issue

It can therefore be argued that as one assess the ability of local authorities to account there are also some requirements or preconditions that should be existing in order to ensure that they are well equipped to perform and carry out their mandate of service delivery. Accountability and service delivery can therefore not be analysed without talking the above stated preconditions pointed out by World Bank as they can impact positively or negatively on the performance of the tools.

#### **2.4.Accountability from a Gender Perspective**

Good governance is democratic decision mechanism that ensures public participation, social justice and the upholding of human rights principles. UNIFEM (2009) points out that from a gender perspective, accountability should emphasise that public decisions are assessed equally by men and women. When it comes to the provision of services by local authorities, poor women

and girls rely more on these public services because they cannot afford alternative sources. The burden of unpaid care work by women and girls is significantly lessened when services provision is effective.

Gender sensitive accountability does not only require that women participate in decision making in local authorities but that reforms are made in councils that necessitates gender equality as one of the performance standard of local authorities.

Chatizaet *al* (2014) highlight that gender responsive accountability means that decision makers make commitments to ensure that spaces are expanded for different community groups. This will involve integration of gender dimensions in the planning, implementation and monitoring of management of resources to ensure sustainability. This is evident in Gender Budgeting initiatives that have been successfully implemented in Uganda to enhance accountability in service delivery especially to women. The main aim of these gender responsive budgets is elimination of inequalities in access to services and catalysing the effectiveness and efficiency of development policies ensuring gender equity of developmental outcomes.

UNFEM (2009) further argues that gender biased accountability enables women and girls and other vulnerable groups in communities to engage with local authorities in ways to improve services, provide feedback and monitoring the service provision. Accountable and gender sensitive service delivery local authorities are responsive to needs of women mostly. This can show how governments are committed to the international, regional and national gender equality and women's rights agreements that they have signed and ratified. Chitiga (2003) has pointed out that women comprise the majority of the consumers of services in local authorities yet they are

poorly represented at council and community level. In BCC, women constitute about 35% of both the executive and administrative decision makers. It should however be pointed out that the new National Constitution of Zimbabwe especially Article 26 (a) provides for the promotion of participation of women in all spheres of life , the challenge faced by all public institution is to transfer this provision into reality.

## **2.5.Principles and Tenets Defining the Centrality of Accountability in a Local Government System**

Social Accountability is critical element of success to local governance, which is the lower tier, which executes central government functions effectively and efficiently at the local level. Ideally decentralisation presents good opportunities to improve and enhance local government accountability to citizens and stakeholder institutions. This is so because local government is the closest form of government to the people and people are therefore able to interact with officials and councillors more regularly in issues of service provision. The results and impact of decentralisation as however been mixed especially in Zimbabwe. Service delivery in most of the developing countries like Zimbabwe, are usually poor quality, low access and generally short in supply. The biggest challenge in local authorities in these counties is accountability of duty bearers and lack of responsiveness to the demands of the users of the services.

Mushamba (2010) define local government as the sub-national level of government.Chakaipa (2010) defines local government as the establishment of participatory and development structures that are rightfully placed to identify the development needs of the people and transforming those needs into provision of services for sustainable livelihoods. Local

government established mainly to provide services in a more responsive and efficient way to local communities, to enhance popular participation of citizens in governance so that they exercise their rights and responsibilities.

It is important to note that Zimbabwe as a unitary state has ten administrative provinces and of these ten, eight are rural and two urban, namely Harare and Bulawayo which were established in 2005. Provinces comprise of 60 rural and 31 urban local authorities. Mushamba (2010) goes on to elaborate that of there are 7 cities, 9 municipalities, 4 local boards and 11 town councils in Zimbabwe. The local authorities and councils are divided into wards and local authorities are structures on committee system.

The Ministry of Local Government is at the apex of the local governance system in Zimbabwe and is responsible for creation of an enabling environment for operationalization of local government instruments (Chakaipa, 2010). Thus local authorities in Zimbabwe have delegated authority for performing these functions as delegated by central government. These functions are open to controlling and redirecting by central government thus the Minister as provided for in the Urban Councils Act. The Ministry of Local Government plays the following roles:

- Monitoring and oversight
- Directing
- Promotion and capacity building
- Facilitating and advising local authorities

The powers of the Minister has far reaching impact on local authorities functions especially in terms of the accountability and effective service delivery that will be discussed later in this document Muchadenyika(2013) explains that local authorities are mandated to perform functions that fall under the governance, development, planning, financial and regulatory functions.

Local authorities in Zimbabwe are tasked with service provision function, which also includes maintenance of these services to residents. Local government exist to provide services such as water and sanitation, street lighting, health, housing, roads and education. Funds for service provision by councils are obtained as loans from central governments and the private sectors. Zhou and Chilunjika (2011) highlights that there local authorities sources of revenue are inadequate and this impact negatively on their capacity to provide services to their consumers.

The Combined Harare Residents Association Report (2013) points out that for the past 15 years the policy framework of the Zimbabwe local government has been subjected to a lot of debate. In 2009 and 2010, Civic Society Organisations working on local government service delivery conducted Civic Society All-Stakeholders Constitutional Conference which resolved that Zimbabwe local government system was in dire need for reform in order to democratize local governance. SCOs have pointed out the need reform and make it more inclusive and democratize the Urban Councils Act (Chapter 29:1. Crisis Coalition, Zimbabwe National Residents Association (ZURA) (2011) argued that the Urban Councils Act limit active citizen participation is vulnerable to control by Ministry of Local Government abuse and manipulation. Below is a list of some of the views that Combined Harare Residents Association (CHRA) has combined from its membership with regards the Urban Councils Act.

Urban Councils Act is characterised by delegation rather than decentralisation of power and functions. It is also important to note that the Act is built upon the concept of upward accountability and not local accountability. The Minister responsible for local government has a say in many issues and not the local people or civic. Related to the above, Central Government, and not the local people, retains firm control over all local authorities with powers to suspend the enabling legislation, suspend a local authority and put in an administrator as has been done in the case of City of Harare, and suspend individual councillors and prohibit them from taking active part in local politics. There are no sections that give recognition and acknowledge the existence of civic groups such as residents and ratepayers associations. In Mozambique, the election of representatives into councils is not restricted to partisanship. Civic groups are allowed to nominate a candidate to stand for election.

The Act provides that no meeting of council shall commence before half past four o'clock in the afternoon unless it is an exceptional meeting and the majority of members have agreed to it. What this has done is to exclude the participation of women in council meetings, as council meetings take place during the time that they are expected to be preparing meals for their families at home. The tendency also is for council meetings to finish off late, normally after 7pm, which is risky for women participants relying on public transport to travel from council meetings.

In relation to land use planning, where the council wishes to use a piece of land for parking purposes which is not zoned for such, the council is required to advertise in two issues of a newspaper for such change of use. The Act is silent on the process of public consultation with

regards to planning for parking within the city. Recently, changes by Harare City Council on parking policies have been implemented without consultation of the commuting neither public nor the transport operators.

With regards to rating of property, the Act provides for objections to be made by residents. There seems to be a tendency for the Act to provide mainly for objections to certain developments, but not so much for initiating development activities or making contributions. It is assumed that such contributions can be made through the elected representative, but when it comes to objections, they are better made by the aggrieved party. The Act also provides for public notice, thorough the press, for an application for borrowing powers. The selected medium for disseminating information in the Act presupposes that residents are literate, and that they gain access to the press advertisements.

While this is only but a minimum requirement, there is need for wider consultation on borrowing powers and such application, such that residents are able to understand the impact of the burden of borrowing in terms of additional payments that will be required to service the debt.

The Act requires that the council bylaws and Act be made available for inspection at its offices. The assumption taken by the authors of the Act is that there is a fair understanding of the English language and the legal jargon. The Act should impose a duty to make councils bylaws available in local languages for easy understanding.

On matters of accounts, no conditions are imposed by the Act for dissemination of information to residents on collection, utilisation and balances of moneys belonging to council. The conclusion

therefore is that the Urban Councils Act violates salient tenets of good governance which borders around public participation, accountability and transparency while promoting centralization. Lack of residents involvement has sabotaged service provision especially citizen priorities in the whole process. There is thus an urgent need to amend the Act in order to deal with the above issues and to ensure that it resonates with current efforts in the constitution making process. Some of the sections that need amendment are listed below (CHRA, 2013).

It can be argued that service delivery has collapsed because local authorities are focusing on pleasing the minister at the expense of residents. As from 2000 central government has been controlling local authorities in very disruptive ways (Range, 2007.) This has been summed up by Chirisa and Jonga (2009) as ‘the death of democracy in council business’). Prior to the drafting of the New Constitution the Minister of local government could not be held accountable to his actions by anyone except accusations of mismanagement and corruption labelled against him as publicised in local media. Local authorities have been the battleground for gaining political mileage rather than a means of providing services to community. Social Accountability tools are regarded as a means of improving public participation and civic re- engagement in order for local authorities to be responsive to the needs of the communities.

The scholars have also pointed out that lack of political will to improve administrative system, lack of confidence in local authorities by residents and low collection rate have resulted in a low revenue base for local authorities ( Chatiza 2010, Muchadenyika 2013). Local government facilitate accountability in that citizens are close to sub- national government they should be able to demand accountability from service providers on issues of service provision.



Muchadenyika (2013) argues that, the situation in Zimbabwe has been such that there have been conflicts between residents and councils as residents feel that that they are not being consulted enough and local authorities not being accountable to them and as such not paying service charges. This led to the breakdown of service delivery in most local authorities. Interventions have been made to induce accountability of local authorities to residents. It is the objective of this paper to assess and evaluate how the use of social accountability tools have been effective in enhancing service delivery with a special focus on Bulawayo City Council and Cowdry Park as the unity of analysis.

## **2.6. Tools in Assessing Urban Service Delivery by Stakeholders**

There are several social accountability tools used in demanding accountability from local authorities by the citizens. For the purpose of this research the following will be analysed in this study.

Participatory planning and budgeting refers to the citizen's active participation in budgeting process that is formulation, implementation and monitoring. All stakeholders are able to conduct a situational analysis and jointly identify suitable strategies to solve identified problems within their communities. This enables citizens to channel their priorities in the allocation of council's resources. Participatory Planning and Budgeting creates conducive conditions for accountability by allowing citizens to prioritise resources allocation and be well informed the promises of council in the provision of services, which also give them the opportunity to monitor implementation of council commitments.

Citizens are able to review and ask questions about service delivery in the process and how resources were used in the previous budgets. CSOs have become more involved in local governance by being involved in various strategies of participatory budgeting (deRenzio and Krafchik 2007, Taylor et al 2008). Participatory budgeting is critical as it goes a long way in enhancing transparency and accountability and linking local needs to available resources.

### ***2.6.1 Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS)***

Koziol and Tolmie (2010) and Griffin et al. (2010) defines Public Expenditure Surveys as accountability tools that monitor human and financial resources from national to local government in order to leakages and to formulate policies that avoids such leakages in future. This refers to the tracing of flow or utilisation of public resources by citizens, CSOs and other stakeholders. The process traces the movement of resources from its source to the destination with the objective of determining value for money, corruption and leakages.

### ***2.6.2 Social Audits***

Ringold et al (2012), defines Social Audits as an accountability tool that allow citizens to analyse what the duty bearers and providers of services say against what is actually happening on the ground. Social audits involves a system whereby communities collect and analyse information on service delivery in order to check if agreed commitments of council are matching what is happening on the ground. This form of monitoring assess whether resources are used for the intended and planned services. Results of the audits are usually announced at a public place and citizens and duty bearers engage to discuss findings with the aim of improving performance of local authorities in service provision.

### ***2.6.3 Community Score Cards***

Actionaid (2011) conceptualises Community/ Citizen Scorecards as a participatory accountability tool that is used by communities to rate and evaluate impact and quality of services provided by local authorities. According to Malena, Forster and Singh (2006) this type of accountability benefits poor and marginalised people who rely on government services and are unable to hold public officials accountable. This participatory tool provides communities with space to give their opinion about council service delivery mechanisms. It should be noted that this fosters mutual cooperation and engagement between the local authority and citizens and when successfully implemented can result in increased local authority responsiveness and accountability leading to good governance.

### ***2.6.4 Public hearing***

This is an important tool which promotes social accountability and active community engagement and strengthening. Local authorities, citizens and CSOs gather together to deliberate on public services provision, challenges and possible solutions. These meetings allow communities to register their complaints and ask questions about service delivery quality and access and officials and elected representatives respond and clarify and provide information about the status of councils and challenges being faced. This helps in building mutual understanding among all the stakeholders (Mushamba (2010), Muchadenyika (2013)).

## **2.7 Impact of using Social Accountability tools**

Muchadenyika (2013) points out that the above stated tools are useful instruments because they are easy to use and can be easily used by service users. The tools are also instrumental in birthing of constructive engagement with service providers in planning and implantation of public services and resolving issues around service deficiencies. Social accountability tools have been praised for community ownership and mobilising community resources in community projects for local authorities that faced by financial challenges. This has led to partnering of communities with local authorities in the provision of services (Malena, Forster and Singh (2006)). This has also fostered active role played by different Non-Governmental Organisations, Civic Society Organisation who play important role in capacitating communities in demanding accountability from local authorities.

World Bank (2004) has identified five social accountability outcomes in the provision of services in local government which are area follows:

1. Empowerment of community through awareness of rights and entitlements and obligation of service providers to the communities. Communities can therefore diagnose problems in service delivery, assess the quality of services and measure performance of service providers.
2. Empowerment can also result in increased participation of communities in planning, implementation and evaluation of service delivery standards.
3. Increased participation of non- state actors like NGOs and CSOs and media in local governance and acting as watch dogs for local authorities performance and can facilitate advocacy on improved service in local government

4. The efforts of communities and non-state actors can force city councils to be responsive to demands from communities and increase accountability of service providers to the service users.
5. Participation of communities and other players and increased demand for accountability and responsiveness of local authorities can result in improved quality and access of service delivery in communities.

