MASS PUBLIC OPINION INSTITUTE

FROM DESPAIR TO HOPE: FINDINGS OF THE STUDY ON THE STATE OF THE ZIMBABWE ECONOMY AND PEOPLE'S SURVIVAL STRATEGIES, 2009

Prepared By: E.V. Masunungure
Anyway Ndapwadza
Ethel Muchena
Runyararo

July 2009

Contact Details

The Director
Mass Public Opinion Institute
504 Robinson House
Fifth Floor
Cnr Angwa Street/Kwame Nkrumah Avenue
Harare

Tel: 263-4-758700/771358
Fax: 263-4-758701
Email: director@mpoi.org.zw
Website: www.mpoi.org

Acknowledgements

Firstly, our sincere appreciation goes to the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) for its generous assistance in making this Study possible.

Secondly, MPOI values the contributions rendered by various people notably Research Assistants, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Recruiters, Moderators, Note-Takers and FGD Participants, who during the several months in which this project lasted, provided us with useful and helpful assistance. Without their efforts, this study would not have come to fruition.

Authors

Eldred V. Masunungure: Executive Director
Anyway Ndapwadza: Principal Researcher
Ethel Muchena: Research Officer
Runyararo Munetsi: Research Officer

Introduction

Zimbabwe's development trajectory has been chequered since its attainment of Independence in 1980. It country displayed great promise at first with real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth for 1980-1981 exceeded 20% and the economy grew on average by about 4.5% between 1980 and 1990. Then in the 1990s the country had a paradigm shift in its development path, having abandoned flirtations with some socialism and experimented – half-heartedly, some would say – with World Bank/International Monetary Fund supported Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP). This was also abandoned at the end of the 1990s, heralding "the deepening crisis period, 1997-2008"[1]. Post-2000 Zimbabwe marked a fundamental rupture with the preceding period and the country began its descent into what to many seemed a bottomless pit. For instance, GDP suffered a precipitous decline to -7.4 percent in 2000 and further declined to -10.4 percent in 2003. Real GDP growth averaged -5.9 percent between 2005 and 2007[2]. Cumulatively, the national economy declined by 40% in eight years. Here is Wikipedia summarised the Zimbabwe economic situation earlier this year:

> The economy of Zimbabwe is collapsing from economic mismanagement, resulting in 94% unemployment and hyperinflation. The economy poorly transitioned in recent years, deteriorating from one of Africa's strongest economies to the world's worst. Inflation has surpassed that of all other nations at over 80 sextillion (although it is impossible to calculate an accurate value), with the next highest in Ethiopia at 41%. It currently has the lowest GDP real growth rate in an independent country and 3rd in total (behind Palestinian territories)[3].

In March 2009, the new government of national unity described the economy it inherited as follows:

> At the epicentre of the economic crisis, have been unprecedented levels of hyperinflation, sustained period of negative Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rates, massive devaluation of the currency, low productive capacity, loss of jobs, food shortages, poverty, massive de-industrialisation and general despondency[4].

Poverty levels skyrocketed from 55% of the population in 1995 to 72% in 2003 with the Gini coefficient of inequality increased from 0.53 to 0.61 in the same period[5]. Hyperinflation bankrupted the government, left more than 8 in 10 citizens destitute and decimated the country's

[1] United Nations Development Program (UNDP). 2008. Comprehensive Economic Recovery in Zimbabwe: A Discussion Document. Harare: UNDP/Zimbabwe, 7.

[2] Ibdi, 10.

[3] http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Economy_of_Zimbabwe. Accessed 30 July 2009.

[4] Government of Zimbabwe. 2009. Short-Term Emergency Recovery Programme (STERP): Get Zimbabwe Moving Again. Harare, March, 6.

[5] UNDP, 2008, 18. The Gini coefficient is the most commonly used measure of inequality. The coefficient varies from 0, which reflects complete equality, and 1, which indicates complete inequality.

farms and the manufacturing sector. Almost all primary and secondary schools, as well as state universities, failed to open for the greater part of 2008 and at the beginning of 2009. Teachers refused to wok because their meagre salaries were too little even to cover their transport costs to their work stations. Attendance by pupils dropped to as low as 20%, the pass rates of school leavers dropped precipitously and examinations remained unmarked for lack of resources.

In August 2008, a cholera outbreak broke out, the worst that Africa has experienced in recent times and it claimed 4000 lives and nearly a hundred fell ill. This was at a time when many health services had collapsed and even central hospitals were closed due to lack of running water, food to feed patients, and essential medicines and supplies

By the end of 2008, the Zimbabwe dollar had virtually collapsed and many transactions were now being done in foreign currency and businesses refusing to accept the local currency. To counter the effects of inflation on the Zimbabwe dollar the Reserve Bank Governor was constantly printing higher denominations in order to meet demand and redenominated the Zimbabwe dollar thrice, that is, in August 2006, July 2008 and February 2009. Then in September 2008 the central bank partially dollarized the economy by licensing 1000 retailers and wholesalers under the FOLIWARS scheme to sell goods in foreign currency in a move aimed at helping businesses suffering from a chronic shortage of foreign currency to import spare parts and foreign goods. Other shops and service providers followed suit although they were not authorized by the government. However, in February 2009 the economy became fully dollarized through the adoption of multiple currencies. This single policy move conquered the black market overnight, quelled inflation and empty shop shelves began to fill up once more.

It was against the above bleak and worsening background that a tripartite Global Political Agreement (GPA) involving the three major parities was signed on 15 September 2008 leading to the instalment of the Inclusive Government (IG) in February 2009. The political pact was motivated by the crying need to re-establish economic and political stability after a decade of vertiginous decline. This political intervention had an immediate and positive impact. Business and the economy began to pick up evidenced by the improved availability of goods and commodities on shop shelves. Prices began to drop and deflation actually set in: May 2009, inflation dropped by -3.1%. Industrial capacity and utilization climbed to 20% from 15% since the formation of the Inclusive Government.

All these economic and political developments formed the backdrop for this study. What were people's perceptions about their national economy and their place in it? In other words, what macro and micro-economic attitudes do Zimbabweans have? Has the state of the economy changed in the previous year and if so, in what direction? Has dollarization made a difference to people's lives? Are there any variations in attitudes across space (i.e. geographically) and over time (i.e. compared to previous surveys)? What are people's attitudes towards the mega political event, that is, towards the GPA and the coalition government? What are their expectations after a decade of regression? These and other questions motivated this study.

Methodology

The Mass Public Opinion Institute used a two-pronged methodology for this study: the national survey and focus group discussions.

National Survey

The national survey was conducted in late March through to early April 2009. It involved 1200 randomly selected respondents in the country's 10 provinces aged 18 years and above. A national representative sample was drawn using the 2008 projected population figures and random selection methods at every stage of sampling were applied, with probability proportionate to population size (PPPS) i.e. every adult citizen had an equal and known chance of inclusion. The use of 1200 cases gives a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 2.8% at a 95% level of confidence.

The 1200 questionnaires were administered in 103 Enumeration areas (EAs) with a maximum of 12 interviews in each EA except for a few where fewer interviews were conducted in order that a total of 1200 cases is achieved at the end of the survey. Interviews were subdivided into urban and rural areas according to the proportional contribution of each stratum to the total population. A total of 37 EAs were drawn from the urban areas and 66 were rural EAs. The total number of EAs was determined by calculating the maximum degree of clustering of interviews. Since EAs tend to be socially homogenous, in order to avoid selecting too many people from each EA, the Institute established a standard of not more than 12 interviews from each EA.

The Institute's research personnel developed a questionnaire with close-ended questions. Face to face interviews were conducted by Research Assistants, drawn from the country's tertiary institutions, and with a sound appreciation of social science research and some relevant field experience. For this survey, the Institute hired 18 Research Assistants, and these were divided into three teams. The three teams were deployed countrywide as follows:

Team 1	Bulawayo, Matabeleland North and South and Midlands
Team 2	Manicaland, Masvingo and Mashonaland Central
Team 3	Mashonaland West, Harare and Mashonaland East

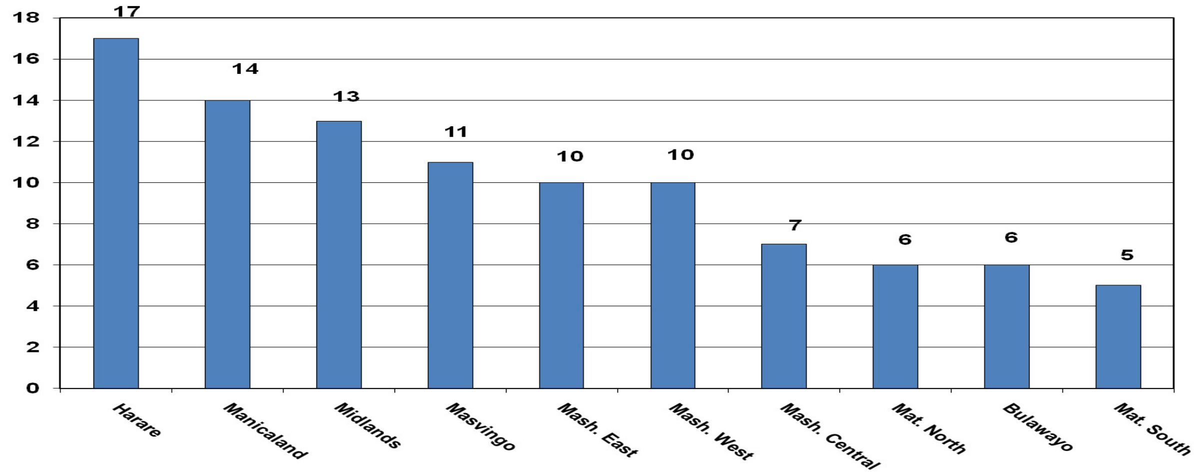
In urban areas the households were randomly selected from both "high" and "low" density suburbs. In rural areas random selection of households included communal, resettlement and commercial farms. Interviews were alternated along gender lines to give an equally representational outcome. However, a random selection criterion was used in the selection of the respondents. Other demographic characteristics such as level of education, age, marital status and occupation of the respondents were considered. The survey employed the day code technique in household sampling.

Socio -demographic Information

To enable in-depth analysis across the demographic spectrum, the study sought answers on the demographic composition of the 1200 people, specifically on their marital status, age, place of residence, level of education, occupation and province. Figure 1, shows the findings.

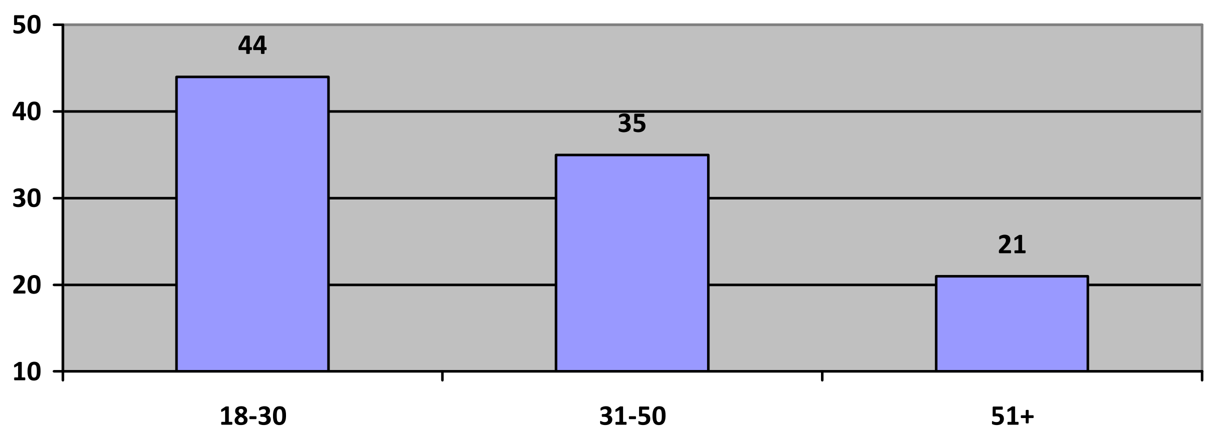
Regarding place of residence and in conformity to the Zimbabwe rural-urban dichotomy, where most Zimbabweans reside in the rural areas, 64% of the sample was interviewed in the rural areas and 36% in the urban areas.

Figure 1: Provincial Representation



The Institute strives to have an equal ratio of males to females in its surveys, thus interviews were alternated between both genders and an equal ratio of 50:50 was achieved. As already alluded to, the age variable was also considered and the achieved statistics revealed that a plurality of the respondents were from the 18-30 age group (44%), following by the 31-50 year olds where 35% were interviewed and lastly the 51+ age group where MPOI interviewed two in ten (21%).

Figure 2: Age representation



On employment status, a plurality falls under subsistence farmers, followed by the 'unemployed but not looking' for prospective employment (18%). A total of 17% of the respondents are 'unemployment but looking' for a job, followed by 7% who are self-employed, 5% unskilled manual workers and another 5% semi-skilled manual workers (see Table 1)

Table 1: Occupational status

Occupation	% of Respondents
Government staff/ civil servant	2
Self employed	7
Professional	3
Broker/ Business owner	1
Student	3
Unskilled manual worker	5
Semi-skilled manual worker	5
Street vendor	3
Subsistence farmer	30
Commercial farmer	3
Trader-formal/ informal	3
Unemployed- not looking	18
Unemployed- looking	17

Regarding marital status, 65% are married, more than two in ten (21%) are single, 10% are widowed and 4% are divorced.

Focus Group Discussions

As a component of the data collection methodology, six FGDs were conducted from the 8th to the 10th of December 2008 in Zimbabwe's selected four provinces: Harare, Matabeleland South, Masvingo and Mashonaland Central – see Table 2 for a combined work plan and participant demographics. To gain a wider perspective about the micro and macro economic issues, also taking into cognizance the possible variations in views across the different demographic features, the following demographics were considered; place of residence, gender, age, level of education and ethnicity.

Table 2: Work plan and Participant Demographics

Date	Time	Province	Place of Residence	Gender	Education	Age	Ethnicity
8-12-08	9am	Harare	Urban	Female	Secondary +	18-34	Shona
8-12-08	2pm	Harare	Urban	Male	Secondary +	35+	Shona
09-12-08	9am	Mat South	Rural	Female	Secondary.	35+	Ndebele
09-12-08	2pm	Mat South	Rural	Male	Secondary	18-34	Ndebele
9-12-08	2pm	Masvingo	Rural	Male	Secondary+	18-34	Shona
10-12-08	9am	Mash Central	Rural	Female	Primary+ Secondary	18-34	Shona

The target and achieved number for each group was 10. For a successful implementation of the discussions, the Institute sought the services of Provincial Coordinators to recruit the participants. Additionally, each group had a Moderator to facilitate the discussion and the Note-taker responsible for documenting the proceedings. The discussions were also audio taped so as to capture information that could have been missed by the Note-taker. All rural groups were conducted in their provincial towns for security reasons. All this was done to ensure a conducive atmosphere for discussion.

STUDY FINDINGs

The Report proceeds in several sections. The first Section presents results of the people's perceptions on the state of the Zimbabwe economy in three time zones: the present, past and future expectations. This precedes the discussion that focuses on three specific policy areas i.e. availability of basic goods, jobs and the income gap. The third section gives an account of the state of lived poverty as given by our respondents before discussing the survival strategies that people adopted to make ends meet. Government policies are discussed in section 5 and this leads to section 6 that presents the public mood on the GPA and the Inclusive Government. Section 7 concludes the Report

1. **The State of the Economy: the Present, the Past and the Future**

In Round 2 (2008) of the ZESS study series, the Report noted that:

> Zimbabwe's economy stands precariously on the edge of an abyss. For eight years now, the economy and quality of life have been in slow, uninterrupted decline; sadly, the pace is no longer so slow but precipitous. People are struggling with stratospheric inflation, widespread and endemic joblessness...

That Report added that:

> There is a palpable sense of desperation and hopelessness among Zimbabweans as they daily witness a catastrophic decline in their living standards, the rapid and comprehensive deterioration in physical and social services (especially education and health care). ... Monthly salary increases have so utterly failed to keep pace with price increases that a considerable number of people now fail to turn up for work because the total take-home pay is not even enough for bus fare for a week.

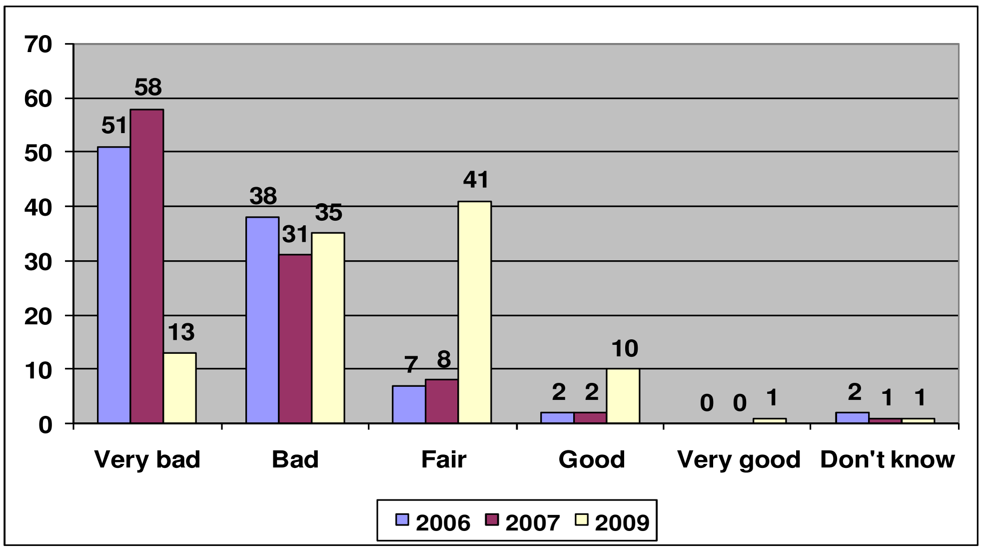
The Report quoted above was compiled in July 2008. A year later, the situation has almost completely changed in many important respects, a turnaround, at least from the perspective of public opinion. In a large sense, the present Report (ZESS 3) is about a revolution in public opinion wrought about by political intervention and the attendant policy changes. The turnaround is in respect of both macro and micro-level evaluations of economic conditions in the country two months after the formation of a coalition government dubbed the Inclusive Government (IG). And the pessimism that engulfed Zimbabweans has virtually evaporated, displaced by a robust optimism about the future micro and macro conditions in the country. This Report presents the findings based on a field survey done in late March to early April 2009 and FGDs carried out in December 2008.

Macro-Economic Evaluations

As in the last two Rounds, the survey asked Zimbabweans about their attitudes towards the country's present state of the economy, compare it with the previous year, and hazard a prognosis of the next twelve months.

Macro-Economic Evaluation – the Present: Nearly half (48%) of survey respondents found the economic conditions of the country either "bad" (35%) or "very bad" (13%), Figure 3. Though this constitutes an unacceptably high proportion of unhappy economic citizens, this compares very well with the nine in ten (89%) of Zimbabweans who in 2006 and 2009 said the country's economy was in a bad state. Significantly, more than half of respondents (51% in 2006 and 58% in 2007) had assessed the national economic situation as "very bad" compared to only 13% in 2009 who described the economy in these terms.

Figure 3: Zimbabwe's Present Economic Conditions, 2006-2009



How would you describe the present economic conditions of the country? [16]

Are the above assessments shared universally among Zimbabweans? Cross tabulated data shows only minor differences in opinion between men and women with 49% of men decrying the state of the economy (10% say its "good", 41% find it "fair") compared to 46% of women (11% say its "good", 42% judge it as "fair").

The picture is very different at the provincial level of analysis where wide differences exist, see Table 3. On the positive side of the assessments, we find a big gap where on one hand just 3% in Mashonaland Central, 4% in Manicaland and Masvingo who describe the national economic condition as "good" and 22% in Bulawayo, 20% in Harare. The 19-percentage points gap between Mashonaland Central and Bulawayo is dwarfed by the 42-percentage points gulf between the 26% in the Midlands (29% in Matabeleland South, 32% in Bulawayo) who find the economy in a bad state and 66% who make the same assessment in Mashonaland Central (68% in Manicaland and 65% in Masvingo). The data clearly points to distinct differences between Western Zimbabwe (i.e. Midlands, Matabeleland North and South and Bulawayo) and the rest of the country except Harare.

