PARLIAMENT OF ZIMBABWE

Tuesday, 21st July, 2026

The National Assembly met at a Quarter-past Two o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS

(THE HON. SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

HON. P. ZHOU: Thank you Mr. Speaker Sir and good afternoon. I sit in the Parliamentary Committee on Health and Child Welfare. Our point of national interest is on Government's remarkable progress in addressing Obstetric Fistula (OB). The point of national interest is to commend the Government of Zimbabwe through the Ministry of Health and Child Care. The dedicated specialists at United Bulawayo Hospitals and their co-operating partners, for the remarkable progress made in restoring the dignity and lives of women affected by OB.

The recent successful completion of 55 free obstetric fistula repair surgeries during a specialised surgical camp at United Bulawayo Hospitals, surpassing the initial target of 40 procedures and attracting patients from our neighbouring country, Mozambique, is a remarkable national achievement. It reflects growing confidence in

Zimbabwe's specialised healthcare services and reinforces Zimbabwe's emergence as a regional centre of excellence in specialised maternal healthcare.

Mr. Speaker Sir, OB is far more than a medical condition. It is a devastating childbirth injury that robs women of their dignity, health and social inclusion. Every successful surgery, therefore, restores not only physical well-being but also hope, confidence and the opportunity for women to participate fully in national development. This achievement gives practical effect to Section 76 of the Constitution which guarantees the right to healthcare and advances the aspirations of Vision 2030 to leave no one and no place behind. Zimbabwe has demonstrated that with vision and leadership, dedicated health professionals and strong partnerships, it is possible to transform lives and restore hope.

To realise this ambition, the Government of Zimbabwe should continue strengthening quality maternal healthcare by expanding access to skilled birth attendants, emergency obstetric services and timely referrals, particularly in rural and under-served communities where the risk of prolonged obstetric labour remains highest. By protecting the girl child, keeping girls in school and strengthening community awareness, we will not only uphold women's rights and girls' rights but also prevent one of the leading causes of this devastating condition.

Our success should ultimately not be measured solely by the number of fistula surgeries we perform but by the day when no woman suffers a preventable childbirth injury, no girl is robbed of her future through child marriage and every mother gives birth safely with dignity and hope. I so submit and I thank you.

THE HON. SPEAKER: Thank you very much. You had all the time to do the tweeting Hon. Members. Most Honourables, since we started, you are on your cellphones. *Chave chirwere, umkhuhlane sibili* listen to what is going on. You learn a lot from others; even if they are saying things that are untoward to some degree, you learn the same. Now the Hon. Member, straight in line with Hon. Kaitano on number three, what is your name again?

HON. CHOKURURAMA: Chokururama.

THE HON. SPEAKER: You have a beautiful name. I will forgive you today. The national dress, if it is a shirt, should be the

Presidential shirt design, you know the famous Mandela shirt. You cannot have a shirt with a flap at the back and a flap in front. It should have some symmetry. The one that has a flap is not proper. So, Hon. Chokururama, today I forgive you. You correct the situation.

HON. CHOKURURAMA: Thank you Mr. Speaker.

HON. KARENYI: Thank you Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of national interest and I also want to add my voice as one of the Members of the Health and Child Care Portfolio Committee. Our point of national interest is on the growing burden of dementia in Zimbabwe. I also draw the attention of this House to a silent epidemic that is steadily unfolding across our communities but it is continuing to receive very little policy attention, which is called dementia.

Almost every week, we read notices on social media, in newspapers and also in community WhatsApp groups, of elderly persons who have gone missing. Families desperately circulate photographs and plead with the public to help to locate a mother, father or grandparent who simply walked away from home and never found their way back. We sympathise with those families, yet very few of us pose to ask an important question; why are so many of our elderly people going missing? For many of them, the answer may not be negligence; it may not even be old age; it may be dementia, a progressive neurological condition that robs people of their memory, judgment and sense of direction,

It is estimated that about 18 000 Zimbabweans are living with dementia, yet this statistic should not comfort us. It is not a measure of the true burden of the disease, it is a measure of the cause we have managed to recognise, the countless men and women whose symptoms are dismissed as ordinary aging, confusion or witchcraft remain invisible within our youth system and absent from our national statistics.

What is even more heartbreaking is that our elderly citizens are not only living with this disease, they are often punished for it. Only recently in Budiriro North, an elderly woman who had been reported missing from home was found dressed only in a petticoat. Instead of recognising that she may have been suffering from a recognised disorder, she was brutally assaulted after being accused of witchcraft. That incident should disturb every one of us and it also demonstrates that in our society, dementia is still being interpreted through the lens of superstitions rather than silence.

When memory fails, we say someone has been bewitched; when confusion sets in, we call them a witch; when an elderly person wanders from home, we rebuke them instead of asking whether they require urgent medical attention. The greatest tragedy is that we are criminalising the symptoms of this illness. This is happening because Zimbabwe currently has no national dementia strategy to guide awareness, prevention, early diagnosis, treatment, caregiver support and public education. Consequently, families are left to navigate this devastation condition alone while senior citizens continue to suffer in silence.

I, therefore, Mr. Speaker, call upon the Ministry of Health and Child Care to urgently develop and implement a national dementia strategy to ensure that dementia is recognised as a medical condition deserving care and treatment, not fear, stigma or violence.

I further call upon the Minister to present a Ministerial Statement to this House providing disaggregated provincial data on diagnosed and treated dementia patients to enable informed policy formulation and effective Parliamentary oversight.

Mr. Speaker, dementia steals memories, it must never steal dignity. Let us not become a nation that mistakenly mistakes disease for witchcraft or abandons those who once carried us simply because they can no longer remember the road home. Let this House lead to the call for a Zimbabwe that protects its elderly with knowledge, compassion and sound public policy. I so submit.

THE HON. SPEAKER: I did not see approbation from Hon Members on my right. What is the problem – [HON. MEMBERS: *Hear, hear*] - We are all possible candidates of dementia as we grow older. It is a silent disease that is very insidious and yet it creeps in families among the elders.

So, I request the Clerk of Parliament to write to the Minister of Health so that he can give a Ministerial Statement and in that statement, we want an indication on how we can control the situation and reduce the prevalence. One such issue is the diet, what you eat and the question of too much drinking alcohol is another cause and other causes that shall be stated by the Minister of Health. So, it will be very interesting to have that Ministerial Statement. Thank you Hon. Karenyi.

MOTION

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

HON. KAMBUZUMA: I move that Orders of the Day, Numbers 1 to 17 on today's *Order Paper* be stood over until Order of the Day Number 18 has been disposed of.

HON. C. MOYO: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

MOTION

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT, PUBLIC WORKS AND NATIONAL HOUSING ON THE PETITION FROM TINASHE MATIKA AND NKOSIKHONA SIBANDA ON THE DUAL LOCAL ADMINISTRATION IN HWANGE

HON. DR. NJANJI: I move the motion standing in my name that this House considers and adopts the Report of the Portfolio Committee on Local Government, Public Works and National

Housing on the petition from Tinashe Matika and Nkosikhona Sibanda, on the dual Local Government administration in Hwange.

HON. NYAKUEDZWA: I second.

HON. DR. NJANJI: Thank you Mr. Speaker Sir.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 According to Section 149 of the Constitution, read together with Standing Order No. 191 and Appendix E, every citizen and permanent resident of Zimbabwe has a right to petition Parliament to consider any matter within its authority, including the enactment, amendment or repeal of legislation.

1.2 The Committee received a petition from Mr. Tinashe Matika and Mr. Nkosikhona Sibanda residents of Hwange Concession area. The petitioners appealed to Parliament to address the plight of residents in eleven (11) wards of the Hwange Concession, who seek incorporation into the Hwange Local Board. They expressed concern that the current Local Government set-up in Hwange Constituency excludes approximately 20,000 residents from being recognised as stakeholders and beneficiaries of the service delivery mandate of the Hwange Local Board. The petitioners further noted that, despite their exclusion, the affected residents contribute to public funds through taxes and actively participate in the national electoral process, yet they remain deprived of the benefits of local governance. The petition was subsequently referred to the Portfolio Committee on Local Government, Public Works and National Housing, which undertook an inquiry into the matter and produced this report with its findings and recommendations.

1.3 Petitioners' Prayer

1.3.1 The Petitioners beseeched Parliament to exercise its oversight and investigate and rectify the following:

1.3.2 Review the policy that subjects Hwange Urban (Hwange Central Constituency) under dual administration.

1.3.3 Enquire into the operational modalities of the current Government matrix of Hwange with a view of making not only the necessary policy recommendations and amendments but also to devise a proposed timeline on the incorporation of the Hwange Colliery Concession residential areas into the jurisdiction of Hwange Local Board as prescribed by Section 274 of Chapter 14 of the Constitution.

1.3 **Objectives**

1.4.1 To assess the impact of the current governance structure on service delivery in the Hwange concession areas

1.5 Methodology

1.5.1 The Committee conducted public hearings and received oral and written submissions from key stakeholders, including the following;

1. Hwange Local Board,
2. Hwange Rural District Council,
3. Hwange Colliery Company Limited,
4. Zimbabwe Power Company
5. The National Railways of Zimbabwe, as well as residents from the affected communities in Hwange.

2.0 Committee's Findings

2.1 Hwange Rural District Council Submissions

2.1.2 The Committee was informed that the Hwange Concession area does not fall within the proclaimed jurisdiction of the Hwange

Local Board but is legally under Hwange Rural District Council as defined by the 2022 Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) delimitation report. Through this report, ZEC placed the concession area under Hwange Central Constituency for electoral purposes, while the other wards of Hwange RDC fall under Hwange West Constituency. In this regard, Hwange RDC argued that this arrangement was made solely to meet electoral thresholds, which does not constitute dual governance as alluded to by the petitioners.

2.1.2 Hwange Rural District Council was concerned that abrupt incorporation of the concession area into Hwange Local Board would have serious financial implications and viability of the local authority. It was gathered that the local authority had already planned its local economic development strategy and its master plan according to its geographical boundaries expounded in the ZEC report. Furthermore, Hwange RDC argued that the urbanised nature of the concession area fits within Hwange RDC's broader development strategy, which aligns with Vision 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

2.1.3 The Committee gathered that the Hwange Colliery Concession, being resource-rich, currently contributes to the welfare of the five chiefs of Hwange District and this benefit could be disrupted if jurisdiction is transferred to Hwange Local Board.

2.1.4 The Committee found out that Hwange Colliery Company Private Limited was responsible for all the service provision within the concession areas. These included 100% subsidised accommodation, water, electricity and infrastructure maintenance for its employees and other inhabitants. It was argued by Hwange Colliery Company that service provision within the 11 wards under its purview was better compared to the 4 wards areas under the superintendence of Hwange Local Board.