This study agrees with the World Bank that the objective of application of social accountability in local authorities is to empower residents and other non-state actors who are consumers of services to participate in decision making that impact of service delivery. This is also aimed at making local authorities to be more responsive and accountable to their relevant stakeholders who pay and fund service delivery.

The tools mentioned above are implemented through all the stages of service delivery. It is important to note that these Social Accountability tools promote active participation of citizens and stakeholder and responsiveness and accountability of duty bearers which are necessary elements of good governance.

The impact and effectiveness of social accountability tools in enhancing service provision in any context depends on the following conditions (UNDP, 2008; UNHABITAT, 2009)

- A conducive political and social environment for effective community participation and civic engagement.
- The availability of necessary policy and legal framework

- Political will of state actors
- Institutional capabilities of local authorities

## **2.8 Case Studies**

Social Accountability tools have been employed in several countries that is, in developed and developing countries, and have been instrumental in achieving great successes in enhancing service delivery.

In many developed nations, the extent of the applicability of social accountability is mainly seen largely on the results which came about after its implementation. Malena (2009) provides a solid example of Germany where by the construction of a certain airport was hit by the cancer of corruption prior to the use of social accountability. Conversely, the draw on of Integrity Pacts (supported by Transparency International) helped greatly to restrain corruption in Germany in all service delivering sectors including Municipalities. This shows that in developing nations, focus is placed on results on service delivery hence social accountability tools are utilised largely to promote transparency.

Institutionalising participation spaces for empowering service users has been as a result of the realisation of the importance of having citizens hold local government accountable for the provision of services. This has also resulted in empowering citizens to participate in setting priorities in service provision hence making them more responsive to the consumers of services (McNeil and Mumvuma, (2006). Getting citizens involvement in planning processes enhances providers' efforts to be responsive to the needs of the poor community members. Goetz and

Jenkins 2003 noted that Janagraha, a local NGO in India has facilitated the mobilisation of community members to form ward committees that have been capacitated and provided information for discussions with local service providers. Discussions have been on education and health services this has improved the management and access of these services (Goetz and Jenkins, (2003).

The use of Citizen Report Cards in these communities has been very instrumental naming and shaming officials and institutions that are believed to causing poor service delivery, this has also pressurised these institutions to improve. Social Audits and public hearing in Rajasthan state has helped in identifying gaps in plans and implementation of services resulting in holding local government accountable (Goetz and Gaventa 2001). As evidenced from the above case studies in India, empowering citizens to collective demand and hold local authorities for better service delivery because of institutionalising participation spaces achieves right based service provision. India has Constitutionalised right to health and education focusing on quality, accessibility and affordability of these services. This has been necessitated the reforming of the health and education services in to respond to the needs of the poor. It is however important to note that CSOs have played a fundamental role in facilitating and mobilising citizens for campaigns for such reforms.

Mumvuma and Neil (2006) have highlighted that Brazil has been recognised as a champion in use of social Accountability mechanisms and participatory democratic governance. In Brazil, there is extensive use of participatory budgeting and this has gone a long way in opening spaces for citizen engagement and inclusiveness in the decision-making process at local

government level, leading to reduction of inequalities in communities. This according to Mumvuma and Neil has led improved access and quality in provision of social services such as education, water and health and improved pro poor development in municipalities.

The introduction of Community Participatory Planning and budget tracking processes in Porto Alegre local authority between 1989 and 1996 resulted in improved waste management and water supply from 46 % to 85%. In India Social audits have served to curtail corruption in the implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (Malena, 2009). This approach engages public hearing of officials as part of social audit. Such an approach makes the officials to be visible to the public where all issues of corruption will be dealt with.

The Asian Development Bank has provided support to the Republic of Republic of the Marshal Islands in analysis of budget on gender basis. The following was the objective of the budget analysis:

- Designing of people centred budgets, gender budget policies and programmes
- Management of gender specific budget.
- Promotion of accountability and transparency of government on gender equality.

The project was successful in forcing the government to implement policies and laws that are in line with certain gender protocols that the country had signed. This also led to institutionalisation of Gender budgeting in local authorities ensuring that the needs of communities and especially women were prioritised in the budgeting processes. Bibhu Prasad Sahu(2010)has elaborated on how Youth for Social Development in India made use of Social Accountability such as the



Citizen Report Card (CRC) to empower communities in Brahmpur City to spearhead improvement of service delivery of water in the communities. The city of Brahmpur has problems of poor and inadequate service delivery and weak systems of governance. Problems faced by communities in this city ranged from poor quality water delivery system, waste management and poor road infrastructure. Women and girls were mostly affected by the problems of water provision and would walk 2- 6 km to fetch water. This also meant that the girl child would miss school and women could not be involved in other strategic gender roles as most of the time would be spent looking for water for home use.

Stakeholder meetings and community discussion forum meetings are also part of social accountability initiatives in India. The discussions are mainly centred on the quality, access of services and responsiveness of service providers. These discussions exert pressure on the city council to improve provision of water to communities. In most cases in India, the public always feel secure on service delivery by the Municipality since they are involved in the process of planning and implementation.

The most sensitive issue, which manifests on the evaluation of service delivery of Municipalities tend to lie on how funds are being used. In order to promote the issue of transparency, many governments engage the public on the budgeting needs and make people to decide to themselves on the most relevant needs. According to the World Bank (2004), common examples of budget-related social accountability practices consist of efforts by civil society to analyse the impact and implications of budget allocations, demystify the technical content of the budget, lift up awareness about budget-related issues, point out discrepancies between government policy

priorities and resource allocations, and undertake public education campaigns to improve budget literacy.

Participatory budgeting is also used in Brazil where by more than 200 Municipalities engages the public (World Bank, 2004). The public in these settings will be taught first on effective budgeting followed by being deployed in action. This then makes the process not to be too technical for the public, hence positive results always manifest at the end of the day.

Corruption in many settings hinders the functionality of Municipalities since funds will be flowing in the pockets of officials rather than the main treasure. In India, as argued by Malena (2009), social audits are recognized largely which can lead to firing of officials if found guilty. Aakella, 2007 noted that in some cases social audits can go for three days of a public hearing. Aakella (2007) gave a solid example whereby the Deputy Commissioner of Ranchi suspended 16 officials and laid charges against five, who were guilty of receiving commissions and misappropriating funds. This shows that the government does not take flippantly the issue of social accountability tools.

In the Philippines, the social accountability tools were merged with governmental laws where by individuals found on the other side of the law will be answerable to the court of justice. Malena (2009) noted that Procurement Watch has achieved enormous triumph infringing transparency and accountability to procurement processes in Philippi. On the other hand, Ramkumar (2008) argued that the Procurement Watch efforts have also helped to establish systems that permit citizens not only to sit as observers on government bid and award committees but also to act as

monitors to ensure that contractors abide by their contracts. Such efforts of amending the law to fit in social accountability related issues shows that in Philippi the issue is taken serious from national levels of implementation to grass roots levels.

UN- HABITAT (2004) has also pointed out that the Philippines government came up with the Philippines Local Government Code, which guarantees public participation of communities and CSOs in local councils. Naga City in Philippines came up with an Empowerment Ordinance in 1995 is a good case study for the implementation of the Local Government Code. The city has established structures at the community level which partner with council in assessing needs and implementing and provision of services at the community level. This has improved participation of communities in service delivery processes and the council has improved in being responsive to the demands of the residents.

Right to information and popular participation are concepts that are of paramount in importance to social accountability effectiveness, this arguably is the main reason behind successes of social accountability in India. Indian government enacted the Right to information Act in 1997, which guarantees citizens' rights to get information that relates to affairs of their communities from the state and local government. Civil society has built capacity and empowered communities on this law and this has resulted in communities demanding information from local authorities on how decisions are made and other service delivery issues UN- HABITAT, (2008).

Anderson (1999) also highlights that Bolivia enacted the Popular Participation law, which is designed to ensure that municipal councils implement projects and programs that are based on

effective participation of communities and beneficiaries. Commins (2007), highlights how local Community Based Organisations (CBOs), participate in the drafting of councils' five year strategic plans of local authorities in Bolivia. Councils under this law are forced to share council management financial resources with the CBOs which enable them to hold councils in the use of financial resources during the implementation of the Strategic Plan. This law has led to the establishment of the Vigilance Committees which works in close association with local CSOs in provides community priorities to council and monitors council operations and financial processes.

The mainsuccess of this law has been the provision of legalisation of participation and interaction between communities and local authorities through participatory budgeting, implementation and monitoring of council operations. The law made it possible the integration of CSOs into governance processes of the local authorities and establishment of this the law led to improvements in decentralisation of the governance system in Bolivia (Gaventa and Valderrama (1999) . This case study shows the importance of formulating legal frameworks that empower citizens and their representative to participate in the running of local authorities enabling them to access information and demand accountability from councils.

Participatory budgeting practice is also manifest in Tanzania and Senegal. This is a process whereby the public will be involved in the process of allocation of resources to various activities which Municipalities will be implementing. World Bank International (2007) argued that in Senegal and Tanzania there was an increase popularity and increased public support for local

government authorities in municipalities due to the utilisation of participatory budgeting which is one of the major components of social accountability.

The budgeting system tend to be more effective in South Africa where vital improvements in fiscal transparency and accountability were seen due to the independent budget work of the Public Services Accountability Monitor (PSAM) and the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA) (Malena, 2009). Malena (2009) also noted that publicity surrounding PSAM's documentation of prevalent corruption and mismanagement of funds helped influence the South African cabinet to assign an interim management team (IMT) in 2003 to advance financial management in the Eastern Cape Province. Such changes in South Africa show that the model is being used to its optimum level. This can also be linked to the same achievements, which were highlighted by World Bank International (2007) in Tanzania and Senegal. The fact that the public is responding positively to the initiatives of their Municipalities shows that these tools are being used effectively.

Malena (2009) pointed out that in Kenya and Tanzania Participatory budgeting supported by Agan Khan Foundation led to improvements in the health, road, water and sanitation sectors. World Report (2010) pointed out that the deployment of Community Report Cards between 2008 and 2009 resulted in the improved water supply governance in Wobulenzi local authority in Uganda. Many users reported improved relationships with the water providers who were more responsive to community reports of borehole breakdowns and council gave regular feedback to communities, hence there was improvement in the billing system of water. Looking at this, one can safely say the tools are being used effectively in some countries largely.

Shah (2009) provides a case study of how Community Score Cards were used in improving health in local government councils in Malawi in 2007. According to Shaz's report (2009) Malawi local government had serious challenges in health provision services. Care International funded a Local Government Health Programme whose main objective was to improve health provision and empowerment of community users. The programme concentrated on four elements, which were the following:

- Community meetings to assess access, quality efficiency and effectiveness of health services. Designing of indicators evaluation and community ranking the performance of the health centres using the indicators.
- Staff of the health centres going through the same process that was done by the communities.
- Interface meetings between health centre staff and community where each group made presentations of their scorecards and made comparisons and finally worked together to find solutions to the identified problems.
- Implementation and follow up of the action plans.

There was evidence of significant improvements local government service delivery in most local authorities in Malawi, which are attributed to the use of the scorecards. Significant improvements were noticed in areas of respect for patients, transparency of staff, prioritisation of serious cases and non-discriminatory methods used in supplementary nutrition provision (Shah 2007).

In 2009 World Bank supported a Community Action Program (CAP), in Niger which emphasises on community management of local government project integrating community self – assessment. The programme involved the following steps:

- Assessments of the community needs
- Local development planning focusing mainly on service delivery
- Implementation of the development plans
- Maintenance and monitoring of projects
- Reassessing and re-evaluation of annual plans and readjustments of project implementation

The processes involved were commented for improving community empowerment through participatory planning and monitoring and evaluation of projects, sustainability of the projects, and improvements in efficiency in implementation and stakeholder accountability.

Classen and Alphin-Lardic (2010) have noted that in Africa lack of political will is affecting much the implementation of social accountability tools. They argue that most people who work in municipalities are placed in there based on political interest of those on top. Social accountability only works if the political environment is favourable. Social accountability in Africa is also said to flop during the course of implementation due to lack of capacity to sustain and scale up social accountability initiatives (Classen and Alphin-Lardic, 2010). Classen and Alphin-Lardic also noted that many governments fail to scale up from district levels they operate in. Lack of financial and human resources also hinders the smooth flow of social accountability in Africa. Classen and Alphin-Lardic noted that many governments in Africa rarely allocate resources to social accountability initiatives. First priority is given to other sectors like Education where tangible results are seen immediately.

In Zimbabwe, participatory budgeting is among social accountability tools, which are being used by various Municipalities. Malena (2009) noted that there was a great misunderstanding in Mutoko where by the public was complaining about service delivery in Mutoko. This later forced the Municipality to initiate participatory budget to clear a tense atmosphere, which was created through public grievances. Malena (2009) argued that in Zimbabwe some municipalities effectively utilised social accountability tools. Malena (2009) went on to highlight that citizens protested regularly against the local government that led to the introduction of participatory budgeting. The processes were credited to result in “a new relationship and mode of mutual understanding and interaction between citizens, CSOs and the municipal council”. (Mumvuma, 2009). The approach was found to create opportunities for informed, constructive dialogue and negotiation between citizens and government by breaking patterns of unproductive confrontation and conflict (Malena, 2009). Looking at the case of Mutoko, there is no doubt that these tools are used largely by some local authorities in Zimbabwe.