Table 3: Zimbabwe's `s Present Economic Conditions by Province

	Very bad/Bad	Fair	Very good/Good	Don`t Know
Harare	34	45	20	2
Bulawayo	32	46	22	0
Mashonaland East	53	36	9	3
Mashonaland West	49	38	10	3
Mashonaland Central	68	29	3	0
Midlands	26	60	20	1
Matabeleland North	45	49	6	0
Matabeleland South	29	63	8	0
Manicaland	66	29	4	1
Masvingo	65	31	4	0

A rural/urban gap is also manifest from the data as Table 4 shows. From the positive side of the responses, the survey reveals that less than one in ten (7%) of the rural folk are satisfied with the state of the country's economy compared to nearly two in ten (17%) among urban residents i.e. a 10-percentage difference. On the negative side, an 18-percentage gap exists between the 53% of rural people who say the national economy is in a bad state and 37% of urbanites who offer the same opinion.

Table 4: Country's Present Economic Conditions: Residential Dichotomy (2006-2009)

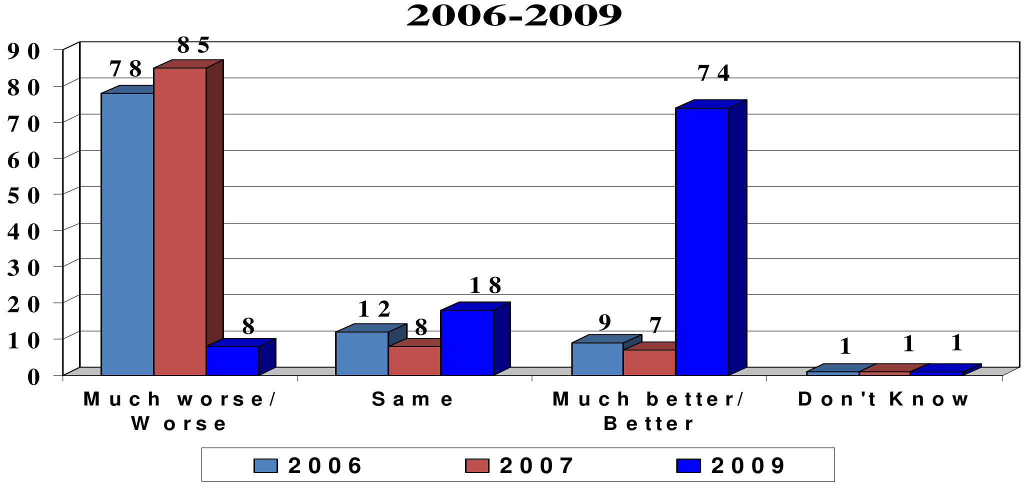
	Urban			Rural		
	2006	2007	2009	2006	2007	2009
Very bad/ Bad	88	88	37	91	89	53
Fair	9	8	45	6	8	39
Very good/ Good	1	3	17	2	2	7
Don't Know	2	1	1	2	1	1

The urban/rural gap seems to account for why Harare is an island (20% find the economy good, 35% say it is bad, while 45% find it fair) in a sea of unhappy Mashonaland provinces, including Manicaland and Masvingo. While this residential variable seems to account for the pervasive negative opinion rendered in rural provinces outside Matabeleland, it does not explain why equally rural Matabaleland North and South are less disposed to offer negative evaluations of the state of the economy. In fact, pluralities in Western Zimbabwe (63% in Matabaleland South, 60% in the Midlands and 49% in Matabeleland North) find the country's economy in a fair state. Why does Western Zimbabwe defy the urban/rural pattern? We speculate that this is partly (if not largely) because of these provinces' proximity to two of the major destinations for Zimbabwean economic migrants and therefore that these provinces benefit substantially from remittances (in cash and kind) from their Diaspora relatives and friends in Botswana and South Africa. In fact, Matabeleland provinces are almost denuded of young men (18 to 40 years old) because most of them have flocked across the border. MPOI researchers have also reported that houses in rural Matabeleland are much better than in the rest of the countryside and most are newly built or renovated. So, remittances mitigate the harsh impact of the economic crisis.

A generational gap is also evident especially in respect of the negative end of the evaluations. MPOI's age categories are: young (18-30); middle-aged (31-50), and old (51+). Positive assessments of the economic situation decline with age. Among the youth, 13% assessed the economic situation as good, declining to 9% among the middle aged and 7% among the old folk. At the negative scale, the age-based differences are more acute whereby four in ten youth described the country's economic condition as bad compared to as many as six in ten (58%) among the old respondents. Half of the middle aged (51%) shared the same assessment. A plurality (48%) of the youth could not decipher any difference and this declines to 40% among the middle aged and 33% of the old generation.

Macro-Economic Evaluations: the Present Compared to the Past: The above assessments about the current state of the Zimbabwe economy indicate that citizens still find the present state of the economy burdensome. But compared to the past, citizens see a major change for the better – refer to Figure 4. The survey asked: "Looking back, how you rate the economic condition of the country today compared to one year ago?" in 2007, more Zimbabweans (85%) found the economy to have worsened in the previous year than the 78% who said the same in 2006. But, in a dramatic turnaround, in March/April 2009, only 8% said the economy had worsened in the previous twelve months while three quarters said the economy was "better" (70%) or "much better" (4%). Another 18% had witnessed no change.

Figure 4: Past economic condition of the country, 2006-2009



Looking back, how do you rate the economic conditions of the country today compared to a year ago?

14

We again ask if these assessments are shared across the country. We find striking gender unanimity in responses to this question as portrayed in Table 5. For instance, 74% of females said the economy was better, so did 73% of men, Table 5. On the negative side, 8% of both men and women said the economy had worsened. Table 5 also reveals that an unmistakable rural/urban gap in terms of positive assessments of the present economic condition of the country compared to the previous twelve months: while some two thirds (68%) of rural residents witnessed an improvement, more than eight in ten (84%) urbanites gave a positive evaluation. At the other end of the scale, 10% of rural folk said there had been deterioration, compared to less than half this proportion (4%) among urban residents. Further, twice as many rural respondents as urban ones said there was no change (22% and 11%). Again, the IG dividend seems to have benefited the urban people much more than their rural counterparts.

Table 5: Past Economic Conditions of the Country by Place of Residence and Gender

	Place of Residence		**Gender**	
	Rural	**Urban**	**Male**	**Female**
Much better/better	68	84	73	74
Same	22	11	19	18
Much worse/worse	10	4	8	8
Don't know	1	1	1	1

A provincial breakdown of the findings confirms this observation with the two urban provinces of Harare and Bulawayo expressing a robust sense of improvement. In fact, nearly nine in ten of Hararians (88%) had witnessed an improvement and Bulawayo is not far behind with 83% expressing the same judgement. The variation in provincial assessments is acute from the 88% recorded in Harare to as low as 55% recorded in Manicaland, a yawning 33-percentage points gap. At that lower end Manicaland is joined by Matabeleland North at 63% and Mashonaland Central with 68%. Manicaland also recorded the highest proportion of those who said the economy worsened with 16% offering this opinion, followed by Mashonaland East (12%) and Matabeleland North (10%).

Table 6 shows that a gap in partisan-based assessments is also evident. MDC-T voters (77%) are much more inclined to notice an improvement than their ZANU-PF counterparts (68%) while the latter are more predisposed to seeing deterioration than the MDC-T people (12% to 7%), Table 6. We also observe more ZANU-PF voters (21%) saying there was no change compared to 16% among MDC-T people. Age wise, the younger generation is considerably more robust in its assessment and the older generation significantly less so. While eight in ten youths (79%) said there was an improvement, only 63% of the older folks witnessed the same improvement; the middle aged were in between with 72% saying the economy was better. More than a quarter (27%) of the old generation said there was no change compared to 14% among the youth and 19% of the middle-aged.

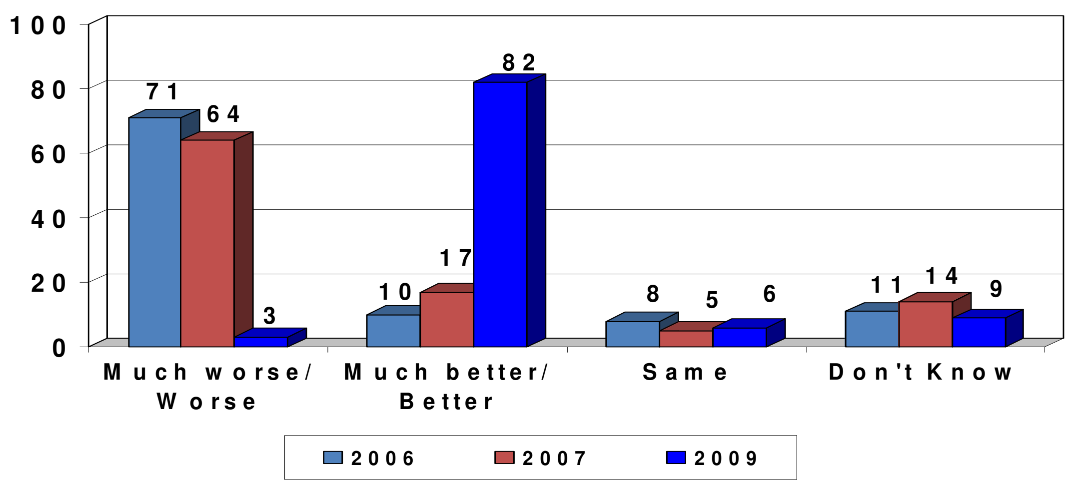
Table 6: Past Economic Conditions of the Country by Political Party Affiliation and Age

	Party Affiliation			**Age**		
	ZANU. PF	**MDC-T**	**MDC-M**	**18-30**	**31-50**	**51+**
Much better/better	68	77	70	79	72	63
Same	21	16	20	14	19	27
Much worse/worse	12	7	10	6	8	9

Don't know	0	1	0	1	1	1

Macro-Economic Evaluations – the Present Compared to the Future: To assess the confidence and optimism people have in their country's economic future, we asked our respondents: "How do you see the economic condition of the countryside one year from now?" To put it in comparative perspective, we note that in 2006, only 10% of respondents were hopeful about the national economy and this statistic rose to 17% in 2007 and in 2009, it surged to over eight in ten (82%) who project the economy to be "better" (56%) or "much better" (26%), Figure 5. Only a minute 3% now expect the economy to worsen compared to 71% and 64% in 2006 and 2007 respectively.

Figure 5: A prediction of the Zimbabwe economy



How do you see the economic conditions of the country one year from now? [15]

What is the profile of this dramatic wave of optimism? This time a gender gap – albeit a moderate one – appears whereby 78% of women foresee an improvement compared to 85% of their male counterparts. But this gap disappears in respect of the proportions that predict deterioration in the national economy: just 3% of both males and females say the economy will worsen. More women (12%) than men (7%) could not predict the future.

A ten-percentage generational gap separates 86% of the younger generation and 76% of the old people who are optimistic. In fact, optimism declines with age with 81% of the middle aged sharing the optimistic. At the other end of the scale, pessimism increases with age but quite slightly: 2% of the young, 3% of the middle aged and 5% of the old are gloomy.

Provincial level analysis shows that all provinces are optimistic but some are more optimistic than others. The two urban provinces, Midlands and Masvingo are the most optimistic with Harare registering 89% on the optimism barometer, followed closely by Bulawayo and Midlands (88%), and Masvingo (84%). Mashonaland East is the least optimistic with a quarter (74%) of its residents saying they are optimistic, followed by Matabeleland North at 77%. At the other end of the scale, Manicaland is the most downbeat with 6% of its population fearing the economy will worsen in the next 12 months, followed by Mashonaland Central and Matabeleland South (both at 5%). No one in Bulawayo predicts that the national economy will worsen and less than one percent in Harare foresees deterioration.

The residential gap persists with urban folk being more optimistic (87%) than their rural counterparts (79%). And pessimism has almost disappeared in urban areas with just one in a hundred but it is also negligible among rural residents only 4% of whom think the economy will deteriorate.

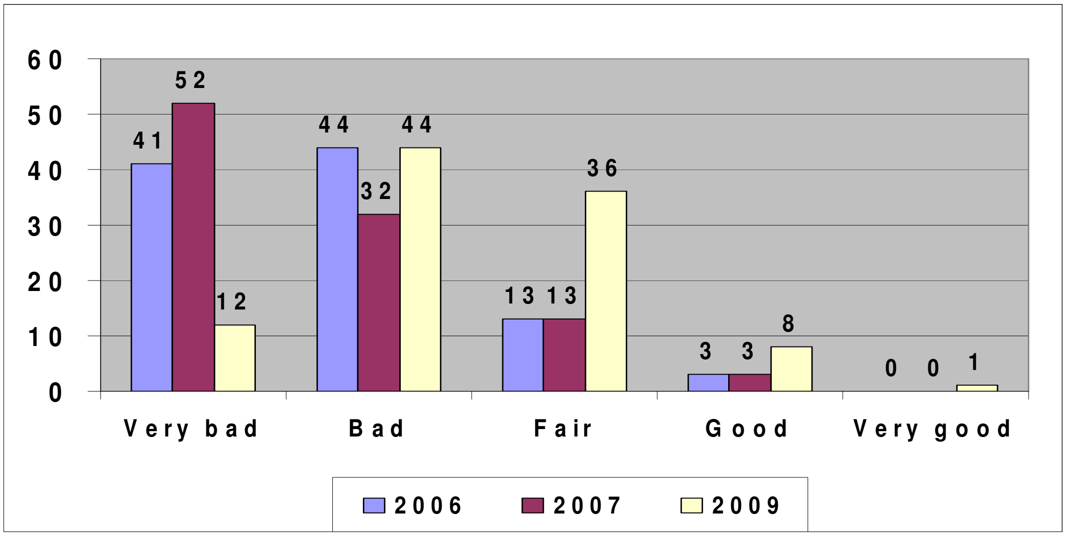
What is the picture among party-affiliated voters? We find more optimists (86%) among MDC-T voters than former ruling party supporters (80%) but the key message is that optimism is very high in both camps. No significant differences separate ZANU-PF and MDC-T supporters on the pessimism scale: just 2% and 3% respectively are gloomy.

Micro-Economic Evaluations

Switching from the macro to micro-level evaluations reveals that Zimbabweans are more negative about their economic status. Even then, the findings demonstrate that the scale and pervasiveness of the despair arising from the economic quagmire is considerably less in 2009 than in 2007. And people are as optimistic about their personal economic future as they are about the national economy.

Micro-Evaluations – the Present: Figure 6 shows that most citizens are still finding the economy difficult to live in. More than half, 56% (12%'very bad', 44% 'bad') say their present economic condition is bad. This however compares very favorably with the 84% (52% 'very bad', 32% 'bad') and 85% (41% 'very bad', 44% 'bad') who found the going tough in 2007 and 2006. Moreover, the despair has shifted from "very bad" to "bad." In 2007, more than half the population (52%) described their economic circumstances as "very bad" while 32% said it was "bad"; this compares to the 12% who said their economic condition is "very bad" and 44% who said it was "bad" in 2009. This suggests that most people are climbing out the economic abyss. And in 2009 8% compared to 3 in 2007 can now describe their economic circumstances as good.

Figure 6: Present Personal Economic Conditions: 2006-2009



How would you describe your own present economic conditions? 26

Cross tabulating the data by various variables is equally illuminating. We find no major gender-based differences on this matter with 10% women and 8% men saying their own economic condition is good. On the negative side, 57% of the females compared to 54% of the males rate their economic condition as bad. The partisan polarisation that characterises virtually all aspects of life in Zimbabwe is not visible in respect of this question. For instance, while 57% of the ZANU-PF aligned respondents say their economic circumstance is bad (45% "bad" and 12% "very bad") about the same proportion (56%) among MDC-T respondents give the same verdict (44% "bad" and 11% "very bad)"

The survey however reveals a huge gap in micro-economic evaluations across provinces. Western Zimbabwe provinces are significantly far less negative about their economic situation than those in the rest of the country while those in two Mashonaland provinces, in Manicaland and Masvingo are the most downbeat. Table 7, shows that while as 36% of Bulawayo residents, 39% of people in Matabeleland South and 43% in the Midlands described their economic condition as bad up to seven in ten (71%) of respondents in Mashonaland Central, 69% of those in Manicaland and 68% in Mashonaland East said their situation was bad.

Table 7: Present Personal Economic Conditions by Province

	Own Present Economic Conditions		
	Very bad/bad	**Fair**	**Very good/good**
Harare	47	38	16
Bulawayo	36	46	18
Mashonaland East	68	24	8
Mashonaland West	58	34	8
Mashonaland Central	71	26	3
Midlands	43	44	13
Matabeleland North	54	39	7
Matabeleland South	39	49	12
Manicaland	69	29	3

Masvingo	61	37	2

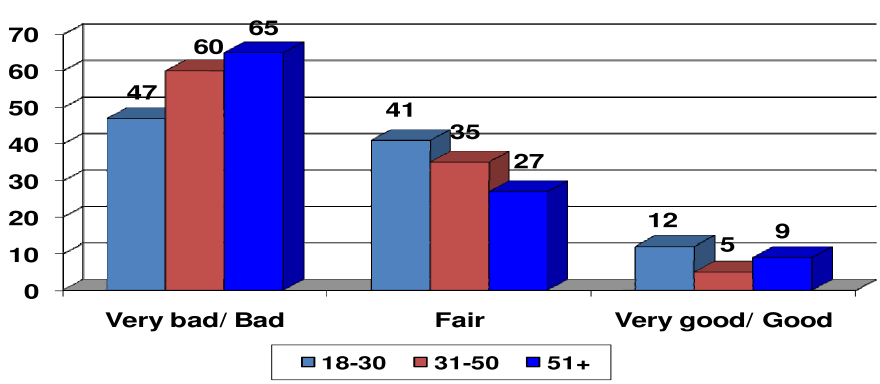
It is difficult to decipher the reasons for these huge provincial differences but top among the suspects would be the degree of shortages of basic commodities (especially food and cash) experienced by the people in various provinces. For example, while only 8% of Bulawayo residents and 31% in Matabeleland South said they had "always" gone without food in the previous year, the proportion of people giving the same response is up to 54% in Mashonaland Central and 43% in Manicaland. Similarly, while just a third of Bulawayo respondents said they "always" face cash problems, more than half (58%) of those in Mashonaland Central and 65% of people in Mashonaland East have always gone without cash.

Another important consideration is the rural/urban divide and proximity to favored destination countries for economic migrants. We find that provinces that are near South Africa and Botswana (Bulawayo, Matabeleland North and South and to some extent the Midlands) are least likely to say that economic conditions are bad than provinces in the rest of the country. For instance, while only 36% of people in Bulawayo say their economic situation was bad, followed by 39% in Matabeleland South, seven in ten (71%) of people in Mashonaland Central described their personal economic conditions as bad, followed by 69% in Manicaland.

A related consideration is the rural/urban factor. Six in ten (61%) rural residents described their economic circumstances as bad compared to only 46% of urbanites who share this assessment. Nearly three times as many urban respondents (15%) as rural ones (6%) describe their economic conditions in positive terms.

The younger generation is more upbeat than either the middle aged or the old folks: Figure 7 reveals that 12% of the 18-30 age group says their economic circumstances are good compared to 5% of the middle aged and 9% of the old. At the other end of the responses, a clear pattern is evident in that downbeat assessments increase with age. We see that less than half (47%) of the youth evaluated their personal economic conditions as bad; this jumps to 60% among the middle aged and to 65% among the old.

