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## Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

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Consideration of reports: reports submitted by States Parties  
under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant

### Replies of Zimbabwe to the list of issues in relation to its second periodic report\*

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



## Acronyms

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| ACHPR   | African Charter on Human and People's Rights                         |
| AJ      | Administrative Justice   |
| ARSS    | At Risk Surveillance System  |
| BEAM    | Basic Education Assistance Module                                    |
| CCD     | Early Childhood Development  |
| CHI     | Complaints Handling and Investigation                                |
| CPU     | Civil Protection Unit  |
| CSO's   | Civil Society Organisation   |
| ESCR    | Economic, Social and Cultural Rights                                 |
| EMA     | Environmental Management Authority                                   |
| EPRA    | Education, Promotion, Research and Advocacy                          |
| GBV     | Gender Based Violence  |
| GoZ     | Government of Zimbabwe   |
| ICESCR  | International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights     |
| ILO     | International Labour Organisation                                    |
| IPCC    | Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change                            |
| IPPU    | Industrial Processes and Product Use                                 |
| JSC     | Judicial Service Commission  |
| LT-LEDS | Low Emissions Development Strategy                                   |
| M & I   | Monitoring and Inspections   |
| NAP     | National Action Plan   |
| NECs    | National Employment Councils   |
| NPA     | National Prosecuting Authority                                       |
| NDS1    | National Development Strategy 1                                      |
| NSSA    | National Social Security Authority                                   |
| OSH     | Occupational Safety and Health                                       |
| PWD's   | Persons with Disabilities  |
| SADC    | Southern Africa Development Community                                |
| SAZ     | Standards Association of Zimbabwe                                    |
| SME'S   | Small and Medium Enterprises   |
| TWG     | Thematic Working Group   |
| UNCRPD  | United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities |
| ZACC    | Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission                                  |
| ZHRC    | Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission                                     |
| ZICC    | Zimbabwe Independent Complaints Commission                           |
| ZPCS    | Zimbabwe Prisons and Correctional Services                           |
| ZiNEPF  | Zimbabwe National Employment   |

## Replies to the list of issues (E/C.12/ZWE/Q/2)

### I. General information

#### Reply to paragraph 2

1. Chapter 4 of the Constitution of the Republic of Zimbabwe outlines the Declaration of Rights, encompassing socio-economic and cultural rights as stipulated by the Covenant. These rights are legally enforceable under Section 85 of the Constitution, guaranteeing the incorporation of the Covenant provisions in Zimbabwe's laws. Additionally, Section 46 of the Constitution mandates courts to consider International Law; Treaties, and Conventions to which the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) is a party to when interpreting the Declaration of Rights.<sup>1</sup>

2. With regards to law enforcement agents trained on human rights, a total of 106 814 Zimbabwe Republic Police officers were trained on human rights since 2019 to date tabulated below.

Table 1  
**Statistics of ZRP officers trained on human rights**

| <i>Province</i>     | <i>Number of officers trained</i> |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Harare              | 34 812                            |
| Bulawayo            | 15 835                            |
| Manicaland          | 7 482                             |
| Masvingo            | 7 161                             |
| Matabeleland South  | 4 871                             |
| Matabeleland North  | 6 198                             |
| Mashonaland Central | 1 601                             |
| Mashonaland East    | 4 245                             |
| Mashonaland West    | 15 139                            |
| Midlands            | 3 042                             |
| Police Academy      | 1 725                             |
| Support Unit        | 2 008                             |
| CID                 | 995                               |
| PPU                 | 1 700                             |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>106 814</b>                    |

3. In addition, trainings have been conducted at Ntabazinduna Zimbabwe Prisons and Correctional Service Training School for recruit correctional officers (RCOs) from with 1 500 officers trained in 2019, 2022 and 2023. In 2024, 1621 RCOs have been trained so far. No trainings were conducted for RCOs in 2020 and 2021 due to Covid-19 pandemic.

4. Human Rights trainings were also conducted to 79 and 80 Zimbabwe Staff College Officers in 2023 and 2024 respectively. In addition, 36 and 34 Officers at the Zimbabwe Defence University were trained in 2023 and 2024 respectively. Lastly, in 2022, a total of 48 School of Intelligence Officers received trainings on human rights.

<sup>1</sup> [https://zimlil.org/search/?q=covenant+on+economic%2C+social+and+cultural+rights&doc\\_type=Judgment](https://zimlil.org/search/?q=covenant+on+economic%2C+social+and+cultural+rights&doc_type=Judgment).

### Reply to paragraph 3

#### National Human Rights institution (NHRI)

5. The Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC) functions under the provisions of Section 242 and 243 of the Constitution. As part of the Chapter 12 institutions mandated to protect, promote and enforce human rights, the ZHRC also promotes constitutionalism to secure the observance of democratic values and principles by the State. Its operations are regulated by the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission Act.

6. The ZHRC is dedicated to receiving and addressing complaints concerning purported infringements of ESCR. As part of its mandate, the ZHRC evaluates laws, policies, public institutions, client service charters, and legislation to ensure they align with the Constitution and reflect human rights standards.

7. To uphold the Paris Principle on the independence of the ZHRC, the ZHRC has a distinct budget allocation direct from the Treasury. The ZHRC possesses the financial autonomy necessary to allocate these resources for its operational activities. Furthermore, the ZHRC has expanded its reach by decentralising its functions to six (6) out of the ten (10) provinces of the country, thereby ensuring that the most vulnerable and marginalised groups are effectively served.

Table 2

#### National budget allocations since 2020

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Budget Allocation</i> |
|-------------|--------------------------|
| 2024        | 42 117 758 000           |
| 2023        | 4 740 600 000            |
| 2022        | 403 898 000              |
| 2021        | 166 608 691              |
| 2020        | 38 735 185               |

8. In accordance with Paragraph 7 of the First Schedule of the ZHRC Act, the ZHRC has six (6) Thematic Working Groups (TWG), one of which is the TWG on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. The TWG consists of experts from various Government Ministries including the Ministry responsible for Social Welfare, the Chiefs Council, representatives from health institutions, women’s groups, and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). The TWG plays a crucial role in supporting the ZHRC in safeguarding, promoting, and enforcing Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR) by offering technical guidance on a range of issues. Additionally, members of the ESCR TWG play a key role in highlighting critical ESCR concerns to the ZHRC.

### Reply to paragraph 4

#### ‘Human rights defenders’

9. There are no known cases related to the criminalisation of the work of “human rights defenders” and CSO’s including those working to promote social and cultural rights. The Independent Commissions established in Chapter 12 of the Constitution are responsible for overseeing the GoZ’s adherence to human rights, including preventing the State from infringing upon its citizens human rights. The GoZ is also in the process of operationalising the Zimbabwe Independent Complaints Commission (ZICC) in terms of Section 210 of the Constitution, which will serve as a mechanism to receive and investigate complaints from members of the public concerning misconduct on the part of members of the security services, and for remedying any harm caused by such misconduct.

## Reply to paragraph 5

### Business and Human Rights

10. The GoZ continues to enforce due diligence and ensure accountability for corporations and business entities domiciled within its jurisdiction with respect to upholding human rights in their operations. To this end, aspects such as environmental impact and social assessments are mandatory before licensing for those entities operating in sectors such as mining, agriculture, and construction.

11. The GoZ presently engaged in internal procedures aimed at formulating a National Action Plan (NAP) concerning the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. The development of the NAP will enable the GoZ to perform a comprehensive evaluation of the existing legal framework, thereby improving its capacity to address human rights infringements by corporate entities.

## Reply to paragraph 6

### Mitigation of Climate Change

12. On climate change mitigation GoZ adopted its Long-term Low Emissions Development Strategy (LT-LEDS), 2020-50 and submitted its revised Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) in 2021. The LT-LEDS is a long-time plan for emissions reduction from which the country draws priority measures into its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement.

13. Both documents outline mitigation actions across the 4 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) sectors namely: Waste; Energy, Industrial Processes and Product Use (IPPU); and the Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU). The revised NDC commits to a conditional 40% per capita emissions reduction target by 2030 across all sectors as outlined in the LT-LEDS. Recently, GoZ has launched its NDC Implementation Plan and Investment Framework to enhance resource mobilisation and action towards meeting the NDC targets. In addition, the NDC actions are mostly drawn from existing national policies and strategies and therefore well integrated with the national development discourse.