2.2 Hwange Local Board Submissions

2.2.1 Hwange Local Board informed the Committee that the 11 wards under the concession areas experienced scattered and uncoordinated developments due to lack of local planning authority. It was argued that this uncoordinated development was stifling the growth and expansion of Hwange urban.

Arguments for incorporation stressed the necessity of establishing orderly planning, zoning and land use control tailored to community needs through master plans and local development plans.

2.2.2 Hwange Local Board argued that the concession areas under the stewardship of the Hwange Colliery Company lacked adequate bylaws to govern its traffic system, resulting in disorderly and haphazard traffic management within the Hwange CBD. It was echoed that the proposed incorporation by Hwange Local Board would subject the concession areas to HLB's by-laws. This would, in turn, enable efficient and orderly traffic management and coordinated road planning management.

2.2.3 The Committee further gathered that Hwange Colliery Company Limited (HCCL), whose core mandate is mining, is currently burdened with providing municipal services. Incorporation would allow HCCL to focus on mining, while HLB assumes responsibility for municipal services in line with its statutory mandate.

2.3 Hwange Colliery Company Limited Submissions

2.3.1 The Committee established that the concession area was privately titled land owned and managed by HCCL although lying within the jurisdiction of Hwange Rural District Council (HRDC). Payments of land development levies to HRDC are based on section 95 of the Rural District Council Act, [Chapter 29:13].

2.3.2 The Committee established that the 11 wards within the Hwange Concession area under the administration of Hwange Colliery Company have their elected councillors sitting under Hwange Local Board (HLB). This misnomer was creating decision-making impasses wherein councillors under Hwange Concession were making decisions in a jurisdiction outside of their electoral boundaries. This governance impasse was a result of the 2022, ZEC delimitation exercise.

2.3.3 HCCL as a private entity, fears the risk of losing its assets, expropriation of land under title without compensation and operational instability that will potentially arise from incorporation process. A critical aspect was raised by HCCL alluding to the fact that forced incorporation would transfer

35% of the company's balance sheet assets, which are tied in infrastructure, amenities and utilities including roads, lighting, water, sewer systems and housing, to Hwange Local Board. The company fairly argued that incorporation without proper agreement, consultation and consensus among the parties involved will lead to the company's closure and unimaginable negative ripple effects on the socio-economic fabric of its workers and community.

2.4 Submissions from the National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ)

2.4.1 The NRZ submitted that it does not object to the incorporation of Hwange urban constituency. However, the company reiterated that guarantees must be given to it to ensure that it continues to control all the land under its ownership, including the railway station, facilities and the staff houses built on its land. The company argued that by having control over land adjacent to the railway line and station, the company will continue to grow and expand as per its future business development and growth model.

2.5 Submissions from Residents of Hwange

2.5.1 Hwange residents expounded that incorporation of Hwange Urban Constituency will give them ownership of company houses they currently occupy within the Hwange Concession area. Furthermore, it was emphasised that the incorporation will assist in transforming the colonial type of one-room housing and communal toilets to modernised housing units in sync with the current urban trends and dynamics. However, the HCCL clarified that the properties belonged to the entity and will remain company-owned as they are recorded on its balance sheet as core operational assets.

2.5.2 Other residents argued that the incorporation into Hwange Local Board would impose stiffer rates and levies on Hwange Colliery Company employees who are currently 100 percent subsidised on all expenses. The Committee was informed that this eventual imposition of new rates and levies would lead to a significant reduction of disposable income and worsen living standards.

2.5.3 The residents informed the Committee that the Hwange Local Board does not have the capacity to take over the 11 Wards within the Concession area and properly provide adequate services. It was highlighted that the Board did not have adequate staff in key areas such as engineering and planning to take over the enormous task currently being administered by the HCCL. With this in mind, it was echoed by the residents that any possible discussion on incorporation must take place after significant capacity building of human and technical resources at Hwange Local Board. Furthermore, calls for an implementation framework based on stakeholder engagement, consensus and capacity enhancement were made loud and clear by residents of Hwange.

2.6 Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfers (Devolution Funds)

2.6.1 The Committee gathered that the 11 wards located within privately owned land under the Hwange Colliery Company, were not receiving any Government funding or Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfers (Devolution Funds). The Committee was informed that the disqualification of the concession area from receiving Government funding was short-changing the residents of the area from receiving much-needed financial support to augment of existing service provision gaps. The residents of the concession area underscored that every Zimbabwean had a right to benefit from Intergovernmental fiscal transfers.

2.7 Legacy Issues on Incorporation

2.7.1 The Committee gathered that the local governance problem currently transpiring in Hwange had been discussed by the local leadership and the then Minister of Local Government and Public Works, Hon. July Moyo. The Minister had indicated that a commission of enquiry was needed to expedite the incorporation of Hwange and the consultation of key stakeholders. However, the Committee found out that the Commission of Enquiry was yet to undertake the important exercise. This delay had stalled the process of rectifying the local governance impasses and the issues causing the grievances between the stakeholders in Hwange.

3.0 Committee Observations

3.1.1 Section 71 of the Constitution protects HCCL's property rights, preventing compulsory deprivation of assets without compensation. To this end, incorporation of HCCL's private land into HLB jurisdiction without compensation will not only be unconstitutional and unlawful, but most importantly an infringement on property rights.

3.1.2 The residents residing within Hwange Concession areas are caught in a governance puzzle. Although administratively under Hwange RDC, the area is politically represented by councillors adjudicating under Hwange Local Board. This arrangement unfortunately excludes them from meaningful participation in policy and decision-making, as rightfully echoed by the petitioners.

3.1.3 The Committee observed that Hwange Colliery Company and Hwange RDC were not in support of changing the current local Government matrix through the incorporation of the Hwange Concession area into the Hwange Local Board. Arguments on property rights, investments made and revenue generation issues raised by the RDC were valid and must be given serious consideration by the Executive. Incorporation will have possible negative effects on Hwange RDC's revenue and derail its development agenda set out in its master plan and local economic development policy. Hwange has a delicate local governance system that needs a thorough enquiry by the Executive to fully understand the sinews and ligaments of its very architecture.

3.1.4 Hwange is fast growing and booming due to the rapidly expanding mining activity, which requires urgent intervention for its upgrading to a thriving urban industrial hub. However, the current setup, on what the Committee observed as a disjointed urban administration system, undermines any meaningful progress towards having a vibrant urban systems which responds to the need of the growing population and the fast-developing need for good urban governance.

3.1.5 Hwange Local Board does not have the capacity to captain the whole Hwange Urban Constituency once the incorporation is implemented. The capacity of the local board must first be augmented through deliberate intergovernmental strategies and the implementation of a transitional framework bolstered on urban planning fundamentals.

3.1.6 The disjuncture of the 11 wards under the concession area represented by councillors who sit under the Hwange Local Board is an anomaly, which need immediate intervention. The ZEC delimitation report placed citizens under the Hwange Concession area under pseudo local representation were councillors have no means to deliver any meaningful input into issues affecting the residents.

3.1.7 The Committee further observed that the concession areas currently do not have access to funding streams such as the Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) and Government loans, which individual concession units cannot access.

4.0 Committee Recommendations

4.1 The Committee recommends that a Commission of enquiry be established by the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works to ascertain the feasibility of incorporating Hwange urban under one Local Government unit by 31 August 2026.

4.2 The Committee recommends that adequate modalities be put in place to ensure fair compensation to HCCL should the concession areas be incorporated into the Hwange Local Board. In line with Section 71 of the Constitution, any lawful incorporation must be preceded by just and adequate compensation for both movable and immovable assets of HCCL.

4.3 The Ministry of Local Government and Public Works must review the ZEC delimitation report and address the incoherence of administrative boundaries between Hwange Local Board and Hwange RDC by 31 December 2026.

4.4 The Committee recommends that the incorporation of concession areas into the Hwange Local Board be pursued and completed by 31 December 2026 to facilitate the following;

a. The upgrading of housing and sanitation infrastructure. This would enable Government and development partners to implement targeted WASH programmes that improve access to clean water, functional sewer systems and modern ablution facilities.

b. To enable access to national funding streams, including the PSIP, significant IGFT and Government loans that will strengthen service delivery and infrastructure development in Hwange.

c. To establish orderly urban planning and land use management in the concession areas, through the adoption of master plans and local development plans tailored to community needs.

d. To ensure orderly traffic management, coordinated provision of public infrastructure and integrated urban growth across Hwange.

5.0 Conclusion

The Committee recognizes that the Hwange Concession areas face a significant governance gap, being administratively under Hwange Rural District Council while politically represented by councillors sitting under Hwange Local Board. This arrangement has limited the residents' participation in local decision-making, restricted access to essential services and hindered infrastructure development. While acknowledging the legitimate property rights of Hwange Colliery Company Limited and the need for careful compensation, the Committee recommends that incorporating the concession areas into Hwange Local Board is necessary to ensure unified governance, enhanced service delivery, orderly urban planning and improved overall quality of life for residents. Hwange is a prime urban area with all the hallmarks to be accorded a municipality status in the shortest period of time. Effective incorporation, accompanied by adequate planning, capacity building and just compensation, will align the area's development with national strategies and sustainable urban growth principles. Thank you.

HON. NYAKUEDZWA: Good afternoon Mr. Speaker Sir. I rise with gratitude for the opportunity you have offered me to contribute to the debate on the report on the Portfolio Committee on Local Government, Public Works and National Housing on the petition submitted by Mr. Tinashe Matika and Mr. Nkosikhona Sibanda concerning the dual local government administration in the Hwange Concession area.

Mr. Speaker Sir, allow me to begin by commending the Committee for undertaking a thorough inquiry into the matter and for producing a balanced report that takes into account the concerns of residents, the position of Hwange Colliery Company Ltd. and the broader constitutional governance considerations involved. I stand in support of the Committee's findings and recommendations. In doing so, I wish to emphasise the need to place the interest and welfare of the residents of the Hwange Concession area at the centre of any future policy decision regarding the administration of this area.

The issues raised by the petitioner's concern access to quality services, effective local governance and equitable development. The residents of the Concession area are Zimbabwean citizens who contribute to the economy through their labour, entrepreneurship, and tax payments. Like all citizens, they aspire to live in communities with adequate housing, reliable water supply, proper sanitation, modern infrastructure and access to development opportunities.

It is, therefore, important that any governance arrangements in place support these aspirations and ensure that no community is disadvantaged in accessing national development programmes. The committee correctly observed that the matter before us must be addressed within the framework of the Constitution and the laws of Zimbabwe.

Section 274 of the Constitution provides mechanisms through which local authority boundaries may be reviewed and adjusted where circumstances warrant such action. This demonstrates that our constitutional framework recognises that administrative arrangements may evolve in response to changing demographic, economic and developmental realities.