Figure 7: Present Personal Economic Conditions by Age

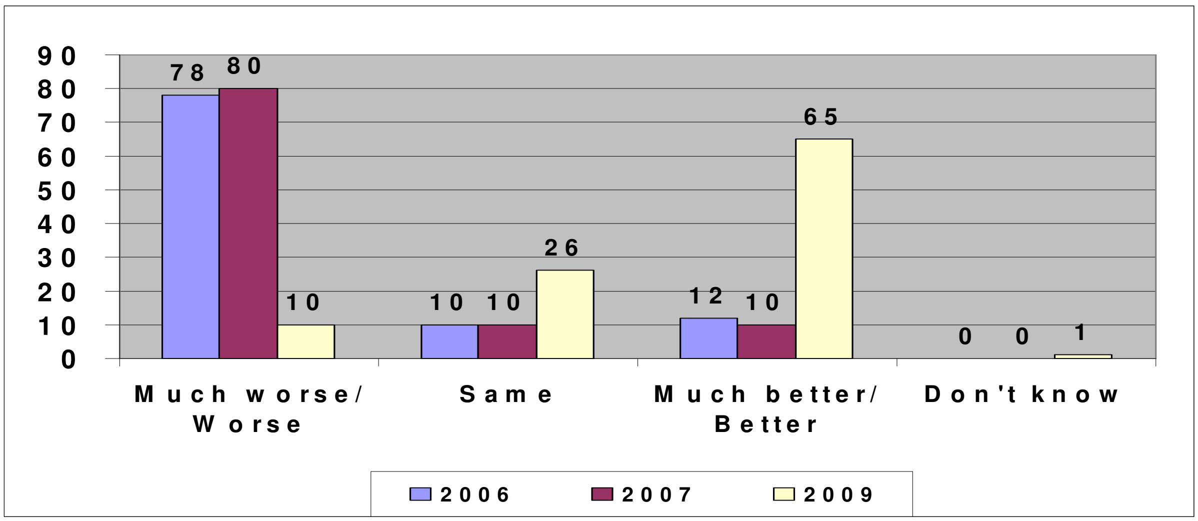


How would you describe your own present economic conditions?

27

Micro-Evaluations – the Present Compared to Past Twelve Months: The most dramatic turnaround in the public mood is in respect of the comparison between people's present and their past economic condition. Only 12% in 2006 and one in ten respondents in 2007 could describe their own economic situation as better than the previous year (Figure 8). In 2009, this proportion spectacularly shot up to two thirds of the sampled citizens who rated their personal economic circumstances as "better" (61%) and "much better" (4%). Further, in the past two Rounds of the series of studies, as many as eight in ten adult Zimbabweans had assessed their condition as worse than the previous year. In 2009 however, only 10% offered this verdict, a remarkable turnaround indeed.

Figure 8: Past Personal Economic Conditions



Looking back, how do you rate your own living conditions today compared to one year ago

29

The survey again shows no significant gender differences in micro-level comparisons of the present with the past. Nearly two thirds of both males (65%) and females (64%) said their economic situation had improved; 9% of males and 10% of females witnessed a worsening of conditions while a quarter of both gender groups said there had been no change.

The younger, the more robust are the positive assessments. For instance, over two thirds (68%) of the youth said they witnessed improvements in their economic lives and this declines to 65% among the middle aged before slumping to just over half (52%) among the old generation. No significant generational differences exist in respect of negative assessments: about one in ten respondents across the three age groups said their economic circumstances had worsened.

The rural/urban divide also stands out, especially in regard to the positive end of economic evaluations. We find that six in ten (61%) of rural inhabitants acknowledged an improvement in their economic situation but in the urban areas, seven in ten (72%) said their economic status had improved. Conversely, more rural people (10%) complained things had deteriorated in the previous twelve months compared to 7% of their urban counterparts.

The economic changes to individual lives vary widely depending on provinces. Just half of people in Manicaland said their economic circumstances had improved in the previous year, the lowest among the ten provinces. The next lowest proportion (58%) is found in Matabeleland North and Mashonaland East (61%). Masvingo (71%) and the two urban provinces of Bulawayo and Harare (67%) record the largest concentration of inhabitants who witnessed improvements. At the other extreme survey findings show that two in ten Manicaland residents witnessed economic deterioration, followed by those in Mashonaland East (14%) and Mashonaland West (9%).

A moderate but significant partisan divide is evident. Nearly two thirds (63%) of ZANU-PF supporters saw their economic condition improve in the previous twelve months compared to just over two thirds (68%) among MDC-T sympathisers. At the other end of the economic evaluations, more ZANU-PF (12%) complain that things worsened compared to the 9% who share this assessment. For a quarter in both parties, things had not changed.

Micro-Economic Projections: The optimistic hype about the national economy extends to the micro-level, see Table 8. Over eight in ten (82%) Zimbabweans are upbeat about their economic future compared to only 20% and 12% in 2007 and 2006 respectively. This is another evidently huge surge in economic optimism. And the optimism cuts across all demographic categories.

When projecting into the future, large proportions of both men and women express optimism but the more males (84%) than females (79%) harbour optimism. On the other hand, more women than men are inclined to either see no change (9% to 6%) or plead that they "don't know" (10% to 7%). In terms of age, optimism declines with age: while as 87% of the youth are upbeat about their personal economic circumstances, this proportion declines to 80% among the middle aged and to 74% among the old.

Table 8: Future Personal Economic Projections by Demographic Variables

	Gender		**Age**			**Place of Residence**	
	Male	**Female**	**18-30**	**31-50**	**51+**	**Rural**	**Urban**
Much better/better	84	79	87	80	74	85	79
Same	6	9	6	8	8	8	6
Much worse/worse	3	3	2	3	4	4	1
Don't know	7	10	5	9	14	9	8

Residentially, more urbanites (85%) than rural inhabitants (79%) foresee an optimistic future for themselves. Few people expect their own economic situation to deteriorate though slightly more rural residents than urban ones (4% to 1%) harbour this projection.

Both ZANU-PF and MDC-T people are upbeat but the latter more so than the former: 83% of former ruling party supporters are optimistic compared to 87% of those sympathetic to the former opposition party. Significantly more ZANU-PF voters (11%) are inclined to no change in their economic situation than is the case with MDC-T folk (6%).

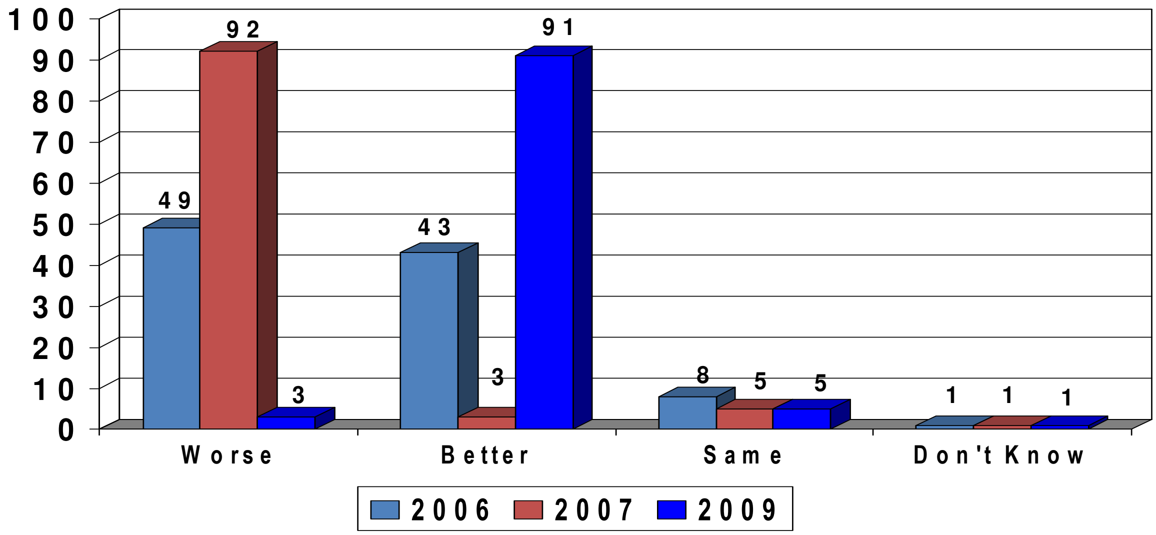
The urban/rural divide reflects itself as well at the provincial level. The urban provinces are more optimistic (88% in Bulawayo and 86% in Harare) than is the case in the largely rural provinces with the exception of Masvingo which also records 86% on the optimism scale. Mashonaland East has the lowest proportion (71%) of upbeat people, followed by Mashonaland West and Central, both at 78%. On the pessimism side, virtually no one has a gloomy prognosis among Bulawayo residents and even in Manicaland and Mashonaland Central, just 5% expect their economic situation to worsen in the future.

The above findings make it clear beyond any reasonable doubt that the people of Zimbabwe find the country a much more habitable place than they have ever been in a long time. They are also full of optimism that the country has turned the corner and Zimbabwe is poised for economic regeneration and a better future.

2. Improvement/Deterioration in Three Policy Areas

The above discussion gives an overview of the state of the national economy and how people are faring in it. The survey then asked a related but more specific set of questions, two of which were on availability of basic goods and jobs and the third on the gap between the rich and the poor. First we asked if the availability of consumer goods was "better or worse" than the previous year and Figure 9 presents the results. To put in perspective, we note that in 2006, 43% responded that availability was better, while half (49%) said availability had worsened in the previous 12 months. In 2007, only 3% said availability was better while a whopping 92% said it had worsened. In fact, in 2007, nearly half (47%) of all respondents fingered "shortages of basic commodities" as the "most serious problem" facing the country. The situation completely changed in March/April 2009 with an overwhelming 91% saying the availability of consumer goods was "better" and only 3% saying it was "worse." Also, this problem dropped from being the number one problem to the number four with just 11% identifying it as their most serious problem.

Figure 9: Availability of Consumer Goods: 2006- 2009



[17]

Responses to the job opportunities question were more restrained but still much more positive than in previous surveys. For instance, in both 2006 and 2007, only 2% of respondents said the availability of job opportunities was better but this jumped to 18% in 2009. In the two previous surveys, around 86% had witnessed a worsening in opportunities for jobs but this proportion had shrunk to 24% in 2009 with a plurality saying there had been no change. The gravity of the problem is illustrated in the fact that Zimbabweans still regard unemployment as their number two problem, now second to education.

The same pattern is repeated with respect to the gap between rich and poor. In 2006 and 2007, a minute 2% had said the gap was narrowing while as in 2009, this proportion increased to 26%. More than eight in ten in 2006 (82%) and 2007 (83%) said the gap between the rich and the poor had worsened but this contracted sharply to only 27% in 2009.

If both the macro and micro economic conditions have vastly improved, what then do Zimbabweans now consider as their most serious problems? Though the survey asked respondents to give up to three responses, i.e. what they consider as the three most serious problems, for purposes of this analysis, we focus only on the first responses given. From the spontaneous responses, education is the most troubling problem, fingered by 14% of all adult Zimbabweans. Closely following are unemployment and agricultural inputs, each mentioned by 12% of the survey respondents. Inflation and shortages of basic commodities follow at 11% each and then health (8%) and destitution (8%), see Table 9.

Table 9: Most Serious Problem, 1st Response (2009)

Education	14
Unemployment	12
Lack of agricultural inputs/ low agricultural production	12
Inflation	11
Shortages of basic commodities	11
Health	8
Poverty/ destitution	8
Wages and salaries	5
Governance crisis	4
Other	4
Water shortages	3
High rates and taxes	2
Corruption	2
Transport problems	2
Power cuts	1

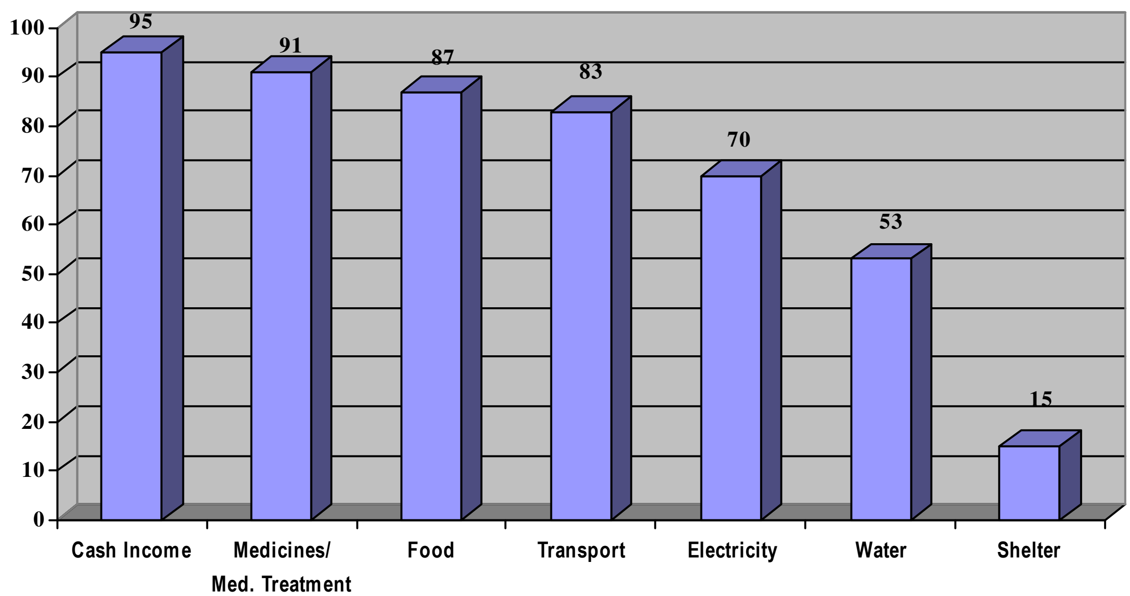
What, in your view, are the three most serious problems facing the country that the Inclusive Government should address? 20

Of vital interest is that apart from the surge in optimism discussed earlier, there is an equal surge in confidence that the Government i.e. the Inclusive Government "is capable of solving" the serious problems identified. In 2007, only a third (35%) expressed confidence that the government was capable of solving the problems but in 2009, the confidence skyrocketed to 79%. It is equally interesting that a political intervention was seen as providing the solution. This was in response to a question on what the government "should do to improve the economy of the country" to which more than half (53%) said the government should "fully implement the provisions of the global political agreement." This dwarfed by far the other recommended solutions: 10% said the government should increase agricultural production; 9% advised government to "seek external aid"; and 8% would like government to create "a conducive environment for investment."

3. Incidence of Lived Poverty and People's Survival Strategies

The SADC Regional Human Development Report (2000) defines poverty as a multidimensional phenomenon that is reflected in malnutrition, poor health, low survival rates, low literacy levels, inadequate clothing, housing and living conditions, apart from low incomes. There are two perspectives to the definitions of poverty; the monetary and the human development. The monetary perspective defines poverty as falling below a certain income threshold. The UN defines all people who live below 1 US$ per day as being poor.[6] Then the human development perspective defines poverty as being deprived of those opportunities and choices that are essential for a long and healthy life, freedom, dignity and decent standards of living. Zimbabweans going by these definitions are poor, necessitated by nearly a decade of political and economic crises. Over 75% of the people in Zimbabwe are living in desperate poverty. Save the Children (SCF) found out that 10 out of 13 million people in Zimbabwe live in abject poverty, struggling to access food and other essentials. The ZESS Round 3 survey found alarming levels of deprivation in Zimbabwe, 95% went without a cash income, 91% without medicines and medical treatment, 87% without food, 83% without transport, 70% without electricity, 53% without water and 15% without shelter in the last year, see Figure 10.

Figure 10: Shortages of Basics



Question: "Over the past year, how often have you or a member of your immediate family gone without... (See listed goods and services) Notes: Figures are percentages of respondents saying that their household "sometimes" and "always" went without these basic goods and services.

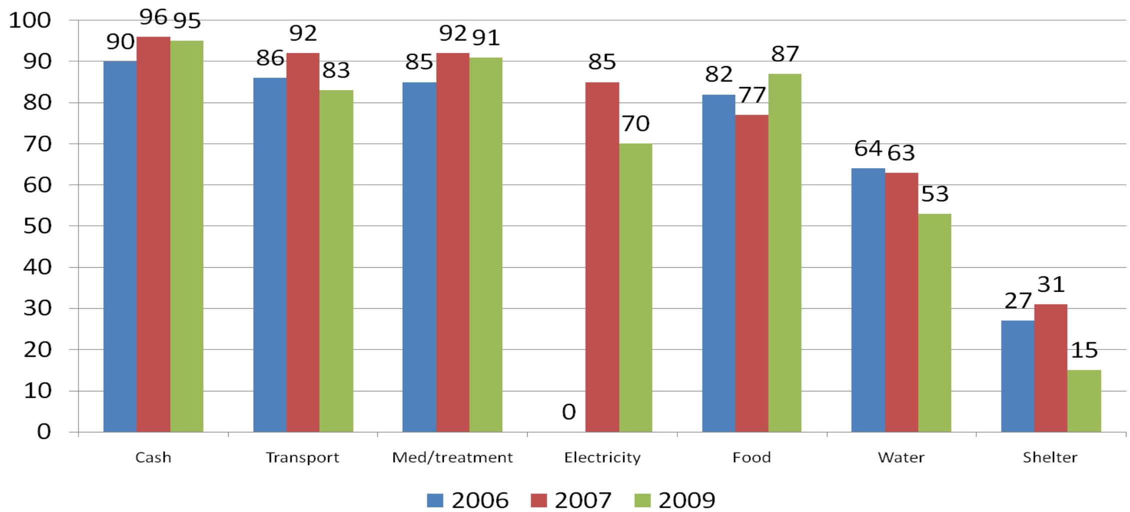
Cash Income

In the past year, cost of living in Zimbabwe was skyrocketing at a breathtaking pace. The hyperinflationary environment eroded people's incomes and with the persistent cash shortages, people were not able to access their hard earned cash. Dollarizing the economy has resulted in the stabilization of prices, however many do not access to foreign currency, whilst many of those employed, earn paltry wages and salaries. Resultantly, a large proportion of the adult population had gone without a cash income (95%) in the past year. Both males and females are similarly

[6] Judith Kaulem, Government and Social Welfare, the experience of Zimbabwe in achieving the MGDs

affected by lack of a cash income as reflected by 95% and 96% respectively. Across the age variable, 95% of the youth, 96% of the middle aged and again 96% of the old aged had gone without a cash income. Even when looked at from a place of residence perspective, an apparent majority has been exposed to lack of a cash income that is 96% of those in the rural areas and 93% of the urbanites. Comparing to the previous rounds, that is Round 1 and 2, 90% and 96% respectively went without a cash income.

Figure 11: Trend analysis Shortage of Basics



Question: "Over the past year, how often have you or a member of your immediate family gone without... (See listed goods and services) Notes: Figures are percentages of respondents saying that their household "sometimes" and "always" went without these basic goods and services.

Medicines/ Medical Treatment

The economic crisis has severely affected health service delivery. The health sector has been dogged by striking heath personnel, brain drain, shortages of drugs and medicines, lack of basic equipment (injections and thermometers), inadequate remuneration and deplorable working conditions and exorbitant treatment costs, resulting in a crisis that left the country's major referral hospitals unable to function. The crisis also affected the quality of health care offered in most of the country's health institutions and made it difficult for health professionals to conduct their duties effectively. Because of these problems MPOI sought to assess people's experiences in accessing medical treatment and medicines. A majority (91%) of Zimbabwe's adult population had gone without adequate medicines or medical attention. Analysis across the gender variable reveals a shocking level of deprivation as 92% and 91% of the males and females respectively had gone with inadequate health attention and medicines. Generationally, majorities across board have gone without medicines or medical treatment that is 90% of the youth, 92% of the middle aged and 93% of the old aged. Across the place of residence dichotomy, majorities still went without medicines/ medical treatment. In the rural areas 94% and in the urban areas 87% were deprived of health care services. However there is a 7% gap, as those from the rural communities feel the pinch more. What then explains this difference? In the urban areas, there are more resources that is, human and capital (hospitals, clinics, health personnel, medical aid cover) and urbanites have more means of accessing income to pay for health services.