14. Specific measures for emissions reduction includes, development of renewable energy, energy efficiency measures, reducing electricity transmission and distribution losses, reducing veld fire incidences, afforestation, reforestation, and sustainable forest management, composting organic matter and landfill and wastewater methane recovery, biofuels, mass public transportation and phase down of hydrofluorocarbon usage in refrigeration and air conditioning among others.

15. Currently, no quantification of the impact has been done and GoZ is yet to submit its 1<sup>st</sup> Biennial Transparency Report by 31 December 2024 which will report on progress towards the NDC target. GoZ assesses climate change impacts, and vulnerability in particular for marginalised, disadvantaged individuals and groups on a four-year cycle in line with the National Communications report to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Furthermore, vulnerability studies are also done on a need's basis for specific areas for example for the preparation of projects baselines.

16. GoZ developed the National Climate Change Adaptation Plan (NAP) in July 2024. The NAP provides adaptation actions across 7 sections namely: agriculture, health, water, infrastructure, human settlement, tourism, and forestry and biodiversity. The NAP estimates a financial requirement of USD10.3billion to implement the NAP between 2024 and 2030.

### Measures taken to strengthen preparedness for and responses to natural disasters

17. GoZ, has adopted:

- Early Warning Systems: to capacitated hydro-meteorological services to advise on weather related impacts;
- Weather Monitoring: GoZ has installed 5 weather radars and upgraded 47 weather stations with automatic systems for better forecasting and real-time data;

- Emergency response: GoZ enhanced disaster warning systems and response protocols. Further, GOZ developed educational resources on disaster management;
- Civil Protection Unit (CPU): is a government agency responsible for disaster management and its mandate is coordinating responses to natural and human-induced disasters, ensuring that the country is well-prepared to mitigate, respond to, and recover from emergencies.

18. The Climate Change Management Department, in the Ministry responsible for Environment and Climate Change Management has the mandate to develop and coordinate implementation of climate change adaptation measures in cooperation with MDAs as well as various stakeholders such as development partners, CSOs, private sector and youths. There is a proposed governance structure for coordination outlined in the National Climate Policy which will be operationalized under the Climate Change Management Bill being formulated.

19. Coordination of the institutions responsible for disaster preparedness and management is guided by the National Civil Protection Act, which has clear and functional structures at national and sub-national levels involving multiple stakeholders from the public, private, development and cooperation sectors among others for effective disaster management. The Civil Protection Unit (CPU) is also among the institutions responsible for disaster preparedness and management is ensured.

## **II. Issues relating to the general provisions of the Covenant (Articles 1–5)**

### **Maximum available resources (Art. 2 (1))**

#### **Reply to paragraph 7**

20. Zimbabwe has experienced economic growth averaging 5.3% annually since 2014 excluding the COVID-19 period of 2020 to early 2022. However, Zimbabwe continues to face challenges due to climate change, which has significantly impacted communities reliant on primary industries, particularly agriculture. These sectors are vulnerable to climate-related shocks, leading to increased hardships for many families. As a result, the number of individuals living below the poverty datum line rose from 2.6 million, or 21.36% of the population in 2011, to 5 million, representing 33.86% of the population in 2017. By 2019, this figure further increased to approximately 6 million, equating to 39.5% of the population.

21. The marginal rise in poverty levels can be attributed to the adverse effects of climate change, particularly the severe droughts experienced in 2015/2016 and 2018/2019. Zimbabwe has a relatively equitable distribution of income. In 2011, the Gini coefficient after taxes and transfers was recorded at 43.2%, indicating a moderate level of inequality within the population. Although this measure of inequality has shown some fluctuations over time, it is important to view these changes within the context of ongoing efforts to promote social equity and economic development.

22. By 2017, the Gini coefficient increased to 44.3%, this trend continued, with the Gini coefficient reaching 50.3% in 2019. These trends in inequality were further compounded by the effects of the climate change and drought in 2015/16 and 2018/19, which severely disrupted economic activities affecting those who rely heavily on agriculture and other primary industries and exacerbated existing vulnerabilities. The pandemic's impact led to job losses and reduced incomes for many, particularly in urban areas where economic opportunities are often more concentrated.

23. The average GDP growth rate has shown a notable increase, rising from 2.4% in 2014 to 5.3% in 2023, reflecting an average growth of 4.3% over this period. This growth trajectory excludes the significant disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020 to 2022, which profoundly impacted global economies. The recovery observed in subsequent years indicates resilience in the economic landscape, suggesting positive trends in various sectors such as mining, agriculture, wholesale and retail trade contributing to this growth.

24. The economy of Zimbabwe has experienced notable fluctuations in GDP per capita over the past decade. In 2014, the GDP per capita was recorded at USD 1,407. This figure has seen a gradual increase, reaching USD 1,592.40 by 2023.

25. The significant rise in GDP per capita can be attributed to various factors, including improved agricultural production, a recovery in mining output, and a favourable global economic environment that positively impacted Zimbabwe's export revenues. However, this peak was followed by economic challenges, on account of the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to a decline in economic activity. The increase in GDP per capita from 2014 to 2023, despite the setbacks, indicates a slow but positive trend in the country's economic recovery efforts.

26. Public debt as a percentage of GDP in Zimbabwe has exhibited significant fluctuations over the past decade. In 2014, public debt was recorded at 43% of GDP, a level that indicates a manageable debt situation at the time.

27. However, this figure has escalated, reaching 96.6% by 2023 due to infrastructure development which includes roads, airports and electricity-generating power stations. This sharp increase underscores the fiscal pressures faced by the government, which have been exacerbated by various factors including the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic between 2019 and 2022 and geo-political tensions.

28. Notably, the public debt as a ratio to GDP reached a low of 22.4% in 2017, a period marked by relative economic stabilization. However, this brief respite was followed by a surge in public debt, peaking at 100.5% in 2022.

29. The implementation of stimulus packages and financial assistance programs to provide immediate relief to those most affected by the pandemic, including low-income households, informal workers, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) were key initiatives in response to Covid 19. The GoZ allocated significant funds to support these programs, ensuring that essential needs were met and livelihoods were protected.

30. In response to the Covid 19 pandemic, the GoZ announced ZWL18.2 billion (about USD180 million) stimulus package on 30 March 2020. The Economic Recovery and Stimulus Package was aimed at reinvigorating the economy and providing relief to individuals, families, small businesses and industries. To support the recovery of domestic tourism in response to the decline in international tourist arrivals caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government implemented a 12-month VAT waiver on accommodation and visitor services for local tourists. In 2022, the Government raised its expenditure on employee benefits by expanding the COVID-19 allowance. The allowance was increased from USD75 to USD150 for civil servants and from USD30 to USD100 for pensioners.

## **Corruption (Art. 2 (1))**

### **Reply to paragraph 8**

31. In addressing the challenges and pitfalls of corruption, The GoZ is in the process of reviewing and developing the following anti-corruption legislative measures:

- The Whistle-blowers Bill seeks to protect whistle-blowers against reprisals, dismissals from employment, victimisation and discrimination, as well as harassment. It will also facilitate disclosure of conduct adverse to public interest in both the public and private sector;
- The ZACC Amendment Bill seeks to enhance anti-corruption legal Mechanisms, strategies, and procedures in Zimbabwe whilst also outlining specific roles mandates and inter-agency cooperation frameworks of anti-corruption institutions;
- Public Entities and Corporate Governance Act provides for a uniform code of conduct and practices for the corporate governance of all public entities;
- The Asset and Conflict of Interest Declaration System, Guidelines and Regulations are being developed and seeks to promote public confidence in the public service, including in the offices of public and elected officials;

- In 2018, GoZ introduced the Public Procurement and disposal of Public Assets Act, to ensure that procurement processes are transparent, fair, honest, cost-effective and competitive. In January 2024, GoZ also introduced the electronic Government Procurement (eGP) system which allows public entities and bidders to conduct e-procurement activities, promoting efficient communication in procurement systems and reducing corruption.