Masvingo Residents and Rate Payer Association Report (2012) highlights that Masvingo City Council holds Mayor Accountability meetings with residents associations and communities where the mayor and his council elaborate on the council’s major undertakings and challenges that they face. This allows the residents to ask question to council on service delivery and highlight their concerns. The major problem that has been cited on these meetings is that communities are not furnished information prior to the meetings which limit the level of engagements and discussions.



It has been evident that the SA tools besides having governance benefits they also contributed to improved public policies, better service delivery. This can be seen by the way Harare City council went on to purchase 26 Refuse Collection Trucks in 2013 after Combine Harare Residents Association ( CHRA) engaged council on its waste management system which was inefficient and waste was dumped in residential areas causing a lot of health hazards in the communities. According to reports from CHRA Collection of refuse waste by Harare City Council have improved by 40% in most areas especially high density suburbs(CHRA, 2013).

Zimbabwe is listed amongst the most corrupt nations in Africa because of lack of transparency in service delivery in some sectors(Transparency International Report, 2011).However, the World Bank International (2007) credited the Zimbabwe's Centre for Total Transformation for reducing corruption within rural schools in the Mazowe district and led to improved delivery of education services. School authorities are now open- minded on the fact that the community is now watching and monitoring closely their actions. The fact that the community is conscientized about issues which relates to social accountability shows that the phenomenon is not new in Zimbabwe and in some sectors it is functional.

## **2.9 Parameters for Successful Application of Tools Social Accountability in Service Delivery and Governance**

Social Accountability tools effectiveness in enhancing service delivery and good governance depends on the political, social, institutional conditions(UNDP 2008, Chatiza 2013, and Muchadenyika 2014). Reforming accountability relationships is complex cannot be achieved by

just applying technical tools. There are elements which are critical and a prerequisite for the success of social accountability tools which are as follows:

- Willingness of government and local authorities to be accountable to the public. This is shown through information disclosure and transparency, creation of mechanisms for constructive dialogue and civic engagement with citizens.
- Capacity and willingness of communities and CSOs and other stakeholders to demand accountability from central and local government. This is enabled by citizens being empowered by information, capacity development and knowing of their rights to demand accountability and CSOs playing a critical role in mobilization and building of coalitions and networks for advocacy on citizens demanding accountability.
- Available facilities for legal and policy frameworks for civic engagement, a political operating environment granting freedom for open pluralistic discussions and constructive engagement.
- Financial viability of local authorities that provides financial muscle to be responsive to citizens demands for quality service delivery.

### **2.10 Chapter Summary**

Social Accountability as a concept heavily relies on popular participation of communities which allows a people centred approach development. This is a critical element in achieving good governance which also emphasises on human rights, efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, equal participation and right to information. The basic pillars of social accountability are transparency and participation which are important facets in democratic decision making.

Local government accountability improves service delivery as it allows community right to information on their rights and entitlements, information on council operation and civic engagement on issues of service delivery. Social Accountability tools assessed under this research include Participatory Planning and Budgeting, Public Expenditure Tracking, Social Audits and Community Score Cards and how they have been in identified countries and have resulted in improved service delivery. It is however important to note that, the success application of all these social accountability tools is dependent on the operating and political context that exist in any particular system.

The next chapter will focus at the research design and methodology that was used in this research to collect and analyse data from interviews, questionnaires, archival (i.e. council minutes and reports) and general observations that were made by the researcher as she visited the area of study.

## **Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology**

### **3.1.Introduction**

This chapter will be looking at the research methods which were used to collect data. Although data collection was successful, some challenges were encountered, which are going to be outlined on the study limitations.

### **3.2.Research Paradigm and Philosophy**

A triangulation methodology that employed both qualitative and quantitative was used to unveil the operations of the Municipality of Bulawayo. The triangulation method was of choice considering that the study is two folded and likely to obtain variations within findings. Qualitative method was mainly used because it provides room for analysis of the context of the local government under which service delivery is taking place. In addition to that, it also enabled the researcher to understand the background of the subjects under study. The advantage of using qualitative techniques in the research was that qualitative data played a pivotal role in unveiling interactions and relationships between Bulawayo City Council and residents of Cowdry Park, and how this affects service delivery. Qualitative data gave an opportunity to the researcher to probe and get in-depth information on perceptions, opinions about the operations of Bulawayo Council service delivery systems, Social Accountability performance and effectiveness.

Qualitative methods were used for quantifiable data pertaining to number of people participating in service delivery meetings, number of times for collection of refuse, number of budget consultative meetings and number of public meetings conducted by council.

### **3.3. Research Design and Rationale**

A case study of Bulawayo City Council with a special focus on Cowdry Park was used.

Evaluative Research Design was which enabled explanation of the different scenarios in service delivery in Bulawayo especially in Cowdry Park and the subjects' experiences. With this research design the researcher was able to analyse the efficiency and effectiveness of Social Accountability Tools towards enhancing service delivery in CowdryPark.

### **3.4. Population and Sampling**

The researcher used population documents from ZIMSTATS which shows all the residents in Bulawayo and their status. The population of Cowdry Park is approximately between 12000 and 15000 with an average of about 400 households (Bulawayo City Council Strategy Document 2013- 2017). Simple random sampling technique was used on the 50 targeted households because all the households are faced with the same challenges in the delivery of services and their sole service provider is Bulawayo City Council. The selected sub group was considered a representation of Cowdry Park population that could be used to draw conclusion about that whole population in that area (Depoy and Gitlin, 2005).

Purposive sampling was employed on the following selected key informants.

The key informants were as following

- Cowdry Park councillor
- Mpopoma Councillor
- Residents Associations and other CSOs

- Bulawayo City Council Social Service Director or Manager
- Bulawayo City Council Social Service Committee Chairperson
- 2 local government expects
- BUPRA, BURA and Bulawayo Agenda Programme Officers

### **3.5.Data Collection**

Interviews were used for the key informants. As defined by Behr, (1983) interviews are a conversation with the objective of collecting data. The researcher was cognisance of the concept of saturation by Sanchez (2006) which state that the researcher interviewed informants up to the point that she was not getting any more new information.

Focus group discussions and in depth interviews were also applied in cognisance of the saturation concept. The method offered flexibility to the researcher who was able to add, rephrase or modify questions in order to get deeper understanding of the issues. The researcher was also able to obtain information through non- verbal reactions and response by observing body language of the respondents.

General observations were made through observing the quality and level of service delivery as the research travelled through Cowdry Park observing general outlook of the area. Analysis of council minutes and reports and articles from other CSOs like Bulawayo Agenda, Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association and Newspapers was done as well.

Two Focus Group Discussions were conducted in Cowdry Park with 6 women, 2 youths and 4 men. Focus groups enabled in depth discussions and interrogation of issues on accountability and

service delivery. People were able to express themselves and the way they perceive issues under discussion.

### 3.6.Data Analysis and Presentation

Information gathered from full council and stakeholders’ reports, newspaper articles, questionnaires, key informant interviews and literature review supported the research findings as evidence. Social Packaging for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 20) was used to analyse quantitative data and qualitative data was analysed manually using thematic frames.

**Table 2:** Data Collection Summary

<i>Objective</i>	<i>Source of Data</i>	<i>Data Collection Tools Used</i>	<i>Data Analysis Tools Used</i>
i. explain the principles and tenets defining the centrality of accountability in a local government system.	- Literature - Archival records - Key informants	- - - Interviewing	- Textual analysis - Discourse analysis -
ii. establish the meaning(s) of social accountability in urban service delivery.	- Literature - Key informants	- - Interviewing	- Textual analysis

iii. assess tools used in assessing service delivery by urban stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Key informants (stakeholders)</li> <li>- Community (fieldwork)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interviewing</li> <li>- FGDs, Questionnaires</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Textual analysis</li> <li>- Statistical analysis</li> </ul>
iv. evaluate the determinants for quality of service delivery in urban areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Literature</li> <li>- Community (fieldwork)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interviewing</li> <li>- FGDs, Questionnaires</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discourse analysis</li> <li>- Statistical analysis</li> </ul>
v. examine the form(s) and pattern of application of social accountability tools in service delivery in the case study area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Literature</li> <li>- Key informants (stakeholders)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interviewing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Textual analysis</li> </ul>
vi. assess the extent to which intention and practice inform each other in the case study area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Key informants (stakeholders)</li> <li>- Community (fieldwork)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interviewing</li> <li>- FGDs, Questionnaires</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discourse analysis</li> <li>- Statistical analysis</li> </ul>
vii. define parameters for successful application of social accountability tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Literature</li> <li>- Key informants (stakeholders)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interviewing</li> <li>- Research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Textual analysis</li> </ul>



in service delivery and governance in the case study area.	- Synthesised information	findings	- Discourse analysis
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### Primary data collection

- Household survey
  - Questionnaire
- Observation
  - Checklist
  - Photography
- Interviewing
  - Key informant interviewing
    - Interview guide
  - Focus group discussion
    - Interview guide

### Secondary data collection

- Archival methods
  - Minutes of meetings
  - Newspaper articles, documentaries
  - Reports

- Literature review
  - Published or unpublished scholarly articles

### **3.7.Ethical Considerations**

The following ethical considerations were made:

- The purpose and objectives of the research were explained to prospective participants before conducting the research.
- Respect of participants' right to remain anonymous and confidentiality of information was upheld.
- Participants were given the right to participate voluntarily or pull out of the research at any given time.

### **3.8.Limitations of the Study**

The study could not collect all needed information from the key informants especially council staff who attributed it to be official secrets of the council.To mitigate this, the researcher worked out timelines, which were outside working hours to meet with some council staff and discuss the issues. These meetings were arranged by someCSOs working in Bulawayo who have established good working relations with the councilstaff.

### **3.9.Chapter Summary**

All in all, data collection was fruitful since a lot of information was acquired from both residence of Bulawayo and the key informants. Triangulation methodology allowed the researcher to

analyse quantitative data simultaneously with qualitative data. Interview guides, focused group discussion guides, questionnaires and field notes were the tools which the researcher used to collect data. Although some information was classified as the council secret, the researchers worked around these obstacles and meet all the objectives of the research.

## **Chapter 4: Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation**

### **4.1.Introduction**

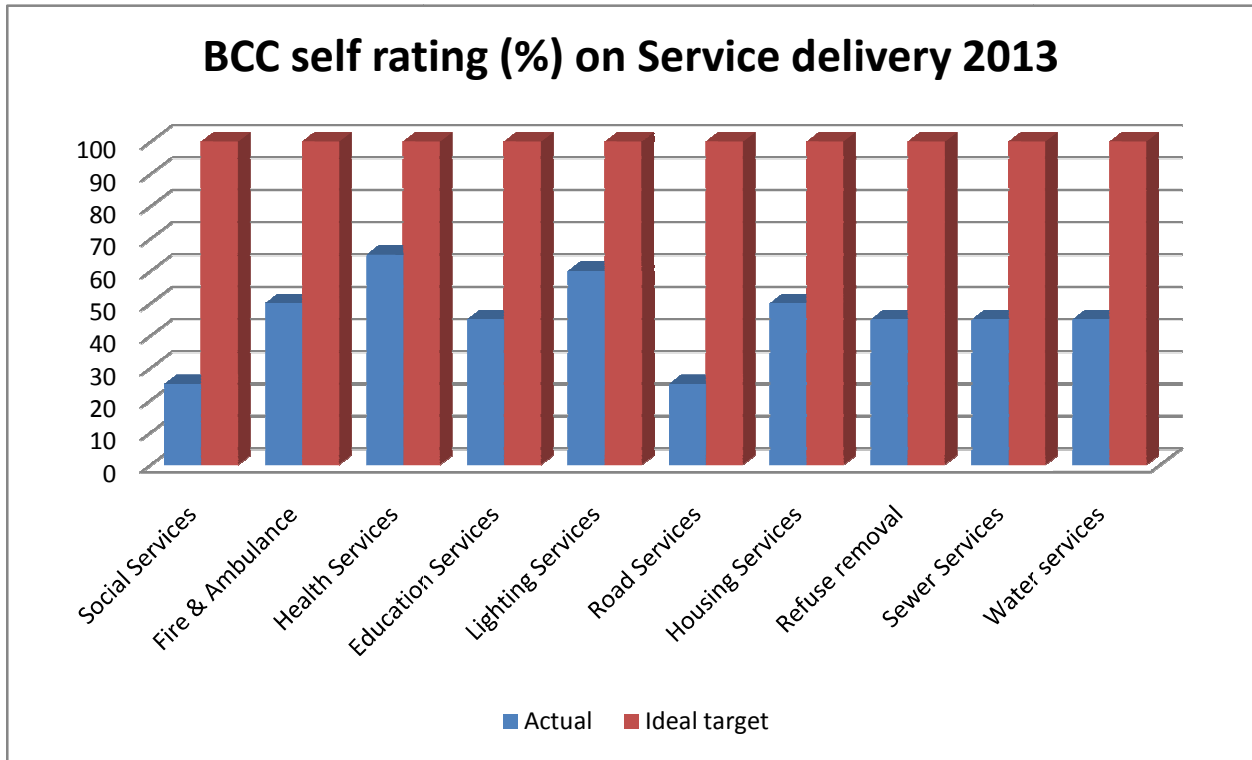
There was consensus among the different stakeholders and key informants that service delivery in local authorities had fallen below the acceptable standards. The Government of Zimbabwe Medium Term Plan acknowledges that had failed to meet the standards expected by communities and consumers this mainly due to the economic challenges that have bashed and bruised the councils and this has led to general fall of services provision in most if not all local authorities. It is under this background that the issues of accountability have also fallen below the required standards as such there has been a period of conflict and disengagement between councils and communities(BUPRA, BCC and Chatiza, 2014).

