

## The Debates and Impact of Sanctions: The Zimbabwean Experience

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### Abstract

*This study evaluates the impact of the sanctions which were imposed on the Zimbabwean leadership in the new millennium in pursuit of human security and good governance. Using primary and secondary sources it argues that the imposed sanctions caused more harm than good and hence achieved the opposite of what they were designed to accomplish. Despite the debate generated on whether the sanctions are targeted or not the paper asserts that these sanctions further endangered provision of services as leaders neglected service delivery due to the imposition of sanctions which they dubbed an anti-Land Reform Programme strategy. The presentation further asserts that several sectors deteriorated; risking the lives of many Zimbabweans as water supply, education and health delivery systems collapsed. Therefore sanctions served to aggravate the welfare of ordinary Zimbabweans with very little achievement on the objectives of the embargo. Instead of registering improvements, sanctions soured relations between Zimbabwe and the west. Mediators should therefore seek to harmonise relations amongst Zimbabweans, Zimbabweans and other nations through the strategy of engagement. It is my submission that, where sanctions are imposed, it should be after a deeper scrutiny on their wider short and long term repercussions on the ordinary powerless citizens of the targeted country. One may find it fruitful and humane if great players in diplomacy search for flexible strategies of engagement rather than rely on rift widening tactics like sanctions which impact negatively on vital service providing systems such as health, education, water and sanitation.*

**Key Words:** sanctions, water, health, education, service delivery, Government of National Unity.

### Introduction

Over the years countries accused for violating human rights had sanctions in their different forms imposed on them. In their diverse packages sanctions are a penalty imposed to ensure compliance with the law. In human history economic sanctions have been used in response to international crisis, as an alternative to the use of armed force for instance; Napoleon Bonaparte almost brought Britain to her knees through his famous continental system had the British not responded with counter-measures guided by the Orders in Council (Thomson 1969: 43-8). A couple of decades later nation states used this strategy under the emblem of the United Nations (UN) charter as a peaceful means to settle disputes. For example in the sixties sanctions were imposed on Rhodesia for flouting human rights. The major goal of sanctions is to punish the rule breaker so as to prevent him from attaining his objectives and aim to change the rule breaker's policy. More-so sanctions are designed to safeguard economic interests of the imposer.

For over a decade, Zimbabwe has been under economic sanctions imposed by the European Union (EU), the United States of America (USA) and Australia accusing the government of human rights violations. The EU and US consider the sanctions as targeted restrictive measures on President Mugabe and officials who support his rule. On the other hand, ZANU (PF) views these sanctions as targeting the whole nation and for that matter an anti-Land Reform Programme strategy. This presentation briefly discusses the history of sanctions, disputations which have been generated by the sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe and outlines the sanctions road map. Furthermore, it unveils the suffering caused by sanctions as education, water and the health delivery systems collapsed. The argument being that targeted or not, sanctions had far reaching consequences since for over a decade ruined service delivery to Zimbabweans. Therefore in light of the damaging effect of the sanctions parties to the conflict should be encouraged to embark on a regulated removal road map attached to the six issues in the Global Political Agreement (GPA) such as the creation of a reliable voters' roll, transparent handling of the emotive land issue and media reforms. It is high time for the US, EU and Australia to realize that the sanctions had and are still inflicting devastating effects not only on the targeted few but on the poor majority Zimbabweans.

## **Sanctions: History**

Sanctions are an instrument accessible to the Security Council acting under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter in the event of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression. They were employed two times during the Bi-polar system from 1945 to 1990, against Rhodesia (1968) and then South Africa (1977). The use of sanctions amplified since the break-up of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the end of the bipolar system between East-West in international relations in 1991. It would be befitting to refer to the post Cold War era as the sanctions era. Several sanction regimes were adopted by the Security Council from 1990 to the present. Sanctions were imposed against; Iraq (1990), the former Yugoslavia (1991), the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1992), Libya (1992), Somalia (1992), Haiti (1993), UNITA (1993), Rwanda (1994), Liberia (1994), the Bosnian Serbs (1994), Sudan (1996), Sierra Leone (1997), the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1998), the Taliban (1999), Eritrea and Ethiopia (2000), Zimbabwe (1998), Iran (1979), Libya (2011), Syria (2011) and Iran (2012). The sanctions against Iraq, were in force for over a decade. Even if humanitarian exemptions (the oil-for-food program) were gradually widened, the sanctions were at the heart of the debate for several years, especially their use and who they affected. It is the example of Iraq which allowed the international community to appreciate the political and, above all, the humanitarian problems that the imposition of sanctions raise, whether targeted or not. The sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe like those imposed on Iraq, threatened and are still harming institutions which are vital for the survival, sustenance and continuity of human security of the poor majority.

## **Why Resort to Sanctions: The Zimbabwean Experience**

The use of economic sanctions to force an opponent to abide by the law is not a new phenomenon in documented history. A lot has been written articulating the reasons which led to the imposition of sanctions and their effects. There are three broad options which are used to respond to international crisis. They include doing nothing, considering taking military action and to seek to impose economic sanctions (Renwick 1981: 2). Any of these three options are employed to cause pain on the offending country. Economic sanctions are designed to punish the rule violator and to safeguard the economic interests of the imposer (Miyagawa 1992: 9). Sanctions may be introduced as a strategy of deterring states from wrongdoing in order to implement collective security. In support of this view Joseph Kurebwa observed that “a delinquent state threatens international security either through acts of aggression or by creating domestic conditions that are conducive for international anarchy” (Kurebwa 2000: 3). Sanctions are considered a better alternative than military compulsion or force.