Provincially, majorities have been deprived of medicines and medical treatment, refer to Table 10. However Mashonaland Central is the hardest hit province, where nearly all (99%) report having gone without health care or medication. Following is Masvingo (97%), then Manicaland and Mashonaland East each with 96%, then Midlands with 94% of adult Zimbabweans who have gone without medicines or medical treatment. Bulawayo (71%) has the least adult Zimbabweans who have gone by without health care or drugs. In Round 2 of the study, the hardest hit provinces were Mashonaland West and Midlands were 98% felt deprived of medicines or medical treatment. See table below

Table 10: Medicines/Medical Treatment by Province

	Never	Sometimes	Always	Don't Know
Harare	11	31	58	1
Bulawayo	25	38	33	4
Mash. East	3	23	73	1
Mash. West	4	20	71	5
Mash. Central	1	35	64	-
Midlands	7	46	47	-
Mat. North	11	43	46	-
Mat. South	12	37	48	3
Manicaland	3	44	52	1
Masvingo	1	32	65	2

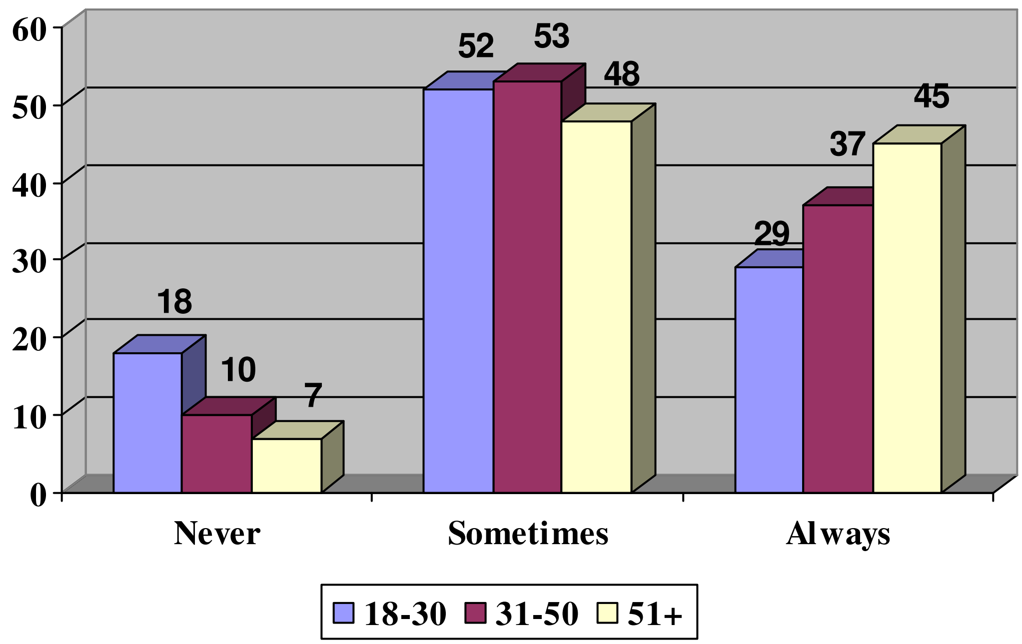
But has access to medical attention and medicines improved over time? A trend analysis reveals that the situation has worsened over time, in Round 1 of the study 85% had no access to medicines or medical treatment, however the situation further deteriorated as in Round 2, 92% and in Round 3, 91% went without health care.

Food Security/ Enough Food to Eat

Zimbabwe once considered the bread basket of Southern Africa, for its bountiful production of wheat and corn, is now a basket case and now faces acute food shortages - something attributed in part to drought, and the effects of accelerated land reform. Cereal production has fallen by two-thirds since 2000, turning Zimbabwe from a provider of corn, a staple food for the region, into a nation facing food shortages and starvation. The situation has been worsened by the breakdown of service delivery systems and other socio-economic factors. Other government policies like Operation Reduce Prices saw the disappearance of goods from shop shelves, only to be found on the black market at exorbitant prices, resulting in failure to access basics. The dollarisation policy resulted in the flooding of goods in Zimbabwe but very few can afford because of lack of access to foreign currency. With these reported acute food shortages, the MPOI study therefore sought to find out how many Zimbabweans had over the past year gone without food. Close to nine in ten (87%) of Zimbabwe's adult population went without food over the past year. Across the socio-demographics of gender, place of residence, age and province what proportion was subjected to food insecurity?

Gender wise, the males and females are similarly affected, as 86% and 87% respectively went by without enough food to eat. Across the rural-urban divide, majorities suffered from food scarcities. However the rural bloc was affected more as 92% against 78% of the urbanites went by without food. In the rural areas because of the effects of erratic rains and lack of agricultural inputs harvests were poor, exposing house holds to food insecurity. The suspension of humanitarian NGOs last year in May 2008 further exacerbated the food crisis especially in the rural communities. Generationally, the most vulnerable are the older generation with 93% saying they went by without food, followed by the middle aged 90% and the youth 81% (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Food Security by Age



The worst food insecure provinces are Mashonaland Central (97%), Masvingo (96%), Matabeleland North (94%), Manicaland (92%) and Matabeleland South (91%), whilst Bulawayo has a lesser figure of 72% - See Table 11 below

Table 11: Assessing Food Security by Province

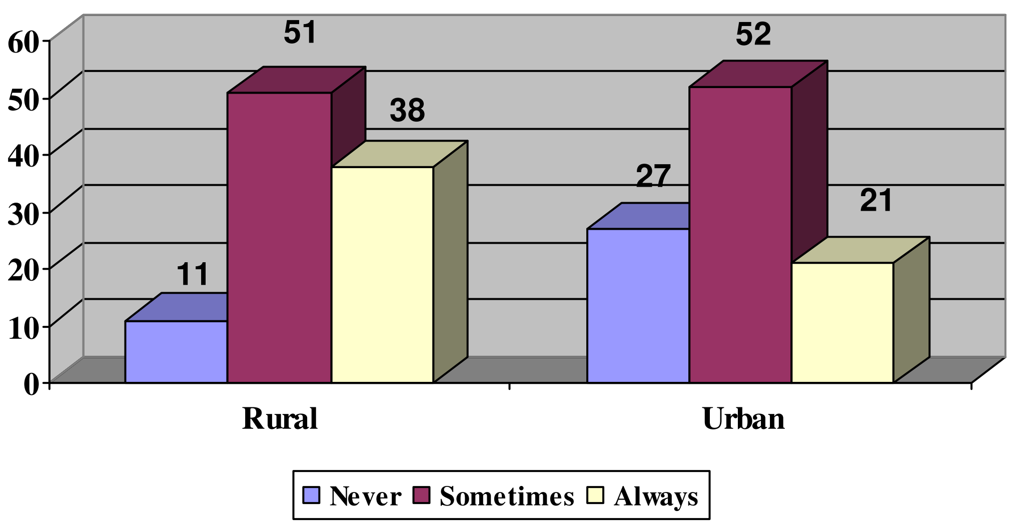
	Never	Sometimes	Always	Don't Know
Harare	22	54	24	1
Bulawayo	28	64	8	-
Mash. East	12	51	36	1
Mash. West	20	36	44	1
Mash. Central	3	43	54	-
Midlands	12	69	19	-
Mat. North	7	47	47	-
Mat. South	9	60	31	-
Manicaland	9	49	43	-
Masvingo	5	46	50	-

A trend analysis over the three Rounds indicates that, in Round 1, 82% went without enough food, decreasing by 5% in Round 2, as 77% reported that they suffered from enough food deprivation. In Round 3 of the study the figure of those affected jumps by 10% to 87%. A number of reasons account for this level of acute deprivation, including hyperinflation, shortages of cash to acquire required food, low agricultural production, low industrial production, suspension of Humanitarian organizations, effects of Operation Reduce Prices and the dollarization of the economy.

Transport

Transport has been problematic in Zimbabwe, if it is not the cost, then it is the shortage of fuel and in some areas, especially rural it is because the roads are in a dilapidated state and impassable. MPOI sought to assess how deep the transport problem is and asked how many had gone without transport, in the past year. A shocking majority of 83% had been exposed to transport shortages over the past year. Along gender lines the males and females are similarly affected as 83% each experienced transport shortages. Further disaggregation by residential dichotomy reveals that whether urban (73%) or rural (89%) Zimbabweans experienced transport woes, Figure 13. However, in the rural areas transport shortages are experienced more, indicated by the 16% difference with those in the urban areas who were exposed to the same problem. In the rural areas many roads are impassable such that transport operators shun such areas and prefer easier roads not difficult to navigate. In addition, in many remote areas one or two buses will be servicing the area creating a huge transport deficit and further more exorbitant transport costs are beyond many rural Zimbabweans. In the rural areas some regions are rendered inaccessible due to lack of fuel.

Figure 13: Transport Problem by Place of Residence



Of the three age categories, the old aged are more affected as reported by 90%, then the middle aged 85% and lastly the youth 78%. The most affected province is Mashonaland East (92%), then Masvingo (89%), followed by Midlands and Mashonaland West each with 88%. Over the years the problem of transport shortages has not had a steady increase or decrease. In Round 1 of the study 86% experience transport problems, this figure rose by 6% and in Round 2, 92% experienced the same problems. In 2007 (Round 2) the problem was exacerbated by Operation Reduce Prices, when government ordered prices of fuel to be slashed. Resultantly, fuel became expensive as the black market became the major source of supply. In March 2009 (Round 3) the situation improved as highlighted by a 9% decrease as 83% were exposed to transport shortages.

On Electricity/energy, Supply of Clean Water and Shelter

Zimbabwe has been experiencing electricity shortages which have resulted on a massive load shedding programme by the Power Utility. This has affected industry, production, jobs and consequently the economy. Seven in ten (70%) reported to have gone without electricity. There is a 15% decrease from Round 2 of the study where 85% said they experienced electricity outages. Looking at from a rural-urban dichotomy there is a yawning gap of 40% between the two localities. The urbanites are greatly affected as 96% against 56% from the rural bloc went without electricity/energy in their homes. But what explains this cavernous gap? In the rural areas there are very few households that have access to electricity compared to the urban areas. Thus the urban areas with more electrified house holds and industries are more susceptible to load shedding. The most affected provinces who were exposed to electricity shortages are Harare (98%), Mashonaland East (95%), Bulawayo (94%) and Mashonaland West (78%). Whilst the least affected experiencing shortages of electricity/energy are Matabeleland North (34%) and Mashonaland Central (45%) – (See table 12).

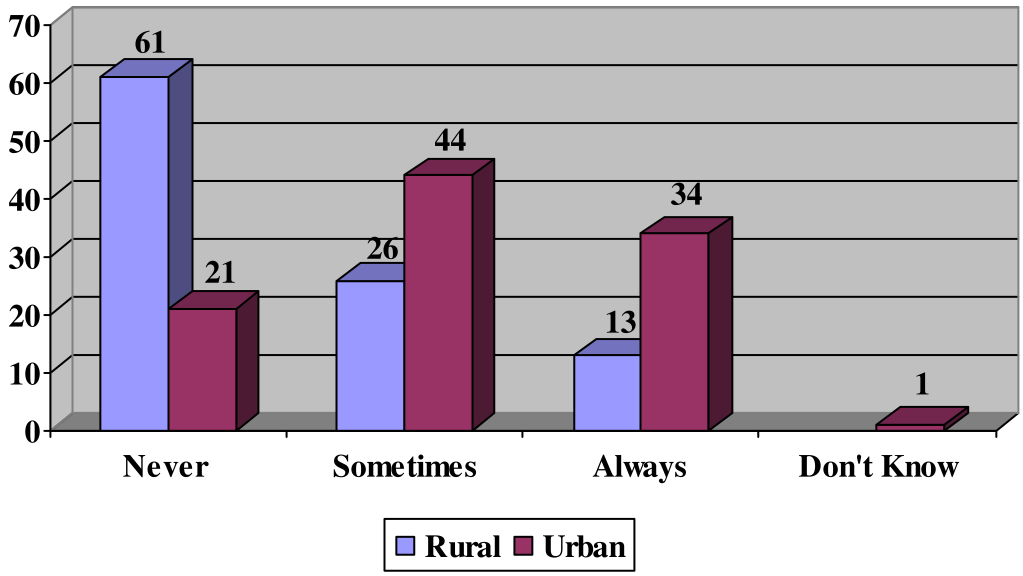
Table 12: Electricity/Energy in your home

	Never	Sometimes	Always	Don't Know
Harare	3	56	42	-
Bulawayo	7	81	13	-
Mash. East	5	35	60	1
Mash. West	22	40	38	1
Mash. Central	55	32	13	-
Midlands	37	45	18	-
Mat. North	66	17	17	-
Mat. South	35	54	9	2
Manicaland	50	36	15	-
Masvingo	39	44	17	-

The survey found out that 53% of adult Zimbabweans had "sometimes" or "always" gone without enough clean water. There is however a significant drop as 64% and 63% had gone without clean water in Round 1 and 2 respectively. The transference of water management from the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA) improved water supply.

The males and the females are similarly affected, as 54% and 53% respectively went "sometimes" or "always" without water. Across place of residence (Figure 140, the urbanites (78%) are gravely affected when compared to their rural counterparts, with 39% having gone without clean water supply. In most urban areas persistent water cuts are experienced.

Figure 14: Gone Without Enough Clean Water, by Place of Residence

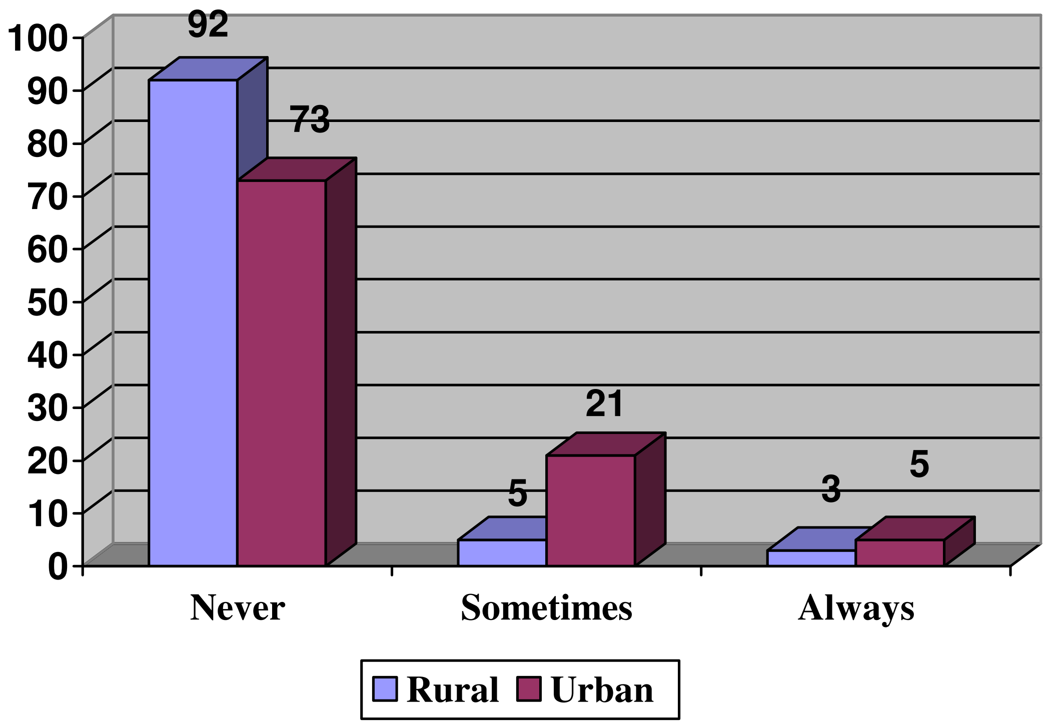


Provincially, Harare (86%), Bulawayo (71%), Matabeleland South (56%), Matabeleland North (54%) and Midlands (53%) have majorities who are affected. In the south of the country (Matabeleland Region), an estimated 2.5 million people suffer from daily water shortages. Climate has also played a part. Since 2006, the region of Matabeleland has had below normal rainfall and the rain that has come has been erratic. Some areas of the province are experiencing a full-scale water crisis. In the city of Bulawayo water rationing has become the norm thus the city is not able to supply half of the daily requirement.

Shelter

Assessing the availability of shelter, the survey revealed that 15% of Zimbabweans adult population had gone without shelter in the past year. However the degree of deprivation has significantly decreased. In Round 1 and Round 2 of the study 27% and 31% respectively, report that they went without shelter. This may be attributed to the effects of Operation Murambatsvina/Restore Order where government demolished what it termed illegal structures, leaving many homeless. What is the degree of deprivation between the males and the females? There is a marginal difference as 16% and 14% of the males and females were exposed to lack of shelter. Analysis by residence (figure 15) shows that more in the urban areas (26%) than the rural areas (8%) experienced accommodation problems. Across the age categories, the youth (17%) are the most affected, followed by the middle aged (16%), whilst the old aged (8%) are the least affected.

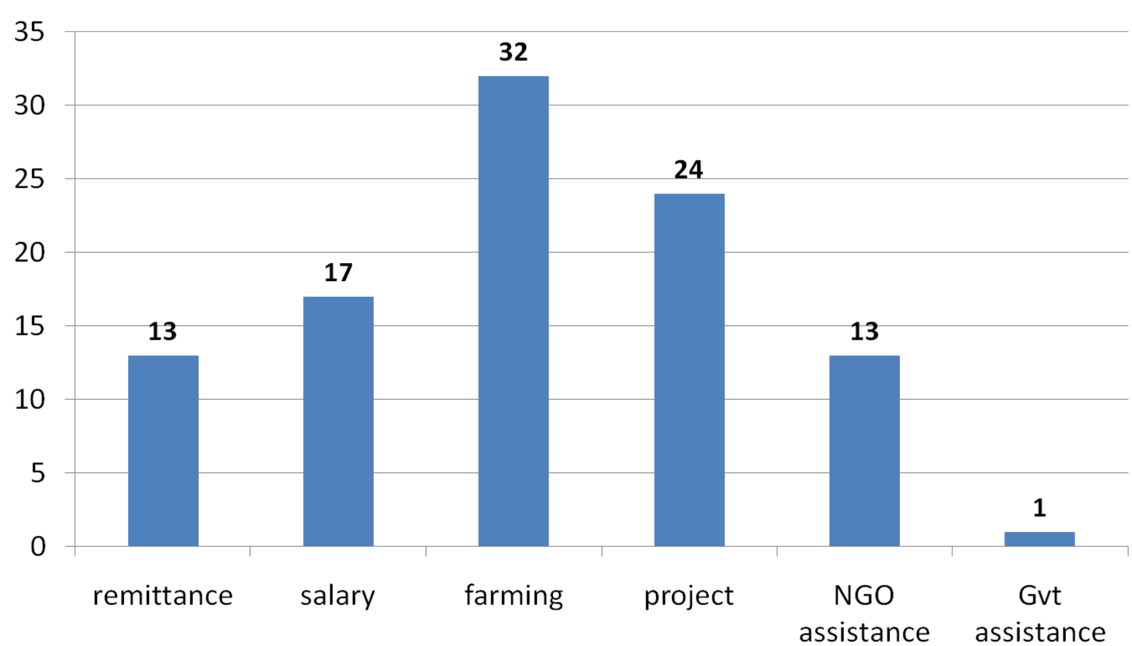
Figure 15: Gone without shelter, by Place of Residence



4. **Survival Strategies**

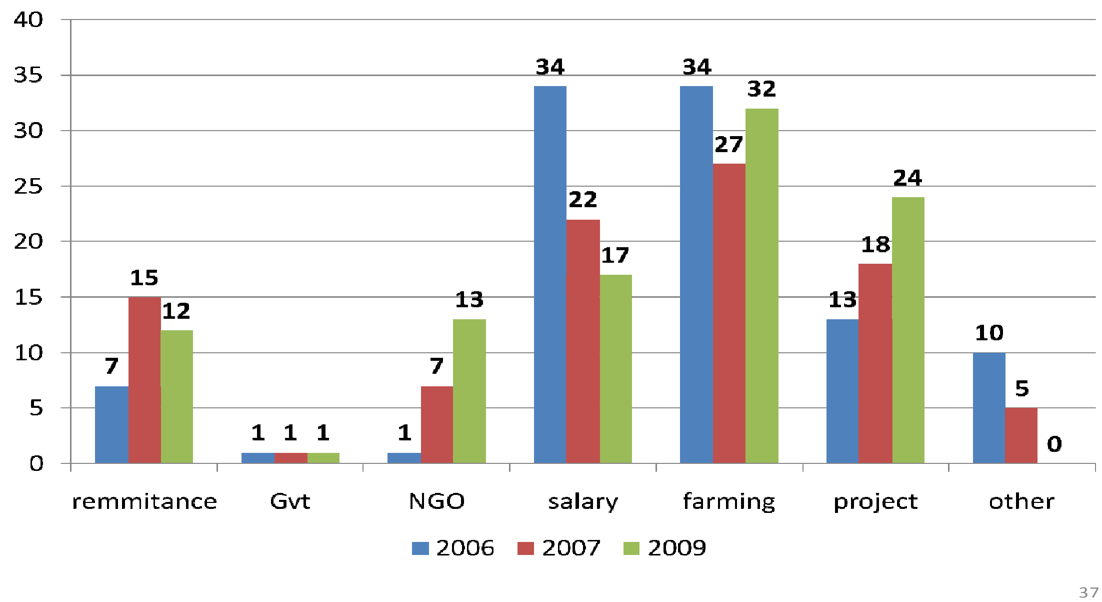
Zimbabwe is gripped with a severe crisis that has destroyed the economy and affected virtually every sector. Standards of living have severely deteriorated, unemployment is estimated to be around 94%, more than 3 million Zimbabweans are in the Diaspora and out of a population of 13 million, 10 million are facing acute food shortages. How are Zimbabweans surviving faced with such a grim reality? Asked to respond to a question on how they obtain food, a plurality 32% mentioned farming, 24% project income, 17% salary, 13% NGO assistance, another 13% remittances and 1% government assistance, Figure 16.