32. The Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (ZACC), since its establishment, has made notable strides in the fight against corruption. Below are some of the significant achievements of ZACC to date:

- Increased Investigations and Prosecutions of High-Profile Arrests cases such as “Draxgate scandal case” where officials were implicated in the misappropriation of funds meant for the procurement of COVID-19 medical supplies among other cases;<sup>2</sup>
- Asset Recovery and Forfeiture of Illegally Acquired Assets ZACC has facilitated the recovery and forfeiture of assets gained through corrupt means. This includes the seizure of property, vehicles, and bank accounts from officials and businesspersons involved in corruption;
- Asset Declaration and Transparency Initiatives- ZACC has helped to institutionalize the asset declaration process for public officials, which promotes transparency and accountability;
- ZACC developed a National Anti-Corruption Strategy (2020–2024) to address systemic corruption in public institutions. This strategy includes measures for improving transparency, reducing opportunities for corruption, and fostering public accountability;
- The Committee is referred for more information by the report noted thereto;<sup>3</sup>

Table 3  
shows high profile cases under ZACC from 2019–2024

| <i>High Profile Cases</i> | <i>2019</i> | <i>2020</i> | <i>2021</i> | <i>2022</i> | <i>2023</i> | <i>2024</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Referred to NPA           | 4           | 16          | 11          | 22          | 41          | 27          | 121          |
| Convictions               | 2           | -           | 1           | 1           | -           | -           | 4            |
| Acquittals                | -           | 3           | 2           | 1           | 1           | 1           | 8            |
| Trial Stage/Waiting Trial | 2           | 7           | 6           | 20          | 40          | 26          | 101          |

- High profile cases are classified in terms of the value involved, the status of the individual or individuals and the impact to the general public. For a case to be classified high profile, the value involved should be US\$100 000.00. The accused persons should be public officials with a status of a Director and above. Also, the case should have a grand impact on the general public;
- From 2019 to 2023, fraud and Criminal abuse of duty were the most prevalent crimes that were dealt with by the Commission. Fraud accounted for 52.35% of the cases dealt with. Criminal abuse of office cases have been mostly concentrated in local authorities, government departments, agencies and ministries among other officials such as traditional leaders.

<sup>2</sup> Attached ZACC Annual Reports.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/UNCAC/COSP/session10/statements/Zimbabwe.pdf>.



## Non-discrimination (Art. 2 (2))

### Reply to paragraph 9

33. GoZ reiterates its dedication to preserving the Nation's cultural heritage and African values, which have been integral to Zimbabwean society for generations. The fundamental principles of family, community and ethics constitute the foundation of the Nation, promoting social unity and stability in accordance with the country's objectives specified in Section 3 of the Constitution.

34. The GoZ is committed to upholding and advancing the integrity and dignity of every individual by ensuring equal protection and benefits under the law for all, irrespective of sex, gender, class, custom and culture amongst other factors. Consequently, the Constitution guarantees that all citizens receive equitable treatment and equality, free from discrimination based on sex or gender, as well as other established grounds. The GoZ recognises the significance of embracing diverse traditions and cultures whilst also striving to strike a balance between cultural rights and socio-economic progress. Upholding cultural rights in the Republic of Zimbabwe involves interpreting the Constitution in a manner that respects gender equality considering the societal norms and values that continue to influence the Nation.

### Reply to paragraph 10

#### Persons with disabilities, in particular women and children

35. The Constitution provides for the State to ensure reasonable legislative and other measures to promote the achievement of equality, non-discrimination and protection of all persons, including PWDs. The Committee also referred to Zimbabwe's Initial State Party Report to the UNCRPD.<sup>4</sup>

36. To further safeguard the rights of PWDs, GoZ has adopted, amongst others, the following measures:

- The Labour Act prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of disability;
- The Education Act mandates the government to provide State funded education to PWDs up to tertiary level, including technical and vocational education training;
- Section 76 of the Constitution provides for the right to health, particularly reproductive health care services for women and girls with disabilities;
- In 2024, Zimbabwe ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa;
- GoZ has made Universal Access Designs a mandatory requirement and that all public buildings. To strengthen this policy, the GoZ ensures that all buildings are compliant with accessibility requirements for PWDs and is carrying out inspections of newly constructed and reconfigured buildings to meet this requirement. See also paragraph 98-100 and 112 of the UNCRPD;<sup>5</sup>
- In 2021, GoZ developed a National Disability Policy (NDP) which guides the development of operative rights based social services, strategies aimed at enabling independent lives of PWDs. Consequently, the Public Service Commission has incorporated the policy concerning matters of human capital management, including the recruitment, hiring, employment, retention, career advancement, as well as the safety and health of PWDs. Furthermore, a National Technical Committee on the Implementation of the National Disability Policy was established and includes representatives from all Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs);

<sup>4</sup> [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2FC%2FZWE%2F1&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2FC%2FZWE%2F1&Lang=en).

<sup>5</sup> [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2FC%2FZWE%2F1&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2FC%2FZWE%2F1&Lang=en).

- To guarantee access to information and raise awareness, the National Disability Policy has been translated in all the 16 Official Languages;
- Established an Office for the Special Advisor to the President and Cabinet on disability issues in government projects, programmes and policies;
- Over 357 000 persons with disabilities including women and children with various forms of disabilities were reached with relevant healthcare services for free under the Capacity building of health workers on the At-Risk Surveillance System (ARSS);
- Under the School based community outreach fairs, GoZ reached 72 districts where 59 904 people (30331 females and 29573 males) increased the level of enrolment and to promote understanding of the rights of children with disabilities.

### **Equal rights of men and women (Art. 3)**

#### **Reply to paragraph 11**

##### **Gender stereotypes**

37. A range of initiatives have been designed to improve women’s representation in political and decision-making roles within both the public and private sectors founded on a combination of legal structures, policy changes, advocacy initiatives, and grassroots movements that seek to tackle gender inequalities.

38. Section 17 of the Constitution mandates the State to promote the full participation of women in all spheres of Zimbabwean society on the basis of equality with men. This Constitutional obligation lays a foundation for policies and initiatives focused on enhancing the representation of women. In order to increase women’s representation in political affairs, the GoZ amended Electoral laws to extend the women’s quota system to Local Authorities covering a period up to 2033.

39. The Zimbabwe National Gender Policy underscores the importance of enhancing the capabilities of women leaders and advocates for the implementation of gender-sensitive policies that encourage women’s involvement in decision-making. Furthermore, in 2023, GoZ adopted the Women in Leadership and Decision-Making Strategy to ensure the comprehensive participation and representation of women in decision-making processes. This Strategy is centred around five thematic areas: women’s engagement in politics, the private sector, the public sector, civil society, and community development.

40. The GoZ introduced the “*Women Rise in Politics*” (WRiP) program, which focuses on training and mentoring aspiring female political candidates. This initiative has provided women with essential knowledge and skills necessary for pursuing political office. In total, 425 candidates benefited from this program, leading to 18 candidates participating in the National Assembly elections and 44 candidates contesting at the Local Authority level during the 2023 Harmonised Elections. GoZ in collaboration with various stakeholders, including CSO’s conducted trainings designed to enhance women’s political participation. See also paragraph 296–299 of the Maputo Protocol.

### **III. Issues relating to specific provisions of the Covenant**

#### **Right to work (Art. 6)**

##### **Reply to paragraph 12**

41. GoZ is currently in the process of reviewing the Zimbabwe National Employment Policy Framework (ZiNEPF 2010) to promote equality, prevent discrimination, improve access to services, as well as to guarantee that PWDs, including women, and children are protected from discrimination and have equal access to economic and employment opportunities.

42. Some of the outcomes of the ZINEPF are:

- Creation of an online registration and placement system which enables individuals who encounter discrimination, such as people with disabilities and women, to sign up for job openings, take part in interviews, and secure job positions with employers from the comfort of their homes. This removes the necessity for them to personally visit the Department's offices or wait for job placements on-site;
- National programs are implemented nationwide to guarantee that marginalised communities are enrolled for possible job openings that could arise. These initiatives aim to promote a more comprehensive approach to enrolling and matching job candidates, recognising the entitlement of all individuals to obtain employment, regardless of their disabilities and vulnerabilities;
- Services such as career guidance and counselling which are provided across the Nation are essential in empowering PWDs, including women, to fully realise their ESCR;
- Recently GoZ amended the Labour Act to include violence and harassment as forms of unfair labour practices. This helps in reducing sexual harassment incidences. Further, the GoZ is in the process of ratifying the ILO Convention 190 on Violence and Harassment;
- Additionally, amendments to the Labour Act amongst other changes expands maternity benefits by eliminating restrictions on the number of maternity leaves, as well as full pay during maternity leave irrespective of time in service;
- The economy of Zimbabwe has largely informalized, migrating and providing significant sustenance and economic opportunities for a significant proportion of the citizenry. UMCs have, however, inhibited the GoZ's capacity to create the ideal and desired economic environment for prosperity due to lack of lines of credit and negative publicity amongst other negative impacts;
- The Committee referred to more statistical data pertaining to unemployment and underemployment in Zimbabwe.<sup>6</sup>

## **Right to just and favourable conditions of work (Art. 7)**

### **Reply to paragraph 13**

43. The new amendment Act, No. 11 of 2023, has introduced legislative changes to provide a solid legal foundation for labour inspections, including tougher penalties for non-compliance with child labour issues.