Mr. Speaker Sir, at the same time, Section 71 of the Constitution guarantees the protection of property rights. Any future incorporation processes involving assets owned by Hwange Colliery Company Ltd. must, therefore, be conducted in a lawful, transparent and consultative manner that fully respects constitutional provisions relating to compensation and protection of private property.

In this regard, I fully support the Committee's recommendation that the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works, working together with relevant stakeholders, develop a comprehensive framework to guide any future transfer of infrastructure and services. Such a framework should provide certainty to all parties while ensuring that the interests of residents remain protected.

One of the most compelling issues emerging from the Committee's inquiry relates to equitable access to development resources. The Second Republic has demonstrated its commitment to devolution through the allocation of inter-governmental fiscal transfers and the implementation of community development projects across the country. These initiatives are intended to ensure that development reaches every part of Zimbabwe in the principle of leaving no one and no place behind and that local authorities are empowered to respond to the needs of their communities.

The Committee noted concern regarding the extent to which residents within the Concession area can benefit from certain development programmes including funding mechanisms. This matter deserves careful consideration because the objectives of devolution can only be fully realised when all communities have meaningful opportunities to benefit from national development initiatives. The incorporation of the concession area into an appropriate local governance framework has the potential to improve access to development funding, strengthen service delivery planning and enhance coordination of infrastructure investments. Such an approach would contribute significantly towards achieving the aspirations of Vision 2030 and the objectives of the National Development Strategy 2.

The Committee also highlighted concerns regarding housing conditions and the sanitation infrastructure within parts of the concession area. Access to adequate housing, clean water and proper sanitation is fundamental to human dignity and social wellbeing. These issues are not unique to Hwange and form part of broader national efforts to improve living standards and modernise infrastructure throughout the country. As Zimbabwe advances towards Vision 2030, there is need for continued investment in housing development, water infrastructure, sewer reticulation systems and modern sanitation facilities. Such investments improve public health outcomes, strengthen community wellbeing and create an environment that supports economic growth and human development.

To that end, the incorporation process presents an opportunity to facilitate long-term planning and mobilisation of resources necessary to upgrade infrastructure and improve living conditions for residents. The Committee's report has also highlighted governance challenges arising from the current administrative arrangements. Effective local governance requires clarity regarding administrative responsibility, accountability and service delivery obligations. Where governance structures create uncertainty regarding planning, resource allocation and service provision, residents may ultimately bear the consequences. There is therefore merit in the Committee's recommendation that the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works review the current arrangements and identify sustainable solutions that promote efficient accountability and coordinated development.

A clear and coherent governance framework will strengthen service delivery, improve planning processes and provide residents with greater certainty regarding the institutions responsible for addressing their concerns. While the welfare of residents remains paramount, it is equally important to recognise the significant role that Hwange Colliery Ltd Company has played over many decades in supporting infrastructure and services within the concession area. Therefore, any future transition should be guided by principles of fairness, consultation and mutual benefit. Hence, I support the development of a transparent compensation and transition framework that provides;

a. Comprehensive evaluation of infrastructure assets.

b. Clearly defined transition arrangements.
c. Protection of service delivery during the transition period.
d. Continued operational viability of Hwange Colliery Ltd. Co. and
e. Effective oversight and accountability mechanisms.

Mr. Speaker Sir, such an approach would ensure that the interests of residents, Government and the company are balanced. The petition before us presents an opportunity to address long-standing governance and development challenges affecting residents of the Hwange Concession area. The Committee's recommendations provide a practical pathway towards improving local governance, enhancing service delivery, expanding access to developmental resources and promoting orderly urban development. As we pursue the national vision of leaving no one and no place behind, it is important that all communities are afforded equitable opportunities to participate in and benefit from national development. I, therefore, support the report of the Portfolio Committee and urge the relevant ministries and stakeholders to work collaboratively towards implementing its recommendations in a manner that advances the interests of residents, respects constitutional provisions and contributes to the broader objectives of Vision 2030. I so submit.

THE HON. SPEAKER: As a matter of interest, Hon. Njanji, did we interview the Minister of Local Government?

HON. DR. NJANJI: We invited him and he did not turn up.

THE HON. SPEAKER: How about the officials, the Permanent Secretary?

HON. DR. NJANJI: We interviewed other directors, not the Minister.

THE HON. SPEAKER: You invited who?

HON. DR. NJANJI: The directors came on behalf of the Permanent Secretary and the Minister.

THE HON. SPEAKER: Okay. They should have given you some history of what has been done in the past regarding the preliminary master plan and how the Copperbelt mining area towns in Zambia have resolved the issue of double administration between the concession mines of the Copperbelt and the local authorities. I hope those that will debate later will go deeper into the issue. I want to say that what I have heard from the mover and the seconder was not deep enough.

HON. MAKUMIRE: Thank you very much Mr. Speaker Sir. The situation in Hwange requires urgent Government intervention because what is happening there is unsustainable for the Hwange Local Board. The Chairperson has made it clear that legally, the Hwange Local Board has four wards that fall within its jurisdiction. The other eleven wards fall under the Hwange Rural District Council. In terms of the delimitation of 2022, ZEC decided to put these wards under the Hwange Local Board.

I am ambivalent towards the decision made by ZEC, because logically they did what is right, but legally, it is incorrect. What has happened is that in 2015, the then Minister of Local Government appointed a Commission of Inquiry to look into the aspect of incorporating the concession areas into the Local Board. There is a report that was produced. In 2022, I am not sure if it was the then Minister of 2015, I am sure it was Hon. Kasukuwere.

In 2022, another Commission of Inquiry was sent again to carry out the same exercise. The two commissions of inquiry have the same recommendations. ZEC realised that the Ministry was delaying in coming up with a position and a decision to finalise the incorporation of the concession areas into the Local Board. ZEC did what the Ministry of Local Government was supposed to do, although it is not the correct procedure. The issue before us Mr. Speaker, is that the Hwange Local Board is bearing the governance costs that are supposed to be borne by the Hwange RDC.

The councillors who are making decisions in the Local Board are councillors who are supposed to be sitting in a different local authority. This is increasing the financial burden on the Hwange Local Board because it is not collecting any revenue from the concession areas. This issue requires that the stakeholders involved, led by the Ministry of Local Government must hasten to finalise the issue of incorporating the concession areas into the Hwange Local Board.

The issue of capacity was also raised by residents and some of the stakeholders involved in this issue. One of the biggest issues that was being raised had to do with off-site infrastructure and on-site infrastructure. In terms of the Zimbabwe National Housing Policy, the Central Government has the responsibility of providing off-site infrastructure and the local authorities have the responsibility of providing the on-site infrastructure. If there is collaboration between these two tiers of Government, I am quite convinced that the issue of capacity can be addressed in this way. It was also raised that the Hwange Local Board and the Hwange RDC have last received their devolution funds in 2023. This is not particular to the two local authorities; it is an issue that is prevailing across all the local authorities.

Our Constitution is very clear on the disbursement of Devolution Funds. Surprisingly, we have seen that the Minister of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion is continuously violating the Constitution, ignoring the provisions of Section 301 (3) and (4). As a way forward, I support the recommendations that were made by the Committee. I also want to add that this House must summon the Minister of Finance on issues to do with the disbursement of Devolution Funds. On the issue of the incorporation of the concession areas into the Hwange Local Board, I support the recommendation that the process of incorporating the concession areas into the Local Board must be fast-tracked. This can bring relief to Hwange Local Board, which is bearing the burden of financing the governance costs related to allowances and other expenses linked to the conditions of service for councillors.

I also want to buttress the issue of the two inquiries that were made by the Minister of Local Government. I want to recommend that they harmonise the findings and then implement them. I so submit.

The Hon. Speaker having emphasised Hon. Butau's name.

HON. D. BUTAU: Hon. Speaker, thank you so much for emphasising my name there. I think it is a good sign.

THE HON. SPEAKER: Have I pronounced it in the past wrongly?

HON. D. BUTAU: No, Hon. Speaker, it has nothing to do with the pronunciation, it is the emphasis. It makes me feel like I belong – [*Laughter.*] –

THE HON. SPEAKER: Please proceed.

HON. D. BUTAU: Thank you so much for giving me this opportunity to contribute to the report of our Committee on Local Government in particular, in response to the petition raised by the residents of Hwange, specifically Mr. Tinashe Matika and Mr. K. Sibanda. My emphasis is going to be very narrow because of the areas that I think are more informed and intelligent about, if there is any such thing as human intelligence. The responsibilities of the Hwange Local Board should, in my view include those within the Hwange concession area. I feel the role of Local Government is being neglected and this, you will see, permeates most of our reports. The issue of silo planning by the Department of Local Government and Urban Development.

The silo issue is doing a lot of disservice to the people of Hwange. In general, real estate valuation and augmentation lead to improved value of the land. Valuable land by nature attracts capital. Hwange is kind of constrained and almost hostage to the fact that the biggest investor in the area is Hwange Collier Company. I hope that by the time this House adopts this report, a solution would have been found to allow the people of Hwange to benefit from the resources that they are endowed with. The issue of Hwange Colliery Company carrying such a huge community does have its own negative effects on the balance sheet of an organisation, an enterprise that provides such a critical resource to the country that will end up without a big coal mining company.

In my view, Hwange Colliery Company should not be carrying such a huge financial burden. Municipality management, by its nature, requires a dedicated and well-resourced team, a kind of team that does not constrain proper planning, bulk services supply to the people of Hwange and those that are now found in no man's land. The department of Local Government should and ought to facilitate consolidation and provision of services for those that seem to have been isolated in no man's land between the concession area and the Hwange Local Board. Exclusion of those outside the Local Board area's jurisdiction, in my view, is an affront to the dignity of the citizens caught up in this area or without clear jurisdiction.

Hon. Speaker, as a Member of the Committee that is chaired by Hon. Njanji, I do agree to the recommendations of our Committee and I wish to state that one of the things that I feel should have greater emphasis is the role that can be played by the National Railways of Zimbabwe as one of the most important cogs in the core supply chain that is being produced in the Hwange area. I also wish to indicate that, just with a general view, most of the developments and investments that are currently taking place in Hwange seem to be *ad hoc* and poorly planned. This will curtail investment and capital is a coward. Where there is no security of tenure and proper land management, there is likely to be chaos.

Hon. Speaker, I urge this House to adopt this report and specifically to support this Committee in ensuring that the Committee's work is not viewed as collateral or some supplementary work by those in the Executive. I wish to end my presentation and my debate at this point. Thank you Hon. Speaker.