Figure 16: Source of Food



What does a trend analysis on source of food reveal? Figure 17 presents the picture. In 2006 a plurality depended on salary (34%) and farming (34%), in Round 2 of the study there are no changes concerning source of food, with a plurality of 27% depending on farming followed by 22% who are dependant on their salaries. In Round 3 of the study again a plurality of 32% are dependant on farming, however there is a shift as more are dependant on projects (24%) than their salaries (17%). This shift is because of a booming informal market and illegal black market. More and more people were opting to become "money changers" as this gave them easy money rather than waiting at the end of the month for salaries that were quickly eroded by inflation.

Figure 17: Trend analysis: Source of Food



Question: Describe how you currently obtain food?

Analysis across place of residence reveals different patterns of survival, see Table 13. In the urban areas pluralities depend on salary (38%) and project (38%) to acquire food. In rural areas nearly half (48%) are dependant on farming, followed by 18% who rely on NGO assistance and 17% depending on a project income. Refer to table 13 below.

Table 13: Source of Food, by Place of Residence

	Rural	Urban
Remittance	9	18
Government Assistance	2	0
NGO Assistance	18	3
Salary	5	38
Farming	48	4
Project Income	17	38

Question: Describe how you currently obtain food?

Age wise, most youth depends on project income (27%) as compared to the older generations, (34% 'middle aged' and 44% 'old aged') who are dependant on farming.

Asked to explain on source of health care, Table 14 shows that 31% mention project income, 19% farming, 18% remittances, 17% salary, 8% government assistance, 7% NGO assistance, 4% failed to utter a response, whilst 2% gave other reasons.

Analysis by residence shows that in the urban areas pluralities depend on salary (36%), same proportion depends on project income, whilst in the rural areas most Zimbabweans rely on farming (29%) and project income (29%) to obtain health services.

Table 14: Source of Health Care, by Place of Residence

	Rural	Urban
Remittances	17	19
Government Assistance	11	2
NGO Assistance	2	1
Salary	6	36
Farming	29	1
Project Income	29	36
Other	5	3
Don't Know	1	2

Question: Describe how you currently obtain health services?

Generationally, whilst a plurality of the youth (35%) and the middle aged (31%) rely on project income, the older generations depends mainly on remittances from friends and relatives.

A trend analysis over the years reveals a shift in reliance on salary income to reliance on project income. In 2006, 35% of Zimbabweans said they obtained their health care from salary income and a quarter in 2007 depended on the same source, whilst in 2009, almost a third (31%) are now dependant on project income. This confirms the earlier findings of unavailability of job opportunities, where most Zimbabweans are not formally employed.

Source of Money

The survey also sought to find out how Zimbabweans obtain money amidst such economic challenges. We found out that close to four in ten (36%) obtains money through projects, 24% from farming, 18% salary, 9% remittances, whilst none mentions NGO and Government assistance and 3% cite other sources. Across the different demographic variables, the survey reveals, project as the main source of cash for the youth (39%) and the middle aged (37%), whilst the older generation (34%) are mostly dependant on farming. Across the urban-rural divide, most urban residences depends on salaries (39%) and project income (39%), whilst their rural counterparts mention farming (36%) and project (35%) as sources of cash income.

Similarly to the above findings, Zimbabweans` dependency on salary for cash income declines over time (Table 15), with projects providing an alternative source of income for many. In 2006 and 2007, 37% and 26% said they relied on salaries for a cash income, whilst in 2009, a plurality (35%) mention project as a source of cash income.

Table 15: Source of Money: Trend analysis

	Money		
	2006	2007	2009
Remittances from friends & relatives	8	18	19
Government handouts	-	-	0
NGOs handouts	-	-	0
Corruption	-	5	0
Stealing	-	-	0
Begging	1	1	0
Use of a salary	37	26	18
Farming	24	20	23
Project income	16	24	36
Don't know	-	-	2
Other (Specify)	14	7	0

Question: Describe how you currently obtain money?

As depicted in the national survey many have gone by without the necessary basic commodities that sustain life. To gain a more understanding of how people device ways of survival, we therefore ask FGDs participants on survival strategies. Most participants mention both legal and illegal means as survival mechanisms. Some are informal traders trading foreign currency and selling fuel, whilst for some it's the illegal activity of diamond panning that keep them afloat. Market gardening had also become a prevalent source of food for many, whilst some sadly pronounced how they had resorted to dependant on wild fruits for survival. Similarly to national survey findings, a few participants survive on remittances from relatives abroad. For the deeply religious, they put their trust in God who they believe can only change their situation. Others believe that Zimbabweans should have unity of purpose and stage demonstrations in order to stamp out corruption and put a stop to the problems bedevilling the nation. Still others feel, only a change in leadership is necessary for economic recovery and food security.

Some participants were quick to mention that not all have coping means; some are failing to cope at all with these hardships and to them the future is bleak.

> *We are innovatively trying our level best to survive under these harsh conditions by engaging in informal trade. We had never thought we could end up doing this. Some of us even have to barter our own personal possessions. I have to cross the countryside to trade goods in return for anything on offer, be it poultry. This is barely to make us survive but I can foresee my fortunes subsiding in the future.* (Urban Harare Female)

> *We have few options but we are helping the government in improving our lot. The government is no longer capable to provide social services it used to provide us with. The only way to make our ends meet is having our relatives in the Diaspora send us remittances to make a living.* (Urban Harare Male)

In my opinion the only plausible solution lies in the hand of God for he is our creator, and nothing but only God can solve all these problems. (Rural Matabeleland South Female)

In my view, the only way we can conquer our problems is when everyone in Zimbabwe come to the realization that we are all suffering then we unite and map one direction for our country, including those in the rural areas. What you are doing as an organization, i.e. conducting research, this makes everyone aware of what is happening and map better solutions. I suggest that people hold demonstrations to show their discontent. (Rural Matabeleland South Female)

To cope with these hardships we want to defeat them in elections. We want a new beginning. We do not tolerate a party that rules for 28 years. Now we have to pay fees in foreign currency. (Rural Mashonaland Central Female)

5. Government Policies

Dollarization Policy

On 29 January 2009, the ZANU-PF government gave in to economic pressures when it de-regulated the economy after years of ignoring fundamentals on the ground. The first quarter of the year witnessed a significant shift in economic policy that has transformed the hitherto gloomy business outlook to one of hope and optimism. This came through the 2009 national budget statement presented to Parliament by the then Acting Minister of Finance, Patrick Chinamasa, on 29 January and reviewed on 18 March 2009 by the new Finance Minister, Tendai Biti. This was coupled with a supportive Monetary Policy Statement announced by the Reserve Bank Governor, Gideon Gono, on 2 February 2009.

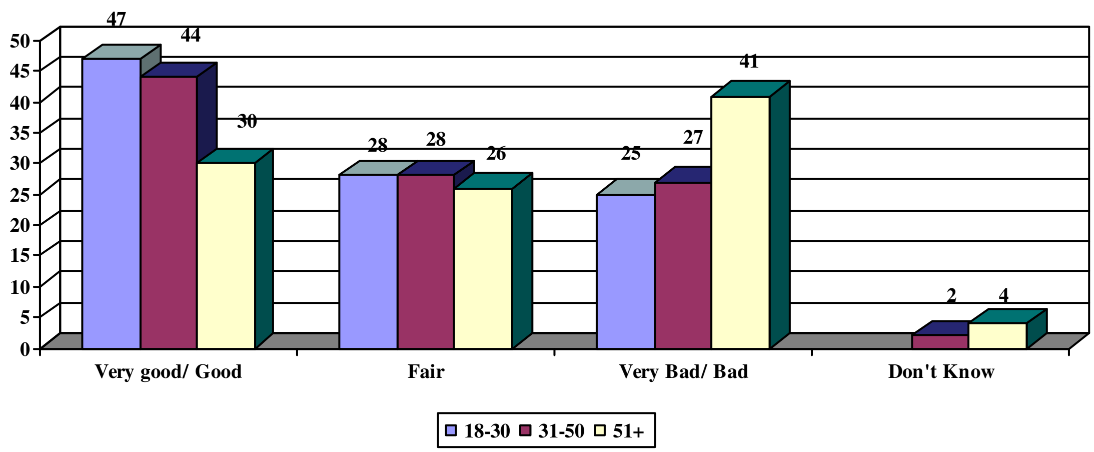
On the demand side of the economy, these statements brought a totally new exchange rate regime whereby foreign currency, replaced the now moribund Zimbabwe dollar as a medium of exchange and unit of account. Chinamasa legalized the use of foreign currency, which had become widespread as economic agents tried to hedge their Zimbabwe dollar-denominated financial assets against the ravaging hyperinflation. In other words, he moved the dollarization of the economy from being unofficial to semi-official. The semi-official nature of Zimbabwe's dollarization was enshrined in Statutory Instrument 5 of 2009 which compelled all traders to adopt a dual pricing framework where goods and services would be quoted in both local and foreign currency. Since February this year, the Zimbabwe dollar is no longer a currency that the public and any trader will accept. The study therefore seeks to gauge people's perceptions and attitudes towards this dollarization policy.

Assessment of the dollarization policy

How do Zimbabweans evaluate the dollarization policy? Slightly above four in ten (42%) assess the policy as either very good (10%) or good (32%), close to three in ten (28%) believe the policy is either very bad (10%) or bad (18%), another 28% classify it as fair and 2% do not know. Judging by this the policy came as a relief as the Zimbabwean dollar was at a comatose stage, with business and ordinary citizens finding it virtually impossible to make transactions using the Zimbabwean dollar. Dollarization restored sanity to the economy, vanquishing the black market and at the same time quelling inflation and prices which by February 2009 had fallen by 3.1% according to the Central Statistical Office. Across the social demographics of age, place of residence, gender, level of education, province and party affiliation how is the policy appraised?

Generationally the youth and middle aged assess the policy more positively when contrasted to the old aged, Figure 18. Close to five in ten (47%) of the youth appraise it as either very good (11%) or good (36%), 44% of the middle aged consider the policy as either very good (11%) or good (33%), whilst three in ten (30%) of the old aged classify it as either very good (8%) or good (22%). A plurality (41%) of the old aged rate the policy as bad, against 27% of the middle aged and 25% of the youth. Notably the old aged are subdued about the policy since in this category are pensioners and most persons who are not economically active. These have been hard hit by the policy.

Figure 18: Assessment of the Dollarization Policy by Age

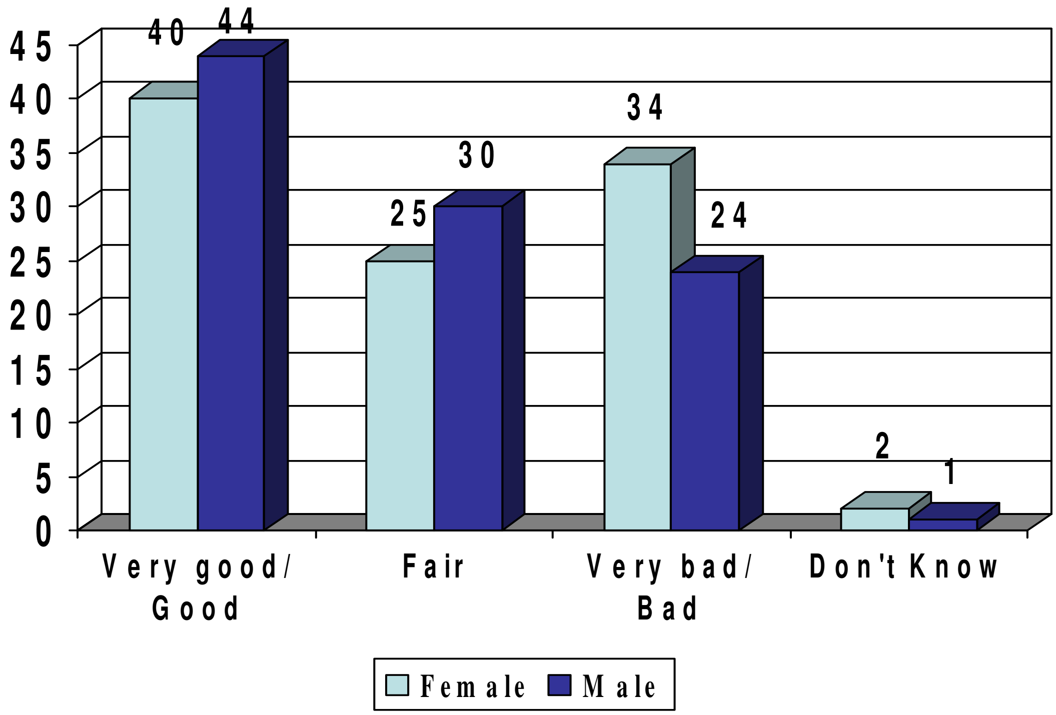


Question: What is your assessment of this Dollarization Policy?

Analysis across the residential divide reveals that, respondents in the urban areas evaluate the policy more confidently than those in the rural areas. Half of the respondents (50%) in the urban areas evaluate the policy as either very good (16%) or good (34%), against 38% in the rural areas who rate it again as either very good (7%) or good (31%). What explains this 12% variation? The Zimbabwe Situation of 2 May 2009 reports that people in the rural areas were receiving fake notes and are more and more resorting to barter trading. John Robertson, a Zimbabwean Economist sums the problem with dollarization in the rural areas; "Rural populations have to depend largely on the money remitted to them by relatives and friends living outside Zimbabwe and, to some extent, breadwinners who can generate it in urban areas. But, given the fact that the economies of most of the countries that Zimbabweans have gone to as economic refugees are in recession, the future is bleak."

Gender wise the males assess the policy more favourably, while the females are a bit more critical 9Figure 19). Four in ten (40%) of the females assess it good compared to 44% of the males who also evaluate the policy in the same manner. There is a notable 10 percentage difference, as 34% of the females assess the policy as bad against 24%, their male counterparts. The policy though intended to help alleviate the financial crisis and ease shortages in the economy left a double blow on women and most likely worsened the plight of already over-burdened Zimbabwean women, especially the large numbers who rely on cross border trading for a living. Most of these traders had sustained their families but now fear being swamped out of their livelihoods by big businesses.

Figure 19: Assessment of the Dollarization Policy, by Gender



Question: What is your assessment of this Dollarization Policy?

Table 15 presents findings across level of education that indicate that, those who obtained higher level of education are more buoyant about the policy than those with a lower education status. For those with tertiary education a majority of 52% assess the policy as very good/ good, 48% with high school education evaluate it as very good/ good, followed by 44% with complete secondary education, then 45% with some secondary education, 37% with primary schooling and lastly 28% of those with no formal education. Those with lower levels of education were the ones most benefiting from the illegal foreign currency dealings as the so called "money-changers" . The introduction of this policy was a blow to these groups of people for they were crowded out of their illegal businesses (Illegal foreign exchange). For the educated ones, the policy, was a sign of relief as it managed to quell inflation, return sanity to the economy and ensure that workers earn a decent salary.

Table 15: Assessment of the Dollarization Policy by Level of Education

	No Formal Education	Primary	Some Sec.	Secondary Complete	High School	Tertiary

Very good/ Good	28	37	45	45	48	52
Fair	28	28	24	29	32	27
Very bad/ Bad	34	33	30	26	20	21
Don't Know	10	2	-	1	-	-

Question: What is your assessment of this Dollarization Policy?

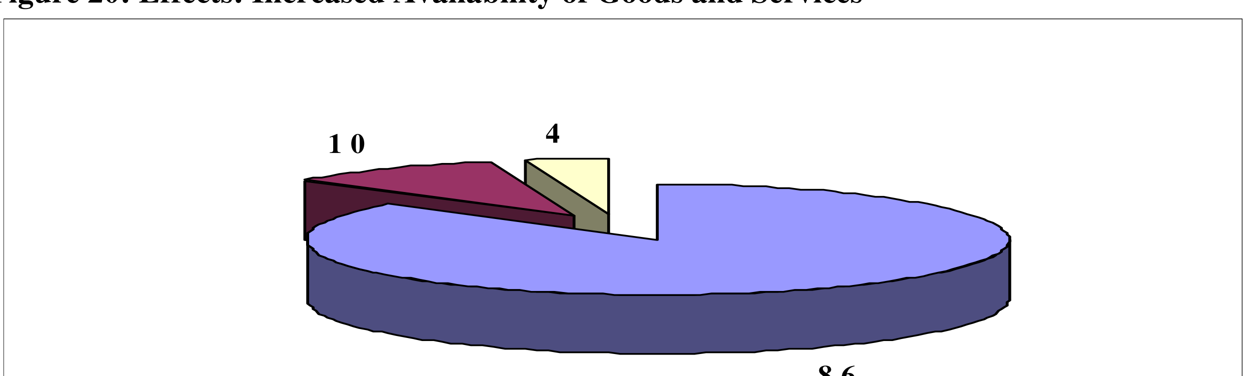
Provincially, Midlands (54%), Harare (53%) and Bulawayo (53%) appraise the policy more optimistically as very good/ good, whilst Mashonaland East amongst all provinces has the least respondents (27%) who are upbeat about the policy. Mashonaland East of all ten provinces has a plurality (43%) of respondents who assess the policy as either very bad or bad, with Midlands obtaining the least (19%) number of respondents who evaluate it pessimistically.

How do the different party supporters evaluate this policy? Of the two major political parties, MDC-T sympathizers are more buoyant in their assessment of the policy, as a plurality of their supporters (42%) believes the policy is either very good or good. There is a 12% gap between ZANU PF and MDC-T supporters who rate the policy as good, with ZANU PF obtaining 34%. ZANU PF sympathisers are more negative about dollarization as 42% feel that it is bad, against 23% obtaining for the MDC-T supporters. ZANU PF supporters were the beneficiaries of the illegal foreign currency dealings, with some allegations in some sections of the media that the RBZ governor buys foreign currency illegally.

Effects of dollarization on availability of goods and services in Retail Shops

Before the dollarization policy accessing goods and services was virtually impossible. Goods could only be accessed on the black market at exorbitant prices, while many had to travel to neighbouring countries in order to access basics and other items. However the dollarization policy saw an influx of imported goods into Zimbabwe, with empty shop shelves filling once more. But do Zimbabweans feel that the policy resulted in an increase of goods and services in the formal market? To gauge their feelings, the Institute asked the following question, *"Do you think this dollarization policy increased the availability of goods and services in Retail Shops?"* figure 20 presents the findings. A clear majority of close to nine in ten (86%), believe that indeed goods and services became available, one in ten (10%) are not in agreement and 4% don't know.