#### **Labour inspections**

44. GoZ introduced a revised inspection form that integrates regional best practices to strengthen the labour inspection system. This updated form emphasises new focal points, particularly in tackling child labour concerns. Additionally, funding has been increased to facilitate the acquisition of vehicles dedicated to labour inspections.

45. The initiative by the GoZ on integrated joint inspections has greatly improved both the coverage and frequency of inspections as shown by the increased number of inspections undertaken by the Government every year. As of January 2023, new labour offices have been established, and district-level labour officers have been appointed to improve the presence of labour inspectors in the field. Annual budget provisions have been allocated for capacity-building workshops aimed at providing innovative insights into labour inspections and incorporating best practices.

46. The following outlines the Labour Inspections conducted during the reporting period.

<sup>6</sup> <https://zimbabwe.opendataforafrica.org/xsjxfwe/labour-market-indicators>.

Table 4  
No. of inspections

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Number of inspections</i> |
|-------------|------------------------------|
| 2017        | 1 421                        |
| 2018        | 1 645                        |
| 2019        | 2 116                        |
| 2020        | 2 044                        |
| 2021        | 1 179                        |
| 2022        | 5 951                        |
| 2023        | 6 704                        |

47. The main areas of violations identified through labour inspections are non-payment of wages, violation of the minimum wage and issues related to leave days. The main measures undertaken to address them are awareness raising of conditions of service, including minimum wage in the sector, the dispute resolution process of conciliation and or arbitration was also undertaken to address the violations.

48. GoZ established sector-specific collective bargaining bodies known as National Employment Councils (NECs), which are authorised to manage collective bargaining as outlined in Section 62 of the Labour Act. These collective bargaining agreements usually cover areas enunciated in Section 74 of the Labour Act.

49. There are 48 NECs currently registered. Employment Councils are expected to negotiate every 12 months but currently most are negotiating quarterly taking into consideration the prevailing economic conditions.

#### Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)

Table 5  
Occupational Safety and Health- Legislative, and Policy Framework

##### *Legislative framework*

| <i>Law</i>   | <i>Description</i>   |
|--|--|
| Constitutional Provisions  | Section 65 and 73 of the Constitution provides for fair and safe labour practices.   |
| Factories and Works Act (FWA)  | Provides for the registration and control of factories, regulation of conditions of work in factories, supervision of the use of machinery and precaution against accidents to persons employed on structural work.  |
| National Social Security Authority (Accident Prevention and Workers' Compensation Scheme SI 68 of 1990).   | Provides for compensation to workers in respect of injuries arising from their employment and the promotion of occupational safety and health. The instrument further describes the employer's and employees' general duties in OSH and outlines the schedule of occupational diseases.                |
| Pneumoconiosis Act   | Provides for the control and administration of persons employed in dusty occupations.  |
| Mines and Minerals Act and Statutory Instrument 109 of 1990 on Mining (Management and Safety) Regulations. | The Act regulates mines and minerals.<br>The statutory instrument provides for management of OSH, defines responsibility in mines, provides for improvement of the work environment and work conditions to safeguard and maintain employee's work ability against occupational accidents and diseases. |

| <i>Law</i>                | <i>Description</i>  |
|---------------------------|---|
| Constitutional Provisions | Section 65 and 73 of the Constitution provides for fair and safe labour practices.  |
| NOSH Policy               | The object of the policy are to provide for OSH as a major component in the creation of sustainable business and to eliminate occupational accidents, injuries, diseases and fatalities and to promote OSH. It also provides for the establishment of OSH structures for worker organisations, and National Employment Councils (NECs). |
| OSH BILL                  | GoZ is currently in the process of finalising a new OSH Bill, which seeks to provide for the governance and provision of the OSH framework. It will also be in line with relevant ILO Conventions.  |
| ILO Conventions           | Ratified ILO Conventions 155 and C161.<br>Ratification of ILO Convention 187 is underway.   |

*Coordinating mechanisms on osh issues*

| <i>Mechanism</i>  | <i>Description</i>  |
|---|---|
| National Level  | The OSH Authority is NSSA mandated to enhance the capacity of institutions responsible for occupational safety and health to better enforce regulations and standards. It has decentralised OSH activities into 6 main regional centres throughout the country.   |
| Enterprise Level  | Worker organisations, through their trade unions have established OSH structures which promote OSH at enterprise level. These Union structures are also used to promote the establishment of safety and health committees in various sectors of the industry.<br><br>National Employment Councils (NEC) are also entities which promote OSH through provisions in their collective bargaining agreements of their respective sectors.<br><br>Standards Association of Zimbabwe (SAZ) offers accreditation certification to ZWS ISO 45001. This certification is given to organisations who have demonstrated that they have implemented a system for OSH for their workers. |
| Zimbabwe Occupational Safety and Health Council (ZOSHC) | ZOSHC is the tripartite body on OSH matters comprising government, business and labour organisations mandated to enforce, promote, raise awareness, monitor health programmes, conduct research and rehabilitation programmes on matters of OSH.  |

Table 6  
**Number of recorded OSH incidents and fatalities from 2016–2023**

|                                | 2016  | 2017  | 2018  | 2019  | 2020  | 2021  | 2022  | 2023  |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Injuries                       | 4 922 | 4 640 | 4 301 | 5 082 | 3 528 | 5 641 | 4 912 | 4 191 |
| Incidence Rate/10 <sup>5</sup> | 450   | 660   | 310   | 460   | 450   | 460   | 536   | 457   |
| LTIFR                          | 4.5   | 3.3   | 3.1   | 3.4   | 2.4   | 2.9   | 1.79  | 1.52  |
| Fatalities                     | 58    | 46    | 76    | 47    | 45    | 42    | 79    | 59    |

50. Progress made in the implementation of the national strategy to facilitate the transition from the informal to the formal economy in Zimbabwe, the Committee is referred to paragraph 41(vi) above.

51. With respect to equal pay and equal opportunities, Section 65(6) of the Constitution and Section 5(2)(a) of the Labour Act proscribes discrimination of equal pay and opportunities based on sex or gender. Further, the committee is referred to paragraph 71 of CEDAW/C/ZWE/CO/6.

52. GoZ empowers NECs to develop regulations through collective bargaining agreements to implement the principle of equal pay for work of equal value. Labour inspectors are specifically trained to monitor compliance with equal pay regulations during regular inspections. The resolution of wage-related disputes has been enhanced, with both labour officers and designated NEC agents offering clear avenues for employees to seek redress if they believe they are being unfairly compensated. The Labour Act's provision effectively addresses gender disparities, promoting equal pay initiatives and combating gender bias and occupational segregation.

## **Trade Union Rights (Art. 8)**

### **Reply to paragraph 14**

53. GoZ through its legal framework, including revisions to the Labour Act, has promoted 'safeguarded workers' rights' to form or join trade unions and to engage in strikes. These amendments are designed to remove prior limitations on these rights. Moreover, GoZ ratified significant ILO conventions, including *Convention No. 87*, which addresses Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise, and *Convention No. 98*, which pertains to the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining.

54. GoZ has also fostered improved communication with trade unions through the Tripartite Negotiation Forum (TNF), aimed at collaboratively resolving labour-related issues. Judicial decisions have further consolidated workers' rights to unionise and strike, whilst the establishment of National Employment Councils (NECs) has enhanced collective bargaining and dispute resolution processes, thereby promoting equitable labour practices and safeguarding union activities.

## **Right to Social Security (Art. 9)**

### **Reply to paragraph 15**

55. GoZ provides for social protection frameworks that encompasses both state-funded social assistance and contribution-based social insurance. NSSA manages contributory programs, including the Pension and Other Benefits Scheme and the Accident Prevention and Workers' Compensation Scheme. These programs address some of the social security branches specified by ILO Convention 102.