HON. CHITIMBE: Thank you Hon. Speaker. I rise to support the report of the Portfolio Committee on Local Government, Public Works and National Housing on the petition concerning the dual local Government administration in Hwange. At the outset, let me commend the Committee for conducting a thorough inquiry that reflects the views of all stakeholders. The Committee has demonstrated Parliament's important oversight role by carefully examining the concerns raised by the petitioners and proposing practical recommendations that seek to resolve a long-distance governance challenge. Hon. Speaker, the current governance arrangement has created uncertainty over who is responsible for planning, service delivery and local development. Residents of the concession area participate in national elections, elect councillors and contribute to the economy through their labour and the payment of taxes. However, they continue to experience governance challenges arising from an arrangement that has left them without clear and effective local administration. The situation is inconsistent with the principles of good governance and inclusive development.

Hon. Speaker, Local Government exists to improve the lives of the people. It should provide reliable water supplies, efficient refuse collection, proper roads, modern sewer systems and other land use planning and quality public services. These services can only be delivered effectively where there is a clear governance structure with well-defined responsibilities and accountability.

Hon. Speaker, I fully support the Committee's recommendation that a commission of inquiry be established by the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works. This is the most appropriate way of resolving this matter because it allows all stakeholders to present their views before any final decision is taken. A matter of this magnitude cannot be resolved through assumptions or isolated consultations.
It requires a transparent, evidence-based and inclusive process that builds consensus among all affected parties. The commission of inquiry should carefully examine the legal, financial, administrative and developmental implications of incorporating the concession areas into a single Local Government authority. It should also recommend practical transition arrangements that guarantee continuity in services delivered while safeguarding the interests of all stakeholders.

Hon. Speaker, as we seek to improve governance, we must equally uphold the Constitution. The property rights of Hwange Colliery Company must be fully respected. The company has invested substantially in housing, roads, water infrastructure, electricity networks and other public amenities over many decades. Any future incorporation process must therefore be accompanied by fair, lawful and adequate compensation as recommended by the committee. Protecting private investment is essential for maintaining investor confidence and demonstrating Zimbabwe's commitment to the rule of law.

Hon. Speaker, one of the strongest aspects of this report is its vision for the future development of Hwange, which is one of Zimbabwe's most strategic economic centres. It is home to major mining operations, electricity generation projects and transport infrastructure that are vital to our national economy. As investment continues to grow, the town itself must also grow in a planned and coordinated manner. Modern urban development requires integrated planning. Roads must connect efficiently with residential areas. Housing development must be supported by water supply, sewer systems and proper waste management. Commercial expansion must be guided by sound land use planning. Traffic management must keep pace with increasing economic activities. These are responsibilities that require strong and coordinated local governments.

Hon. Speaker, the Committee also correctly observed that the current governance arrangement has limited access to important

Government development programmes and funding mechanisms. Once these governance challenges are resolved, the people of Hwange will be better positioned to benefit from the national development initiatives, including the public sector investment programme and inter-governmental fiscal transfers. These resources have the potential to improve roads, schools, clinics, water infrastructure, sanitation systems and other public services that directly improve the people's quality of life. This aligns perfectly with the national vision of ensuring that no one and no place is left behind.

Hon. Speaker, the Committee was also prudent in recognising that incorporation should not be rushed before any transition takes place. Hwange Local Board must have the institutional, technical and financial capacity to effectively manage an expanded urban area. Capacity building, proper planning and stakeholder engagement are essential if the transition is to succeed and deliver improved services to the residents.

In conclusion, Hon. Speaker, this report presents Parliament with a practical, balanced and forward-looking roadmap. It seeks to resolve a long-standing governance challenge while protecting constitutional rights, promoting orderly urban development and improving the quality of life of the people of Hwange. By implementing these recommendations, we will strengthen local governance and enhance accountability, improve service delivery, unlock greater development opportunities and position Hwange to realise its full potential as one of Zimbabwe's leading mining and industrial centres. For these reasons, I fully support the adoption of this report and urge the responsible Ministry to implement the Committee's recommendations within the proposed outlines.

HON. KAMBUZUMA: Hon. Speaker, I move that the debate do now adjourn.

HON. C. MOYO: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Wednesday, 22nd July, 2026.

MOTION

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

HON. KAMBUZUMA: Hon. Speaker, I move that we revert to Order of the Day Number 1 on today's *Order Paper.*

HON. C. MOYO: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

COMMITTEE STAGE

BIOLOGICAL AND TOXIN WEAPONS CRIMES BILL [H. B. 9, 2025]

First Order read: Committee: Biological and Toxin Weapons Crimes Bill [H. B. 9, 2025]

House in Committee.

Clauses 1 to 4 put and agreed to.

On Clause 5:

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (HON. MUCHINGURI-KASHIRI): Hon. Chair, I put the amendments standing in my name that on page 6 of the Bill, insert the following subclause after subclause (2) ending on line 26 - "(3) In appointing members of the National Authority Advisory Committee the Minister shall endeavour to secure that women constitute at least half the membership of the Committee and that the Committee's membership is fairly representative of all Zimbabwe's regions".

Amendment to Clause 5 put and agreed to.

Clause 5, as amended, put and agreed to.

Clauses 6 to 14 put and agreed to.

On Clause 15:

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (HON. MUCHINGURI-KASHIRI): Thank you Hon. Chair. I move the amendments standing in my name that:

On page 15 of the Bill, insert the following subclause after subclause (8) ending on line 41—

"(9) If in the course of a search of any premises referred to in subsections (3), (4) or (9), an inspector seizes, removes or detains anything, document or article in terms of subsection (6), the inspector must, no later than forty-eight hours after such search (or, if the search was conducted during a public holiday, no later than forty-eight hours after the end of the public holiday)—

(a) lodge with the clerk of the Magistrates' Court having jurisdiction over the area where the search was conducted, a written inventory of all the items seized, removed or detained as a result of the search; and

(b) if the search was warrantless, attach to the inventory, an affidavit sworn by the inspector setting forth the circumstances and grounds for his or her belief that—

(i) a warrant would have been issued to him or her in terms of section 51 (1) (b) of the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act [Chapter 9:07] if he or she applied for one; and

(ii) the delay in obtaining a warrant would prevent the seizure or defeat

the object of the search, as the case may be.

(10) The following provisions apply in every case where an inspector effects a warrantless entry and search of a residential dwelling—

(a) no inspector may execute a warrantless search of a private residential dwelling except upon a reasonable belief on his or her part that immediate harm to public safety will result unless such a search is made promptly to avoid such harm; and

(b) the inspector shall within the period specified in subsection (9) (even if no thing, document or article in terms of subsection (6) was seized, removed or detained), lodge an affidavit with the Clerk of the Magistrates' Court having jurisdiction over the area where the search was conducted, setting forth the circumstances causing the inspector to believe that immediate harm to public safety would have resulted unless the search in question was made promptly to avoid such harm."

Amendments to Clause 15 put and agreed to.

Clause 15, as amended, put and agreed to.

Clauses 16 to 21 put and agreed to.

On Clause 22:

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (HON. MUCHINGURI-KASHIRI): I move the amendments standing in my name that: On page 18 of the Bill, in Clause 22, repeal subclauses (4) and (5) between lines 38 and 42 and substitute the following subclauses—

"(4) On an appeal, the Minister may—

(a) uphold the decision of the responsible authority; or

(b) refer the decision back to the responsible authority for reconsideration (whether with or without directions on how the decision is to be reconsidered, including a direction to the responsible authority to investigate the matter further) on any one or more of the following grounds—

(i) allowing extraneous or irrelevant considerations to affect the decision, or

(ii) failure to take into account relevant considerations in arriving at the decision, or

(iii) any material mistake of fact or law that tainted the decision; or

(iv) interest in the cause, bias, malice or corruption on the part of any person involved in making or contributing to the decision:

Provided that the Minister shall not make a finding on this ground without affording the responsible authority an opportunity to respond to such finding.

(5) Any person who is aggrieved by a decision of the national authority resulting from an appeal under subsection (4) may seek a review of the decision by a review board appointed under section 23 within twenty-one days after the date of its notification to the appellant."

Amendments to Clause 22 put and agreed to.

Clause 22, as amended, put and agreed to.

On new Clause 23:

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (HON. MUCHINGURI-KASHIRI): I move the amendments standing in my name that:

Any application for review of any decision under section 22 (5) is in this section and Sections 24 and 25 referred to as a "challenge"

(1) Review boards shall be appointed from one or more lists of reviewers prepared in terms of this section (upon the written request from time to time of the responsible authority) by on behalf of the Chief Executive Officer of the National Biotechnology Authority established in terms of the National Biotechnology Act [Chapter 14:31] (Act No. 3 of 2006) (hereinafter called the "selecting authority").

(2) The selecting authority shall select persons for inclusion on a list of reviewers by requesting—

(a) the Law Society of Zimbabwe; and

(b) the Civil Service Commission; and

(c) organisations representing professional associations or bodies or commercial and industrial entities; and

(d) other organisations which, in the opinion of the selecting authority, have or represent persons who have expertise in fields relating to the subject matter of this Act;

to nominate persons for inclusion on the list from whom the responsible authority shall in turn select for inclusion in the list those reviewers who—

(i) are or have been registered legal practitioners; or

(ii) have been senior officers in the Civil Service with experience in procurement; or

(iii) have qualifications or experience in fields relating to the subject matter of this Act.

(4) The responsible authority shall keep the lists of reviewers at its offices available for inspection by members of the public, free of charge, during normal office hours.

(5) A review board for any challenge shall consist of at least three members appointed by the responsible authority from a list of reviewers, of whom—

(a) one shall be a registered legal practitioner or former legal practitioner or a member or former member of the judiciary; and

(b) one shall be a former member of the Civil Service with experience in procurement; and

(c) one shall be a person nominated by an organisation referred to in subsection (2) (a).

(6) The terms and conditions of service for members of a review panel shall be as prescribed.

Amendments to new Clause 23 put and agreed to.

New Clause 23, as amended, put and agreed to.

On new Clause 24:

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (HON. MUCHINGURI-KASHIRI): I move the amendments standing in my name that:

A review board appointed to hear a challenge shall conduct such investigation and hearing as it considers appropriate and deliver its written decision in the matter, setting out its reasons for the decision within twenty-one days after the challenge concerned was received by the responsible authority.

The procedure to be adopted by a review board shall be as Prescribed, or in relation to any matter that is not prescribed, as may be fixed by the review board: Provided that the review board shall afford the parties to the challenge, an adequate opportunity to make representations in the matter and generally, shall observe the rules commonly known as the rules of natural justice.

The decision of a review panel shall be binding on the appellant that lodged the challenge and the national authority.

A review panel shall dismiss a challenge where—

(a) the challenger that lodged the challenge has failed to comply with section 22; or

(b) the statement of the grounds of the challenge is vague or embarrassing; or

(c) the grounds of the challenge do not constitute a valid basis for a challenge; or

(d) the challenger has failed to establish the grounds of the challenge; and may order the challenger to compensate the responsible authority for any expense or loss it incurred as a result of the challenge.