### **4.2.Rating of BCCService Delivery by Different stakeholders**

#### *4.2.1. Bulawayo City Council*

Bulawayo City Council service delivery self-rating,in 2013 councillors and council staff conducted a self-rating of Bulawayo City's service delivery using a scale of 1 to 10. The graph below shows that out of the 10 services that were rated, fire and Ambulance, Housing services, Health and Street Lighting were performing above fifty per cent whilst the other services were below half of the requires standard expected .

**Figure 2: BCC Service Delivery Self Rating**



#### **4.2.2 Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association (BUPRA)**

Bulawayo Progress Residents Association (2013) conducted an assessment of service delivery performance for Bulawayo and came up with ratings shown in Box 2.

**Box 1:**Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association

Bulawayo Progressive Association which was establish mainly to monitor BCC operations in provision of service delivery introduced an toll free line in 2012 for residents to monitor and report on service delivery and other local governance issues. From residents' perceptions and information they provided and other researches and surveys done by BUPRA assisted the organisation to come up with a rating of service delivery by BCC. In April 2013 BUPRA rated BCC service provision to be 3/10.

Source: BUPRA Newsletter ( May 2013)

Key:

1- 2 points = very bad

3 - 4 points = bad

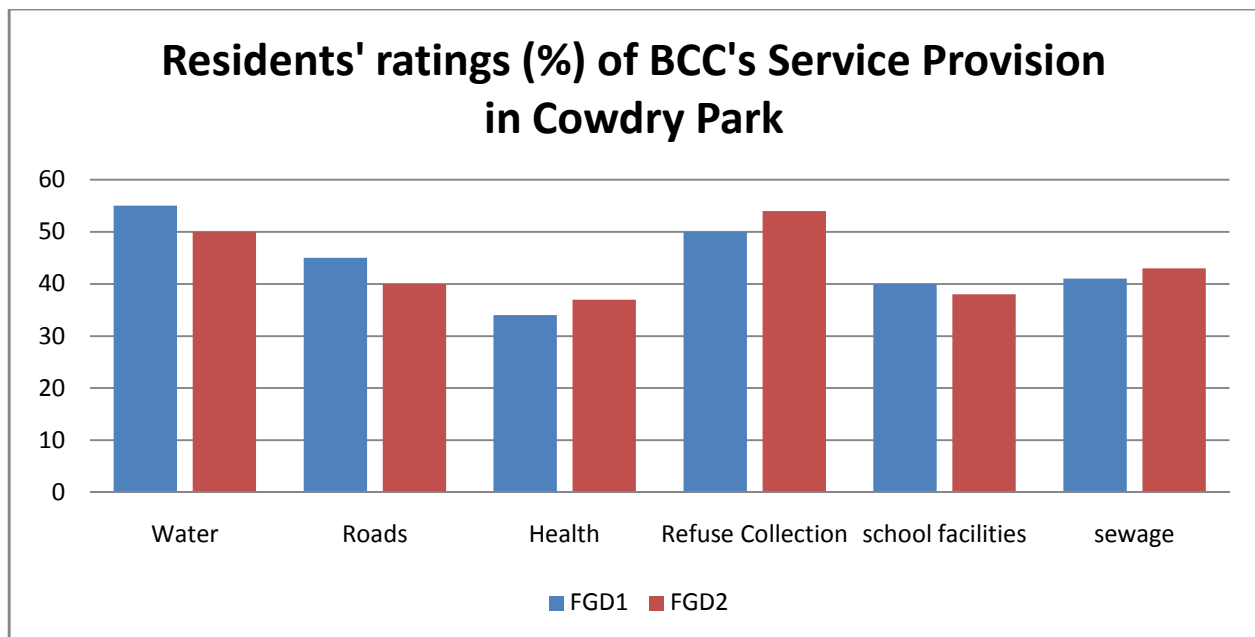
5 - 6 points = good

7 - 8 points = very good

9 - 10 points = excellent

#### 4.2.2. Cowdry Park FGD Ratings

Figure 3: Rating of 2 FGDs in Cowdry Park (2014)



Ratings from Cowdry Park Residents

#### ***4.2.3.1. WASH Services***

The focus under this section was on the community's access to water and sanitation facilities. Interviews with key informants and information from the focus group discussions and questionnaires revealed that access to water in the city is heavily challenged. Bulawayo City pointed out that they realised the challenge of water in the city and provided bowsers before they partnered with World Vision and UNCERF to provide boreholes and water purification chemical.

Cowdry Park Residents noted that in fifty percent of the houses there is no tapped water and most people rely on 4 boreholes that have been drilled in the community. Some people mostly women travel as far as 2 km to fetch water by buckets. Women in focus groups also highlighted that this has worsened the burden of unpaid care work for them as they spent a considerable time going and waiting on long queues to get water. The women who are engaged in Home based Care work also pointed out that lack of water is causing difficulties in their work and also pointed out that this situation is actually worse in child and elderly headed households. The women also highlighted that in areas where there are taps council does not stick to the schedule of water rationing.

Focus Group also pointed out that they council has a habit of sending bills which are with very high charges yet in most cases the water meters are not functional. Sanitation facilities in Cowdry Park was considered be inadequate as on third of the population in that residential area are using blare toilets. The residents complained about burst sewers which the local authority was taking too long to repair exposing residents to water borne diseases and infections. It was



however pointed out that World Vision and CRS has been assisting BCC and communities in providing material for repair and maintenance of sewers.

#### ***4.2.3.2. Health Services***

Bulawayo City Council has a total of 19 clinics with 4 offering maternity health services and only one infectious disease hospital. Key informants from BCC, the Public Relations Manager and 2 councillors for ward 15 and 28 also pointed out that, since the stopping of paying of maternity fees in July 2012 with the Government promising to reimburse council the maternity fees, councils have been suffering a lot because government has not honoured its promise. This has created a huge burden on council.

Health facilities in Bulawayo in general was reported to be inadequate for the communities in that there was lack of drug, and ambulance were not enough to meet demand. Shortage of health personnel was also highlighted by key informants in BCC who pointed that council had applied to recruit 600 nurses for all the clinics in Bulawayo city and the ministry had only approved recruitment of 30 nurses which far below the required number to meet the need in the communities.

Key informants pointed out that the provision of health services in Bulawayo is low because of the following reasons:

- Shortage of experienced health staff yet provision of health services is labour intensive due to recruitment freeze that was imposed on councils by Government
- Shortage of equipment and drugs in most of the council clinics though they usually get donations from organisations such as UNICEF.

Box 2: Cowdry Park FGDs Views on Health Service

- There is no clinic in CowdryPark; patients have to travel to Luveve or Entumbane which is at least 10 km away.
- After one travels that long distance sometimes they are not given medication and are referred to pharmacies
- The attitude of health personnel in those clinics is not good
- The city does not have enough ambulances to meet the demand from communities.
- Cost of transporting patient by Ambulances are high and since most people are unemployed due to de-industrialisation these services are not affordable
- Some people resort to put the sick in wheel burrows to take them to the nearest clinic, which is not easy for both the patient and the person pushing the wheel burrow.
- The situation is worse for elderly people and child headed who cannot afford ambulances and procuring medication from private medical service providers.

Source : Cowdry Park FGD session: April 2014

It should be noted however that FGD discussions pointed out that council have done well in provision of immunization, PPTCT, nutrition education and VCT services.

#### ***4.2.3.3. Education services***

Key informants from BCC highlighted that council had not been receiving government grants for development of school infrastructure in recent years. BCC is currently faced with a shortage of 15 primary schools, which has caused the available schools to be overcrowded. This is causing overstressing of the learning environment and compromising the quality of education provided in these councils schools. It was also pointed out that both central government and parents have a joint responsibility for providing funds for school development. Council were given the mandate to build and monitor school operations. This function of council was expected to be coupled with the provision of per capita grants from central government. Unfortunately, funds from government have only been able to cater for payment of teachers and School Development Committees and Associations pay administration staff like bursar and grounds maintenance staff.

The fact that most of residents in Bulawayo high-density suburbs are unemployed and some are employed in informal sector, which is also facing challenges, most parents are unable to pay school fees for their children. This has resulted in most schools not having enough funds for embarking on capital projects or rehabilitation and construction of classroom blocks as such this is causing overcrowding in most schools. During the FGD in Cowdry Park residents pointed out that there only 3 primary schools and one secondary school that was catering for children in this community. According to the residents some children around 6 years attending ECD classes have to travel 9 km to the nearest school. This according to the residents was a big challenge as it was causing a lot

of compromises on the way children acquire education. Unavailability and cost of tertiary education was another challenge that was cited by residents. They pointed out that the community had a lot of school leavers who had around 10 to 11 points at A' Level but parents could not afford taking them to tertiary colleges due to lack of funds. There were a lot of youth loitering in the streets and some were resorting engaging crime activities to fend for their lives.

#### ***4.2.3.4. Street lighting services***

It was reported and also observed that most of the streets light in Bulawayo are not functional. Different mobile network companies for mounting their transmitters now use the metallic poles that were originally used for tower lights. Unavailability of street lighting affects women and girls' safety mostly as they are more vulnerable to gender based violence. Women in the two FGDs indicated that that is the reason why they are unable to attend to meetings that will go into the evening. Women in the *HlalaniKuhle* community that is part of CowdryPark highlighted that there was absolutely no street lighting in their communities and this was a posing a lot of dangers , people getting mugged and some incidences of girls and women getting rapped were reported. People in this community mainly use firewood and a small percentage use solar and gas.

#### ***4.2.3.5. Road services***

The road network in Bulawayo city especially in the high-density suburbs is generally bad. As shown in table 3.

**Table 3:** Conditions of Roads in Bulawayo

Road “ grade type”	Proportion considered in bad state
Surfaced	46%
Gravel	79%
Earth	58%

Source: BCC 2013

Table 3 shows that the state of roads in Bulawayo is in a bad shape

The road that leads from city centre to Cowdry Park is in a very bad state with many potholes and residents reported that this is worse during the rainy season. Despite numerous attempts to bring this to the attention of council through the councillor council to rectify the situation has done a little. Some commuter omnibus operators charge extra fees because they claim that the road is damaging their vehicles so residents have to pay more if they want to be transported to part of Cowdry Park that is further. This further impact negatively on pregnant women, children and the elderly people, because they find it difficult to travel long distances when public transport is not available or if they can afford to pay extra charges that are demanded.

Council has also agreed that the state of the roads in the city are below the required standard and is finding difficult to cope with that because of lack of funds and equipment to work on the roads.

#### ***4.2.3.6. Housing Services***

Housing is fundamental human rights that should be fulfilled by the local authority to its residents. Access to quality housing facilities in most urban local authorities is considered to be below the required standards. There a lot of families who are living in overcrowding housing facilities because of the shortage and unaffordable housing facilities in the urban areas. The housing lists in all the urban local authorities are very long; some people have been on those lists for at least 15 years(Chatiza 2003).

Residents have pointed out that BCC has failed to supply the low-income housing services to the poor and now this has been left to private developers who charge prices, which are out of reach of most people in the city. Council indicated that in the period from 1983 - 1995 it was able to provide about 500 housing units per year. This was mainly because council was receiving fund from central government for programmes such as Public Sector Investment Programme and could also borrow funds from the open market for housing development. These programmes have since stopped and accessing funds from the open market has been very difficult BCC can only provide stands amounting to around 3000 which are in most cases not serviced. The most unfortunate part is that due to de-industrialisation and high levels of unemployment in Bulawayo most of the people mainly women and youths cannot afford buying these stands. Maintenance of council houses has also been very difficult for the local authority due to shortage of revenue.

Recreational facilities in the city are also in a deplorable state as they have been left unkempt; there are no playgrounds for children and the youths. There are 3 functional swimming pools out of 6 in Bulawayo Eastern suburbs. Swimming pools in Luveve, Mpopoma and Barbour

fields need serious refurbishment and council's financial standing currently cannot cater for that. The running costs for operating these swimming pools are very high due to high electricity traffic and cost of chemicals. It was estimated that council will need about \$500 000 to get these swimming pools running.

Discussions in the FGDs indicated that most of the parks that existed in the residential areas in high-density suburbs have turned into parking lots. It was also pointed out that there are no recreational facilities that exist in new suburbs like Cowdry Park. Some youths in FGDs pointed out that they had received assistance from Youth Development Trust a local NGO to lobby with for the establishment and rehabilitation of youth community centres and council had made provision in the 2014 BCC Budget for the rehabilitation of youth centres.

Bulawayo City Council is faced with enormous challenges in providing its citizens with adequate services like any other city in Zimbabwe. This has caused serious conflicts between council and residents and engagement and participation of residents in local governance has been very minimal. CSOs have come in to try to revive reengagement of citizens through employing social accountability tools which foster residents' participation in planning, implementation and evaluating BCC service delivery. The potential and influence of the social accountability tools in enhancing service delivery are outlined in the next section of this paper.

### **4.3. Form(s) and Pattern of Application of Social Accountability Tools in Service Delivery in Bulawayo**

Challenges and inadequacies in service provision in Bulawayo highlighted in the previous section have necessitated the application of social accountability tools in Cowdry Park. The objective of the use of accountability tools has been to seek explanation from council, feedback on service provision by residents and seeking ways to improve service delivery by Bulawayo city council. Several tools were used and these are outlined below.