56. Currently, NSSA provides coverage for 6% of the workforce through its schemes, benefiting a total of 209,325 individuals with monthly pensions, which includes 110,178 retirees. NSSA Pension and Other Benefits Scheme caters to 12% of the elderly population, offering an average pension of fifty (\$50) United States Dollars for old age and a minimum of seventy (\$70) United States Dollars for work-related injuries.

57. To achieve universal social security coverage, GoZ conducted a feasibility study, supported by the ILO, to identify the priority social security needs of informal economy workers. The results of this study will play a crucial role in informing the design and financial structure of social security benefits for the informal sector. Further, in 2024 GoZ ratified the Optional Protocol to ACHPR on the Rights of Citizens to Social Protection and Social Security.

## Protection of the family and children (Art. 10)

### Reply to paragraph 16

#### High-Level Political Compact on Ending GBV and Harmful Practices

58. To fulfil the commitments outlined in the High-Level Political Commitment (HLPC), GoZ has established interventions that are being executed across each of the seven thematic areas.

| <i>Thematic Area</i>   | <i>Description</i>  |
|--|---|
| Prevention   | The goal is to critically examine certain social-cultural practices and norms that perpetuates GBV. In this regard, GoZ is actively collaborating with community, religious, and traditional leaders, along with local residents, to enhance awareness regarding GBV.   |
| Service Delivery   | <p>The GoZ has set up 6 operational One Stop Centres offering comprehensive services for GBV survivors, including psycho-social support, police assistance, legal aid, and health services. Furthermore, there are 19 safe shelters available, providing temporary housing to survivors of GBV which has significantly encouraged the reporting of GBV incidents.</p> <p>The establishment of Victim Friendly Units (VFU) at all police stations and Magistrates Courts' which has improved the delivery of GBV-related police and legal services, ensuring that survivors can receive assistance in a confidential and safe setting.</p> <p>Further, GoZ recently amended the criminal code to expand the scope and definitions of sexual offences against minors including raising the age of consent to sex to 18 eliminating predatory and exploitative sexual behaviours towards children also integrates with recent amendments to the Marriages Act and the Children's Act which criminalised child marriages.</p> |
| Gender-Based Violence and humanitarian settings                            | GoZ is implementing capacity-building initiative for members of District Civil Protection Committees (DCPC) across the country. The aim is to ensure that every DCPC integrates GBV considerations into all aspects of crisis response.   |
| Resource Mobilisation  | The HLPC has been convened as a multi-stakeholder platform to mobilise resources and proffered various strategies towards implementation of programmes to prevent and respond to GBV.   |
| Research, Knowledge, Management, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Reporting. | <p>In 2023, the GoZ commissioned a GBV assessment study to evaluate the current situation of GBV. The findings of the study indicated that GBV is a significant issue despite existing prevention and response measures.</p> <p>The GoZ has commenced; the development of a data management system software for GBV, and the training of personnel in data management.</p>  |
| Coordination   | GoZ established coordination platform through the Ministry responsible for Women Affairs to enhance GBV programming at both provincial and district levels.   |
| Women Empowerment  | Empowerment initiatives focused on survivors of GBV, women experiencing extreme poverty, women with disabilities, and those living with HIV. The goal was to  |

| <i>Thematic Area</i> | <i>Description</i>   |
|----------------------|--|
|                      | <p>prevent further abuse whilst ensuring that women at risk of violence gain economic independence, enabling them to make autonomous decisions in situations of abuse. A total of 3,293 women participated in the program, engaging in sustainable income-generating activities in Chipinge, Muzarabani, Umzingwane, and Hopley.</p> <p>The committee is further referred to paragraph 100–122 of the CEDAW/C/ZWE/CO/6 on funding opportunities at grassroots level for women.</p> |

## Reply to paragraph 17

### Implementation of the Marriages Act

59. Zimbabwe has taken several positive steps to implement the provisions of the Marriages Act concerning the prohibition of child marriage including :

- Enforcement and Prosecution of Child Marriage Cases;
- Community Education and Awareness especially in rural and remote areas, where child marriage is more prevalent with the involvement of Traditional and Religious leaders;
- One of the most effective strategies for preventing child marriage is to keep girls in school longer as well as implementation of Child Protection Policies in Schools such as gender-sensitive education and peer counselling programs to address the risks of child marriage among vulnerable adolescents;
- The designation of traditional leaders as marriage officer in terms of the Marriages Act will enhance their role in preventing child marriages due to the prohibition of such marriages and traditional leaders as gate keepers and custodians of traditions will form the first point of ending the malpractice. In early 2024, all traditional (Chiefs) leaders from across the country underwent an induction programme on the new Marriages Act empowering them on their role to fight and end child marriages as officer of the court in terms of the new function of their office as marriage officer.

Table 7

### Shows reported cases of child marriages in 2023 per province

| <i>Province</i>  | <i>Age</i>  | <i>Sex</i> | <i>Residence</i> | <i>Social and economic status</i> | <i>Position of case</i>  | <i>No. of cases</i> |
|------------------|-------------|------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| Harare           | -           | -          | -                | -                                 | -  | -                   |
| Bulawayo         | -           | -          | -                | -                                 | -  | -                   |
| Midlands         | -           | -          | -                | -                                 | -  | -                   |
| Masvingo         |             |            |                  |                                   | In 2 cases accused where sentenced 6 and 10 months respective. |                     |
|                  | 15–17 years | F          | Rural            | Poverty                           | In the 6 remaining case the accused could not be located       | 8                   |
| Manicaland       | 13–17 years | F          | Rural            | Poverty                           |  | 15                  |
| Mashonaland west | -           | -          | -                | -                                 | -  | -                   |
| Mashonaland east | 16–17 years | F          | Rural            | Poverty                           | 1 accused was sentenced to 12 months imprisonment              | 5                   |



| <i>Province</i>     | <i>Age</i>  | <i>Sex</i> | <i>Residence</i> | <i>Social and economic status</i> | <i>Position of case</i> | <i>No. of cases</i> |
|---------------------|-------------|------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Matabeleland north  | 15–16 years | F          | Rural            | Poverty                           |                         | 2                   |
| Mashonaland central | -           | -          | -                | -                                 | -                       | -                   |
| Matabeleland        | -           | -          | -                | -                                 | -                       | -                   |

## Reply to paragraph 18

### Child labour

60. GoZ conducted a national survey on child labour in 2019 which indicated that approximately 1% of the 4.2 million children were engaged in child labour. The sectoral distribution revealed that the majority (71%) of these children were employed in the agriculture sector, followed by retail trade at 17% and mining and quarrying at 5%. Further, the committee is referred to paragraph 13 above for information regarding Labour Inspections.

61. GoZ has been actively involved in eradicating child labour and places a strong emphasis on monitoring child labour under the National Development Strategy (NDS1). Key milestones towards elimination of child labour in Zimbabwe include:

- Zimbabwe became signatory to the 2022 revised *SADC Code on Child Labour* which provides for guidelines for Member States on issues of combating Child Labour;
- The *Labour Act* was amended in 2023 to increase the penalty for perpetrators of child labour from 2 years to 10 years;
- GoZ engaged NECs to mainstream child labour issues in their respective principal Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs). To date, over 30 NECs have developed sector-specific hazardous lists;
- Following the 2019 national survey on child labour, between 2020 and 2021, the tea and sugar industry as well as the artisanal mining sector were engaged to create awareness on child labour and to secure sectorial pledges and commitments to eliminate child labour. Awareness on the elimination of child labour across sectors remains a priority and is ongoing;
- GoZ launched the fourth generation of the decent work country programme (2022–2026), with a focus on advancing international labour standards and social protection where the elimination of child labour was identified as a key output.

## Reply to paragraph 19

### Birth Registrations

62. The Committee is referred to Paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 of the First Periodic Report on the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC). Further, the Children's Act was amended to empower Child Protection Officers to obtain birth certificates for children without parental care or identified as in need of care and protection. In terms of Section 11 of the Birth and Registration Act, Traditional Leaders are now empowered to issue birth records for home births within their communities.

## Right to an adequate standard of living (Art. 11)

### Reply to paragraphs 20 and 21

#### Ensuring access to adequate food, water and sanitation in the State party

63. Pursuant to Section 30 of the Constitution, GoZ is implementing various social protection programmes to cater for the most disadvantaged and marginalised groups and individuals through the following:

- The Food Deficit Mitigation Programme targets food insecure households and for this current period, 2.7 million households are set to receive food assistance;
- The Harmonised Social Cash Transfer designed to strengthen household economic status through provision of cash transfers. Currently 388 000 individuals are being supported;
- The GoZ annually funds an average of over 10,000 individuals who receive medical assistance through treatment orders which are accepted in public hospitals, some mission hospitals and local authority clinics;
- The Committee is referred to Paragraph 86 below on the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM).