Sanctions were imposed on Zimbabwe then Rhodesia in the sixties after she was accused of infringing human rights. Instead of alleviating the plight of the people whose rights were violated, the sanctions led to the deterioration of the situation they were meant to alleviate (Strack 1979: 44). Furthermore, not all countries support the imposition of sanctions on another country as a result of a number of factors including state-centric interests. A practical example was the imposition of sanctions on Rhodesia during the war against the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army and Zimbabwe People’s Revolutionary Army forces in their struggle for Zimbabwe, when apartheid South Africa, Israel and Portugal did not uphold the sanctions as they continued to trade with the Rhodesian Government. Consequently, oil was pumped into Rhodesia and a Machipinda service station was built in January 1966 in an effort to aid the flow of oil into the country (Jardim 1979: 44). Another vivid example came after Mozambique closed her border with Rhodesia in 1976 in support of black majority rule, South Africa allowed the late Ian Smith led government to rapidly construct a railway line to connect to South Africa via Beit Bridge (MS308/31/1: 1976-77).

## **Disputations on Sanctions**

Disputations on sanctions do not commence, during the Zimbabwean conflict. Writing in 1978, Strack asserted that Rhodesian sanctions were not only unsuccessful in terms of protecting policy objectives, they were perhaps 'counter-productive, leading to the weakening of a situation they were meant to improve (Strack 1978: 237-238). The subsequent year, Losman wrote that political success has not been forthcoming due to the Rhodesian sanctions, despite their damaging economic results (Losman 1979: 122-123, 124). He attributed Rhodesian willingness to negotiate to the increased costs of the war and hostilities of neighbouring states. In 1980, a year when Rhodesian whites capitulated to majority rule, Doney (1980: 1-2, 73), declared that the effectiveness of Rhodesian sanctions had been publicized as inadequate.

It was the military strength of the guerrilla forces, including 'heavy diplomatic force from Western powers and from South Africa (Losman 1979: 122-123, 124), with only limited role from sanctions that led to the surrender of power to the majority (Doxey 1980: 1-2, 73). A year following the independence of Zimbabwe, Renwick noted that sanctions 'have very rarely succeeded in producing the desired result' (Renwick 1981: 77, 87, 91).

There are basically two schools of thought in explaining the reasons as to why Zimbabwe was slapped with sanctions by the European Union (EU), United States (US), and Australia. Euro-centric individuals argue that they are only restrictive targeted measures on President Mugabe and his party officials. This school asserts that the sanctions have nothing to do with the economic meltdown since they only target individuals. As a result the brains behind the scheme call for the persistent existence of sanctions as long as the security of Zimbabweans is in jeopardy and if ZANU PF is still in power. On the other hand are the Afro-centric individuals who believe that sanctions were imposed as a countermeasure to the genuine Land Reform Programme. The argument here is that Britain was acutely affected by the land programme and launched an economic warfare with the regime change agenda. This idea has been stressed with a quotation from former US ambassador to Zimbabwe Howard, French who said, "everyone felt that they had invested something to the success of Zimbabwe, so when it all started unraveling, everyone felt personally disappointed" (Fowale 2010: 9). This statement is believed to be a great betrayal of the hidden agenda of Britain and the US, since it exposed the truth behind their mission. Contrary to the US and EU position, Fowale notes that "there is nothing that President Mugabe has done which is so strange in the continent- plunder, torture, corruption, ethnic politics, mismanagement, election rigging and state brutality as some of these abuses thrive with the support of the same great powers of the west and east who cry foul over Zimbabwe" (Ibid).

From the anti-Mugabe critics they attack him for his land policies, endemic corruption, Zimbabwe's involvement in the DRC war, absence of the rule of law, and other ill-conceived economic policies (Hondora). It is further argued that President Mugabe's political intolerance, electoral swindle and disgusting human rights abuses have contributed to the country's economic depression (Ibid). Certainly, it is accurate that each one of these often mentioned factors has contributed, or presents an explanation to Zimbabwe's economic quagmire. However, western countries and media almost jointly ignore one other important factor accountable for the country's economic disintegration notably economic sanctions imposed by the US, the EU and Australia against Zimbabwe. The US and the EU imposed and renewed sanctions on Zimbabwe accusing ZANU PF of infringement of human rights, white farm invasions, supposed election swindle, demolition of tens of thousands of low-income homes through Operation *Murambatsvina* (Clean-up), and the persecution of opposition advocates (Chogugudza 2009:8). Furthermore, they renewed sanctions because of the denial by President Mugabe and ZANU-PF to wholly execute the requirements of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) which culminated into the configuration of the inclusive government in 2009. From this standpoint sanctions imposed on ZANU PF are considered a tool to influence it to transform and not retribution.

The Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) believes that, sanctions were imposed as part of the overall United States (US) strategy against intolerable behaviour of foreign governments. In juxtaposition with diplomacy and other strategies, sanctions are designed to transform the conduct of the targeted nation in an effort to discourage other countries from committing similar violations in future (Ibid). ZANU PF argues that when the United Kingdom, the European Union (EU) and the US discovered that their regime change agenda through the complicity of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) was not achievable they slapped the country with sanctions (Guvamatanga, 2009: 4). This view is selfish because it reduces Zimbabweans to people who are passive-empty vessels and can not call for change of government unless this is induced by external forces. It ignores the many pointed criticisms by Zimbabweans on their government even long before the establishment of the MDC and it gives the wrong impression that without the west Zimbabweans would not be clamouring for change of government.