Figure 20: Effects: Increased Availability of Goods and Services

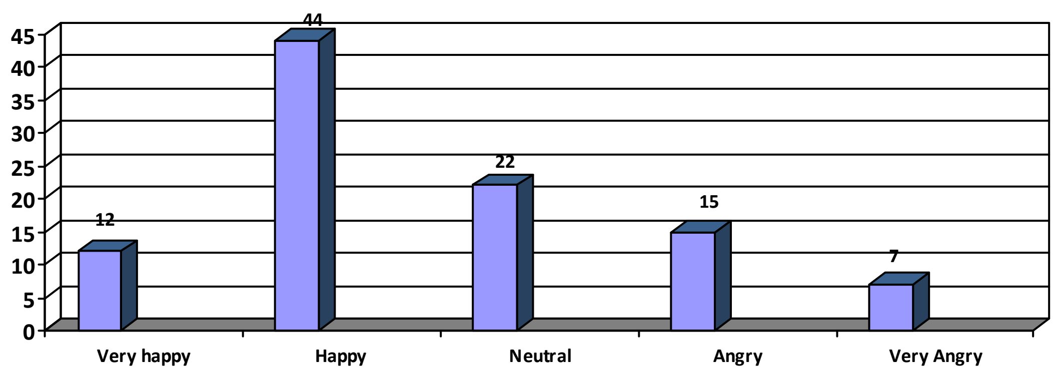


Question: "Do you think this dollarization policy increased the availability of goods and services in Retail Shops?"

Feelings towards dollarization policy

As a means of assessing Zimbabweans feelings towards the policy, the Institute asked the following question; *"What are your feelings towards this policy?"* A majority of 52% is happy with this policy: 44% are "happy", while 12% feel "very happy", see Figure 21. Two in ten (22%) either feel angry (15%) or very angry (7%). Just over two in ten (22%) are neutral.

Figure 21: Feelings towards Dollarization



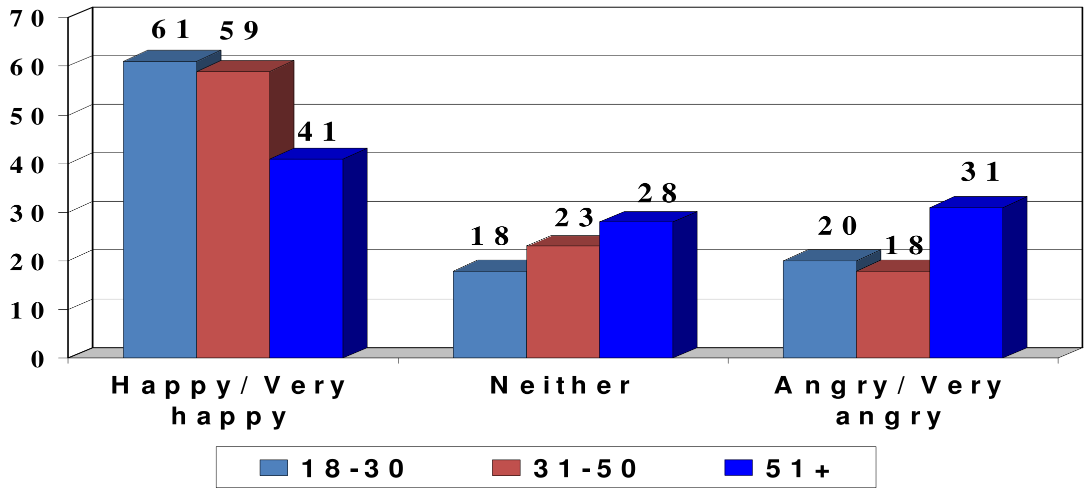
Question: What are your feelings towards this policy?

How do the males and the females feel about dollarization? More males (62%) feel more upbeat about this policy than the females (51%). Over two in ten (25%) of the females and 20% of the males feel angry. However, 19% and 24%, of the males and females respectively are neutral.

Are there any rural-urban disparities concerning people's feelings about legalising foreign currency? Urban Zimbabweans (63%), when contrasted to their rural cousins (53%) feel more content about the policy, while respondents from the rural areas (24%) feel more downcast than the urbanites (18%) about the policy. Of those who are in between, 23% are from the rural area, while 19% are urban dwellers.

Across the different age categories how do adult Zimbabweans feel about dollarization? There is a huge gap between the younger generations and the old aged (Figure 22). The youth are comfortable as 61% feel happy compared to the middle aged (59%) and the old aged (41%). However the old aged are more subdued with the policy, as three in ten (31%) express their discontentment, against the youth (29%) and the middle generation (18%). See graph below

Figure 22: Feelings towards Dollarization, by Age



Question: What are your feelings towards this policy?

Assessment of Foreign Currency Licensed Warehouses and Retail Shops (FOLIWARS): FGDs Findings

Before adopting multiple currencies in February 2009, the economy was partially dollarized in September 2008. This move by the RBZ gave some retailers and wholesalers the right to sell their products in foreign currency and since 10 September 2008 the RBZ governor licensed at least 1000 shops to sell goods in foreign currency. However other sectors and even retailers and wholesalers not licensed under the FOLIWARS scheme continued to trade using the Zimbabwean currency as a medium of exchange. The creation of these foreign exchange licensed warehouses and retail shops was seen by some analysts as negatively impacting not only on Zimbabwe's economy, but also on the rural poor and vulnerable populations who had no access to foreign currency. By then most Zimbabweans were paid in the local currency and therefore could hardly access the foreign currency. Since MPOI conducted its focus group discussions just after this partial dollarization, a question on `this topical` issue become indispensable.

Many criticized this move by the RBZ to give other retailers and wholesalers licenses to trade in foreign currency. The move has worsened the situation, Zimbabweans are now poorer and now in a precarious state. Many do not have access to foreign currency; even workers are not paid in foreign currency participants complain, whilst goods being sold in foreign currency are very expensive, whilst unlicensed retailers are also selling goods in foreign currency leaving people in a tight situation. At the same time participants feel that they are not recipients of this policy. Shop owners are benefiting because they are prejudicing consumers and those in authority are also benefiting because they are now exploiting the system.

That move has worsened the situation as many shops included those not licensed are now selling their goods in foreign currency. Secondly, it is a programme to benefit those in authority to establish their shops selling in foreign currency since they are the only people who can access the foreign currency needed to run the shops. They are now exploiting the system. The move is no longer benefiting the intended beneficiaries. (Urban Harare Male)

There are pros and cons, its okay for others but definitely not for us the general populace, because personally I am not a border jumper or a migrant to South Africa but permanently based in the rural areas were I sale vegetables and tomatoes so I do not have a way of accessing these rands. For me to get the rand I have to sneak to Beitbridge and buy soap to come and sell it to the rural folks (Rural Matabeleland South Female)

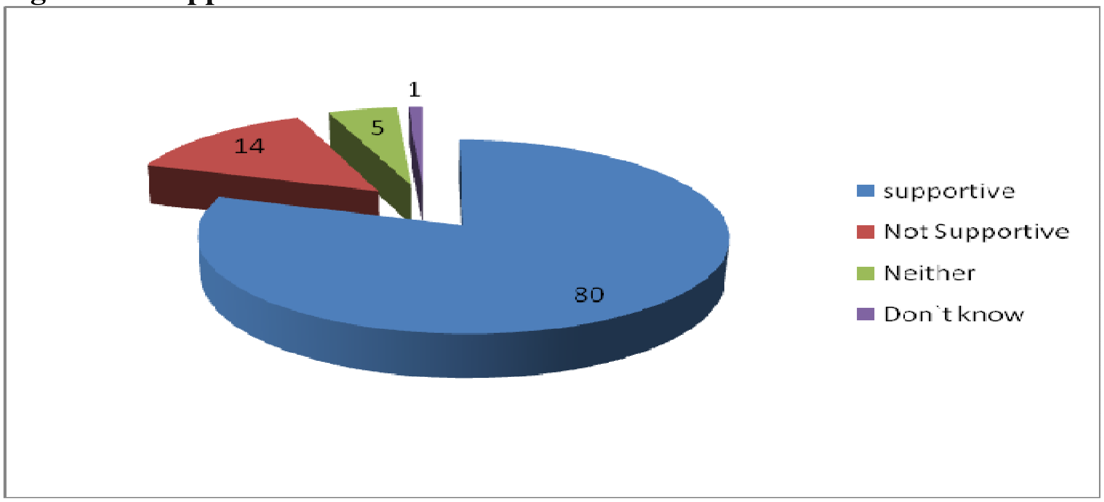
I think that is one of the good and simple examples that show that these people have failed because to say Zimbabweans should operate their businesses in Zimbabwe and ignore our currency and adopt other people's currencies as legal tender is failure. It shows that we have conceded to defeat. I think it is not a good move because we are employed by the Government which pays us in Zimbabwe dollars and where does he expect us to get the Rand or the US Dollar with which they are now trading? Don't you see that that is failure? (Rural Matabeleland South Male)

The way I see it is that this was done out of desperation when they had discovered that we no longer had anything in our shops so the only viable option then was to allow them to go and hoard things in bulk using Rands so that things would become available in shops. So I might say this was done as a marriage of convenience, but since this has been implemented and implemented wrongly why don't they just lend people Rands so that they may become legal here just as they are in South Africa because this is unacceptable, where will we get the rand? (Rural Masvingo Male)

6. The Public Mood on the Inclusive Government (IG)

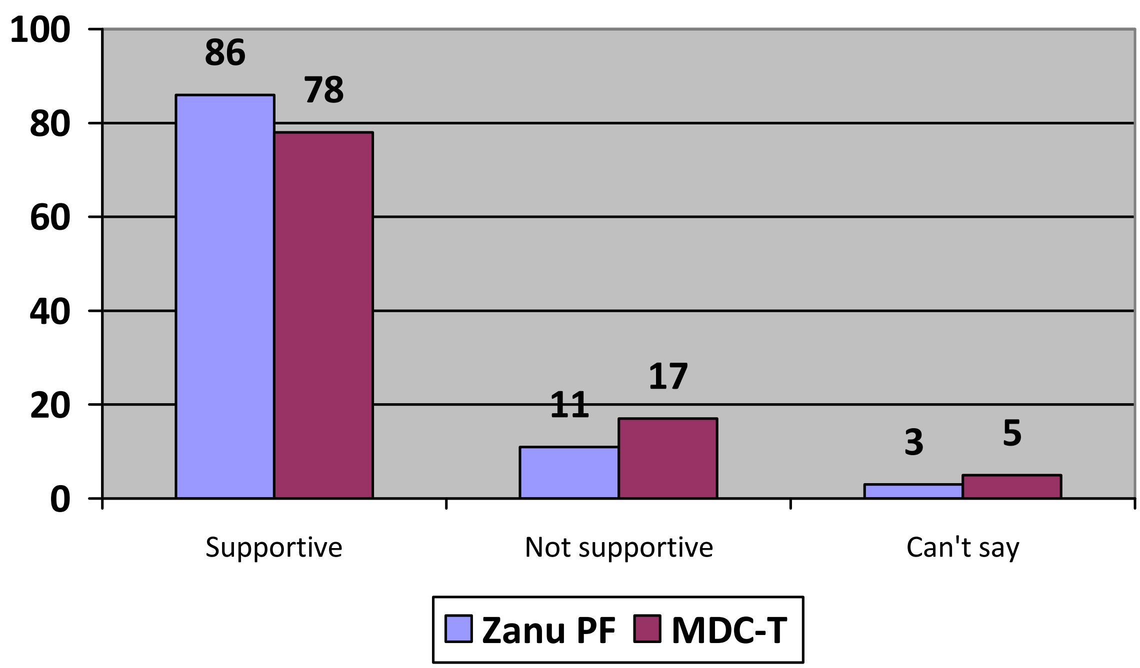
After nearly a year of seemingly endless talks brokered by the former South African President Thabo Mbeki, Zimbabwe's long-ruling ZANU-PF party and the two factions of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) managed to finally form a coalition government. Thus the long awaited Global Political Agreement (GPA) signed on September 15 2008 was consummated on 11 February 2009 with the formation of an Inclusive Government (IG) with the aim of bringing to an end the crisis that had characterized the country over the past eight years. The MPOI Study sought to find out whether Zimbabweans are supportive of this coalition government by asking, *An Inclusive Government between the two MDC formations and ZANU PF was formed in February 2009. How supportive would you say you are of this Inclusive Government?* From the total respondents, an overwhelming majority of eight in ten (80%) stated that they are for the move while just over one in ten (14%) are opposed to the formation of the IG (Figure 23). 5% neither support nor oppose the formation of the IG and only one percent of the total respondents expressed ignorance over the matter.

Figure 23: Support for the IG



It is worthy noting that support for the IG is instantly recognizable from the respondents irrespective of age, gender, political party affiliation or place of residence. However, it is important to note that across the political party affiliation of respondents, there is more support from ZANU PF when compared to the MDC-T. Figure 24 shows that 86% of those affiliated to ZANU PF are in support of the coalition government, compared to 78% from MDC-T people. Conversely 17% MDC-T supporters rebuff the idea of a unity government against 11% ZANU PF supporters.

Figure 24: Support for the IG, by Political Party Affiliation



There is not much difference across the age variable as a majority of the respondents support the formation and existence of the IG. Eight in ten (81%) of the total youths, 78% of the middle aged and 79% of the old aged category are supportive of the IG. On the gender divide, there is parity of opinions for those who are supportive as expressed by a total of 80% males and the same statistic for their female counterparts. Across the ten provinces of Zimbabwe, well above half of the respondents in each province hail the IG with an overwhelming proportion in Harare (87%) and the least in Matabeleland North with 63%, see Table 16.

Table 16: Support for the IG, by Province

	Supportive %	Not supportive %	Neither/can't say %	Don't Know %
Harare	87	6	7	-
Bulawayo	72	25	3	-
Mash. East	87	9	3	1
Mash. West	76	17	4	3
Mash. Central	85	11	2	2
Midlands	74	19	7	-
Mat. North	63	28	9	-
Mat. South	68	25	5	2
Manicaland	83	12	5	-
Masvingo	80	13	5	-

Public Perceptions on the Effectiveness of the Inclusive Government

Zimbabweans have suffered the hardest blow of economic recession and have been living in abject poverty for so long. The government which is entrusted with providing basic social and economic services to the citizenry appeared to have failed and the formation of the all-inclusive government created a crisis of expectations as Zimbabweans hoped that a new political dispensation would shepherd the majority out of dismal poverty. MPOI therefore measured public assessment of IG's effectiveness by asking the following question: "How do you rate the IG's capacity to address the following aspects in the next 12 months?" Fifteen items were listed for assessment, as either "good", "fair" or "bad." For purposes of analysis fair and good will sometimes be combined to present a positive rating for the IG's capacity and bad will present the negative score. Unlike in previous years, there is an impressive improvement in peoples' hopes that the IG, compared to the previous ZANU-PF government, would have the capacity to address the problems Zimbabweans are currently facing, see Table 17

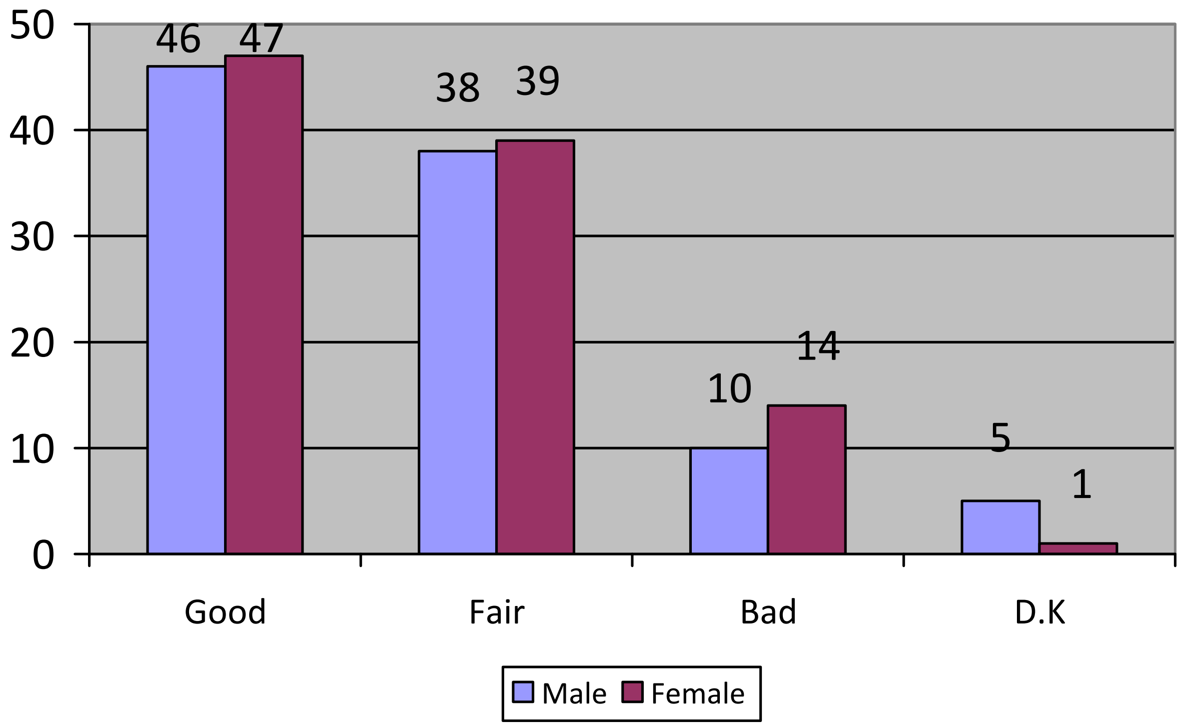
Table 17: IG's Capacity to Address Problems in the next 12 months

	Good	**Fair**	**Bad**	**D.K**
A) Creating jobs	47	38	12	3
B) Keeping prices stable	53	37	7	3
C) Narrowing gaps between the rich and the poor	32	41	23	4
D) Reducing corruption	37	36	24	4
E) Reducing crime	37	38	22	3
F) Providing health services	55	35	8	2
G) Addressing educational needs	57	33	9	2
H) Ensuring everyone has enough clean water	55	34	10	2

I) Electricity supply	43	38	16	3
J) Ensuring everyone has enough to eat	47	36	15	2
K) Equitable distribution of land	28	31	36	5
L) Combating HIV/AIDS	35	32	32	2
M) Combating cholera outbreak	64	25	10	1
N) Providing housing	32	39	26	3
O) Maintaining physical infrastructure, e.g. roads	40	39	18	3

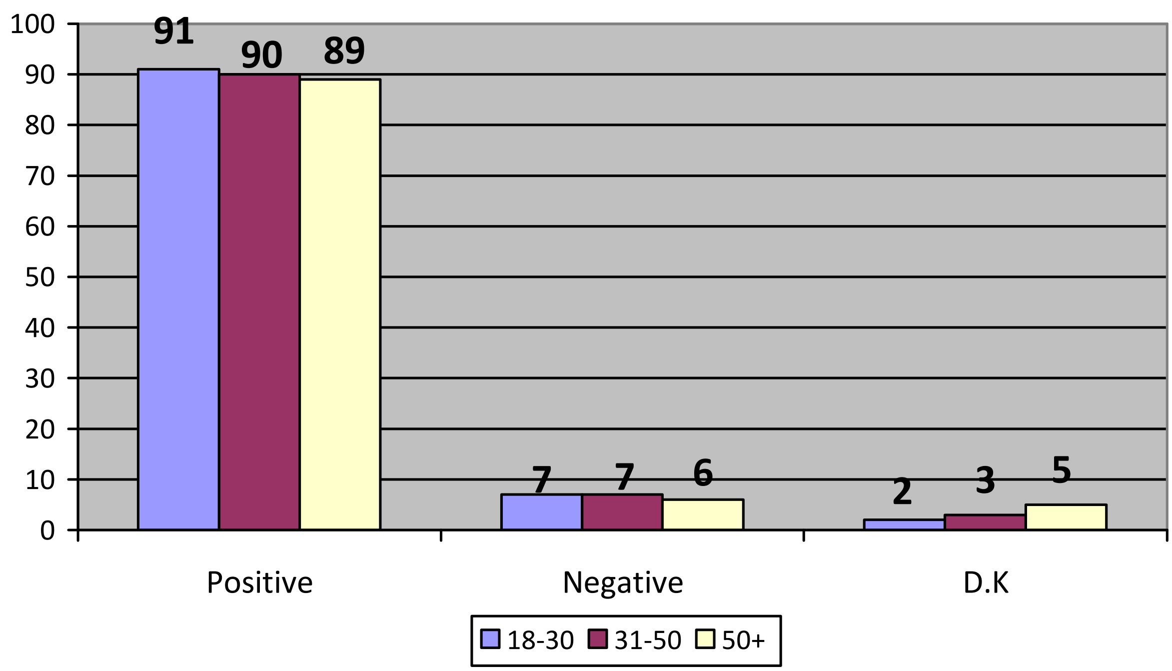
For the reason that Zimbabwe's unemployment is over 94 per cent of the total labour force, it became inevitable for the Study not to gauge public opinion on whether the IG has the capacity to create jobs for the vast majority who are unemployed. Eight in ten (85%) think the IG will perform positively in creating jobs for the people while only one in ten (12%) think that it does not have the capacity to tackle the unemployment problem, Table 17. More youths seem to be upbeat on the IG's competence in creating employment and there is a slight decrease as one grows older. For the youths, 87% pin their hopes on the IG to create jobs and this decline to 83% for the middle aged and 81% for the old age category who also share similar sentiments. Respondents' opinion across gender lines is at par for those who optimistically look forward to creation of employment (85%) but differences emerge on the strength of optimism as reflected by a plurality from the female side (47% 'good' and 39% 'fair') against the males (46% 'good' and 38% 'fair'), see Figure 25. One in ten males and 14% females think that the IG's capacity is bad and 5% males against only 1% of the females said they don't know.