64. In 2023, 72,460 children were reached with welfare and protection services, 1,515,047 children reached with education assistance, 3,895,652 received food assistance and 353,080 received cash transfers and 16,793 refugees and asylum seekers were assisted whilst 20,757 vulnerable migrants were reintegrated.

65. Further, GoZ recognizes that access to water is central to the realisation of socio-economic rights. In this regard, GoZ has embarked on several water related programmes including the construction of 12 dams across the country with the aim of providing water for drinking and bringing 350 000 Ha under irrigation by the year 2025. GoZ has also embarked on the Presidential Borehole drilling programme which is targeting to drill 35 000 boreholes.

66. In 2023; 3,895,642 food insecure individuals were assisted in the eight rural provinces on the country. In 2024, due to the Elnino induced drought, the target is to reach at least 6.2 million food insecure households and as at August 2024, GoZ has since reached 5,479,705 food insecure people with assistance from various development partners and CSOs.

### Reply to paragraph 22

#### Prison conditions

67. The GoZ has implemented several strategies to address the challenge of overcrowded prisons, focusing on constructing modernised prison facilities, granting amnesty, promoting open prison systems, and introducing rehabilitation programs. Two modernised prison facilities, smart prisons in Gwanda and Hurungwe, to ease overcrowding and improve living conditions are currently under construction.

68. Further, the Presidential Amnesty has significantly reduced prison populations. As of 20 August 2024, the population dropped from 21,949 inmates (21,160 males and 789 females) to 19,462 inmates (18,943 males and 519 females) following the latest amnesty. Amnesty has benefitted 12,507 inmates between 2021 and 2024:

2021: 2,204 beneficiaries;

2023: 4,406 beneficiaries;

2024: 5,897 beneficiaries.

69. Open Prison Facilities such as the Marondera Female Open Correctional Institution and Connemara Open Correctional Institution, are offering reintegration programs. These facilities allow inmates to prepare for release, preventing reoffending and reducing congestion. Marondera holds 38 inmates (capacity: 50), and Connemara holds 94 inmates (capacity: 108). GoZ also embarked on Income-Generating and Skills Programme imparting

entrepreneurial and trade skills training programs to rehabilitate inmates aimed at reducing recidivism. Programs such as agriculture, motor mechanics, clothing technology, carpentry, and education engaged 14,378 inmates in July 2024 alone. This approach equips inmates with skills for post-release employment, reducing chances of reoffending.

### **Reply to paragraph 23**

#### **Land Audit**

70. The results of the recently concluded Land Audit by the Lands Commission are yet to be published.

### **Right to physical and mental health (Art. 12)**

### **Reply to paragraph 24**

#### **Availability and Accessibility of Quality Health Care**

71. GoZ is in the process of constructing healthcare infrastructure which includes the construction of the Lupane Provincial Hospital, expansion of Mashonaland Central and Matabeleland South provincial hospitals, 4, 22-bedded mini hospitals including 60 health posts, 22 rural health centres and 5 district hospitals across all provinces. With regards to infrastructure enhancement and innovation in health care services, to date, GoZ has installed solar systems in 1,100 health facilities. Additionally, 1,400 solar refrigerators have been installed for immunisation programs including hard to reach areas.

72. GoZ is providing medical equipment and technologies such as digital X-ray machines, ventilators and laboratory equipment for diagnostic, therapeutic, anaesthesia and critical care equipment as well as maternity equipment. Further, GoZ has installed oxygen reticulation system at 12 health institutions. To date, solar systems for power back-up have been installed to 1080 health facilities. The government has established state-of-the-art, world-standard warehousing and transportation facilities for the nation's medicines. With a target to upgrade storage space for 500 health facilities, 57 was achieved by 2022. The Government has installed oxygen reticulation system at 12 health institutions.

73. There is high attrition in the health sector, and based on the Health Labour Market Analysis health worker trainings has been scaled up by increasing the number of training schools, and the intake of trainees as well as the reintroduction of the Primary Care Nurse (PCN) trainings in 2021 after having been phased out for some years.

74. There was a general increase in availability of medicines in health facilities from 51% in 2020 to 54.3 % in 2021, though below the set target of 55%. The year 2022 witnessed a decline in the availability of medicines and commodities to 52,25%. The year was characterised by budget constraints and low releases. In the second quarter of 2022, almost 96% of public health facilities in Zimbabwe had at least 80% of essential medicines in stock. ARVs, antimalarials and anti-TB medicines stocks have remained adequate over the years. There are about 13 local pharmaceutical manufacturing companies producing finished products in Zimbabwe.

75. GoZ introduced a strategic initiative to eradicate the vertical transmission of HIV, Syphilis, and Hepatitis. This plan emphasised the primary prevention of HIV among adolescents and young individuals, ensuring early access to antenatal care, testing, and treatment for the three conditions. It also focused on the early diagnosis of infants exposed to these infections and provided community support for impacted families. Antiretroviral therapy is also offered at no cost with treatment services decentralised to primary healthcare level.

76. All citizens freely access health care facilities where they receive the necessary care. Any person seeking medical assistance is neither denied nor forced to receive such care. Further, through peer groups and networks individuals also receive vital medical information on STIs, HIV prevention including Condom promotion and access to HIV care. specific to their needs.

77. GoZ is currently in the process of developing a National Drug and Substance Control Agency Bill which will establish the National Drug and Substance Control Agency (NDSCA). The Agency is envisioned to enforce drug related laws and also the Agency will be responsible for coordinating access to support services.

78. GoZ has allocated approximately USD1.5 million from the treasury for the procurement of contraceptives.

79. GoZ has been implementing interventions to ensure the availability and accessibility of Reproductive Health Services including:

- Continuing to strengthen Mothers' Waiting Homes (MWHs) at health facilities by improving the infrastructure, resources and services which women access while staying in the MWHs e.g. daily measurement of blood pressure, foetal heartbeat checks, urinalysis;
- Implementation of community results-based financing to create awareness and demand creation for maternal health services including early identification of pregnancy and early bookings, through village health workers;
- Health Education Programs in maternity wards for expectant mothers, in general and outpatient wards for all patients and in paediatric wards for children and their caregivers;
- Removal of user fees for reproductive and maternity services in all public health facilities thereby improving access to skilled health care;
- Capacitating Health workers to provide Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care (EmONC) at all levels;
- Introduction of the Blood Coupon initiative with the help of funding partners which saw women accessing free blood transfusion for maternity causes.

80. GoZ has undertaken and accomplished the following initiatives:

- In September 2024, GoZ amended the Criminal Law Codification and Reform Act by expanding sexual offences against minors to eliminate predatory and exploitative sexual behaviour amongst other offences. Strengthening community-school-health facility collaboration through establishment of community led adolescent health committees affiliated with Health Centre (HCCs) and Child Protection Committees;
- Rolling out of a national parent-child communication programme in over 50 out of 72 districts to foster friendly and protective family or home environments for positive health benefits and outcomes for adolescents, including service uptake;
- Established youth led and accountability platforms for meaningful engagement of young people for demand generation, advocacy and client satisfaction measurement. Young people are also engaged through the Junior Parliament, Junior Councils and Young People's Network on RH and HIV;
- Adaptation and rolling out of the World Health Organization global standards on provision of quality and friendly integrated RH services nationally with a special focus on 32 high burden districts (with high adolescent pregnancies, early marriages and high sexual violence, among key factors).

81. Zimbabwe's current legal framework for abortion permits the procedure in cases of rape, incest or when the pregnancy poses a significant health risk to the mother or child. For further information the Committee is referred to paragraph 95 of the CEDAW/C/ZWE/CO/6.

## Right to education (Arts. 13 and 14)

### Reply to paragraph 27

#### Enrolment, Completion and Dropout Rates at the Primary and Secondary Levels of Education

82. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) and Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) are crucial indicators of involvement in the education system. The following Tables illustrates the disaggregated GER, NER, Completion and School drop-out rates at both primary and secondary levels between 2015–2022.