In addition, ZANU-PF holds that sanctions were designed to induce suffering on Zimbabweans so that they would turn against their government especially through the ballot box thereby bringing about change of government (Chenga, 2009: 6). ZANU PF concludes that the MDC politicians lobbied for sanctions in a drive to manipulate Zimbabweans for the furtherance of their objective of regime change, against a justified Land Reform Programme meant to correct the colonial imbalances. In this scenario the sanctions strategy was for removing those governments that pursue policies contrary to the economic interest of western countries.

In light of this, sanctions are/were a torch bearer of the US and EU's post liberation neo-colonial agenda in Africa, imposed to inaugurate pro-western governments. The feeling that sanctions are there to induce suffering on Zimbabweans is correct, but should not be laboured to the extent of giving a false picture that before the introduction of sanctions Zimbabweans were not suffering, when in-fact they did as a result of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme. Maybe what can be emphasised is the magnitude of suffering experienced when sanctions were imposed.

EU and US sanctions on Zimbabwe are considered as strategy to influence the Zimbabwean government to fulfil international obligations by respecting democratic beliefs such as the respect of the rule of law. Related to this point of view, in March 2001 the MDC legislator Tendai Biti noted that sanctions were provoked by circumstances where Zimbabwe, disregarded 'requirements of the institutions such as the United Nations Human Rights Charter, apparatus of the Organisation of African Union (OAU now the African Union (AU)), infringed its Constitution and its own laws (Parliamentary Debates 2001: 6142-3). Biti maintained that Western countries inflicted smart sanctions on Zimbabwe in a drive to compel the ZANU PF government to stop oppressing Zimbabweans. It is apparent that the MDC believed that targeted sanctions were applied on ZANU PF think tanks as a result of their failure to redress the absence of the rule of law and good governance.

Among other things ZANU PF invited sanctions as a result of oppressive legislation, as well as three constitutional modifications, which were passed between 2000 and 2007. These incorporated the infamous *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, which illegalised the exercise of journalism before one was licensed and the *Public Order and Security Act*, which rigorously limited freedom of speech and assembly including granting exclusive powers to the police ([www.idasa.org/.../](http://www.idasa.org/.../). *Idasa%20Restrictive%*). A series of constitutional amendments integrated: Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 16) Act, 2000 – designed to shoulder the responsibility for setting up a fund to compensate for agricultural land forcibly obtained for resettlement on Britain. In addition, Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 17) Act, 2005 - successfully vested possession of agricultural land, compulsorily acquired for resettlement purposes in the state. It prevented the courts from challenging any such acquisition.

A different MDC legislator the late Learnmore Jongwe deplored the decision to impose sanctions on Zimbabwe and denied that MDC called for sanctions. He noted that attacking the MDC was at all times a ZANU PF scheme of distancing itself from essential short comings (Parliamentary Debates 2001: 6145). Added to this Jongwe said that there was no proof tabled in the House of Assembly pointing to a single member of the MDC responsible for sanctions. He cited President Robert Mugabe for his pronouncement that, he would decline to acknowledge and permit the opposition to govern the country even if they won an election. Jongwe, further singled out the Justice Minister Patrick Chinamasa for compelling judges to resign, openly attacking the Judiciary and intimidating it with war veterans.

Gideon Gono regret, sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe on the grounds that they led to “the drying up of project finance and balance of payments support” and noted that sanctions had far reaching effects on the majority of the people and this was noticeable through the following economic challenges:

- i. Denial of medication to the unborn child;
- ii. Poor rural folks not able to grind their maize;
- iii. School children not able to go to school;
- iv. Transport system grinding to a halt;
- v. Workers walking to work because of fuel shortages; and
- vi. Blackouts due to electricity outages among many other ailments induced by sanctions  
([Dalje.comdalje.com/en/minute-by-minute/article.php?id](http://Dalje.comdalje.com/en/minute-by-minute/article.php?id)).

This view point can be challenged on the grounds that this was a diplomatic way by Gono one of the targeted ZANU PF officials to push for the removal of sanctions under the guise of the suffering many. It is my submission that it is juvenile for anybody to reflect that sanctions had catastrophic consequences on a few targeted persons. Patently, the effects of the sanctions were and are still being felt across the entire Zimbabwean spectrum. Admittedly, President Mugabe made blunders which affected the economy such as unbudgeted “exorbitant” compensation to the war veterans, costly venture into the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the radical nature of his land reform (Fowale 2010; 8).

Subsequently, these effects combined with those of sanctions crippled Zimbabwe's economic capacity. It was apparent that with sanctions the war would not end and this is evident in President Mugabe's remarks that; "our party must continue to strike fear in the heart of the white man, our real enemy" (Mugabe quotes). This explains why the indigenization program although laden with beneficial gains if it is professionally implemented, was instead rushed and aggressively kick-started thereby turning it into a retributive project targeting foreign owned, especially western properties. Accordingly, some hardcore revolutionary presidents have supported President Mugabe whereas those who believe that there were human rights violations are against him. This led the international community to criticize the way in which African leaders were/are handling the Zimbabwean conflict.