Amendments to new Clause 24 put and agreed to.

New Clause 24, as amended, put and agreed to.

On new Clause 25:

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (HON. MUCHINGURI-KASHIRI): I move the amendments standing in my name that:

A challenger entity aggrieved by a decision of a review board may appeal against the decision to the Administrative Court within twenty days after the panel's decision was notified to the party concerned.

(1) On an appeal, the Administrative may—

(a) uphold the decision of the responsible authority; or

(b) refer the decision back to the responsible authority for reconsideration (whether with or without directions on how the decision is to be reconsidered, including a direction to the responsible authority to investigate the matter further) on any one or more of the following grounds—

(i) allowing extraneous or irrelevant considerations to affect the decision, or

(ii) failure to take into account relevant considerations in arriving at the decision, or

(iii) any material mistake of fact or law that tainted the decision; or

(iv) interest in the cause, bias, malice or corruption on the part of any person involved in making or contributing to the decision:

Provided that the Court shall not make a finding on this ground without affording the responsible authority an opportunity to respond to such finding.”.

Amendments to new Clause 25 put and agreed to.

Clause 25, as amended, put and agreed to.

On New Clause 26:

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (HON. MUCHINGURI-KASHIRI): I move the amendments standing in my name that:

If anything, article or substance removed by an inspector under this Act is an “article whose possession is intrinsically unlawful” for the purpose of Part VI of the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act [Chapter 9:07], such thing, article or substance shall be dealt with in accordance with sections 49, 58, 58A, 58B, 59 60, 61 and 63A of that Act, as references to a “police officer” in those sections were references to an “inspector”, and references to any officer to whom a police officer is answerable in those sections were references to the “responsible Authority.”

Amendments to new Clause 26 put and agreed to.

New Clause 26, as amended, put and agreed to.

On New Clause 27:

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (HON. O.C.Z. MUCHINGURI-KASHIRI): I move the new amendment standing in my name that no act or omission whatever the responsible authority or an inspector or any person employed by the responsible authority, the State or an inspector or such employee liable in respect of any loss or damage sustained by any person in consequence of such act or omission unless the act or omission was in bad faith or was due to gross negligence.

Amended to new Clause 27 put and agreed to.

New Clause 27, as amended, put and agreed to.

On Clause 23, now Clause 28:

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (HON. O.C.Z. MUCHINGURI-KASHIRI): I move the amendment standing in my name that on page 19 of the Bill, insert the following paragraph after paragraph (h) of subclause (2) of this clause— “(i) establishing, operationalising and maintaining a secure electronic registry and network to be known as the Decentralised Biosecurity Information System (DBIS).”

Amendment to Clause 23 now Clause 28 put and agreed.

Clause 23 now Clause 28, as amended, put and agreed to.

Clause 24, now Clause 29 put and agreed to.

Clause 25, now Clause 30 put and agreed to.

Clause 26, now Clause 31 put and agreed to.

First Schedule put and agreed to.

Second Schedule put and agreed to.

House resumed.

Bill reported with amendments.

Bill referred to the Parliamentary Legal Committee.

MOTION

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

HON. KAMBUZUMA: I move that Orders of the Day, Numbers 1 to 27 on today’s *Order Paper* be stood over until Order of the Day Number 28 has been disposed of.

HON. C. MOYO: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

MOTION

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE, HOME AFFAIRS, SECURITY AND WAR VETERANS ON THE FOURTH QUARTER BUDGET PERFORMANCE

HON. MAONEKE: Mr. Speaker, I move the motion standing in my name that this House considers and adopts the Report of the Portfolio Committee on Defence, Home Affairs, Security Services and War Veterans Affairs on the Fourth Quarter Budget Performance Report for the Ministry of Veterans of Liberation Struggle Affairs.

HON. NYAMURONDA: I second.

HON. MAONEKE:

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Section 299 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe vests Parliament with the authority to monitor and oversee State expenditure and that of its agencies to ensure that all revenue is properly accounted for, all expenditure is lawful and appropriations are implemented within approved limits and conditions.

Furthermore, Section 33 (2) of the Public Finance Management Act requires that every accounting officer prepares and submits quarterly financial and performance reports which must be tabled before the relevant Parliamentary Portfolio Committee within sixty days after the end of each quarter. In fulfilment of this Constitutional and statutory obligation, the Portfolio Committee on Defence, Home Affairs and War Veterans Affairs analysed the 2025 Fourth Quarter Budget Performance Report for the Ministry of Veterans of the Liberation Struggle Affairs.

The Ministry is mandated to provide welfare services, economic empowerment, and memorialisation support to Veterans of the Liberation Struggle, War Victims, and Heroes Dependants. The Committee's assessment focused on financial performance, programme implementation, service delivery outcomes and compliance with public financial management frameworks.

2.0. OBJECTIVES

i. To assess whether the Ministry achieved its

Fourth Quarter 2025 targets; evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of resource utilisation;

ii. To examine the alignment between budget allocations and service delivery outcomes; analyse financial management practices; and

iii. To proffer recommendations that would assist the Ministry to execute its mandate.

3.0. METHODOLOGY

The Committee analysed the Fourth Quarter Budget Performance Report with technical support from the Parliamentary Budget Office. The Committee analysed financial statements, budget performance reports and sought clarifications on key issues relating to budget execution, performance gaps and audit compliance, which were responded to through oral evidence and written submissions.

4.0. COMMITTEE FINDINGS

4.1. Strategic Planning

The Committee established that the Ministry's strategic focus was anchored on two key pillars, namely welfare support and economic empowerment of veterans of the liberation struggle. These pillars are aligned to national development priorities and social protection objectives. However, the Committee noted a disconnect between strategic planning and implementation, particularly in relation to decentralisation.

In response, Ministry officials indicated that centralisation was a key constraint to service delivery since the decentralisation framework was not implemented in 2025 due to lack of funding. Given that 57 531 beneficiaries are spread across all ten provinces and are largely rural-based, centralisation continues to limit their access to services.

4.2 Human Resources

The Committee noted that the Ministry has an establishment of 407 posts, with 253 vacant posts translating to a vacancy rate of 62%. This high vacancy rate significantly constrains programme implementation and service delivery. In response, Ministry officials attributed the high vacancy rate to Treasury Circular No. 10 of 2025, which imposed a recruitment freeze across government effective 24 September 2025. The Ministry indicated that, following engagement with the Treasury, it was granted Treasury concurrence for critical posts and is engaging the Public Service Commission to redeploy officers identified as excess in other ministries.

4.5. Budget Allocation by Programme

The Committee was informed that the Ministry`s resources were allocated under the Programme Based Budgeting Framework, comprising two programmes: Policy and Administration and Veterans Affairs. The table below illustrates the Ministry's annual and fourth quarter 2025 budget allocation by programme;

Table 1: Ministry's budget allocation by programme, 2025

Programme	**Annual Budget allocation**	**% of allocation**	**Allocation up to September (ZWG)**	**Q4 Budget Allocation**	**% of allocation**
Programme 1 Policy and Admin	122 million	12,3%	105,135,659	32,314,864	86,44%
Programme 2 Veterans Affairs	872.8 million	87,7%	201,223,187	11,719,530	14,66%
Total	**ZWG 994,802,800**	**100%**	**306,358,846**	86,704,965	**100%**

Source: Ministry of Veterans of the Liberation Struggle Affairs Q4 Report, 2025.

The Ministry's revised budget was ZWG 994,802,800. Policy and Administration Programme was allocated 12.3% (ZWG 122 million) of the revised budget, while Veterans Affairs Programme was allocated 87.7% (ZWG 872.8 million).

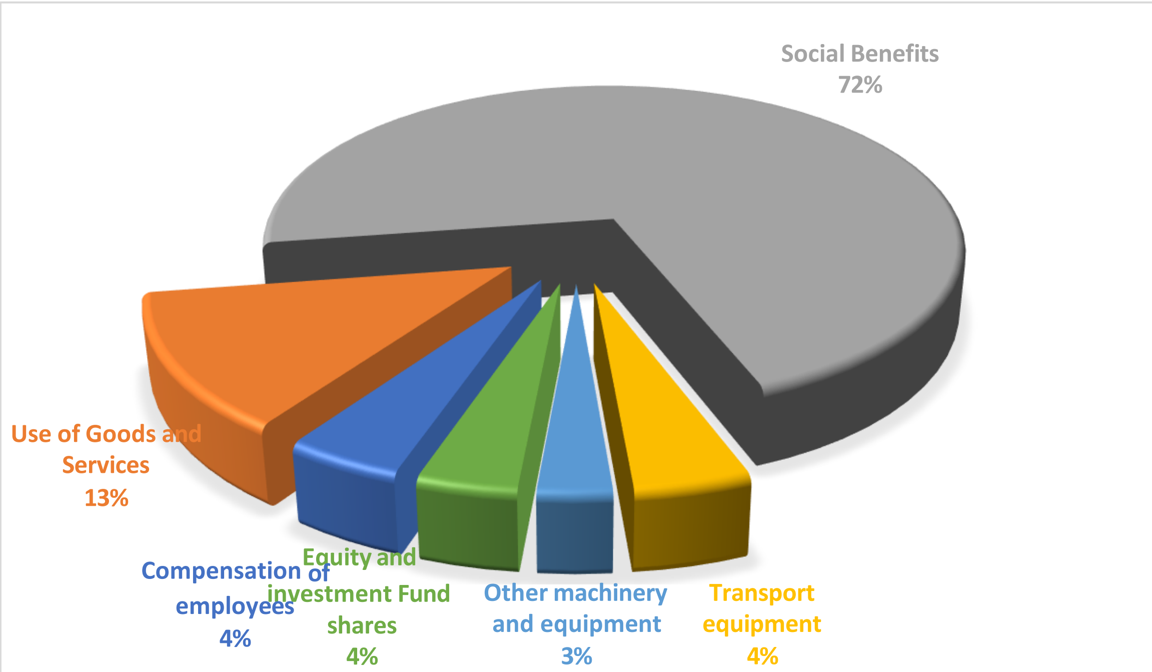
The fourth quarter budget target was ZWG 12,617,103 translating to 1.3% of the revised annual budget. Policy and Administration Programme fourth quarter share was ZWG 5,887,314 (47%) and Veterans Affairs Programme share was ZWG 6,729,789 (53%). The near-equal quarterly split between administration and welfare delivery does not reflect the 88:12 annual ratio, suggesting that quarterly cash release schedules may have distorted resource distribution. The Committee noted that while the annual budget appropriately prioritises service delivery through Veterans Affairs Programme, the fourth quarter allocation deviated from this structure. This misalignment undermines the Ministry's ability to deliver welfare services effectively.