#### ***4.3.1 Public meetings in Cowdry Park (Ward 28)***

Non-Governmental Organisations have been very instrumental in community mobilisation and discussions of community members on how they perceive services offered by BCC. The councillor of ward BUPRA and NYDT have been very active in working with the Cowdry Park community on issues of service delivery. These meetings have been taking place on Saturday afternoon to allow most people to attend including school children. The meetings have been taking place at the councillor offices. Public meetings, according to BUPRA and NYDT are aimed at raising awareness of community members on rights regarding service delivery issues and how they can effectively engage with BCC and make their demands known to council. The meetings are conducted in a very participatory way, and the organisers ensure that they draw participants from broader public so that diverse population is represented. The organisers of these public meetings highlighted that they collect information on the issues affecting different gender groups and have a plenary meeting to identify the major problems and how they community wish to solve the problems.



From those public meetings water was identified as a major problem in the community. Access to water from Cowdry Park is said to have increased from 25% to 55 present due to a series of engagements with community with council and other International Donors operating in the city. Council highlighted the fact that Bulawayo is located in a draught prone areas as such does not receive enough rain to cater for the needs of the urban population. This according to key informant from BCC necessitated council to embark on water rationing as a way of conserving water.

Communities in the city had been receiving water less than 5 hours per day and some community members from the focus group discussion highlighted that they could go for even 2 days without water. This was causing a lot of outbreaks of diseases, sanitation problems children having to carry water to school because the schools had no water facilities. There was no water in schools and clinics. Women were also complaining that the men constitute the majority of the borehole minders as such they do not take their job seriously because it is the women who suffer most due to shortage of water.

The school development committees of 3 schools in Cowdry Park also through their councillor and a local resident association have lobbied council to provide water bowsers in schools which are supplied 3 times per week to ensure that children have enough water when they are at schools.

Although there has been a lot of conflicts between council and residents facilitation of mutual understanding through cooperation and constructive engagements have resulted in residents

understanding the challenges faced by local authorities and the councils appreciating the plight of the residents. Residents felt that they had been consulted during the process through meetings held by council, NGOs and local residents associations. The previous councillor who was interviewed during the research also pointed out that he also lobbied for 5 youths who had acquired A level education to be employed as Research Assistance when World Vision conducted the baseline survey on the water situation in Cowdry Park.

A local NGO facilitated a number of meetings in Cowdry Park with residents to discuss the issue of water shortage and plan a way to engage council. Several meetings were conducted with council staff and council committees and the residents and the issue of water shortage was presented to the full council meeting by the local councillor. Council was challenged with financial resources that were inadequate to provide alternative sources and approached World Vision an INGO implanting WASH programme in the city. The World Vision field staff together with council conducted a series of meetings with the residents to understand their concerns and participate in decisions concerning their issues. World Vision finally drilled 5 boreholes in Cowdry Park that are now complementing efforts from ZINWA and the council as such the supply of water to the community has now improved .

It should however be pointed out that a Water Point Committee was appointed by the communities to manage the facility and trained on how on maintained of the borehole but these have been facing some challenges as they do not have enough tools to use when repairing the

boreholes .The major benefits that have been identified by the CSOs,council staffand community members in using this social accountability tool are the following:

- The public meetings which are held within the community do not consume a lot of resources as they are held at a central place and people do not have to look for money to get in town to the city hall or the organisers do not need funds to book the City hall.
- It gives a clear picture of people's concerns and priorities as people articulate their problems and challenges.
- By bringing communities together from different diverse background helps to foster community cohesion and unity among the residents.
- The service providers are also able to understand the issues coming from residents and are able to answer and clarify issues raised directly to residents rather than relying on councillor who are not fully conversant with operations of council.
- The City council helps the residents to prioritise with knowledge of available resources and possible solutions.
- Public meetings help to foster engagement between local authority and residents and allows for constructive dialogue

Evidence from this research showed that public meetings have yielded a lot of good results in terms of clarifying outstanding issues that existed between BCC and residents e.g. billing systems, challenges faced by council in providing services. This has actually gone a long way in resolving conflicts between council and residents.

The major challenge that have been identified in the Public meetings held in Cowdry Park is that council at first was reluctant to meet with communities until the residents association threatened to organise a strike against the council. It is also important to note that Cowdry Park is a very big community as it now incorporates people that were resettled by government under *HlalaniKuhle project*. It is therefore to hold such a big meeting for the whole community and CSOs now have to have smaller inter ward meetings which are proving to be costly and time consuming. There is also the problem of some community members who want to politicise issues and wants to be domineering during the meetings this causes some people to shy away and not participate effectively.

**Box3:Participation of Cowdry Park Residents in Public Meetings**

From the information assessed from the questionnaires and focus group discussions 55% of the responded acknowledged that they participate effectively in public meetings organised in Cowdry Park. Their reasons for participation was that it gives them space to talk and deliberate on issues of service delivery such as water shortage, burst water pipes and bad roads. Council has to hear and know what residents think about their performance. One of the residents said that he enjoys interrogating council staff who are just collecting their money without providing services. The other respondents said they don't participate because they have lost confidence in their council which is failing to provide services and they felt that it is waste of time to attend those meetings.

**4.3.2 Citizen Report Card**

Habakkuk Trust, a local NGO operating in Bulawayo is also implementing some programmes on Participatory Democracy in 5 high density suburbs and Cowdry Park happens to be one of the

project areas. The goal of the project is to capacitate communities to demand accountability from local government. Ward Action Committees have been established in the communities and these facilitate community meetings to identify the needs and priorities and they also conduct community monitoring of the quality and access of services to communities.

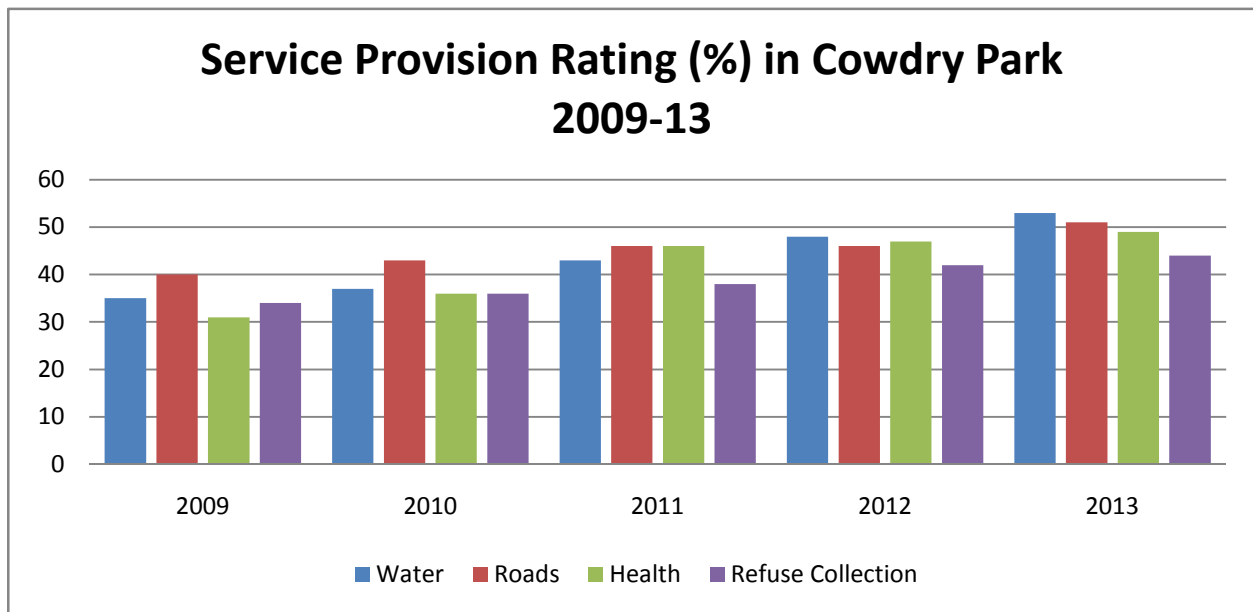
It has been learnt from the interviews that were conducted the Senior Programme Officer that the Habakkuk Trust Community Action Teams have been empowered through capacity building trainings on the Local Government System in Zimbabwe this has enabled them to understand how Bulawayo City Council function, its mandate and obligation in relation to service provision. The capacity building has also targeted local leaders e.g. councillor and women and youth leaders and representative of different groups in Ward 28 as well. The main objective of such capacity building programmes is to equip the community representative with skills so that they can perform their monitoring role well and come up relevant and appropriate mechanism to engage with their local authority.

In monitoring and assessing the quality of service delivery in Cowdry Park the Community Action Teams have been using a social accountability tool called Citizen Report Card. This tool according to the Cowdry Park Action Team Chairperson has been instrumental in obtaining and soliciting information from residents on the quality and performance of council in service provision.

The Action team have focus group discussions with different interest groups in the ward e.g women vendors at the market, youths, church representatives, and community at large. Since the

inception of the project in 2009 to 2013 Community Action has conducted 4 surveys of the following service: refuse removal, water, health and road services. This information has been utilised by Habakkuk and other CSOs to lobby for improved provision of services in Bulawayo.

Figure 3: Cowdry Park Citizen Report Card Service Rating



As pointed out by Pekkonen(2010), the use of Community Report Cards has been to track changes in service provision in Cowdry Park by residents and other CSOs. The ratings have been made been published in various publications in the city to show the citizens' feedback this has in a way forced BCC to look at ways to improve service delivery. Bulawayo City has now come with the Citizens' Charter, which outlines the standards of public services, which the public should expect to get from the council. As pointed out by the key informant from BCC, has set up its own performance standard, which forces them to make concerted efforts to provide services

and be responsive to needs of its consumers though it is such a toll order under the current economy.

Another advantage that has been cited by respondents in the focus group discussion concerning the use of Community Report Cards is enhanced awareness raising and capacity building on service delivery quality. This is seen in the increase of budget allocations on service delivery in BCC budgets and Bulawayo City Council has been cited as one of the local authorities that are well managed maintaining the 30:70 ratio of administration cost to service delivery costs.

After the ratings were publicised in the various publications in 2013 BCC Public Relations Department called a meeting with various stakeholders in the city including CBOs to discuss challenges faced by council in meeting its obligations in service delivery. Community members in the 2 focus groups have attributed the improved responsiveness of council when it comes to repairing sewer pipes and improvements in refuse collection has been as a result of publication of poor performance of council.

It was highlighted during the research by some informants that the major challenge for using this tool is that it requires qualified people to train on how to do the assessment and to simplify the trainings so that they become use friendly to community platforms. A limitation of this accountability tool was that communities can quality and performance of service provider but they do not have mechanisms and capacity to force BCC to improve. The council also pointed out that it was not they were not taking the community ratings seriously but they had financial limitation to tackle the issues that were being highlighted by the communities but were making efforts to find how best they could solve the problems faced by communities.

The assessment also rate the level of responsiveness and transparency of Bulawayo City Council in providing information on different sectors of service provision. The project pointed out that the general upward trend was as a result of opening spaces for dialogue after the dollarized of the economy as council went on a campaign and dialoguing with communities in a bid to encourage them to pay service charges. The situation also improved due to the ability of council to borrow from the open market and more engagement with International Organisations like UNICEF , World Vision and Oxfam, Actionaid just to name a few.

#### ***4.3.3 Participatory Budgeting in Bulawayo City Council***

SCOs, local government specialists and BCC key informants agreed in principle that Participatory Budgeting is the surest way of ensuring citizens involvement in deciding allocation of public resources as it tries to ensure that public resources are utilised according to the priorities of the communities.

Participatory budget requires that residents and their networks participate directly in the allocation of local authority budget. This is believed that citizens will be able to get knowledge on financial resources available, participation in the need prioritization collectively and allocating resources in a transparent and participatory way. Participatory budget is supposed to enhance communities' confidence and trust in their local authority. The Urban Council Act provides for the council to make budget consultations before finalisation of council budget before it is submitted to the Ministry of Local Government for approval.



Response from residents on how Participatory Budgeting is implemented in Bulawayo revealed that residents are not furnished with this information on time so that they can be involved in priority setting. It was also argued that the residents do not have the capacity to fully critically analyse and engage council officials on the budget. More than 65% of the respondents pointed out that budget information and consultation is very low. It was also pointed out the consultative meetings were not adequately publicised as council only distributed fliers on major service centres and most people were not aware of when the consultations were done. It was also pointed out by some residents in the FGDs the time the budget consultations was not conducive for them ie in the evening around 5:30pm. This according to the discussions in the FGD militates against women participation as most women who avoid travelling back to their homes at night as most of the streets lights are not functional and there is no street lighting in *HlalaniKuhle* community. Residents pointed out that budget consultative meeting for 2014 was only done once in the whole of Cowdry Park and this was definitely proved to be insufficient for the community to deliberate on the issues. After that meeting after 6 months the budget was approved by the minister, this according to the residents was not acceptable because the council never came to showed the final council budget to see if their concerns were been incorporated before it was submitted to the Minister for approval.

One of the councillor interviewed also pointed that because of the vastness of the wards it is difficult if not impossible for council and their respective councillors to make effective consultation to all members of their wards. This is made worse by the fact that council does not have sufficient resources both human and financial to make the required consultations. The

councillor of ward 28 i.e. Cowdry Park highlighted that fact that Cowdry Park should be looked at as 2 wards combined together to make one, thus it includes *HlalaniKuhle* community as well. The councillor pointed out that it is difficult to reach out to all the community members during these budget consultations. Most of the residents almost 65% according to Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association do not attend the consultation meetings because they feel that their concerns are not taken seriously by council. Residents in FGDs cited that the council is not interested in incorporating views from them and consultations are just done for the sake of fulfilling the requirements from the Ministry. This according to the views of the residents was the reason why residents were reluctant to pay for the services because they were never participated in setting the tariffs for service charges.