Jack Straw, the British Foreign Secretary labelled the African attitude, "a conspiracy of silence" (Fowale: 7). Former South African president, Nelson Mandela qualified the situation in Zimbabwe as a "tragic failure of leadership" and after the 2002 EU sanctions, the political advisor to former Nigerian president Olusegun Obasanjo observed; "they seem to want President Mugabe's head delivered on a platter of gold" (Ibid). It is alleged that some of President Mugabe statements might have compelled the west to be hard on Zimbabwe such as; "if the choice were made, one for us to lose our sovereignty and become a member of the Commonwealth or remain with our sovereignty and lose the membership of the Commonwealth, I would say let the Commonwealth go" (Mugabe quotes). These mixed views on the Zimbabwean conflict show that there developed confusion and divisions in world politics due to the subject of sanctions.

On the other hand sanctions and other ills of ZANU PF have allegedly compelled some members of the party to clandestinely work for regime change. This is evident in the famous whistleblower website, Wikileaks which name vice presidents; Mujuru and Nkomo, Gideon Gono, and Jonathan Moyo as protagonists of the regime change agenda (Makumbe 2011). According to the cables through the Jonathan Moyo-Branson plan, US\$10 million was to be used to sweeten President Mugabe to step down (Ibid). This strategy did not yield results because President Mugabe turned down the deal.

According to Mahmood Mamdani, it is difficult to imagine any leader more "reviled in the West than Robert Mugabe" (Mamdani 2008). In addition, he notes that liberal and conservative analysts similarly depict him as a "brutal dictator, and blame him for Zimbabwe's descent into hyperinflation and poverty" (Ibid). He further acknowledges that, "sanctions have been imposed, and opposition groups financed with the precise goal of removing Mugabe. The western powers and even some of his fellow Africans reviled Mugabe for his undeniable totalitarianism, or his readiness to accept and even persuade the violent actions of his cohorts. His strategy contributed in the destruction of the Zimbabwean economy, although sanctions have been the main culprit, whereas his denial to share authority with the opposition movement led to a sour standoff "(Ibid).

It is apparent from the above disputations that the criticisms from the contending parties are realistic. ZANU PF created a platform for the imposition of sanctions by violating human rights among other ills whereas the west found it vital to use the MDC to change the status quo in Zimbabwe.

### **The Imposition of Sanctions: Road-map**

Important to note is that the road to Zimbabwean sanctions was not a single night event but a process. This was apparent from Fowale (2010) who noted that, sanctions came in the following way;

- November 1998, International Monetary Fund (IMF) imposed unpublicized sanctions under the instigation of Britain and the US despite its earlier commitment to support Land Reform and Rehabilitation Phase 11 (LRRP11) in Harare the same year.
- September 1999, IMF completely suspended its support for economic adjustment and reform in Zimbabwe. The International Development Association (IDA) suspended all structural adjustment loans to Zimbabwe.
- March 2000, US senate passed the Zimbabwe Democracy Bill (ZDB) which made travel bans and froze assets belonging to President Mugabe, his family and other top government officials. It also denied Zimbabwe access to international loans and called her to withdraw forces from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and to respect existing ownership titles to property.
- May 2000, IDA suspended all forms of lending, leaving Zimbabwe desperate for badly needed funds.
- 2001, Britain cancelled an aid package to Zimbabwe worth US 5 million dollars.

- 2003, US froze assets of seventy-seven government officials. Zimbabwe was expelled from the Commonwealth. Australia banned one hundred and twenty-seven people from doing business with her firms and together with New Zealand; they lobbied the UN Security Council to indict President Mugabe in the International Criminal Court (ICC).
- 2005, then US president G. W. Bush junior signed an “executive order” expanding the number of those affected by US sanctions including thirty-three institutions, a list which was further widened after the 2008 election upheavals.

### **Targeted or not: Who is Affected**

The sanctions slapped travel bans on individual officials in ZANU PF and froze their assets thereby making the sanctions targeted.

At the same time if the sanctions were targeted one wonders why Zimbabwe was excommunicated from the Commonwealth of Nations in 2002 after the deeply contested presidential elections and why the International Monetary Fund withheld funds meant for economic development? The institutions which stopped to work with Zimbabwe were benefiting the whole nation not individuals. Therefore removing their services in the belief that only targeted individuals would be affected is to hit a snag and a deliberate attempt to cast a blind eye on the broader impact of sanctions. The so called targeted sanctions had serious repercussions on Zimbabweans evidenced by the collapse of water, education and health services.

Despite the fact that a lot has been said about the effects of sanctions on some sectors of the economy, not much attention has been given on how the unlawful restriction has adversely affected the agricultural sector which has been depicted as one of the foundations of Zimbabwe’s economic recuperation (Zindi 2011). Contrary to the assertion that sanctions in Zimbabwe are ring-fenced and targeted at a small number of persons, the truth is that the stiff grip of the confirmed and clandestine sanctions is being felt all over the whole economy including farming (Ibid). Indeed, education, health and water services were not excluded from the economic challenges which descended as a result of the economic embargo.