THE TEMPORARY SPEAKER (HON. J.

TSHUMA): Order Hon. Maoneke! Hon. Members, can we keep our voices low and can you remember that only the Hon. Member speaking should be up standing. Can all Hon. Members please take your seats? Can the Hon. Member be heard in silence? You can continue Hon. Maoneke.

4.6. Budget Allocation by Economic Classification

Figure 1: Budget Allocation by Economic Classification, 2025



Source: Ministry of Veterans of the Liberation Struggle Affairs Q4 Report, 2025.

The Committee established that budget allocations were mainly schemes towards use of goods and services, compensation of employees and social benefits. However, the Committee observed that allocations towards administrative expenditures were disproportionately high in the Fourth Quarter relative to social benefits, with no funds allocated towards social benefits in the quarter under review. Given the Ministry’s mandate, social benefits should constitute the dominant expenditure category. The skewed allocation indicates weak prioritisation of core service delivery functions.

4.7. Budget Expenditure by Programme

Actual cumulative expenditure (Jan-Dec 2025) was **ZWG 340.3 million** of the ZWG 994.8 million revised budget, translating to a **34.2%** utilisation rate. The 34.2% budget utilization by year-end reflects delays in Treasury support, which disrupts strategic planning and compromises long-term outcomes. Figure 2 below illustrates the cumulative budget expenditure by programme;

Table 2. Budget Expenditure by Programme

Progra mme	**Expe ndit ure targe t**		**Actual expendit ure up to Septemb er**		**Variance/s shortfall**
Progra mme 1 Policy and Admin	**137,450,523**	105,135,659	32,314,864	5,887,314	129,981,692

Programme 2 Veterans Affairs	**212,G42,717**	201,223,187	11,719,530	6,729,789	210,334,800
Total	**350,3G3,240**	**306,358,846**	44,034,394	**12,617,103**	**340,316,4G2**

Source: Ministry of Veterans of the Liberation Struggle Affairs Fourth Quarter Report, 2025

From the First to Third Quarter (Jan-Sep 2025), the Ministry received minimum cash disbursement, which meant minimum execution of planned activities under both programmes. By September 2025, actual expenditure stood at only ZWG 306,358,846 against a cumulative target of 350, 393, 240 leaving a shortfall of ZWG 44,034,394. Policy and Administration Programme consumed ZWG105 million of its 2025 revised budget allocation, that is 86% of actual *vs* ZWG 137 million as of September 2025. Veterans Affairs Programme had utilised ZWG201 million up to September, which translates to 23%. The Committee noted that direct welfare services for 57,531 beneficiaries were underfunded throughout 2025. The low utilisation rate implies that a substantial portion of allocated resources did not translate into tangible benefits for veterans and their dependants.

During the fourth quarter, the Ministry`s expenditure rose sharply to ZWG 340, 316, 492 against Fourth Quarter budget target of ZWG 12, 617, 103. The Ministry reported that the fourth-quarter budget was funded to the tune of ZWG 76,7 million, against a quarter target budget allocation of ZWG 12,6 million, reflecting a budget execution rate of 77 (%) for the quarter. Of the allocated resources, ZWG 25 million (34%) was directed towards the Veterans Affairs Programme, while ZWG 52 million (66%) was consumed under the Policy and Administration Programme.

The Committee noted that the Ministry's excessive expenditure reflects delays in cash releases from Treasury during the first, second and third quarter. The bulk of funds was only released towards the year-end, forcing the Ministry to implement and account for outstanding activities within a compressed timeframe to avoid losing the appropriation under the "use it or lose it" principle governing public funds. Such patterns compromise efficiency, and increase the risk of misallocation of resources. It also negatively impacted various sub-programmes, leading to delays in project implementation, a reduced scope of services and compromised service quality. It further constrained the Ministry's service delivery capacity, resulting in the failure to meet planned objectives and operational inefficiencies. The most missed targets were on the following; Failure to award medical benefits to veterans, failure to conduct reburials of fallen heroes, no documentation of liberation war history, no improvement on the welfare of Veterans of the Liberation Struggle and their dependants, war victims and their dependents and heroes' dependents and self-help projects for empowering veterans just to name a few.

4.8 Performance Management

The Ministry managed to meet and surpass some of its target set for the Fourth Quarter which is commendable**.** The Committee noted the Ministry performance against its target as indicated in the table below:

Table 3. Achievements versus targets

Activity	Target for Q4	Actual performance	Variance	Comment
Veterans mining prospecting licenses issued	25	42	+17	Exceed target
Statutory benefits for War Victims	120	138	+18	Exceed target

Mining licenses issued	25	42	+17	Exceed target

Table 4. Challenges in meeting targets

Challenge	Impact of the unmet targets
Erratic cash releases	The attrition rate of veterans is alarming, hence the nation is losing important narratives of the liberation war. Failure to access medicals services resulting in worsening health conditions thereby leading to premature deaths of veterans
Financial constraints	Lack of financial support from the Treasury to cater for medical services has compelled the Ministry to continue
	Sub-contracting of medical attendance and sometimes being taken to courts by services providers.
Delayed reburials of fallen heroes	Fallen heroes will remain in shallow graves and affected families and communities will not have closure and healing.
Delayed budgetary allocations	Hindered empowerment efforts thereby exposing the veterans to poverty.

The Committee expressed concern that failure to document liberation war histories represents a permanent loss of national heritage. Shortfalls in education and medical assistance further highlight gaps in service delivery. The Ministry in their responds highlighted that they did not meet some of its targets due to inadequate funding from Treasury. In addition, a knowledge gap persists within the Veterans Community, which perceives that its needs are not being adequately addressed. Treasury has since been engaged, and there have been notable improvements in the provision of benefits.

The Committee observed a significant inconsistency in beneficiary data, with figures declining sharply between quarters. As at the quarter under review, the Ministry's constituency comprised 31,559 War Veterans, 5,483 War Victims, and 20,489 Heroes Dependants'. A total of 57,531 registered beneficiaries.

4.5 Auditor General's Report

The Committee noted that the Ministry's 2024 Appropriation account received a qualified opinions and the following issues were raised by the Auditor General:

- *Reconciliation of Appropriation Account*

The Ministry had not done Reconciliation of Appropriation Account Expenditure for the year 2024. The Committee noted that these unresolved discrepancies in financial records, indicating weak reconciliation processes. The Ministry informed the Committee that at the moment monthly reconciliations are being carried out and misstatements to be detected and corrected timeously.

- *Salary reconciliations*

The AG observed the absence of salary reconciliations for the Ministry. In response, the Ministry informed the Committee that monthly reconciliations had commenced and currently there were no challenges in relation to reconciliation.

- *Unvouched Expenditure (Heroes Dependants Fund 2023)*

The Committee noted that the absence of supporting documentation for certain expenditures raises concerns about accountability and transparency. The Ministry responded that currently accounting records were being maintained per transaction and verification of vouchers before processing was also being done.

- *Absence of accounting policy (VLS Fund*)

The Committee noted that the absence of accounting policy for the Veterans of Liberation Struggle Fund. In response, the Ministry informed the Committee that an accounting policy was formulated and is now in place

- *Education Assistance reconciliations (VLS Fund 2023/24)*

Absence of education assistance reconciliations was also raised in the AG`s report. In response, the Ministry told the Committee that monthly reconciliations carried out and previous delays were as a result of staff shortage.

- *Administrative expenditure not broken down (VLS Fund*

The AG also observed that administrative expenditure was not broken down. In response, the Ministry informed the Committee that systems of control were being developed

- *Unreconciled bulk payments (VLS Fund internal audit).*

The AG noted persistence in terms of unreconciled payments, which indicates weak financial oversight. In response, the Ministry told the Committee that Monthly reconciliations in progress.

4.6 Access to information by the public

The Committee noted that although the Ministry's website was operational, it required further enhancement through developing a digital system for the Veterans of the

Liberation Struggle, a WhatsApp platform to enhance public engagement and feedback, budget and performance information, public notices, and comprehensive service details. In response, Ministry officials indicated that since it was a new Ministry work was in progress to capacitate the IT Department with personnel and tools to be able to provide the information on its website. The Ministry now has a fully-fledged IT Department with a Director to provide all the IT related services.

In addition, steps were being taken to improve the platform, including the provision of liberation narratives, expanding public information, introducing a monthly events calendar and updating service-related content.

5.0 COMMITTEE OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Observation

There was erratic release of funds from for the period January to September that is First to Third Quarter by the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Investment

Promotion.

Recommendation

Ministry of Finance Economic Development and Investment Promotion should consistently disburse funding in all the quarters to the Ministry of Veterans of the Liberation Struggle to enable it to meet its targets.

5.2 Observation

The Ministry's website was operational but lacks comprehensive digital system on Veterans of the Liberation Struggle, budget information, and service details. This limits transparency and public engagement.

Recommendation

The Ministry of Veterans of the Liberation Struggle Affairs should enhance the website by September 2026, developing a digital system, publishing monthly events calendars, and expanding service-related content.

5.2 Observation

The Committee notes that the Ministry serves a vulnerable and ageing population whose welfare is directly dependent on effective budget execution. As such, inefficiencies in planning, resource allocation, and expenditure management have direct socio-economic consequences on beneficiaries.

Recommendation

Treasury should ensure timeous disbursement of resources to ensure that all Ministry`s planned targets are met.

5.3 Observation

The Ministry faces critical human resource constraints which affects service delivery.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Ministry Veterans of the Liberation Struggle Affairs, in collaboration with Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion and the Public Service Commission, should prioritise recruitment for critical posts and reduce the vacancy rate to below 30% by 31 December 2026.

5.4 Observation

Committee observed the existence of persistent audit findings which were not addressed.

Recommendation

The Ministry of Veterans of the Liberation Struggle affairs should take serios audit findings, fully implement corrective measures and ensure that internal controls are strengthened by 31 December 2026.

The Committee emphasises the need to improve performance management systems and recommends the development of a recovery plan with clear targets and timelines.

5.5 Observation

Unrealistic quarterly targets set by the Ministry.

Recommendation

Ministry Veterans of the Liberation Struggle Affairs should carefully place and set realistic targets which are achievable.

6. CONCLUSION

The Committee acknowledges the importance of the Ministry in supporting Veterans of the Liberation Struggle. However, the findings highlight significant weaknesses in budget execution, service delivery and financial management. The mismatch between expenditure and outcomes is of particular concern. The Committee therefore calls upon the Ministry and Treasury to urgently implement the recommendations outlined in this report to enhance accountability, efficiency and effective service delivery. I thank you.