Table 8  
**ECD Gross Enrolment Ratio and Net Enrolment Ratio and GPI, Zimbabwe, 2015–2022**

| Year | Gross Enrolment Rate, % |        |       | GPI  | Net Enrolment Rate, % |        |       | GPI  |
|------|-------------------------|--------|-------|------|-----------------------|--------|-------|------|
|      | Male                    | Female | Total |      | Male                  | Female | Total |      |
| 2015 | 47.05                   | 46.84  | 46.94 | 1.00 | 28.54                 | 29.36  | 28.95 | 1.03 |
| 2016 | 52.10                   | 51.85  | 51.98 | 1.00 | 32.82                 | 33.32  | 33.07 | 1.02 |
| 2017 | 56.15                   | 55.58  | 55.87 | 0.99 | 31.70                 | 32.28  | 31.99 | 1.02 |
| 2018 | 56.11                   | 55.38  | 55.74 | 0.99 | 31.75                 | 32.1   | 31.92 | 1.01 |
| 2019 | 57.67                   | 56.82  | 57.24 | 0.99 | 31.95                 | 32.41  | 32.18 | 1.01 |
| 2020 | 46.62                   | 45.77  | 46.19 | 0.98 | 27.05                 | 27.07  | 27.06 | 1.00 |
| 2021 | 45.69                   | 44.85  | 45.27 | 0.98 | 24.56                 | 24.80  | 24.68 | 1.01 |
| 2022 | 82.45                   | 81.16  | 81.80 | 0.98 | 44.02                 | 44.29  | 44.15 | 1.01 |

Table 9  
**Primary School Gross Enrolment Rate, Net Enrolment Rate and GPI, Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2015–2022**

| Year | Gross Enrolment Rate, % |        |        | GPI  | Net Enrolment Rate, % |        |       | GPI  |
|------|-------------------------|--------|--------|------|-----------------------|--------|-------|------|
|      | Male                    | Female | Total  |      | Male                  | Female | Total |      |
| 2015 | 107.73                  | 104.69 | 106.21 | 0.97 | 88.04                 | 88.89  | 88.46 | 1.01 |
| 2016 | 106.44                  | 103.75 | 105.09 | 0.97 | 89.97                 | 90.06  | 90.01 | 1.00 |
| 2017 | 106.54                  | 104.66 | 105.59 | 0.98 | 89.28                 | 90.46  | 89.87 | 1.01 |
| 2018 | 107.25                  | 105.72 | 106.48 | 0.99 | 91.31                 | 92.5   | 91.91 | 1.01 |
| 2019 | 108.16                  | 106.95 | 107.55 | 0.99 | 92.88                 | 94.33  | 93.61 | 1.02 |
| 2020 | 97.37                   | 96.18  | 96.77  | 0.99 | 85.52                 | 85.62  | 85.57 | 1    |
| 2021 | 96.46                   | 95.20  | 95.82  | 0.99 | 83.22                 | 83.79  | 83.51 | 1.01 |
| 2022 | 99.85                   | 99.48  | 99.67  | 1.00 | 87.72                 | 88.94  | 88.33 | 1.01 |

Table 10  
**Secondary School Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) by Level and Sex, Percentage, Zimbabwe 2015–2022**

| Year | Form 1 to 4 GER, % |        |       |      | Form 5 to 6 GER, % |        |       |      | Form 1 to 6 GER, % |        |       |      |
|------|--------------------|--------|-------|------|--------------------|--------|-------|------|--------------------|--------|-------|------|
|      | Male               | Female | Total | GPI  | Male               | Female | Total | GPI  | Male               | Female | Total | GPI  |
| 2015 | 75.06              | 75.20  | 75.13 | 1.00 | 14.41              | 11.34  | 12.86 | 0.79 | 55.47              | 54.19  | 54.83 | 0.98 |
| 2016 | 76.78              | 76.49  | 76.63 | 1.00 | 15.68              | 12.58  | 14.11 | 0.8  | 57.04              | 55.46  | 56.25 | 0.97 |
| 2017 | 72.48              | 74.31  | 73.39 | 1.03 | 16.46              | 13.98  | 15.21 | 0.85 | 57.22              | 56.31  | 56.76 | 0.98 |

| Year | Form 1 to 4 GER, % |        |       |      | Form 5 to 6 GER, % |        |       |      | Form 1 to 6 GER, % |        |       |      |
|------|--------------------|--------|-------|------|--------------------|--------|-------|------|--------------------|--------|-------|------|
|      | Male               | Female | Total | GPI  | Male               | Female | Total | GPI  | Male               | Female | Total | GPI  |
| 2018 | 76.47              | 76.93  | 76.7  | 1.01 | 16.47              | 14.57  | 15.51 | 0.88 | 57.09              | 56.42  | 56.75 | 0.99 |
| 2019 | 77.74              | 79.44  | 78.59 | 1.02 | 16.62              | 15.28  | 15.95 | 0.92 | 58                 | 58.33  | 58.16 | 1.01 |
| 2020 | 68.57              | 70.19  | 69.38 | 1.02 | 14.88              | 14.51  | 14.70 | 0.97 | 51.56              | 52.63  | 52.09 | 1.02 |
| 2021 | 65.18              | 66.30  | 65.74 | 1.02 | 12.05              | 12.38  | 12.22 | 1.03 | 48.29              | 49.24  | 48.77 | 1.02 |
| 2022 | 74.55              | 77.23  | 75.88 | 1.04 | 12.07              | 12.27  | 12.17 | 1.02 | 55.31              | 56.81  | 56.06 | 1.03 |

Table 11  
Secondary School Net Enrolment Rate by Level and Sex, Number and Percentage, Zimbabwe, 2015–2022

| Year | Form 1 to 4 NER, % |        |       |      | Form 5 to 6, NER% |        |       |      | Form 1 to 6, NER% |        |       |      |
|------|--------------------|--------|-------|------|-------------------|--------|-------|------|-------------------|--------|-------|------|
|      | Male               | Female | Total | GPI  | Male              | Female | Total | GPI  | Male              | Female | Total | GPI  |
| 2015 | 51.05              | 57.25  | 54.13 | 1.12 | 8.27              | 7.75   | 8.01  | 0.94 | 50.36             | 51.13  | 50.74 | 1.02 |
| 2016 | 53.96              | 58.89  | 56.41 | 1.09 | 9.56              | 8.84   | 9.20  | 0.92 | 52.41             | 52.53  | 52.47 | 1.00 |
| 2017 | 52.44              | 58.54  | 55.48 | 1.12 | 9.79              | 9.66   | 9.73  | 0.99 | 52.36             | 53.21  | 52.78 | 1.02 |
| 2018 | 53.44              | 59.39  | 56.4  | 1.11 | 10.23             | 10.32  | 10.28 | 1.01 | 52.67             | 53.5   | 53.08 | 1.02 |
| 2019 | 54.73              | 61.45  | 58.08 | 1.12 | 10.31             | 10.69  | 10.5  | 1.04 | 53.39             | 55.11  | 54.25 | 1.03 |
| 2020 | 50.12              | 54.61  | 52.36 | 1.09 | 9.90              | 10.56  | 10.23 | 1.07 | 48.24             | 50.05  | 49.14 | 1.04 |
| 2021 | 48.32              | 52.78  | 50.56 | 1.09 | 7.73              | 8.68   | 8.20  | 1.12 | 45.49             | 47.07  | 46.28 | 1.03 |
| 2022 | 55.44              | 61.24  | 58.33 | 1.10 | 8.31              | 9.14   | 8.73  | 1.10 | 52.51             | 54.60  | 53.55 | 1.04 |