It is the innocent and the impoverished that have been largely affected by the economic sanctions both directly and indirectly. This has been the case in Iraq an issue raised by Yaya Jameh, the Gambian president and admirer of President Mugabe after the invasion of Iraq and hanging of its president in the eyes of the world saying; “today in Iraq, with all their democracy, oil pipelines are more secure than women and children in the streets of Baghdad” (Fowale 2010: 10). This verdict serves to show that the strategies being used to ensure an end to human rights violations leave those to be protected more vulnerable or endangered. Therefore, the progenitors of the sanction strategy against Zimbabwe need to search for more humane ways of handling the Zimbabwean conflict without jeopardizing service delivery in education, water and health sectors among other areas hit by sanctions.

Zimbabweans at all levels have been deprived of their rights due to sanctions. The government officials allegedly targeted by the sanctions, although affected were not dehumanized as did the poor many Zimbabweans. It is evident from history that sanctions’ major weakness is that they affect the people they are meant to protect hence can not be relied upon in securing stability in the international system (Parliamentary Debates 2006: 51). In fact the sanctions harm the economies of imposers and the targeted state (Kurebwa 2000: 3). Sanctions whether targeted or not hurt the ordinary people. Boutros-Ghali echoed the same sentiments by noting that “the use of sanctions raise ethical issues concerning the suffering they inflict on innocent victims...” (Chogugudza 2009: 8). This is true if one examines the Zimbabwean situation focusing attention on the damaged international relations, collapse of health, education and water delivery systems.

According, to Wikileaks cable Vice President Joice Mujuru met the United States Ambassador to Zimbabwe Charles Ray in a secret location on the outskirts of Harare on the 16th December 2009. She is alleged to have begun the discussion by focusing on sanctions. She argued that whilst the targets of the sanctions (she and others), were not hurt, ordinary Zimbabweans were afflicted as a result of sanctions on institutions such as ZB Bank and Agribank, which traditionally gave loans to small business persons and farmers.

([www.zimbabwemetro.com/?p=26658](http://www.zimbabwemetro.com/?p=26658)).

She concluded that the institutions could not lend because they were incapacitated by sanctions. It is also alleged that the US ambassador accepted that “sanctions were an emotional and pervasive aspect.

There might be willingness in Washington to look at non-personal sanctions, but this was not a one-sided process. With progress on GPA issues, the U.S. would consider responding” (Ibid). ZANU PF dismissed the allegations from the Wikileaks cable as western propaganda bent on dividing the party (Kholwani Nyathi 2011). Whether the Wikileaks cables are propaganda or not it is evident that sanctions had serious effects on those people they intended to protect including the targeted.

### **Effects of Sanctions**

The sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe had serious negative effects. They led to the collapse of health, education and water services. Hyper inflation in Zimbabwe was as a result of shortages of basic commodities caused by the sanctions. In addition, they harmed the government’s capability to obtain foreign currency, making it more intricate to procure essential goods like petroleum and pharmaceuticals (Carrera 2006). All of this spelt further darkness for consumers, who were already under pressure to keep tempo with Zimbabwe’s then runaway “inflation rate, which on 15 January 2008 was at 8,000 percent according to official figures -- but estimated by economists to be around 100,000 percent” (Elles van Gelder 2008).

To make matters worse, they caused serious shortage of cash in banks which led the Reserve Bank Governor Gideon Gono to introduce bearer cheques as an alternative but these were devalued within a day’s time (Ibid). At some point people resorted to corrupt means of accessing their cash from the banks such as giving bribes, forging burial orders and feigning illness (Homeless ...thewe.cc/weplanet/africa/zimbabwe/life\_expectancy.htm). The situation became feeble in health, education and water service delivery. Attempts by the government to control prices were fruitless as the Zimbabwean milieu declined into the law of the jungle or survival of the fittest. In 2008 for instance there were recorded cases of deaths due to hunger (Ian Smillie 2009).

### **Water**

The urban water supply was mandated to Urban Councils up to 2004 when water resources were fully commercialized through the 1998 Water Reform Act. Consequently, after the take over by the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA) from the Harare City Council (HCC) water service delivery increased its pace of deterioration.

Zimbabwe’s urban areas have been experiencing water supply challenges for the past years under the management of urban councils and ZINWA. Research show that, the water service delivery has been deteriorating from the late 1990s up to the present day especially in the large cities of Harare and Bulawayo (Jonga. and Chirisa, 2009). However, in the city of Harare, poor performance by ZINWA resulted in persistent water shortages (Zimeye 7 June 2009). The most affected areas were low income residential areas for instance Mabvuku, Tafara and Budiriro due to limited alternative sources of water and high population densities (Musemwa 2008). Nonetheless, high income suburbs located in the eastern area for example Greendale, Glen Lorne, Chisipite and Park Meadowlands also suffered from this crisis. Water challenges worsened in Zimbabwe’s urban areas during ZINWA’s era and residents’ lives were endangered by the looming threat of water borne disease as they resorted to unsafe sources of water such as rivers, streams and open wells. Such a development led to loss of lives due to the outbreak of cholera whose epi-centre was Budiriro a high density residential place in Harare. The outbreak of a cholera epidemic took a toll across the country with 191, 164 reported cases and 4,047 reported deaths for the period 15 August 2008 to 17 March 2009 (OCHA 2009). The water challenges resulted in a cholera epidemic which the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the worst in Africa in the past 15 years.