Figure 25: The IG`s Capacity to Create Jobs by Gender



Having undergone an era of serious price distortions and fluctuations for the past eight years, the dollarization of the economy somehow brought some pricing stability as all commodities are now pegged in foreign currency. As in the last two rounds, the survey also sought to find the public`s opinion on the ability of the Inclusive Government to stabilise prices. The results (figure 26) reveal a ray of hope amongst the majority with 53% of the respondents having total faith in the Inclusive Government's ability to keep prices stable, three in ten (37%) see it as fair, 7% rated it as bad and 3% professed ignorance, Table 17. When looked at across the gender variable, more males (92%) positively rated the IG's capacity when compared to their female counterparts where exactly nine in ten (90%) think likewise. The age divide reveals a negative correlation between age and trust in the IG`s capacity to stabilise prices. A total of 91% of the youths interviewed affirms to the IG's capacity. This statistic drops down by one percentage gap to nine in ten (90%) of the middle-aged who still share the same opinion and this further drops to 89% of the old-age category who still believe the same.

Figure 23: IG`s Capacity to Keep Prices Stable by Age



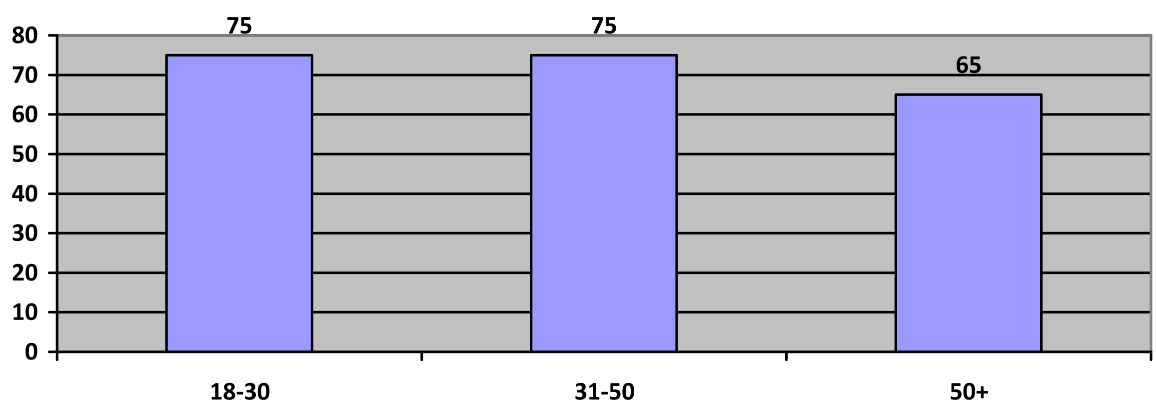
At provincial level, there is an overwhelming level of conviction from the Harare respondents (97%) that the IG has exceptional capacity to deal with the issue of prices. Whilst it is important to note that all provinces exhibit a high level of trust in the IG, the least of all is palpable in Matabeleland North where seven in ten (77%) asserts that the IG can solve the question of prices once and for all. More of the urbanites (93%) as compared to rural (90%) respondents revealed that they are optimistic that the IG has the competence to stabilize prices.

When asked whether they think the IG ca harness the gap between the rich and the poor, three in ten (31%) are positive, four in ten (41%) report on 'fair', two in ten (23%) see it as 'bad' and 4% say they do not know. Analysis across political party affiliation shows that more ZANU PF (82%) affiliates believe that the IG can narrow the gap between the rich and the poor. Three quarters (75%) of the total MDC-T sympathizers share the same opinion that the IG can narrow the gap. Gender wise, there are more females (75%) against males (71%) who positively think that the IG will work on correcting this economic imbalance.

Generationally, there is not much difference in the way respondents perceive the IG's capacity to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor. Well above half on all given age categories that is 74% for the youth, 72% middle aged and again 72% old aged are upbeat that the IG has a chance to trim down the existing gap between the rich and the poor. Place of residence does not bring in serious divergence of views as 74% of the rural and 71% of the urban dwellers are optimistic that the IG will definitely work to resolve such imbalances.

Every government is expected to make its people secure. It should ensure the provision of national and individual security from crime and the promise should further include security of property and many other things. The MPOI Study posed a question to check on whether respondents think the IG has the capacity to reduce crime and corruption which is rife and rampant in Zimbabwe. While in 2008, 84% of the adults assessed the government's performance in reducing corruption as bad and 69% rated its performance in crime reduction as bad, the 2009 Study reflects that the IG, unlike the previous government has the capacity to curb crime and corruption. On the aspect of corruption, seven in ten (73%) think that the IG has an incomparable aptitude to deal with corruption which is detrimental to economic growth. Along the age variable, there are overall more people in all age categories who optimistically rate the IG's capacity to deal with corruption. There is no divergence of views on the youth and middle age groups as depicted by a parity of 75% of these categories who affirms the IG. The old aged generation lags behind, with a ten percentage gap as 65% states that the IG is better positioned to fight corruption, Figure 27. Interesting to note is the commonality of opinions amongst the urbanites and their rural counterparts. There is no difference of opinion on the IGs' ability to deal with the cancerous corruption as 72% of both urbanites and rural dwellers felt the same way.

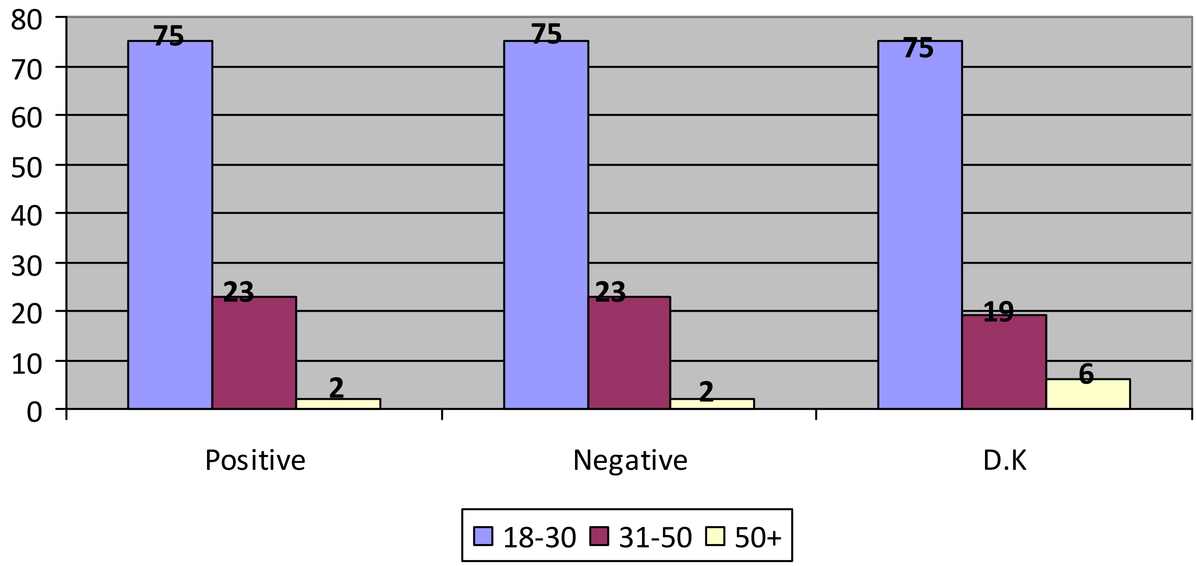
Figure 27: IG's Capacity to Fight Corruption, by age



NB: Figures represented are of those who share an optimistic view with regards to the IG's capacity to fight and reduce corruption.

Criminal activities have been for some time allegedly escaping the spotlight of the government and this prompted MPOI to ask people's opinions now that there is an IG in place. The pattern of positive appraisal still maintains as reflected by a three quarters (75%) of the total respondents who assume all will never be the same again as criminal activities will definitely be reduced. 22% do not have any hope that the IG will curtail these crimes while 3% professed ignorance over the matter. What picture does the age variable bring to this matter? Interestingly, there is no difference, with 75% of the total respondents across all age categories being affirmative, Figure 28. For those with negative views of how the IG is likely to handle this matter, there is parity for the youths and middle aged (23%) and then a much lower statistic for the old aged where close to one fifth (19%) of the respondents feel the same. 2% for the youths and again 2% for the middle aged and 6% for the old aged said they don't know whether the IG has the capacity to deal with the problem of crime in the country.

Figure 28: IG's Capacity to Reduce Crime, by Age

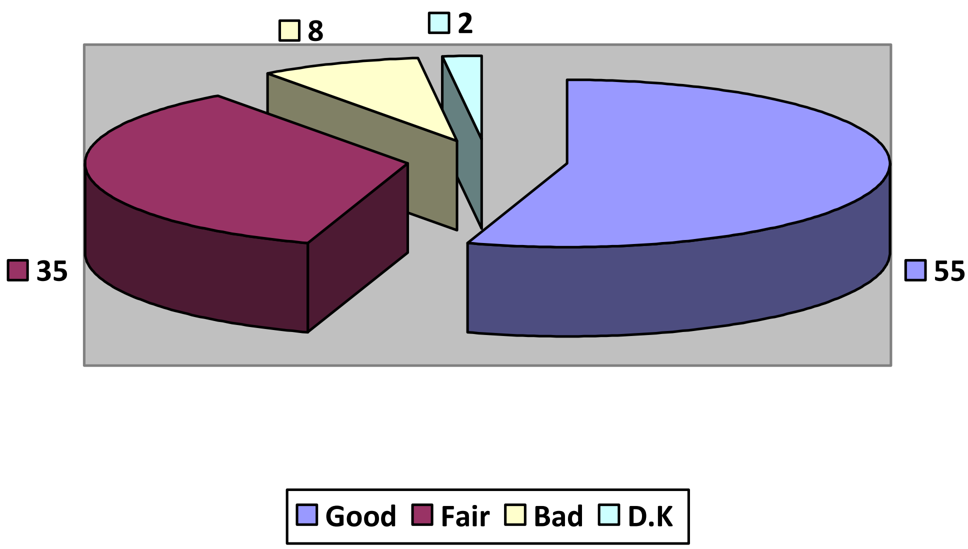


Across gender lines, more males, (76%) when compared to their female (74%) counterparts feel that the IG has the capacity to address the question of crime in the country.

Most of the country's public infrastructure facilities (roads, railways and bridges) and public utilities (electricity and water) had virtually collapsed, further destroying service delivery capacities amid worsening livelihoods. Despite this given, people still pin their hopes on the IG as well capacitated to deal with all these anomalies. On the issue of maintaining physical infrastructure, four in ten (40%) think the IG's competence is good, 39% see it as being fair, 18% bad and only 3% said they don't know. Across the political party affiliations of the respondents, more of the ZANU PF (84%) supporters trust the IG has the capacity when compared to its rival, the MDC-T, where 78% are affirmative. Gender wise, more females as expressed by eight in ten (82%) believe in the IGs' capacity when compared to their male counterparts (76%). Across the age variable, there is parity for the youth and middle aged categories and more of those within the old aged category who think the IG have the capacity to deal with the current infrastructural problems.

The decay in the health sector has not only led to a life expectancy rate of 36.9 years, but has also worsened AIDS-related deaths. Most public health facilities such as clinics and hospitals between the years 2007 and 2008 shut their doors after running out of essential drugs, water, sanitation, transport, food and staff. Asked whether they think the IG will be in a position to provide better health services, a vast majority, nine in ten (90%) of the total respondents expressed positive opinion, 8% think the capacity is dire and 2 said they don't know. To be precise, above half (55%) stated that the capacity seems to be good and three in ten (35%) deem it as fair. See Figure 29 below. Interestingly to note is the uniformity of opinion across the gender variable where nine in ten for both males (90%) and females (90%) stated that they look forward and trust that the IG has the capacity to deliver better health services.

Figure 29: IG's Capacity to Provide Health Services

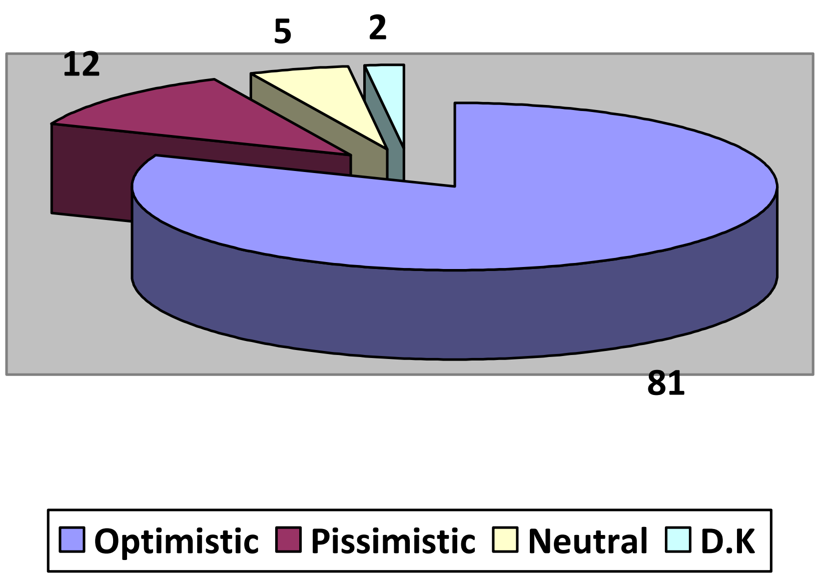


As a result of the country's lack of capacity to import chemicals to treat water and repair burst or ageing water sewerage pipes, the outbreak of cholera, which has now claimed over 3,100 deaths and infected over 59,000 people nationally, has been a serious concern for many Zimbabweans. Do Zimbabweans believe the IG is capacitated to control this outbreak? Close to nine in ten (89%) have positive view that the IG can tackle the problem. Hope is prevalent and it cuts across the generational gaps as reflected by the results. An overwhelming majority of nine in ten (91%) amongst the youth revealed that they are hopeful the IG can combat the cholera outbreak. Middle aged respondents also expressed this hope as reflected by eight in ten (87%) and for the old aged there is eight in ten again (89%) who also believe the IG has the capacity to deal with cholera. There is not much difference, when the same matter is viewed at across residential divide with 90% urbanites being affirmative as compared to 89%, their rural counterparts.

Overall View on the IG: Are Zimbabweans Optimistic or Pessimistic about the IG?

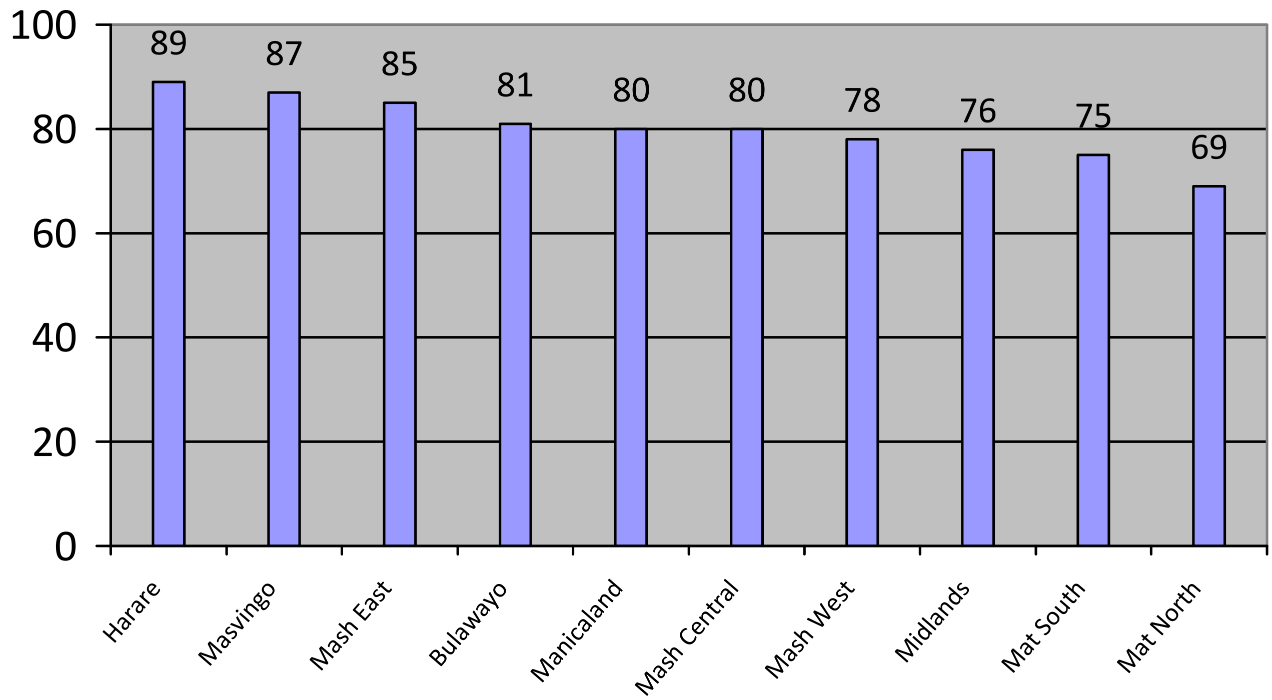
The IG has created a crisis of expectations as Zimbabweans hope that a new political dispensation will ease the majority out of abject poverty. When he finally accepted to join the inclusive government, Tsvangirai said he was doing it because Zimbabweans have suffered for too long and there is need to open a new chapter of dialogue. Despite lingering suspicions, Zimbabweans now pin their hopes on the new government, which they see as the only viable option to solve the country's problems. They also hope that the parties will stay away from petty politics and help each other chart the way forward for a prosperous Zimbabwe. The MPOI Study sought to find out how people perceive the IG. Figure 30 reveals an overwhelming majority of eight in ten (81%) who are optimistic that the multi-layered crises that Zimbabwe finds itself entangled in will be resolved. One in ten (12%) are pessimistic whereas 5% are neutral and only a minute 2% said the do not know whether the IG will solve these problems. Generationally, there is a negative correlation between age and one's optimism for the IG. Though there is not much difference across the age categories, hope seem to die as age increases as clearly reflected by the 82% confidence among the youth, 81% middle aged and 79% of the older generation. From a gender wise perspective, more females (83%) are optimistic when compared with the males (80%). There is a six percentage gap on respondents' views when analyzed across the place of residence variable with more of the urbanites (85%) exhibiting hope in the IG when compared to their rural (79%) counterparts.