One of the hand one of the interviewed local government specialist pointed out that most of the councillors did not have enough knowledge on the budgetary process as they had not been sufficiently inducted and trained on these process. This was presenting a lot of challenges for the councillors to conduct effective budget consultation in their respective wards. It can be thus be concluded that Participatory Budgeting was not effectively implemented in Bulawayo as there was no active participation of residents in priority setting, deciding the allocations and monitoring of budget was not therefore not possible. Citizens lack enough information of councils' available resources and the criteria of how the resources are allocated and council's spending patterns. This has caused many conflicts and allegations of corruption on Bulawayo City Council because the residents view lack of consultations by the council as a sign of hiding information to residents.

#### ***4.3.4 Bulawayo City Council Citizen Charter***

The BCC Public Relations Manager highlighted that the council has also made some initiatives that promote social accountability to residents and stakeholders in service delivery. She pointed out that The Citizen's Charter, as a New Public Management strategy which aims at providing quality services within a particular timeframe. BCC introduced the Citizen's Charter with the objective of enhancing the excellence of service provision which is responsive, transparent and accountable. BCC believes that this initiative has given citizens the ability to scrutinize service delivery provision and performance of council against the prescribed standards. The BCC Citizen's Charters includes the following elements :

- ✓ measurable standards for service delivery
- ✓ service delivery timeframe
- ✓ grievance and complaint procedures
- ✓ giving all citizens equal access to services

These are the parameters that have been set by BCC and citizens are therefore supposed to demand accountability from council as to why service delivery is not as what is prescribed in the service charter. The Citizen's Charter articulates the commitment of Bulawayo City Council towards citizens through clearly specified standards because of pressure to deliver the quality services in a responsive, transparent and accountable manner. The BCC Citizens' Charter also specifies entitlements and legally protects the basic rights and freedoms of all citizens, can arm the poor with vital information that they can use to demand their rights and exact accountability from government. The Citizens' Charter is a proactive manner of matching

the services of a public agency with the needs of its citizens. Thus, the Citizen's Charter at the local level in Zimbabwe is an important tool of good governance.

Some local government specialist have also pointed out that the move by BCC establishing the Citizen Charter has provided information which spells out roles and responsibility of council . The laid out procedures for raising complains and grievances and redress are also beneficial to Residents Associations who have engaged council on non-rehabilitation of roads, church stands which were allocated to one church alone in the whole of Cowdry Park. This provides space for community and their representatives and networks to engage with council when and if the standards are not meeting the required and stipulated standards. These engagements have facilitated rehabilitation of roads in Cowdry Park and redistribution of church stands to other churches that are in ward.

Residents however pointed out that there is need for BCC to have the Citizen's Charter translated into the vernacular or local languages and have ward meetings to discuss its contents with the residents. This according to the residents will enhance their understanding of the Citizens Charter so that they can effectively utilise the accountability tool.

Residents and their representatives also pointed out that BCC has failed to live up to the prescribed standards in service delivery because service provision is below the set standards. BUPRA, BURA and Habakkuk Trust highlighted that Community Score Cards and Social Audits have revealed that service delivery in most areas in Bulawayo were below standard set in

the Service Charter and as such were pushing BCC to improve service delivery as per the commitment in the Charter.

Responding to this, the BCC Public Relations Officer also agreed with issues raised by residents and their representative citing major challenges such as lack of financial, human and material resources that the council is facing which is hampering service delivery in the city.

#### Bulawayo City Council Call Centre

It was also found out during the field work that BCC established a Customer Service Call Centre in November 2012 in a bid to enhance council's interaction with the residents and becoming more responsive to the request from the communities. Through the call centre council has been able to get reports on sewer burst and water pipe burst and leakages from communities that include Cowdry Park.

This Bulawayo Call centre is part of the Bulawayo Water and Sanitation Emergency Response Project whose main objective is reducing the threat of water borne diseases vulnerability. This can be done through improved sewage management, water supply and empowering the City to be responsive to communities when the report cases of burst and leakages.

It is also important to note that this has been made possible by cooperation and partnerships between council and other international organisations such as AusAid, World Vision, European Union and SIDA. The international Non-Governmental Organisations were instrumental in building capacity of technical department with skills and expertise for responding to water and sewer faults and equipment e.g. jetting machines for sewer rehabilitation.

BCC and residents agree that since the establishment of the call centre in 2012 the responds of department of Public Works has improved by 50% though there is also need to do more publicity of the availability of that service so that more residents are aware of that service.

Bulawayo City Council with the support of UN-HABITAT has introduced Community Based Planning to enhance participation of community members especially women and youths in development process within the city. This has been implemented through the formation and establishment of Ward Development Committees in high density suburbs like Cowdry Park. BCC worked together with CSOs like Habakkuk, National Youth Development Trust and Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association.

The following were identified as the main benefits of Community Based Planning in Bulawayo:

- Improvement of communication and public engagement between council and stakeholders especially residents.
- Enhanced responsiveness of council to demands from residents.
- Transparency and accountability of BCC enhanced
- Improved relations between residents and council

Community Based Planning assisted the youth councillor facilitated by NYDT have lobbied and advocate for the rehabilitation of youth recreation facilities in the high density suburbs. BCC have responded to this need by allocated some funds for rehabilitation of recreation facilities in Cowdry Park and other high density suburbs in the 2014 budget. FGDs have also revealed that the revealed that Community based Planning where they were great interactions between local

authority and residents have exposed several challenges that council is facing that are hampering service delivery. Residents mentioned that they know that the Minister of Local Government is exerting a lot of control over local authorities which includes late approval of budget and borrowing powers. During the FGDs the residents and councillor were ready to point out that 2013 Bulawayo City Council budget was approved by the Minister 6 months after submission and that meant that council could not change the tariffs that had been proposed in the budget causing a lot of challenges in the delivery of services in the city.

#### **4.4. Summary of Social Accountability Tools in Bulawayo**

Community groups that have been involved in the use of social accountability tool in Bulawayo have been empowered with knowledge of how the council functions and community rights as regards service delivery. Mobilisation of community members by several CSOs working in the city has stimulated residents to start participating in meetings that discuss service delivery. Although attendance to meetings has not reached the required standard there is a general improved in numbers that are now participating in these meetings.

Use of Citizens Reporting and Community Score Cards have empowered community members to diagnose service delivery problems such as access, poor quality of service, insufficiency, low pressure, lack of accountability , corruption and poor billing process. The use of such social accountability tools have encouraged community to use their social capital in formulating and organising themselves into CBOs that monitor service delivery and engage with BCC in demanding provision of better services. Community Action groups, Youth councillors,

Community lobby groups are community platforms that are spearheading lobbying and advocacy strategies for improved service provision at the ward level.

Community awareness on their role as citizens to monitor local authority practices has to some extent opened up spaces for democratic governance. Information provided to the community members allows them to ask the service providers questions about service quality, lack of accountability and corruption. The inclusion of CSOs in engaging communities in participatory budgeting has also led to the recognition of Civil Society Organisations as an important stakeholder in the governance of local authority. NANGO, Habbakuk, Residents Association, the Women Trust and Zimbabwe Women Resources Network have been very active in using participatory budgeting processes as a channel for community members to voice their preferences and priorities and monitor local authority's public funds expenditure. Though it has had considerable challenges participatory budgeting has to some extent enhanced transparency and accountability in local authority decision making minimising corruption and scope of clientelistic practices.

NANGO office in Bulawayo indicated that they were hosting Budget Consultative and Feedback Community Meetings in high density suburbs of Bulawayo including Cowdry Park. NANGO mobilises citizens in these communities and facilitates holding of pre-budget and post budget consultative meeting with the objective of empowering the marginalised groups like women and youths children and women.



It is also important to note that NANGO organises Provincial Budget Consultative meeting with all active stakeholders at the provincial level to analyse budgets and public expenditure. This improves the elements of good governance such as accountability, transparency, inclusiveness which also incorporate the concept of public participation. One of the major successes of the use of social accountability tools in Bulawayo has been the existence of positive constructive engagement between service providers and the consumers of services. This has resulting in minimising conflicts and local authority and its residents thus improvements on transparency and accountability in the governance of the local authority.

#### **4.5. Factors that have affected influence of social accountability tools in Bulawayo**

Evidence from interviews and Focus Group Discussions pointed out that social accountability can be instrumental at enhancing service delivery if they emphasise on civic engagement and when communities are aware of the importance and meaning of the concept.

Where the local authority invested efforts in explain challenges they are facing in provision of services to the communities, community members have been more willing to work with the service providers to provide alternative solutions. This can be evidenced by willingness of community members to work with the council on Clean up Campaigns, unblocking drainage systems and council and other stakeholders providing equipment.

There have been considerable successes in the implementation of social accountability tools in enhancing service delivery in Bulawayo through promotion of access to information and public participation; there have been also some challenges which have presented challenges to social

accountability. The following paragraphs highlight factors that have posed some limitation in social accountability processes.

#### ***4.5.1 The limitations of councillors to perform oversight role***

The full council is legal organ for decision making in a local authority and council staff is responsible for implementing decisions made in the council. Full council meet on quarterly basis and is supported by a committees which are responsible for functions such as finance, public works, social service just to mention a few. Councillors seat in these committees as members and are head of these committees and all issues are deliberated in the council committees first before they are presented in the full council. It has been pointed out by councillors and other local government experts that were interviewed that councillors are given issues to discuss in the meetings just before the meeting or during the meeting. This limit the councillors' ability to read and understand the issues before they are discussions hence councillors cannot engage meaningfully during council deliberations. This also presents a challenge when councillors have to feedback to the communities.

The councillors limited capacity in terms of educational qualifications and local government experience to monitor and enforce local authority officials' accountability. One of the BCC officials reported that councillors failed to provide strategic direction during meetings as the wasted a lot of time on deciding agenda items and did not leave enough time to deal with other strategic issues with important influence on the governance of the council.

This research also revealed that councillors did not have the knowledge, experience to monitor whether decisions made in full council meetings were implemented or not. This limitation is a serious challenge for the executive to hold the council administration accountable, thus the accountability of council officials to councillors is very weak.

It was also pointed out by one of the councillors that the council officials tend to be very domineering in discussions on planning and implementation of council projects and programmes. This was due to the fact that they have more knowledge than the councillors, as such councillors will not be able to input and even present the priorities of their respective communities in these meetings.

It was also reported by some of the stakeholders that despite councillors having limited capacities as pointed above some of them were involved in corruption and mal practises and were focusing on enriching their pockets. Such councillors were not in council to oversee operation of council administration on behalf of their communities and as such were not even concerned whether the officials were accountable or not. Councillor like that would also not risk pointing fingers at inefficient officials as they were afraid that the official would expose and reveal their corrupt practices.

Council staff also point out that they do not have resources to take the information to the councillors in their respective wards well before the meetings. Also linked to the above is the fact that most councillors have challenges in understanding technical issues like interpretation of budgets and financial reports for them to influence decisions. The problem of accessing and interpretation of information by councillors present serious challenges for councillors in

discharging the oversight role in council operations. This also limits also their ability to engage with their communities and elaborate or give feedback to their constituencies. This problem has made worse by the fact that central government does not have resources for effective induction and training of councillors when they are sworn into office. To make it worse the Minister of Local Government does not allow CSOs train and capacity build councillors without first getting approval from the Ministry.

#### ***4.5.2 Problems in transparency access to information***

It was also pointed out that council minutes are not accessible to members of the public and they are purchased if one needs them. Some residents association members highlighted that it was very difficult for them to obtain the minutes from council. This means that residents have to rely on feedback meetings by the councillors which do not take place regularly as provided for by the Urban Councils Act. The residents have limited access to information and knowledge of what transpires in the council hence cannot effectively demand accountability from the council. Information should be readily available to citizens to enable them to monitor revenue sources and usage and how decisions are arrived at and how they respond to the needs of the communities.

#### ***4.5.3 Poverty levels among communities***

Because of high levels of unemployment and poverty in Bulawayo most people are preoccupied with finding ways to fend for their lives this makes most of the people not finding time to take part in social accountability processes. There also high levels of apathy and mistrust of council to the extent that people do not see the value of investing their time in engaging with council. Some

of the people in the FGDs highlighted that council was not responsive to the community needs hence it was a sheer waste of time to participate in efforts to demand accountability from the local authority.

#### ***4.5.4 Lack of awareness of citizen's rights***

Decentralisation presents opportunities to all citizens to participate in issues that affect their lives and communities. Citizens in any democratic system are entitled to participate and demand accountability from the service providers. Discussions in FGDs and other responses from the questionnaires revealed that a large proportion of the sampled population were not aware the functions of the local authority and how they can effectively engage with the council. It was also noted that most of the people are not aware of their rights as citizens hence cannot confidently engage with councillor demand accountability from the council.

#### ***4.5.5 Limited technical capacity among the residents***

Residents interviewed also highlighted that that had no skills and capacity in advocacy, lobbying analysis and interpretation of council budget, understanding of borrowing powers application system, and information in council financial reports. Some of the residents and their representative alluded to the fact that they had received some capacity building from several CSOs on some other skills but it was not adequate enough for them to play their role effectively. This presents serious limitations in the way residents demand accountability from council.

#### ***4.5.6 Inability of residents to coordinate and develop a common agenda***

Citizens can be in better position to demand accountability from council when they are well coordinated and are united in the way they operate. It has been observed that there are such huge division among the residents on how to engage council and as such some people interviewed pointed out that council take advantage of these divisions among residents and choose what issues to respond or not to respond to depending on what faction is presenting the demands.