Some writers argue that the causes of the outbreak of cholera were not limited to lack of water to flush toilets, lack of clean water supply but to failure to collect refuse, increasing population, institutional incapacity, little rainfall and bursting sewerage pipes among other factors (Jonga and Chirisa 2009). As a result the residents of Harare were dogged by a lot of challenges. Other scholars argue that some of the causes of cholera are institutional, economic and demographic (Manzungu and Machiridza 2005). The HCC and ZINWA’s contestations were responsible for some of the challenges. In response, residents resorted to various strategies in an effort to get water such as digging shallow wells, buying, using nearby boreholes and those who had motor vehicles had to fetch it wherever it was available (Nyika 2011). That is why the epi-centre of cholera epidemic was a high density residential place, where a significant number who can not afford other safe alternative means leave.

## Health

The significance of inter-ministerial cooperation and teamwork is commonly approved when the health status of a given population is an occupation of so many socio-economic factors and therefore the resolution of different government organisations. The health sector as an entity cannot ameliorate the health of the population. Education, water supply, sanitation, nutrition and even variations of earnings need to be handled as well (Tarimo and Fowkes 1989, Muhondwa 1986). Inter-ministerial teams can ease the sharing of resources and information needed for the effective performance of the system.

In response to the call for sanctions on Zimbabwe the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) floated Health Sector Support Programmes which were targeted at:

- i. Supporting the provincial health service capacity building and policy issues to Ministry of Health & Child Welfare (MOHCW);
- ii. Development of a gender strategy Support to HIV/AIDS activities;
- iii. Integration of Zimbabwe Essential Drugs Action Program (ZEDAP) to national laboratories;
- iv. Establishment of the health information system; and
- v. Support to the Health Services Fund Transport Management (Dalje.com [dalje.com/en/minute-by-minute/article.php?id](http://dalje.com/en/minute-by-minute/article.php?id)).

The scheme was set up in May 2000, and it was prized at DKK 235 million (US\$ 29.7 million). The project was halted allegedly because of the Land Reform Programme. The deferment of the programme consequently affected the general health of HIV/AIDS patients. In addition, the Health sector was funded by the Swedish Government to the value of Sek 50 million (US\$6.4 million). The objectives of the project were as follows:

- i. Improving water and sanitation;
- ii. Health education and conditions of the disabled; and
- iii. Prevention of the spread of HIV/AIDS related diseases (Ibid).

As a result of the sanctions deployed on the country, the support programs were stopped. Since 2000, no new programs have been commenced. Sanctions have also indirectly resulted in the relocation of the World Health Organisation's (WHO) regional offices to Congo Brazzaville, leading to the retrenchment of Zimbabweans previously working for WHO. The Kaiser Networks' Daily Reports of 28th November 2004 and AFP News Agency pronounced that Zimbabwe's funding application for its HIV/AIDS programmes to the Global Fund was turned down on political reasons ([www.africanviews.org/.../impact-of-sanctions-against-zimbab](http://www.africanviews.org/.../impact-of-sanctions-against-zimbab)). Three quarters of the equipment in hospitals in the City of Harare were dysfunctional resulting in serious effects on the common people especially HIV/AIDS patients who found it difficult to access drugs (Ibid).

In a report released by Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) the Zimbabwean crisis resulted into economic collapse, food insecurity and malnutrition and outbreaks of infectious diseases. They asserted that "the Government of Zimbabwe has abrogated the most basic state functions in protecting the health of the population – including the maintenance of public hospitals and clinics and the support for the health workers required to maintain the public health system" (Physicians for Human Rights 2009). More-so the services have been in decline since 2006, but the worsening of both public health and clinical care has dramatically increased since August 2008. In reaction, PHR called for emergency international intervention to address the water, sanitation, food and health crisis.

It was very difficult for ordinary people to access proper medical attention. Referral hospitals among them Parirenyatwa and Harare requested patients to bring at least 20 litres of water, gloves and food (Mombera 2011). To worsen the situation patients were asked to purchase medicines which were in short supply against a backdrop of a collapsed banking system which limited withdrawals (Ibid). The situation was worsened by the massive brain drain as hundreds of qualified health personnel left the country in search for greener pastures. The deterioration in the health delivery system was punctuated by massive strikes by the nurses and doctors, a situation that saw patients dying due to lack of medical attention. The Zimbabwean ambassador to the US congress in 2002 reiterated that; "...they imposed informal sanctions on the country in attempts to prevent oil deliveries from reaching Zimbabwe. This resulted in gasoline queues and closure of some factories. They withheld spare parts for our machinery including spare parts for incubators and respirators for new born babies" (Fowale 2010).



From the above it is apparent that the poor fell and continue to fall prey to the wrath of sanctions. The so-called "targeted" officials were affected but not dehumanized like the poor many by the challenges which dogged the medical fraternity. This is because they could easily access medication from other countries such as Malaysia and China, after disengaging the west.

Furthermore, the health sector faced so many challenges at a time when its services were needed the most. For example, the government's failure to provide adequate needs like water to the people led the outbreak of a number of water borne diseases including the cholera epidemic that decimated many people in the country. Evidence show that due to shortage of funds to buy purification chemicals such as chlorine, the Harare City Council stopped receiving piped water on 01 December 2008 not to mention some suburbs which had gone for years with the problem ([www.msf.org.au](http://www.msf.org.au)). This then marked a period when Zimbabwe experienced the deadliest cholera epidemic to be recorded which killed thousands of people in the country (<http://www.independent.co.uk>). The situation was further exacerbated by the end of November 2008, when three of the country's major hospitals shut down and those that remained had no staff and drugs. In 2010 the Government Works Programme revealed the shortage of the human resource in a report stating shortage of human resource as a major challenge with vacancy levels standing at; 67% specialist doctors, 57% environmental health technicians, 77% midwives, 44% nursing tutors, 59% pharmacy personnel, 59% radiography and laboratory personnel (Zhangazha 201). Such a development negatively affected the efforts towards improving health delivery system in Zimbabwe.