HON. KAITANO: I rise to share my analysis and conclusions on the report that has just been presented by Hon. Maoneke on behalf of the Portfolio Committee on Defence, Home Affairs, Security Services and War Veterans Affairs. Every week in Mudzi District, we are experiencing at least a single death of a war veteran in the different categories. It is a reality that is also disheartening that we are seeing this thing happening. You will see the declarations on our groups every week. There is a declaration letter sent showing us that the sons and daughters that fought for the liberation of this country are leaving us. To then realise that Treasury is not disbursing funds expeditiously for the first quarter, second quarter, third quarter and only disbursing in the fourth quarter is deeply concerning. These funds that must be disbursed in the first quarter for the Ministry of

War Veterans Affairs are earmarked for medical services of the war veterans. It is earmarked for burial assistance.

So, according to this report, for the first nine months of the year, there was no such disbursement. It gets me to wonder how the war veterans were managing in terms of their health-related issues. You might be aware that the injuries and the damages that happened during the war of liberation and other related illnesses require constant medical attention. According to this report, the Ministry had to subcontract other players in order to meet the medical bills. Some of these medical services suppliers are suing the Ministry of War Veterans Affairs for late payments of what they owe in medical-related bills. It is my thinking that Treasury ought to prioritise cash disbursements to meet the needs of the war veterans of this country.

We may forego this but not the health-related issues of war veterans. As a country, my thinking is that we ought to religiously and expeditiously serve this Ministry. If our war veterans are dying every week, giving the examples of my district in Mudzi, we then tend to lose rich heritage of the liberation war history. From January to September, the Ministry could not exercise its responsibility in the documentation of the history of the Second Chimurenga because there was no funding. When the funding came in the fourth quarter, there were so many things to do in that particular last quarter. There is a risk that they will not be able to utilise all the funds that have been made available in one quarter.

We also run a risk of not being able to fully utilise the funds. Other programmes have been lagging. That is a serious challenge that I believe Treasury needs to look at and rectify expeditiously. We have had many cases of children of the war veterans whose educational fees have not been paid and not paid on time. Some of them have challenges in attending college because colleges would not admit them. Some of them would have challenges in collecting their results because fees have not been paid. I have had such an experience. My sister could not get her results because fees were not paid expeditiously.

My point is, we cannot accept such things as a nation and we cannot allow it to happen, especially when it concerns our war veterans. If we do a queuing matter, they must be in the forefront. After all, they have been at the forefront. So, let us keep them there in the forefront. As they were fighting for the liberation of the country, they were in the forefront. When it comes to payments, when it comes to Government expenditure, can they not remain at the forefront of things? When it comes to medical bills, can we not put those medical bills in the front and take care of those things as a priority?

As I conclude, in order to ameliorate some of these challenges, I am calling upon the Ministry of Veterans Affairs to ensure that it operationalises the businesses, the assets given to it by the Government. The Ministry has been given mines, the Ministry has been given farms and the Ministry has been given a start-up capital for some animal husbandry project. I hereby urge the Ministry to ensure that these assets are turned into projects and are turned into commercially viable businesses in order for these businesses to then feed into the veterans' farm and ameliorate the burden from the fiscus. That goes a long way.

We cannot continue having assets lying idle and not being utilised, let alone being fully utilised. I urge the Ministry to ensure that aspect has a responsibility, it has a duty to ensure that those assets are utilised and fully utilised for the benefit of their loved veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I therefore urge this House to adopt the report as presented by the Hon. Maoneke. I thank you Mr. Speaker.

THE TEMPORARY SPEAKER (HON. J. TSHUMA): Hon. Kaitano, the way you debated this motion by Hon. Maoneke was excellent. I must commend you for debating without necessarily reading anywhere. I wish many other Hon. Members can emulate that. It shows that you speak from your heart and your mind and you have put every thought to your speech. Well done.

HON. KAMBUZUMA: I move that the debate do now adjourn.

HON. C. MOYO: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Wednesday, 22nd July, 2026.

MOTION

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

HON. KAMBUZUMA: I move that Orders of the Day, Numbers 29 to 35 on today's *Order Paper* be stood over until Order Number 36 has been disposed of.

HON. C. MOYO: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

MOTION

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON YOUTH EMPOWERMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING ON THE 2025 THIRD QUARTER BUDGET PERFORMANCE

HON. M. C. ZIYAMBI: I move the motion standing in my name that this House considers and adopts the Report of the Portfolio Committee on Youth Empowerment, Development and Vocational Training on the 2025 Third Quarter Budget Performance Report for the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Development and Vocational Training.

HON. S. DUBE: I second.

HON. M. C. ZIYAMBI: Thank you Hon. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION

The Constitution of Zimbabwe confers on Parliament a comprehensive mandate to exercise oversight over all State revenues and expenditures, ensuring the prudent and accountable use of public resources. In terms of Section 119(3), every institution and agency of the State, at all levels of Government, is accountable to Parliament.

This responsibility is further reinforced by Section 298 and Section 299 of the Constitution, outlines the key principles of public financial management, stating that public funds must be expended transparently, responsibly, economically and effectively. This is further buttressed by provisions in the Public Finance Management Act [*Chapter 22:19*], including Sections 32, 33. 34 and 35, which compel Ministries to submit monthly, quarterly and annual financial statements, which require responsible financial administration and clear fiscal reporting.

The Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Development and Vocational Training is mandated to empower young people through vocational training, entrepreneurship and civic participation. It executes its mandate through two programs in the context of a results-based budgeting framework.

Program 1, which is Policy and Administration, is composed of seven sub-programs whose principal mandate is policy and administration of the Ministry's programs and projects. The program is inward-looking and its expenditures pertain to those that support functions for the Ministry.

Program 2, which is Youth Development and Employment Creation, is market-facing (Youth) and consists of two sub-programs that carry out the Ministry's primary objective in terms of youth empowerment, development and vocational training.

OBJECTIVES

- To assess the utilisation of public resources as provided for in the Constitution.
- To assess whether the Ministry managed to achieve its 2025 third-quarter performance targets.
- To proffer recommendations to assist the Ministry in effectively executing its mandate.

METHODOLOGY

The Committee examined the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Development and Vocational Training's Third Quarter Budget Performance Report for 2025. The investigation examined adherence to the PFMA reporting criteria and reporting guidelines.

COMMITTEE FINDINGS

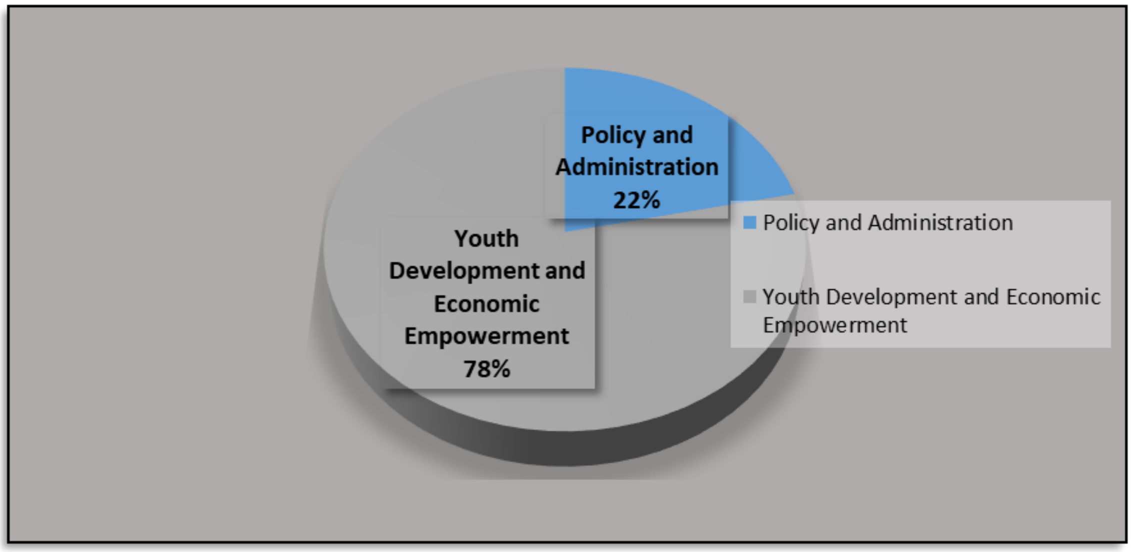
-Strategic Planning

-The Ministry’s strategic planning framework identifies diverse youth groups as clients, ranging from out-of-school youth to vocational trainees, junior parliamentarians and youth with disabilities. The needs include affordable training, access to start-up capital, modern equipment, civic education and rehabilitation programmes. This reflects the Ministry’s dual roles of social protection, which address unemployment, drug abuse, social exclusion and economic empowerment through skills training, entrepreneurship and industry stimulation. The Ministry’s objectives are aligned with NDS1 and SDGs, demonstrating a deliberate effort to integrate youth empowerment into national development priorities.

To address the above, there is a need for quality vocational and entrepreneurship skills training, participation in national development programmes and decision-making processes, affordable training programmes, a platform for networking, career guidance, employment opportunities, recreation and entertainment, national orientation and civic education, awareness and rehabilitation programmes, access to start-up capital and financial literacy training.

Resource Planning and Allocation

Figure 1: Third Quarter Resource Allocation by Programme



Source: Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Development and Vocational Training Third Quarter budget performance statutory report, 2025

In 2025, the Ministry was allocated ZWG 1.09 billion, with the third quarter budget set at ZWG 473.9 million. The distribution of resources for the quarter reveals clear policy priorities. Youth Development and Economic Empowerment received **ZWG 371, 9 million** (78% of the quarter budget), while Policy and Administration was allocated **ZWG 102, 05 million** (22%). The quarterly budget is disaggregated between two key programmes as illustrated in the figure above.

-It was observed that the Ministry’s largest allocation was channelled towards the Youth Development and Economic Empowerment programme, which is the Ministry’s core mandate of creating employment opportunities, capacitating entrepreneurs and addressing drug abuse. This reflects a prioritisation of service delivery; however, delays in disbursements could affect programme implementation, as most activities rely on this programme.

-Programme 1, which is Policy and Administration’s allocation, was relatively modest as it sustains institutional capacity, compliance, and governance systems, including ICT upgrades, staff training and statutory reporting. However, underfunding in this area could weaken oversight and accountability mechanisms, which are essential for transparent management of youth funds.

Human Resources

The Ministry reported an approved establishment of 2 888 posts, with 929 vacancies translating to a 32% vacancy rate. Recruitment remains constrained by *Treasury Circular Number 10 of 2025* on *Government Expenditure Containment Measures*, which imposed a general freeze on recruitment except in critical sectors. The staffing gap undermines vocational training centres operations and outreach programmes. Therefore, filling vacancies in 2026 should be a priority, as this would enhance programme implementation, improve operational efficiency, and ensure delivery on planned activities.