#### ***4.5.7 Fragmented efforts and competition among the CSOs***

There a lot of CSOs operating in Bulawayo that claim to be assisting right holders with capacity and skills building for demanding accountability from local authority. It should be pointed out that these CSOs are competing for operating space, are divided some along political lines. Important to note is that there are more than 3 Residents Associations in Bulawayo and they do not implement coordinated programmes and regards each other as rivals. There is a lot of double dipping of programmes and this is actually causing fatigue among residents who feel that the local NGOs are not really concerned about the well-being of the communities. The local NGOs are now viewed by residents as way by which individuals use information they get from communities for fund raising for personal gains not to implement programmes that enhance the well-being of the communities.

Evidence from interviews also pointed out that many local NGOs working in the communities are preoccupied by satisfying conditions of their donors rather that regarding themselves as accountable to the poor and marginalised people in the communities they work. It was also highlighted that some of the local NGOs have limited skills on how to effectively engage council

or facilitate community engagement and enhance participation and accountability. This was also presenting challenges as to how to effectively capacitate communities in social accountability tools usage.

#### ***4.5.8. Access to information challenges for CSOs***

NGOs need updated information to carry out effective analysis of local authority policies and budget but council is reported to be reluctant in providing such information. Evidence from several CSOs interviewed points to the fact that the Access to information and Protection of Privacy Act is hindering free access to revenue and expenditure in local authorities. This is coupled with suspicions that exist between local authority and the local NGOs.

Some of the interviewed local NGOs highlighted that the political environment was presenting challenges for the operating space which limit public engagement in communities. The use of the POSA and IPA by police was a major hindrance for CSOs to mobilise community members and gather them to discuss issues of service delivery and build capacity in social accountability processes as it was very difficult to get clearance letters from police to have public meetings.

#### ***4.5.9 Control of local media by government***

Local media plays an important role educating citizens about their rights, functions of local government and publicising people's opinion about service delivery and giving council opportunities to respond to community's queries. Communities and their stakeholders have not been able to effectively use the media especially radio to discuss publicly about service delivery and accountability of both central and local government. This also because media especially radio and television is tightly control by government and use of community radios has been

banned by the Minister of information. Some NGO staff has been arrested for use of these community radios which were also confiscated by police. Use of community radios presented opportunities to broaden and enlarge civic engagement in service delivery issues, and monitoring and tracking budgetary processes and performance of local government staff. CSOs working on enhancing social accountability have had to rely on their own publication which has a limited readership hence limiting dissemination of important information to communities.

#### ***4.5.10 Lack of enforcement of civic engagement legal frameworks***

Provision provided for in the legal framework for participation and civic engagements have not been enforced or followed in councils. There is generally low engagement of citizens by council, feedback meetings with residents to solicit their views and incorporate them in council decisions are not happening as they should. This has also limited participation of residents in budget consultations. One of the councillors interviewed highlighted that his ward was very huge such that he could not afford to visit all the parts of the ward to conduct feedback meetings and budget consultations. This means that those community members who are not consulted are left out and cannot participate in local governance.

#### ***4.5.11 Lack of Financial Resources***

Inadequate financial resources is a serious challenge that threatens the sustainability of social accountability initiatives. Social Accountability tools such as budget monitoring and expenditure tracking are very costly.



This has also proved to be the same challenge being faced by the local authority when they need to conduct community consultative budget and other public meetings in the communities. The responsiveness of council is also faced with a serious challenge as the council cannot provide adequate to residents. Interviews conducted during the research revealed that BCC has failed to embark on capital project over the last 4 years because of high interest rates offered at the open market and financial institutions have been reluctant to offer long term loan facilities to the local authority. This has resulted in deterioration and collapsing of services with council taking approximately a month instead of 7 days to repair potholes on main roads in the city .

One of the key informant in BCC highlighted that council is not only faces with inadequate funds for service delivery but also serious shortages of skilled human resources which has resulted in most of technical departments operating below the required standards .

**Table4:** Staff shortage in BCC

Services	Available staff	Required number
Engineers	12	30
Town Planners	5	11
Land Surveyors	3	5
Health personnel	628	1128
Fire and ambulance staff	38	51
Supporting staff	218	318

Equipment shortages are also reasons for inadequate service delivery in the city. Table 4 shows the number of available equipment versus the required amounts.

**Table5:Equipment Shortages in BCC**

Equipment	Available	Required
Ambulances	14	30
Water tenders	3	8
Refuse Trucks	11	21

Source: The Insider 4 February 2013

Inadequate funds in local authorities has caused a lot of challenges where council cannot pay for its workers competitive salaries which results in low morale among staff members causing them not to commit to serving communities. When communities feel that they are not adequately served they stop paying service charges which results in no funds for service delivery and administration costs and the cycles goes on and on like that.

The local authority's financial standing was worsened by dropping of revenue collection since the Minister I. Chombo's directive to councils to write off debts owed by ratepayer as at June 2013. BCC revenue collection went down from USD6.9million to USD 2, 4 million a move that has been considered as devastating by the local authority.

#### ***4.5.12 Attitude of Council staff towards social accountability***

Some residents and local CSOs pointed out that the attitudes of local government staff on social accountability as witch hunting exercise hence they are not really committed to the processes of

social accountability. Some discussions in the FGDs pointed out that council staff regards civic engagement as time consuming and expensive so did not regard it with the level of importance it deserves. It seems that there is a general lack or limited appreciation and awareness of council staff on the importance of participatory democracy and good governance.

Lack of cooperation from local authority staff coupled with outright corruption of staff and governance weaknesses have also limited the potential and influence of social accountability tools in enhancing service delivery in BCC.

In conclusion as highlighted by one of the Local Government Expert Dr Chatiza , Bulawayo like many other councils in Zimbabwe are faced with 3 main limitations that are narrated in the paragraphs that follow.

- Accountability deficit where governments, both central and local, do not pay attention to accountability issues as means of satisfying the needs and priorities of its citizens.
- Decision making deficit whereby policy makers do not make concerted efforts to ensure that citizens are involved and participate effectively in policy making processes. Citizens are just informed of the policies in local government without them having been active players and contributors or even being consulted in the policy formulation processes.
- Democratic deficit, there is limited democratic accountability and public control over the decision making cycle. This contributes to both accountability and decision making deficit in local government as a system.

## **Chapter Summary**

The research has managed to reveal that different stakeholders and BCC are in agreement that service delivery is not attained satisfactory levels; this is evident from the ratings that are shown in this chapter. Application of Social accountability in Cowdry Park has made some considerable achievements in raising awareness on local government function and their rights as well and empowering them to demand accountability from the local authority. This has led to constructive engagements between council and its citizens and has to large extent improved service delivery in Cowdry Park. Several challenges have however influenced the potential and success of implementation of social accountability and a lot of key lessons have been drawn from this study which has led to the formulation of the proposed recommendations as outlined in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 5: Lessons Learnt, Recommendations and Conclusion**

### **5.1. Introduction**

Several issues have emerged from this study. The previous chapter identified challenges that have influenced and limited the success of social accountability in enhancing service delivery. It is therefore important that the conclusion of this study also highlights lessons that have been learnt from the research findings and recommendations that could be put forward to ensure that social accountability tools effectiveness in improving service delivery and good local governance.

### **5.2. Lessons Learnt**

It has been learnt from the research that for social accountability tools to be effective and influential to local government service delivery the critical factors that need to be considered. These factors are very important for success designing and implementation of social accountability. Practitioners implementing social accountability have to consider the following factors:

#### ***5.2.1. Operating and Political Context***

Social accountability tools are likely to succeed in a democratic pluralistic system which guarantees access to freedom of expression, freedom of association and access to information. A political system which upholds civil rights and political transparency is necessary for the effectiveness of social accountability. In closed and shrinking operating space like Zimbabwe there is need to undertake deep analysis of the environment and conduct risk matrix to come up with appropriate mechanisms to address the barriers that exist and maximise on the few

opportunities that are available. The attitude and perception of local government towards social accountability determines point of entry and framework of social accountability. In cases where local authorities are suspicious and not receptive it is usually better to start with less confrontational approaches like the Participatory Budgeting. In a more open system where council is open to public scrutiny social audits can be easily conducted. It has been learnt that in Zimbabwe it is very difficult to embark on social accountability just before elections as this can be taken as means to decampaining some of the candidates and can end up with undesirable results.

#### ***5.2.2. Accessibility of information***

Reliability and availability of information from public institutions like local authority budgets and council minutes is a major determinant for the success of social accountability tools. The research has also revealed that there is need for advocacy for legislation addressing freedom and access to public information and build capacity for local authority for information management systems that ensures that relevant data is easily accessible to the members of the public and other stakeholders.

#### ***5.2.3. Local Authorities capacity for enhancing social accountability***

The effectiveness and capacity for local authorities to understand and implement social accountability is also very important for its success. This is also linked to the how vibrant is the local authority in the current situation in the local government in Zimbabwe most of the local authorities are facing a lot of challenges and as such are finding it very difficult to be responsive to demands from the public. There is therefore need for restoration of the capacity of local

authorities so that they are effectively equipped and empowered to respond to the needs of communities.

#### ***5.2.4. Council - civil society relations***

Effective and construction engagement between local authorities and CSOs is also very necessary for the social accountability success. It has been evident that in cases where citizens, councillors and council administration interactions social accountability has been able to yield very good results. These engagement does not necessarily mean that there is trust or conflict do not exist but they assist in building and facilitating dialogue among the parties for finding solutions that enhance service delivery.

#### ***5.2.5. Media***

Media plays an important role in informing citizens about operations of council, educating them on their role and rights as citizens and exposing issues of corruption and maladministration in councils. It also helps the local authorities to respond to issues raised by the citizens and also publicising public meetings and other important announcement of service delivery. The availability of independent media is important for the success of social accountability in any society this one of the major challenges in Zimbabwe where media is controlled and the use of community radio has been banned.

#### ***5.2.6. Importance of coordinated community networks***

Citizens are better off demanding accountability engaging with the local authorities through their representative platforms rather than as individuals. There is need for communities to be empowered and strengthened on coalition building capacities. It has been learnt from the research that council easily dismiss individual requests and demand but when communities organise themselves and amplify their voice in demanding accountability local authority has no option but to respond to the demands of the collective group.

#### ***5.2.7. Building capacity of the demand and supply side***

Another important factor to be noted that there is still need to capacity build communities and council on the importance of social accountability especially on issues of transparency and participation. Without these skills social accountability is unlikely to succeed. It is important that both the supply and demand side are strengthened them to effectively perform their roles.

#### ***5.2.8. Need for Gender based Accountability***

It has been evident from the research that there is no deliberate move by council to ensure that there is provision of gender sensitive service. Council needs to be equally accountable to men and women for gender sensitive service delivery.

#### ***5.2.9. Social accountability as a means of improving performance not finding fault***

It has also been learnt that social accountability should not be used as fault finding mechanisms against council but as a way of giving feedback with the objective of improving performance of



council in the service delivery system. This strengthens relations between council and citizens and encourages constructive engagements.

#### ***5.2.10. Institutionalisation***

It has been learnt that ad hoc initiatives of social accountability have been able to achieve considerable successes but for greater impact and sustainability it would be necessary for social accountability tools to be institutionalised systematically in central, local government and CSOs operations. There is therefore need for legal institutionalising participatory mechanisms, transparency and access to information in all levels of the local government systems as a means for achieving long lasting effectiveness and impact and sustainability.

### **5.3. Opportunities presented by the New Constitution for application of Social Accountability in Local Government.**

Local government experts like Chatiza, Bhoroma, Mushamba and other officials from stakeholder institutions who were interviewed during this study outlined that it was important to highlight the opportunities offered by the New Constitution in Zimbabwe. The New Constitution presents opportunities for public participation and increased access to information to public, which empowers the citizens to demand accountability from local authorities and provincial councils.

The New Constitution of Zimbabwe provides vast array of opportunities for successful implementation and application of social accountability tools to enhance service delivery in local government. The preamble of the constitution points out the ‘...the need to entrench democracy, good, transparent and accountable governance...commitment to upholding and defending human rights and freedoms’ (Government of Zimbabwe 2013:19). It actually mandates government to

uphold the elements of good governance, thus democratic political system respect of people's rights to participate in affairs that affect their lives . Chapter 14 which specifically focuses on local government local government, provision for the bill of rights and how public institutions like local authorities are supposed to provide a mechanism for increased citizen participation in governance structures and public institution. Section 58 of the constitution elaborates on mechanisms in which Councils and citizens can share powers and responsibilities for the purpose of enhancing citizens' freedom for association and assembling and section 59 also talks about freedom to demonstrate and petitioning and their direct participation in development of their communities as outlined in section 13. Section 62 also highlights on citizens' right to information that is held by government that is in the interest of the public accountability. This mandates government and local authorities to create an open system of governance that allows and equips citizens with relevant information to hold the duty bearers accountable

Section 67:1 a, c and d elaborate on citizens' right on free and fair elections and also gives citizens right to holding peaceful political gathering in a way to '...to influence, challenge or support the policies of the government' (section 67:1 d). Section 68:1. 'the right to administrative conduct that is lawful, prompt, efficient, reasonable, proportionate, impartial and...fair'. Issues relating to impartiality, equality in service provision, civic engagement in policy formulation, public accountability, timely service delivery access to accurate information on services are all provided in section 194:1 c, d, e, f, . These are important issues that have a great influence on social accountability and its application to ensure improved service delivery in the local government.