Consequently, the deteriorating situation become a major barrier to meeting the 2010 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which were combating HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and ensuring improvement in maternal health and reduction of child mortality rate (Ibid). The main reason given for the failure to achieve the MDGs was the considerable deterioration of the healthcare system.

### **Education**

Education is a fundamental right; it is a road to the accomplishment of an individual's ambition as well as a medium for socialization of societal norms and values from one generation to the next. Furthermore, education is the nerve centre for community and economic development of the country. Schools remain the fundamental systems for the provision of access to education therefore any meddling in their running disrupts the discharge of their responsibilities. In Zimbabwe formal schools are registered with the Ministry of Education, Sports, Arts and Culture. Owing to the imposition of sanctions teachers' conditions of service deteriorated alarmingly. Consequently, in an effort to earn a living some Zimbabweans resorted to the provision of education in informal schools, leading to the deterioration of standards (Mboti 2011). Only six percent of rural schools were by January 2009 open, and fewer than six percent of the population had jobs (Ian Smillie 2009).

The government failed to sustain a broad education system in the formal institutions and this became apparent as individuals, businessmen, school teachers set up their own schools without permission from the Ministry of Education, Arts, Sports and Culture. The unofficial learning establishments were identified as 'colleges' or autonomous schools. The informal institutions were situated in cities and residential places where learning took place in homes and church structures and some of the structures were incomplete. Even Washington Mbizvo, Higher and Tertiary Education Permanent Secretary acknowledged the emergency of informal schools when he commented that, "There are 524 registered independent training colleges in the country but thousands had sprouted over the years. Operations of independent colleges have always been mired in controversy" (Herald 13 July 201) The Education Sector Support Programme was funded to the tune of Sek 95 million (US\$13.9 million), by the Swedish government. The project ensured the provision of text books, special education needs, and construction of school buildings, capacity building and sponsorship of gender equity in education ([www.africanviews.org/.../impact-of-sanctions-against-zimbabwe](http://www.africanviews.org/.../impact-of-sanctions-against-zimbabwe)). The Swedish Government did not finance any new programs in the education sector after 2000 (Ibid). Such programs would have gone a long way in assisting the country's education system.

The massive brain drain which was aggravated by the unprecedented levels of unemployment and instability dealing the education sector a serious set back. Government schools suffered the most due to poor remuneration (Mboti 2011). This disadvantaged students from humble backgrounds as they could not afford to join private colleges or to go abroad for education like children of the elites who could study abroad. A plausible example is the reaction by a pupil, Sarudzai Mombeshora, to the minister of education, David Coltart after his publication of US\$20 as advanced level examination fees per subject.

She responded, “I had hoped that the fees would be lowered because I know that my mother will not be able to pay for me. I know that I have the potential and if I am to sit for the exams I will come out with good points” (<http://zimbabwesituation.org>). This shows that education became a preserve of the rich in Zimbabwe during the period covered by this presentation. More-so these negative effects brought by sanctions threatened efforts to accomplish the general objectives of the Zimbabwean education notably to;

- provide education for all at all levels, including non-formal education, eradication of illiteracy and appropriate care for the disabled;
- transform and develop the curriculum to make it more relevant to the country’s cultural-socio-economic and skilled manpower requirements, paying due attention to sciences and practical subjects and improving use of local resources in development of the curriculum and its delivery;
- improve the quality and standards of learning and teaching;
- maintain the cost of education at a level the country can afford and to obtain optimum efficiency and benefits from investment in education (World Data on Education 2006/07).

The tumbling service delivery system affected the education sector, as a result of shortage of water, electricity among other necessities leading to the closure of some educational offices including schools. This put the lives of pupils and students at risk as some institutions could not provide descent accommodation for the students forcing them out of residence especially those in the universities to live in very pitiable conditions (Nyawata, 2011).

Echoing the same point of view, on the situation, one student from the University of Zimbabwe said; “I have been living here for more than a year and I can tell you that it has not been easy because its survival of the fittest...staying here is almost the same as staying at Chikurubi, it’s a nasty experience...” (Rwodzi, 2009). This shows that the situation was beyond control when the University of Zimbabwe closed the halls of residents largely due to failure by service providers to supply water. Institutes such as the Women’s Law sunk a borehole for its students at Basil Fletcher Court within the University of Zimbabwe (Researcher’s Observation 2007). UNICEF sunk a significant number of boreholes within the University, but these could not meet the demand of staff and student population. Up until 2011 the water situation was far from normalcy evidenced by the construction of a 2 500 000 water reservoir completed in August 2011 thereby necessitating some halls of residents to open their doors to students (Bwititi 2011). This has been a vital achievement because it has rescued a significant number of students who lived under crowded and deplorable conditions not favourable for studying in Mount Pleasant a low density residential place in the proximity of the University of Zimbabwe.