Expenditure Management

By the end of the third quarter, the Ministry had accessed 34% of its annual budget, while during the same quarter, the Ministry utilised 16.8% of its quarterly budget. Policy and Administration utilised 23% of its budget allocation, while Youth Development and Economic Empowerment recorded a higher absorption rate of 37%. The relatively stronger performance in the empowerment programme reflects the demand-driven nature of its activities, including entrepreneurship training and awareness campaigns. However, overall utilisation levels in both programmes were very low, suggesting a high risk that the remaining funds may not be fully utilised by the end of the 2025 financial year, due to ongoing cash constraints from the Treasury.

Compensation of employees stood at ZWG 132.3 million, representing 36% utilisation. This partial coverage of staff costs reflects the impact of vacancies, which reduce wage bill absorption. While this prevents wage overruns, it negatively affects service delivery capacity.

- Under Acquisition of Non- financial assets, buildings and structures absorbed just 11% of the budget allocation, implying stalled infrastructure upgrades at vocational centres. This need to be addressed, as infrastructure development is essential for long-term sustainability of youth training. Considering the poor state of infrastructure across the country's vocational training centres, there is need for infrastructural upgrade which is in tandem with industrial trends and demands.

In contrast, equity and investment fund shares recorded 71% utilisation, reflecting strong demand for revolving youth funds and investment support. This high absorption demonstrates effective uptake of empowerment financing and suggests that youth entrepreneurs are actively engaging with available funding mechanisms. This pattern highlights a shift towards financial empowerment initiatives, notwithstanding delays in infrastructure and operations limiting broader programme implementation.

Performance Management

The Ministry reported mixed achievements of the Ministry during the third quarter and they are as follows:

ACTIVITY	**PERFORMANCE TARGET**	**ACTUAL**
Client satisfaction index	71%	72%
Capacity development programmes conducted	2	5
Youth entrepreneurs capacitated	20 000	27 617
Youth trained in digital skills	50 000	52 791
Drug and Substance Abuse Awareness Campaigns conducted	73	150
Youth trained in Youth Services in Zimbabwe (YSZ)	1 500	174
Youth focal persons capacitated	719	26
Youth empowerment forum coordinated	1	1
Training centres upgraded	2	2

It is commendable that the Ministry managed to attain its target for the quarter on youth empowerment forum coordinated. However, meeting the numerical target is commendable, but what matters the most is transforming that engagement target into sustained empowerment and policy uptake. There is a need to transform figures into real impact within the youth community.

The Ministry needs to convert the statistics into sustained empowerment. Four youth business clusters were operationalised against a target of 5. The Ministry slightly fell short of meeting its target. The activation of four youth business clusters represents important vehicles for entrepreneurship incubation, job creation and local economic stimulation among young people.

-The Ministry faced challenges in achieving its youth service training and youth focal person targets due to inadequate funding and resources. As a result, it was unable to recruit the second batch of youth for the Youth Service Training (YSZ) program, limiting access to youth training centres, which are insufficient to accommodate the growing youth population in Zimbabwe.

-Additionally, youth focal persons in provincial and district line ministries were not adequately capacitated, restricting the effective dissemination of youth-related programs across ministries and agencies. To address these gaps, the Ministry plans to lobby for financial support to expand and refurbish YSZ centres and to mobilise resources to train youth focal persons at provincial and district levels, while Parliament is encouraged to support resource mobilisation and prioritise youth programming.

Progress on Audit Issues

- The Ministry received an unqualified audit opinion in the 2024 financial year, indicating that the financial statements presented fairly, in all material respects, the state of affairs on the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Development and Vocational Training. This is commendable and reflects improved financial management and compliance with accounting standards.

- The Ministry made progress in addressing governance issues raised in the 2024 report. While progress has been made in the implementation of the Auditor General’s recommendations, this area requires continued attention. However, the Ministry needs to expedite the implementation of recommendations made in addressing the Auditor General's observations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion should timeously release the allocated funds.
- Treasury should provide Treasury concurrence in filling the vacant posts within the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Development and Vocational Training by 31 June, 2026.
- The Public Service Commission should expedite the filling of vacant posts within the Ministry by 31 June, 2026.
- The Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Development and Vocational Training should expedite the completion and updating of the asset register by 31 August, 2026.
- The Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Development and Vocational Training to prioritise the revamping and rehabilitation of targeted VTCs.
- Treasury should ensure that Programme 2 on *Youth Empowerment and Economic Development* is prioritised in the 2026 National Budget, in terms of financial support and disbursements, as this is the core mandate of the Ministry.

Conclusion

The Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Development and Vocational Training is commended for submitting a comprehensive and timely report, as well as for making notable progress in implementing youth-related programmes. However, there is a need to strengthen budget execution, especially for capital projects and to provide regular updates on progress in addressing audit recommendations.

While the Ministry received an unqualified audit opinion for 2024, unresolved audit issues and non-submission of fund financial statements raise concerns regarding statutory compliance and financial discipline.

The Committee therefore urges the Ministry to strengthen financial controls, enhance reporting integrity and address outstanding audit recommendations with urgency. Effective implementation of these measures will ensure that public resources allocated to youth development deliver measurable, transparent and sustainable outcomes. Thank you.

HON. S. DUBE: I rise to second the motion for the adoption of the Committee's report on the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Development and Vocational Training 2025 Third Quarter Budget Performance Report. Hon. Speaker Sir, Zimbabwe has one of the youngest populations in Africa. Therefore, investment in young people is not merely a social responsibility but an economic necessity. Every dollar allocated towards youth empowerment, vocational training and entrepreneurship is an investment in employment creation, innovation and national development. Mr. Speaker Sir, the Committee rightly observed that the Ministry's strategic priorities are aligned with the National Development Strategy and Sustainable Development Goals. The Ministry has identified the diverse needs of young people, including vocational skills development, access to finance, digital literacy, civic education and rehabilitation programmes.

These interventions, if adequately funded, have the potential to transform livelihoods and reduce youth unemployment. Hon. Speaker Sir, while it is encouraging that 78% of the Ministry's quarterly allocation was directed towards youth development and economic empowerment programme, the Committee noted with concern that delayed disbursement of funds continues to undermine programme implementation. Budget allocations alone are insufficient if resources are not released on time by the Treasury. Ministries cannot implement programmes on promises. They require timely access to approved funds.

The report also raises an important concern regarding the 32% vacancy rate within the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Development and Vocational Training. Such a significant staffing gap inevitably affects service delivery, particularly in vocational training centres and outreach programmes. Youth cannot receive quality services when institutions are operating with one-third of their workforce missing. The relevant authorities should therefore expedite the filling of these critical vacancies.

Another matter deserving Parliament's attention is the low utilisation of capital expenditure, particularly on buildings and infrastructure. Many vocational training centres require modern workshops, equipment and learning facilities that are aligned with today's industrial and technological demands. Without inadequate infrastructure, skills development will remain theoretical instead of practical.

Mr. Speaker Sir, on the positive side, the Committee acknowledges the Ministry's commendable achievements. It exceeded several performance targets, including youth entrepreneurship training, digital skills development, drug and substance abuse awareness campaigns, client satisfaction and capacity building programmes. These achievements demonstrate that where resources are available, the Ministry has the capacity to deliver meaningful programmes for young people. There is need for continued budgetary support in such areas that empower the youth. However, the Committee rightly observed that success should not be measured solely by the number of young people trained or meetings conducted. The true measure of success is whether these interventions translate into sustainable employment, thriving businesses and improved livelihoods. Parliament should therefore continue to monitor outcomes rather than outputs alone. I also commend the Ministry for receiving an unqualified audit opinion for the 2024 financial year.

This reflects progress in financial management and compliance with public financial management standards.

Nevertheless, the Ministry must urgently implement the remaining Auditor General's recommendations to strengthen governance and accountability further. Mr. Speaker Sir, the Committee's recommendations are practical and achievable and in particular, I fully support the timely release of budgeted funds by Treasury; the filling in of vacant posts within the Ministry, which has a bearing on the quality of the services provided to the youth. The rehabilitation and modernisation of Vocational Training Centres; completion of Ministry's asset register and prioritisation of funding for the Youth Development and Economic Empowerment Programme in future budgets must be considered.

These recommendations, if implemented, will strengthen institutional capacity, improve service delivery and ensure that public resources produce measurable results for Zimbabwe's youth.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker Sir, the future of Zimbabwe is inseparable from the future of its young people. A nation that invests in its youth invests in productivity, innovation and sustainable economic growth.

I therefore urge this House to adopt the Committee's report and call upon the Executive to implement its recommendation timelessly. With these remarks, Mr. Speaker Sir, I second the motion. I thank you.

HON. KAMBUZUMA: Mr. Speaker Sir, I move that the debate be now adjourned.

HON. C. MOYO: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

Debate to resume: Wednesday 22nd July, 2026.

MOTION

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

HON. KAMBUZUMA: Mr. Speaker Sir, I move that Orders of the Day, Numbers 37 to 43 on today's *Order Paper* be stood over until Order of the Day Number 44 has been disposed of.

HON. C. MOYO: I second.

Motion put and agreed to.

MOTION

INTRODUCTION OF AI-ASSISTED SYSTEMS IN GOVERNMENT TENDERS

Forty-Fourth Order read: Adjourned debate on motion on the need to adopt Artificial Intelligence to enhance objectivity and improve efficiency in public procurement.

Question again proposed.

HON. BAJILA: Thank you Mr. Speaker Sir, for granting me this opportunity. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Hon. Members for their contributions to the motion and particularly some of the views that Members got which enriched the scope of where the motion should be going. We really appreciate these kinds of contributions and hope that we will get more of these kinds of suggestions from this House as we make efforts to enhance Zimbabwe's ease of doing business. With these words, I move that this House adopts the motion.

Motion that –

WHEREAS the Constitution of Zimbabwe enjoins all public institutions to uphold transparency, accountability, efficiency and fairness in the utilisation of public resources;

AND WHEREAS the Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe (PRAZ) is mandated to regulate public procurement so as to ensure value for money, integrity, competitiveness and public confidence in Government tender processes;

CONCERNED by persistent allegations of corruption, delays and inconsistency in Government tender adjudication;

ACKNOWLEDGING the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to enhance objectivity, detect irregularities and improve efficiency in public procurement:

NOW, THEREFORE, this House resolves that the Procurement Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe (PRAZ) and the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion introduce AI-assisted systems in the adjudication of Government tenders, with appropriate safeguards, human oversight, and regular reporting to Parliament to ensure transparency, fairness and value for money, be adopted, put and agreed to.

On the motion of **HON. KAMBUZUMA***, seconded by* **HON. C. MOYO***, the House adjourned at Two Minutes past Five o'clock p.m.*