Devolution as outlined in Chapter 14 is now the Policy Framework used in Zimbabwe Public Administration. It is important to note that the constitution of Zimbabwe outline the core ideals for a devolution system of governance. Devolution as a form of decentralisation entails the creation of other levels of structures with a clear mandate for securing resources and performing local government functions. Provincial councils and local authorities are local level structures that will be spearheading local development under the local government system. The structures and processes of Provincial and local government should provide more spaces for civic engagement enhancing open governance. This will facilitate democratic participation of citizens in determining development priorities for their communities. The councillors in these structures oversee council administrative unit and monitor local policy implementation by front line managers for sound local governance. Constitution create space for multi democratic operating environment in which citizens are expected to exercise their rights as they interface and hold councils accountable to quality service provision.

BPRA (2014) pointed out that it is hoped that devolution will break the old system of centralisation of local government through empowering the provincial and local government structures and process with the necessary resources and legal frameworks to involve and consult citizens and stakeholder institutions in provision of service delivery. Local government legislation which makes reference to the Minister or President is more diffused in the constitution as it refers to more people centred accountability structures.

Provision of the 5 % of the national revenue annually will also go a long way in strengthening the revenue base for local authorities though it is not yet clear how this will be distributed between the provincial and local government structures

Provincial councils and local authorities are to conduct their affairs in free and democratic way ensuring that citizens participate in planning and implementing development programmes that impact their lives. The constitution also emphasises on gender equality in citizens' participation. It is however important to note that the availability of the National Constitution alone does not guarantee the attainment of social accountability and good governance in local government. It is therefore important that some legal frameworks and increased human and institutional capacities are put in place as recommended in the next sections.

#### **5.4. Policy Options and Recommendations**

The following recommendations are proposed:

##### ***5.4.1. Local Government Reforms***

The current Zimbabwe New Constitution Article 14 has provided for the Devolution system of local governance which is an epitome for the achievement of public participation in all development process. There is therefore need to embrace the principles of devolution in the local government system. It is also recommended that a number of reforms should also be put in place especially the Local Government Act and Urban Councils Act so that local authorities are more responsive to local communities' needs. It is important that the fragmented pieces of local government legislation be consolidated under the new constitution.

##### ***5.4.2. Right to information***

Access to information is a critical building block for social accountability success. In terms of Zimbabwean Constitution, government institutions are obliged to take positive steps in order

to ensure that the fundamental rights enshrined under the Bill of Rights are protected, respected and promoted.

As such, the right of access to information creates a positive constitutional obligation on the state institutions (e.g. local authorities) to provide requested information in a manner and form that one can understand.

Right of access to information is provided for under section 62 of the Zimbabwe Constitution. In terms of the Constitution, citizens have right of access to information held by the state where they need such information for purposes of enforcing public accountability or for purposes of enforcing fundamental right. Enforcement of this right can be at an individuals or organisationlevel. Residents associations can also request for access to certain information on behalf of its members, who are ratepayers. It is important to note that the Access to information and Protection of Privacy Act is the primary legislation which is supposed to give full effect to this right.

However AIPPA came into force prior to the promulgation of this New Constitution and therefore some of the provisions of AIPPA are not in line with the new constitution particularly section 62 of the Constitution. AIPPA must be therefore realigned with the provisions of the new constitution particularly the right of access to information.

Because of the centrality of this right, there are also other legislation that deals with access to information such as the Official Secrets Act and which must also be realigned so that they are in line with what the constitution provides for especially under the right of access to information.

It is therefore recommended that CSOs should lobby Parliament to realign all legislation to the new Constitution so that citizens can enforce the several provisions that allow them to demand

accountability from local authorities in quest for democratic, accountable and effective local government

#### ***5.4.3. Institutional Reforms***

Embracing public participation is key to social accountability, local authorities as institutions for effective good governance need to foster efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery systems. Chatiza, (2010) points out that legal provision for public participation in local governance is very weak. There is need to a legal framework that enhances political transparency, public participation through community driven initiatives and accountability to enable citizens demand information from local authorities. Local government reform should be comprehensive with wholesome changes in institution, legislation and political reforms that ensure that local government system is responsive and accountable to the demands from the communities. Provincial and local councils need to meaningfully account to each other. Legal framework should be put in place for minimum interface between provincial, local councils and citizens. There is need to set up minimum threshold for council business to be more open and accessible by providing direct citizen engagement in policy making. Mechanisms that provide citizens and stakeholder institution to submit their motion for debate at both provincial and local council should be made available which is in line with section 67:1 d of the constitution. Councilstaff should effectively support councillors on technical issues not just in committees for effective stakeholder engagement and processing of policy and administrative information. Councils also need to schedule and budget for joint Ward consultative meetings and visit to allow active citizen participation and build mutual understanding and cooperative governance across the local authority and among the citizens

#### ***5.4.4. Enhanced partnership between council and citizens***

Provision of services in local authorities depends upon citizens and the council itself. The relationship is such that council provides services and citizens are the consumers of the services, the two parties are complementary to each other. As citizens pay services charges and other levies they are actually financed delivery of services and as such have the right to demand accountability from the council and council is obliged to formulate mechanisms that ensure effective engagement with the public.

#### ***5.4.5. Enhanced Participation and Citizenship***

Active citizenship and improved participation are the main drivers for public engagement and social accountability. Citizens should use their civil and political rights improve their quality of lives through fighting for social and economic justice and holding institutions accountable for fulfilling rights to services (Green 2013).

Active participation gives space for citizens to be drives of change rather than being passive recipients of services in local authorities (Sen, 1999), this shapes local governance and people in local governance are well placed to influence their socio and political processed that affect their lives. It is recommended that citizens should social movements that use their collective amplified voice to demand quality services from local authorities.

#### ***5.4.6. Mutual Accountability***

The concept of mutual accountability demands that all the players or stakeholders in local government play their roles effectively and do not neglect their duties hence are accountable to each other. Residents should pay for their services on time provided that local authority provides quality services with the correct billing systems.

It is recommended that there should be capacity building for both the supply and demand side on the importance of accountability in service delivery. As an instrument and as well as goal for improving effectiveness in public governance a holistic and well elaborated social accountability mechanism or framework enhances service provision in local authorities.

#### ***5.4.7. Enhancing Transparency to citizens***

The Administrative arm of councils should establish mechanisms which provide feedback to citizens regarding quality of services and their performance. It is recommended that local authority should not wait on CSOs to initiate social accountability but should conduct social audits so that they constantly review their performance and come up with measures to improve service delivery. It is also recommended that local authorities should come up with mechanisms of correct billing systems and promptly respond to queries raised by citizens.

#### ***5.4.8. Strengthening CSOs and Community based Organisations***

Under the current Urban Council's Act CSOs and Residents Association can seat in the full council meetings but are not given the space to contribute thus limiting their participation and demanding accountability from council decision makers.



It is therefore recommended there should be legal provisions that give participatory mandate for all stakeholders that include CBOs, residents associations and CSOs in full council and other council committee meetings. This can actually improve engagement between council and its stakeholders. CSOs can play its oversight and watchdog role more effectively if they are involved in the planning, budget preparation processes and monitoring in council operations. This also provides more space for information gathering that is very much needed in social accountability.

#### ***5.4.9. Simplifying planning and budget documents***

Community participation in the planning and budgeting process is a critical requirement for ensuring accountability and transparency in local government. The majority of community members are not professional people who do not understand complicated presentation of the planning and budgeting documents.

It is recommended that council and CSOs working on Participatory Budgets come up with ways that are innovative that make information in these plans and budgets simple and easy to understand and these documents should not be very bulky as that discourages people to read such voluminous documents.

#### ***5.4.10. Public Information Centres***

It is also recommended that local authorities establish resources centres where citizens can access information on such things as council budget, audited reports, bye laws and council minutes.

#### ***5.4.11. Annual Social Accountability and Service Provision Reviews***

Local authorities should conduct departmental annual reviews of their performance in providing services to the communities. This can be done with community representatives so as to get the perceptions and views of the consumers of services. Existing gaps in social accountability and service provision be identified in these reviews and action plans should all be outlined. This can further lead to the establishment of service provision monitoring tool or Framework for the local authority which is agreed upon by the local authority and citizens.

### **5.5. Conclusion**

Evidence from this study and other studies by different scholars has revealed that social accountability toll have a great potential to improve services in local authorities. Success of social accountability however depends on existence of a democratic operating environment and legal frameworks that empower and protect citizens and other stakeholder institutions. It can therefore concluded that operationalization of the National Constitution and enactment of legal frameworks and capacity building of local government institutions will go be required to increase the potential and influence of social accountability tools to enhance service delivery not only in Bulawayo City Council but in all the local authorities in Zimbabwe.

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## **Appendices**

### **Key Informant Interview Guide**

1. What is the current local government system and how does it facilitate or limit effective service delivery in local authorities?
2. How do you rate service in Bulawayo City?
3. What challenges/constraints do you face in discharging your duties?
4. Do you think communities are aware and understand how Bulawayo City Council functions
5. How do you engage communities?
6. How do you disseminate information to residents on various operational issues of the council?
7. How do you rate the participation of communities in public meetings that discuss service delivery issues?
8. What are the tools you use to account to residents in terms of service provision?

9. In what ways to communities make you to account to them over the service you provide to them?
10. What options are there to ensure the smooth discharge of your service/duty?
11. What measures should be put in place to ensure effective service delivery in by local government?
12. What opportunities are presented by the Zimbabwe Constitutional provisions in improving accountability of councils to residents?
13. What recommendations can you propose to ensure that social accountability tools are effective in improving service delivery in the city
14. How do you see this city/ward/ neighbourhood in the next five years?

## Focus Group Discussion Interview Guide

01. May you please tell us the main functions of Bulawayo City Council?

02. How do you rate the following services which are provided by council:

- What and Sanitation
- Health
- Recreational Facilities
- Housing
- Road Infrastructure
- Street Lighting

May you please give reasons for ratings?

03. What are the main challenges you are facing regarding provision of these services?

04. Do have platforms to engage BCC regarding service delivery?

05. How do you interact with council staff and your councillor when you have queries with service provision

06. How does council account to residents on service delivery issues.

07. Which other organisations assist residents to demand accountability from the City Council

08. What tools have you used in demanding accountability from council performance of service provision?

09. How far have these tools assisted in improving service delivery in Cowdry Park?

10. What has been the role of media and other CSOs played in assisting residents in demanding accountability from BCC?
11. What challenges have you encountered in using the social accountability tools in improving service delivery in Cowdry Park?
12. What recommendations can you give to improve use of accountability tools in Bulawayo and local government service delivery system?

## Questionnaire for Households - Residents

01. Place of Interview (Tick the Appropriate)

	Place	Tick
1	Cowdry Park	

02. Age of Respondent: Tick the Appropriate)

1	20 - 35	
2	35 - 50	
3	50 - 65	

03. Gender of Respondent: Tick the Appropriate)

1	Male	
2	Female	

04. Do you understand the functions of Bulawayo City Council (Tick the appropriate)

1	Yes	
2	Sometimes	
3	Not at all	

05. What do you think are/should the duties that Bulawayo City council?

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06. How do you rate service provision by BCC for the past 2 years.

Services	Rating out of 100			
	0-25 (Poor)	25-50 (Fair)	50 – 75 (Good)	75 – 100 (Excellent)
Water				
Refuse Collection				
Road infrastructure				
Street Lighting				
Education				
Health				
Refuse Collection				

07. Provide 2 key reasons for your ratings.

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08. In the past 3 months have you attended in any of the following (Tick all that apply to you)

	Yes	No	Don't know
Meeting organized by the councilor			
Religious Meeting e.g. church			
Meeting by club or society			
Meeting by school			
Meeting by some NGO			
Meeting by government meeting			

Identify just 3 critical matters discussed at the meetings you ticked

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09. How do you rate the level of participation of other members in the meetings raised above?

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor	No comment
Meeting organized by the councilor						
Religious Meeting e.g. church						
Meeting by club or society						
Meeting by						



school						
Meeting by some NGO						
Meeting by government meeting						

10. Which group participates mostly in service delivery meetings in your community.

	Women	Men	Boys youth	Girls youth	Don't know
Meeting organized by the councilor					

Religious Meeting e.g. church					
Meeting by club or society					
Meeting by school					
Meeting by some NGO					
Meeting by government meeting					

11. If you have attended on the meetings organized by the councilor/council, tick the issues that have been discussed

	Yes	No	Cant remember
The roads			
Water			
Street lighting			

Grass cutting			
Managing parks			
Crime in the community			
The budget			

Explain

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12. When you have grievances in community services where do you normally take your issues?

1	Councilor	
2	Newspaper	
3	Council offices	
4	Social media platform e.g. facebook/twitter	
5	Neighbours	
6	Party	

7	Club	
8	Other	

Explain

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13. How often do you have meetings with your councilor per month? (Tick that apply)

1	Once	
2	Twice	
3	Thrice	
4	Whenever there is an issue to discuss	
5	None at all	

Explain

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14. Do you have any feedback meetings with your councilor?

1	Yes	
2	Sometimes	
3	Not at all	

15. Do you think you are well-informed on the operations of Bulawayo City Council?

1	Yes	
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2	Somehow	
3	Not at all	

16. Name any organizations (NGOs or CSOs) that assist communities to engage council in service delivery issues?

17. What is the focus of those organizations?

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18. Do think BCC is doing enough to account for service delivery to residents? Please explain your answer.

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18. What platforms do you have to demand accountability from council?

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19. What social accountability tools have you used to demand accountability from council?

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20. What can be done to improve the use of social accountability tools in the service delivery?

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21. What three suggestions can you make towards improving the work of the council in your community?

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What other comments do you have about what we have discussed?

**Thank you for your time and cooperation**