### Completion Rate

Table 12  
Completion Rate by Level of Education and Sex, Percentage, Zimbabwe 2015–2022

| Year           | ECD      |            |           |      |
|----------------|----------|------------|-----------|------|
|                | Male (%) | Female (%) | Total (%) | GPI  |
| 2015           | 84.45    | 83.61      | 84.03     | 0.99 |
| 2016           | 90.17    | 89.82      | 90.00     | 1.00 |
| 2017           | 94.12    | 93.25      | 93.68     | 0.99 |
| 2018           | 92.68    | 91.91      | 92.29     | 0.99 |
| 2019           | 95.00    | 93.96      | 94.54     | 0.99 |
| 2020           | 77.33    | 75.39      | 76.36     | 0.97 |
| 2021           | 74.67    | 72.85      | 73.76     | 0.98 |
| 2022           | 86.57    | 84.48      | 85.52     | 0.98 |
| <b>Primary</b> |          |            |           |      |
| 2015           | 78.71    | 80.78      | 79.73     | 1.03 |
| 2016           | 78.88    | 80.24      | 79.56     | 1.02 |
| 2017           | 77.74    | 79.83      | 78.78     | 1.03 |
| 2018           | 76.20    | 78.96      | 77.57     | 1.04 |
| 2019           | 74.50    | 76.75      | 75.65     | 1.03 |
| 2020           | 86.49    | 87.07      | 86.78     | 1.01 |
| 2021           | 82.71    | 83.97      | 83.34     | 1.02 |
| 2022           | 89.58    | 92.38      | 90.98     | 1.03 |

| Year                   | ECD      |            |           | GPI  |
|------------------------|----------|------------|-----------|------|
|                        | Male (%) | Female (%) | Total (%) |      |
| <b>Lower Secondary</b> |          |            |           |      |
| 2015                   | 67.27    | 64.08      | 65.68     | 0.95 |
| 2016                   | 66.79    | 64.53      | 65.67     | 0.97 |
| 2017                   | 68.06    | 66.65      | 67.35     | 0.98 |
| 2018                   | 64.76    | 61.47      | 63.12     | 0.95 |
| 2019                   | 73.38    | 70.06      | 71.80     | 0.95 |
| 2020                   | 64.75    | 63.34      | 64.05     | 0.98 |
| 2021                   | 55.17    | 54.30      | 54.73     | 0.98 |
| 2022                   | 65.98    | 65.93      | 65.95     | 1.00 |
| <b>Upper Secondary</b> |          |            |           |      |
| 2015                   | 14.33    | 10.83      | 12.54     | 0.76 |
| 2016                   | 14.53    | 11.18      | 12.82     | 0.77 |
| 2017                   | 16.61    | 13.29      | 14.92     | 0.80 |
| 2018                   | 16.04    | 13.88      | 14.94     | 0.87 |
| 2019                   | 16.98    | 14.81      | 15.87     | 0.87 |
| 2020                   | 14.67    | 14.05      | 14.36     | 0.96 |
| 2021                   | 13.27    | 13.38      | 13.32     | 1.01 |
| 2022                   | 12.87    | 12.64      | 12.75     | 0.98 |

Table 13  
Percentage of Dropouts by Level of Education, Zimbabwe, 2015–2022

| Year | % Dropouts Primary | % Dropouts Secondary |
|------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 2015 | 1.00               | 4.22                 |
| 2016 | 0.90               | 3.72                 |
| 2017 | 0.84               | 3.99                 |
| 2018 | 0.61               | 3.41                 |
| 2019 | 0.54               | 3.09                 |
| 2020 | 0.53               | 3.28                 |
| 2021 | 0.53               | 4.67                 |
| 2022 | 0.44               | 4.44                 |

83. Measures taken and their outcomes to prevent children from dropping out of school and to encourage their enrolment in school, includes:

- The School Feeding Programme: was adopted by the GoZ as a strategy to ensure optimal enrolment, improve school attendance, retention and completion rates whilst improving the health and nutritional status of all pupils with the socio-economic effect. It is currently being implemented in all primary schools with the intention of expanding it to secondary schools;
- Provision of Sanitary Wear: it is now a requirement of the law that GoZ must provide sanitary wear to girl pupils attending school in terms of Section 4 (1a) of the Education Act. For further information refer to *paragraphs 263* of the 16th Combined ACHPR State Party Report;
- Non exclusion of pupils: The law now prohibits expulsion of pupils on the basis of pregnancy. Therefore, pupils who fall pregnant are allowed to continue with their studies in terms of Section 68C (1) of the Education Act;

- Collaboration with Education Partners on the payment of fees and levies for vulnerable children;
- Procurement and provision of teaching and learning materials for pupils in disadvantaged schools by the State;
- Implementing the Guidance and Counselling module (Psycho-Social Support);
- Procurement of Assistive devices for pupils living with disability.

## Reply to paragraph 28

84. Measures to Improve Quality of Education are tabulated below and their outcomes.

Table 14

### The following measures were taken to improve the quality of education, and their outcomes

| <i>Measure</i>   | <i>Outcomes</i>  |
|--|--|
| Implementing the Teacher Capacity Development Programme in all learning areas at primary and secondary level;          |  |
| Aligning education policies to meet current needs  |  |
| Infrastructure development, particularly in specialist areas and Early Childhood Development, among others;            | Improved pass rate;<br>Increased pupil retention and completion rates. |
| Promotion of Learning Area Platforms whereby teachers share experiences and best practices to improve service delivery |  |
| Undertaking Curriculum review so as to align with current trends   |  |

### Measures taken and their outcomes to avail qualified teachers

| <i>Measure</i>  | <i>Outcomes</i>   |
|---|---|
| Filling of vacant posts and this includes the expansion of posts and attrition posts. This is meant to reduce the teacher-pupil ratio thus improving teaching efficiency and effectiveness  |   |
| The decentralised of recruitment of teachers to Provinces from January 2024 made the recruitment process more efficient, availing qualified teachers in time. In addition, recruitment of teachers in outlying areas has also been decentralised to Districts and this minimised the transfers of teachers. | Improved staffing at all levels and in all learning areas<br>Improved teaching and learning outcomes; and |
| Implementation of the Teacher Capacity Building Programme which offers various Degree programmes through the country's Universities.  | Reduced teacher-pupil ratio   |
| Enrolment of local student teachers in colleges in their Region to promote qualified teachers in Indigenous languages.  |   |



## Measures taken and their outcome to improve school infrastructure particularly in rural areas

| <i>Measure</i>   | <i>Outcomes</i>  |
|--|--|
| Implementing Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) whereby private entities and Education Development partners take part in building new schools and renovations of dilapidated buildings.                    | Increased access to education; and Improved school infrastructure. |
| Introduction of Public Sector Investment Projects (PSIP). This programme is being implemented by the GoZ whereby a budget is set aside for the construction and refurbishment of the schools respectively. |  |

85. In implementing the amended Education Act, GoZ is implementing the Grant in Aid of Tuition programme as a step towards state funded education. Grant-in-aid of tuition is a pilot programme whereby 2 districts per province are beneficiaries of a Grant from the Government and thereby doing away with payment of school fees by pupils. Further, GoZ is in the process of finalising the School Financing Policy meant to guide the allocation of funds to schools in different contexts, and outlining a sustainable financing strategy based on the mobilisation of resources.

86. Additionally, GoZ continues to implement BEAM which is a programme targeting vulnerable children and provides school fees, examination fees, levies and building assistance to learners. GoZ is also implementing Development Partner funding mechanisms to assist Orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) and children from indigent families.

## Cultural Rights (Art. 15)

### Reply to paragraph 29

87. GoZ has developed the Smart Education/E-learning implementation Strategy encompassing establishment of ICT labs in schools, provision of power to educational institutions, internet connectivity for schools and the development of software for e-learning amongst others.

88. The GoZ through the Universal Services Fund (USF) has rolled out various e-learning projects to schools making ICT services universally accessible to unserved and underserved areas in Zimbabwe such as:

- 1300 Schools Connectivity Project commenced in 2016 in partnership with Zimbabwe Academic Research Network (ZARNet) to provide internet connectivity to 1300 schools in Zimbabwe. The scope of the project also included the provision of functional websites equipped with e-Learning Management System materials, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), telephony, e-mail services and tele-education/video conferencing facilities. To date 800 schools have been connected to internet;
- Provision of ICT Gadgets to Schools ran from 2017 to 2021. Under this phase USF provided ICT gadgets to schools. A total of 7128 computers, 60mprinters, 60 projectors were disbursed to 658 schools during that period;
- Provision of Internet Connectivity to 1500 rural Schools commenced in 2020 and is currently running. Whilst continuing to distribute computers to more schools, the project is also rolling out Internet connectivity to various schools that benefitted under previous phases of the e-Learning Project. In this regard, the Authority is engaging Internet service providers for the provision of internet connectivity to 1500 rural schools across the country;

- GoZ in partnership with PORTAZ is implementing “A Computer Laboratory for every school” where it is establishing computer laboratories fully equipped with ICT gadgets and internet connectivity. Since 2022, over 800 computer laboratories were established with each lab equipped with 30 computers;
  - GoZ deployed Community Information Centres (CICs) throughout the country to allow for better access to computers and the internet by marginalised communities.
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