Statistics prove beyond any reasonable doubt that the situation in Zimbabwe’s education system was pathetic. Explaining the deteriorating situation in the education sector Nherera noted that; 1998, enrolment stood at 2,509,153 and dropped to 2,488,939 in 1999, 15% of the children in primary school ages remained out of school while further 21% of those who start school drop out before completing grade 7 and 30% of those who completed grade 7 do not proceed to secondary education (Nherera). Incapacity by the parents and guardians to pay fees due to economic challenges led to this educational down turn. It must be taken into consideration that the people who are afflicted in this case are essentially the susceptible children of the poor. As a result children attending registered private schools had high chance to pass compared to those who attended poorly resourced schools. What must be appreciated is the fact that the effects the collapse of the education system had far reaching consequences in the social lives of the people in the country. For instance it led to an increase in the rate of HIV/AIDS, theft, hooliganism and robbery due to poverty (Ibid).

Given this scenario, the imposition of sanctions by western countries had serious negative effects on the class of Zimbabweans they were designed to protect. Without with standing the fact that the targeted group was affected it is the ordinary person who was hit hardest. Even, De Klerk who advises countries on development had reservations about the attitudes of western countries when he argued that, “if I look at the EU policy towards sub-Saharan Africa, I do not see a coherent policy nor from the US. They are trading water.” He added that, “We are not looking for handouts, grants or gifts but we are looking for help in building capacity and infrastructure” (Sunday Times 2011). It is against this background that the paper encourages dialogue between the western countries and Zimbabwe through diplomatic engagement in drive to ensure proper service delivery in education and sustainable national development.

### **Way forward after the Formation of the Government of National Unity**

With regards to the Zimbabwean conflict the international community has three choices: uphold the sanctions, completely lift restraining measures, and the regulated removal of the limiting measures attached to six yardsticks. ZANU-PF has successfully generated the restrictive measures debate within the framework of Western interference. Upholding the sanctions may do little to persuade ZANU PF to concede to further demands within the GPA. Maintaining sanctions is likely to lengthen the impasse between ZANU-PF and the Movement for Democratic Change formations (Mutambara (MDC-M) and Tsvangirai (MDC-T). To this end the failure by the west to offer substantive developmental assistance to Zimbabwe encouraged Raftopoulos to conclude that; “this is a dilemma for the western policy on Zimbabwe for while the sanctions continue to put pressure on the ZANU-PF elites, the lack of substantive development assistance to the economy is likely to also weaken the MDC and its social base” ([www.nai.uu.se/forum/.../06/...south-african-led.../index.xml?](http://www.nai.uu.se/forum/.../06/...south-african-led.../index.xml?)). This revealed lack of will to support national development on the side of the western countries. Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai said that he lobbied for sanctions on Zimbabwe to be lifted, but insisted that his efforts were defeated by supporters of President Robert Mugabe who “did not want to let go of the culture of violence,” and concluded that, “it is difficult to convince the world that you have turned the corner when others are perpetuating the same culture of violence in the countryside; the same culture and behaviour that brought us where we are.” As a useful safety valve it is critical to put an end to violence in an attempt to find a lasting solution to the Zimbabwean conflict.

Likewise, lifting sanctions might be untimely, because the removal of sanctions may not be a guarantee that the international credit lines and donors would seriously and effectively re-engage Zimbabwe. The possible nerve centre to the elimination of sanctions which may satisfy all stakeholders is the regulated removal of sanctions attached to six yardsticks: the creation of a reliable and trustworthy voters’ roll, the establishment of an autonomous electoral commission, safeguarding media freedom, carrying out a people driven constitutional reform process, implementing an objective land audit, conducting a non retributive security sector transformation and implementing a national healing- reconciliation and integration process all in collaboration with the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). The composition of the team may even go beyond SADC to AU and the UN. The mediator may also encourage Zimbabwean leaders to take cognisance of the fact that Zimbabweans have suffered immensely and that development can be attracted by a peaceful and stable investment milieu.

### **Conclusion**

The violations of the rights of Zimbabweans go beyond the collapse of the health, water and education systems which have been covered in this presentation. Sanctions had a damaging effect on all sectors of the Zimbabwean economy and this in turn increased the levels of corruption thereby endangering service delivery. Above all readers should note that sanctions were not the only culprit towards Zimbabwe’s economic collapse since the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme, the involvement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, payment of the unbudgeted gratuities to the war veterans contributed to Zimbabwe’s economic meltdown. The question is what should Zimbabweans and the west do? It is critical to harmonise relations between Zimbabwe and the west for the benefit of the present and future generations so that Zimbabwe will look everywhere it matters for her needs. If blacks forgave their former masters after independence in 1980, why should it be made difficult for black against black to co-exist? Zimbabweans, SADC, AU and the UN should curtail any leadership geared at rolling the country back to the unstable years when the majority languished in abject poverty.

Credit lines should be opened for Zimbabwe as a drive towards employment creation given the high levels of unemployment. The land issue should be resolved by all stakeholders in a transparent manner, taking cognisance of the fact that it is an emotive issue hence should be accorded the seriousness it deserves beyond political lines. Party politics must be shelved in an effort to address service delivery in education, water, health and other crucial sectors of the society. It is admission that, the removal of sanctions will resuscitate the currently ailing economy and may lower the levels of corruption, encourage the return of the rule of law and end of violence. I recommend that even beyond Zimbabwe, where sanctions are imposed, it should be after a deeper scrutiny on their wider short and long term repercussions on the ordinary powerless citizens of the targeted country. Above all, great players in diplomacy should hatch flexible strategies of engagement rather than rely on dis- engagement tactics like sanctions which impact negatively on human security.

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