Figure 30: Optimism or Pessimism About the IG`s Ability to Resolve Zimbabwean crises



Even those who are opposed to ZANU PF and Mugabe's leadership have viewed this set-up as a positive step towards resolving the country's political and economic problems. Specifically, those respondents affiliated to the MDC-T; there is a majority (82%) who are for the IG and who see light at the end of the tunnel. 84% of ZANU PF are also confident about the IG`s performance. The provincial picture reveals more of those in Harare as reflecting sky-scraping optimism with close to nine in ten (89%) of the total respondents stating that they have hope. The lowest rate is recorded in Matabeleland North were six in ten (69%) reported on hope in the IG, Figure 31.

Figure 31: Optimism by Province

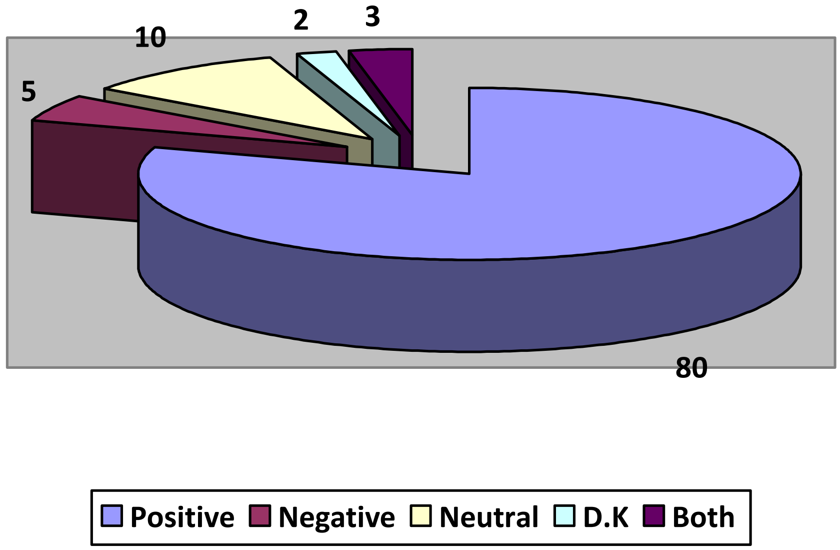


NB: Figures represent those who expressed optimism for the IG

The Inclusive Government's Impact On People`s Life

Under the last government, hundreds of thousand of people lost their jobs as economic conditions worsened. While people suffered from this economic quagmire, it is also worthy noting that they were not spared from the political repression in a country where there is no rule of law and the constitution is violated willy-nilly. Many were subjected to inhuman torture as human rights were continually trampled upon. There was serious violation of the constitution to the extend that people felt so much restricted in excising their rights as provided for in the Supreme law of the land. As far as this is concerned, the Study further asked whether the IG had had a positive or negative impact in the respondents' lives. Figure 32 shows that a swooping eight in ten (80%) of the total respondents stated that the IG had in fact brought in positive changes unto their lives against a diminutive 5% who reported on negative impact. 10% said the IG did not bring in either positive or negative impact, 2% expressed ignorance and 3% said it had both negative and positive implications upon their lives.

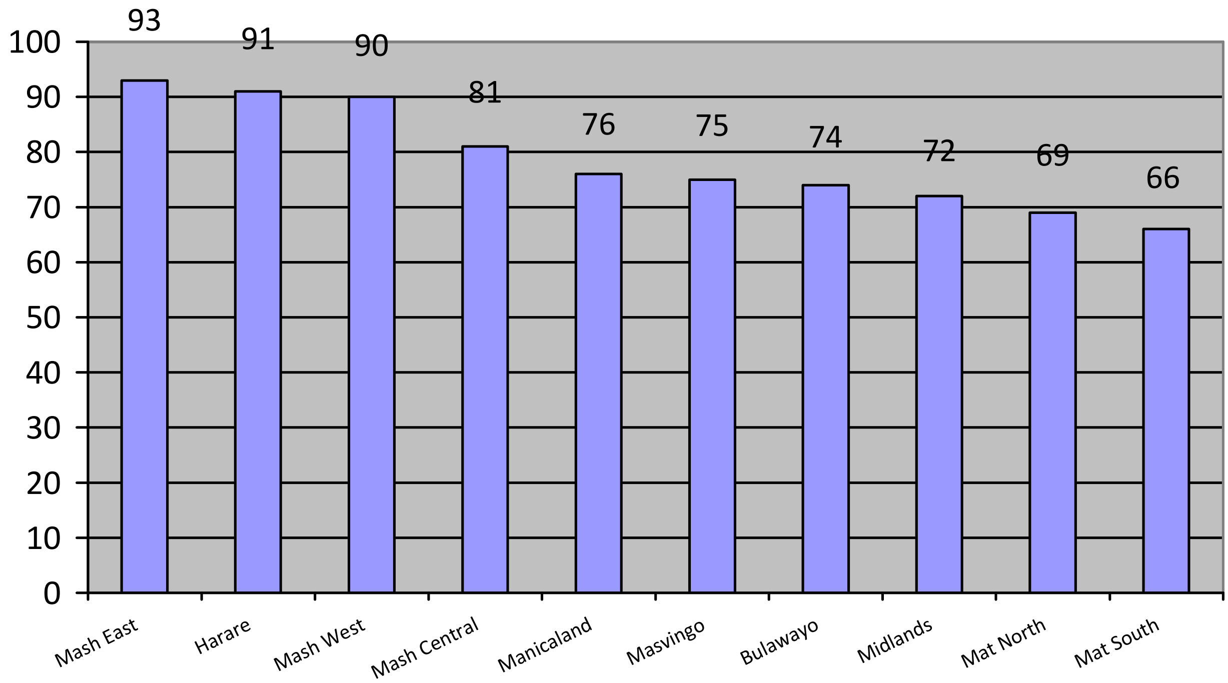
Figure 32: The Impact of the Inclusive Government: Positive/Negative?



What picture does the gender variable brings in to this question? More males (82%) than the females (78%) stated that there has been a remarkable positive change since the inception of the IG. For those pointing on the negative side, 4% were males and 6% females. One in ten for both males (10%) and females (11%) stated that the IG did not bring either positive or negative effects on their lives. 2% and 5% for males and females respectively reported on 'neither'. Another 2% for the males could not reflect on the type. Looking at the positive side of the IG across the different age categories, it is evident that there is much approval from the youth as expressed by an overwhelming eight in ten (84%). The statistic drops down a bit to exactly 80% for the middle aged category and it further drops by a seven percentage to 73% for the old aged category. Place of residents depicts a more wary rural populace when compared to the urbanites. There is a clear six percentage gap across the place of residence divide as reflected by 84% of the urban population against the 78% of those in the rural setup.

The impact of the IG also varies across the different provinces, see Figure 33. An awe-inspiring nine in ten of the total respondent in Harare (91%), Mashonaland East (93%) and Mashonaland West (90%) describes the IG's impact as constructive and encouraging. Though the impact is rated as positive in all the ten provinces, there is a bit lower approval from the Matabeleland South province where a total of 66% testifies that there has been a positive mark in their lives since the setting up of the IG.

Figure 33: Positive Impact of the IG, by Province



Note: Figures represent those who say the IG had a positive impact on their lives

Perceptions on Changes Brought About by the Inclusive Government

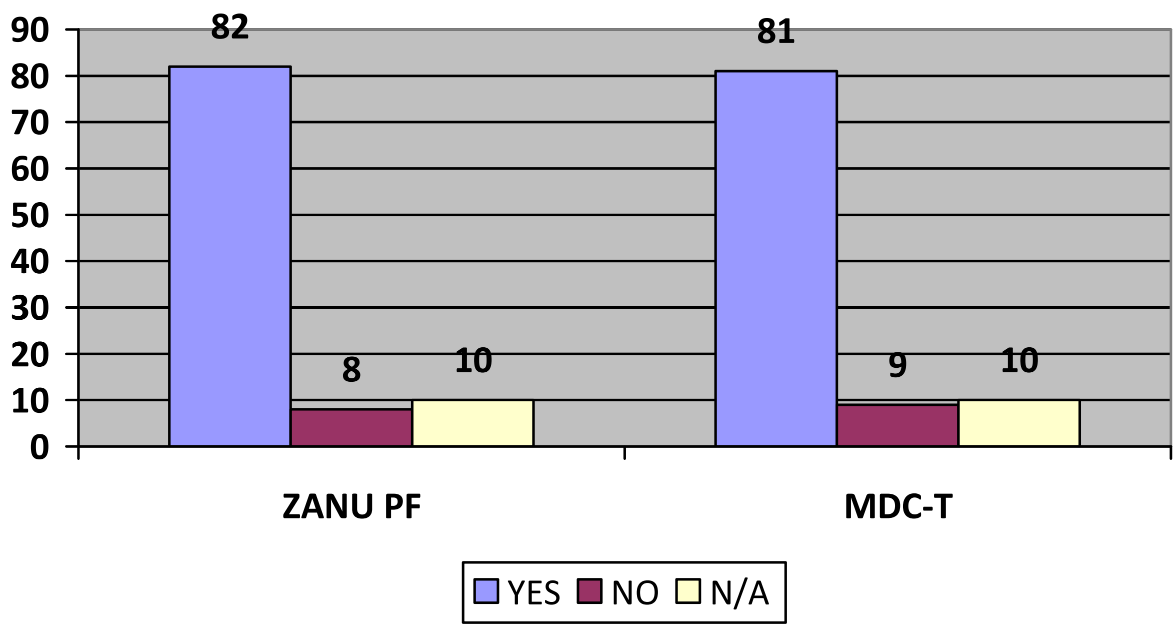
The Inclusive Government has brought with it more of the positives than negatives in Zimbabweans' socio-economic and political conditions. This is what Table 18 reveals. Within the political sphere, a majority (77%) stated that there is now less/no political violence in their communities. Across the gender variable, more males (78%) think that the IG has brought an end to politically motivated violence. There is a two percentage gap from their female counterparts (76%) who also share similar views. Generational analysis reveals that the old aged thinks that the IG has not done much to lessen the political violence as expressed by difference across age categories with 79% of the youth, 77% of the middle aged and 72% of the old aged generation who share similar sentiments.

Table 18: Nature of change brought by the IG

	YES	NO	N/A	D.K
A. I feel freer now to express myself without fear of reprisals	66	24	10	--
B. Improvement in economy	73	17	10	-
C. Improvement in social services	73	17	10	-
D. Improvement in standards of living	72	18	10	-
E. Less/no political violence in the community	77	13	10	-
F. Feel more confident about the future	79	11	10	-
G. I can vote freely in the upcoming elections	78	11	10	1
H. Fairer distribution of humanitarian assistance	63	24	10	3

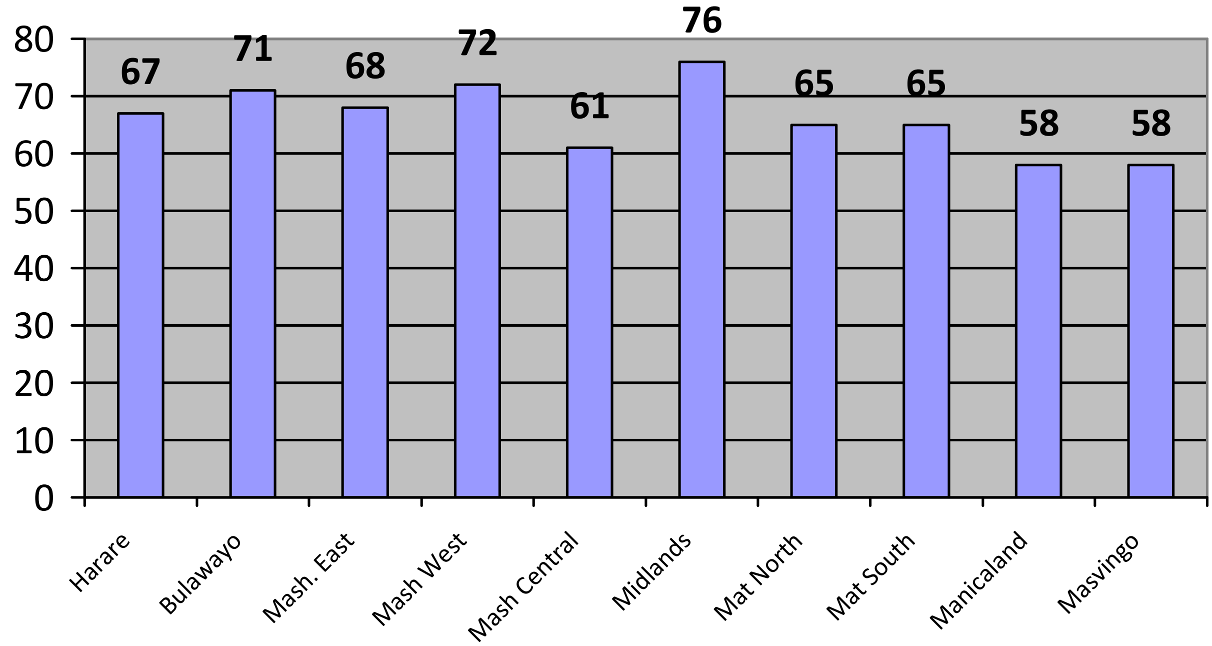
There is preponderance of those who think that after the formation of the IG, they can now vote freely in the upcoming elections as expressed by close to eight in ten (78%) of the total respondents. More youths (81%) think that enough space has been opened for them to vote freely when compared to the middle (74%) and old aged (74%) categories where views are at par. Gender wise, more males (79%) than females (76%) have the feeling that the upcoming elections will be conducted in a free and fair manner. An overwhelming eight in ten for both ZANU-PF (82%) and MDC-T (81%) stated that they feel they can vote freely after the establishment of the IG, Figure 34. On gender lines, more males (79%) against females (76%) are of the view that they can vote freely now as compared to times back before the IG was in place.

Figure 34: Free to Vote, by Party Affiliation



Zimbabweans are of the opinion that they are now freer to express their views now than before the IG came into place. This is echoed by a total of 66% of the total respondents. There is not much difference across place of residence on this matter. More of those who think that it is now better are the urban dwellers (67%), with just a percentage difference from their rural counterparts (65%). There is parity of opinions on the Youth (65%) and the Old (65%) aged categories amongst Zimbabweans who think there is now freedom of expression. This however, lags behind the Middle aged category where 67% express the same sentiments. Seven in ten (70%) of the MDC-T sympathizers think that they can express their views more freely now than before, whilst 61%, members affiliated to ZANU PF share the same view. There is a four percentage gap with more males (68%) than females (64%) believing that the IG opened more space for freedom of expression. Across the provinces, more in Midlands (76%) trust they can freely express their views, whilst Masvingo has the least of respondents of 58% holding the same opinion, Figure 35.

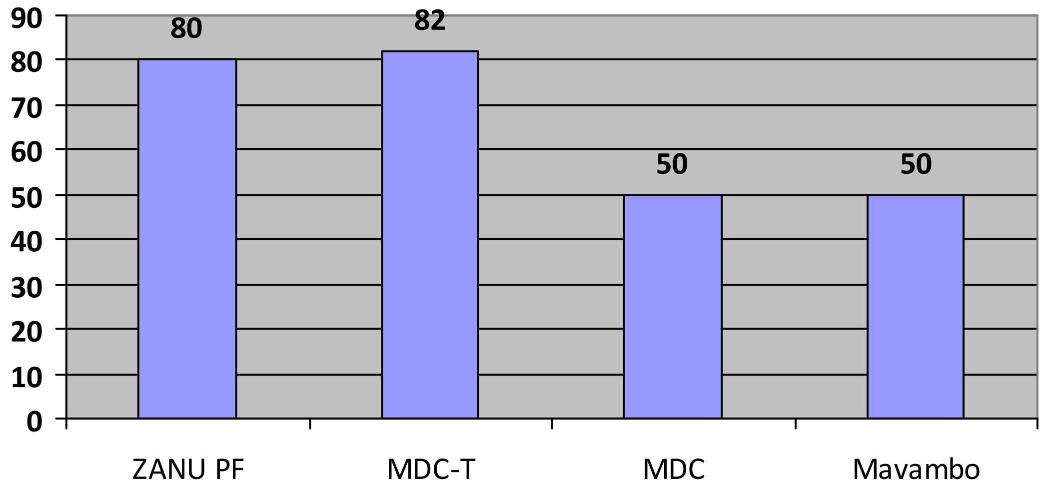
Figure 35: Freedom of Expression by Province



Note: Figures represent those who confirmed that they now feel freer to express now than before the IG came into place.

From the onset of the IG, a majority noticed a positive shift in the state of the economy. 73% of Zimbabweans reported that they witnessed an economic turnaround as compared to 17%, whilst 10% were not in a position to answer because the IG had had no impact in their lives. Specifically, a vast majority of 72% had observed an improvement in their standards of living. No wonder why near eight to ten (79%) of Zimbabweans were quick to mention that 'they now feel confident about their future'. There is a sense of optimism lodged within the minds of Zimbabweans since they have already perceived some changes in their lives. Eight in ten of the total males (80%) feel more confident about the future and seven in ten (78%) of their female counterparts also expressed similar sentiments. What picture does the generational gap portrays? More of the youths (81%) think that they are now guaranteed of a brighter future when compared to the middle (78%) and old (77%) aged categories. Surprisingly, there is a huge gap between the MDC and Mavambo supporters on one side and ZANU PF and MDC-T on the other with an overwhelming statistic of eight in ten for both the ZANU PF (80%) and MDC-T (81%) who are confident of the future but half of the MDC (50%) and Mavambo (50%) also share this same view, Figure 36.

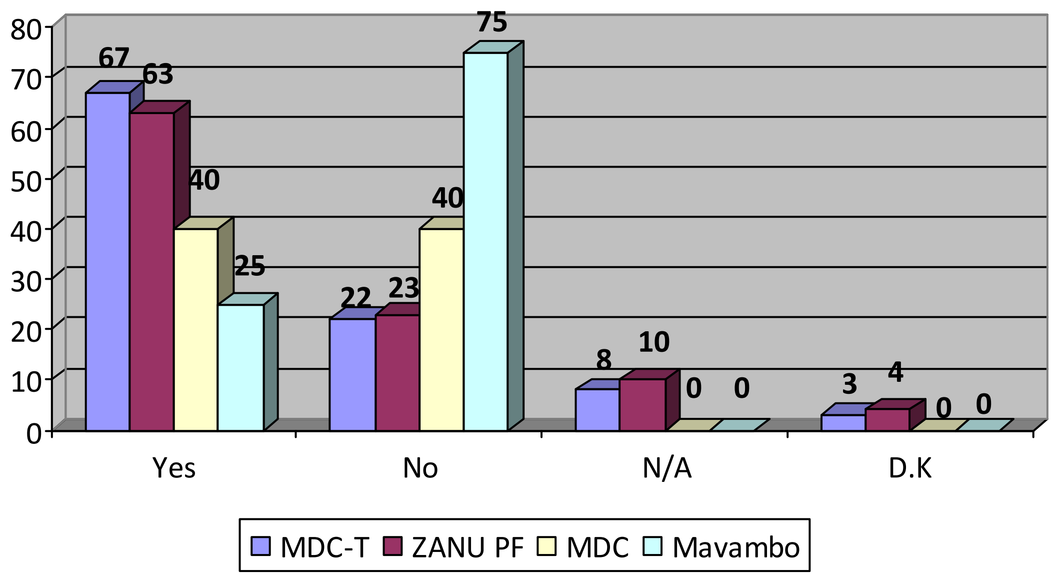
Figure 36: Confidence in the Future, by Political Party Affiliation



Note: Figures represent those who feel confident about the future.

There have always been allegations of unfair food distribution but the results of the Study reflect that six in ten (63%) of the total respondents believe that there is now a just allotment of humanitarian assistance, 24% think nothing has change. 10% had no comment because the IG had had no impact upon their lives, i.e. the N/A category and 3% said they don't know. Across political party lines, Figure 37 reveals that more MDC-T (67%) affiliates are of the opinion that the process is now fairer when compared to ZANU PF (63%), MDC (40%) and Mavambo (25%) supporters. More males (65%) seem to have benefitted from this transformation as compared to 61% their female counterparts.

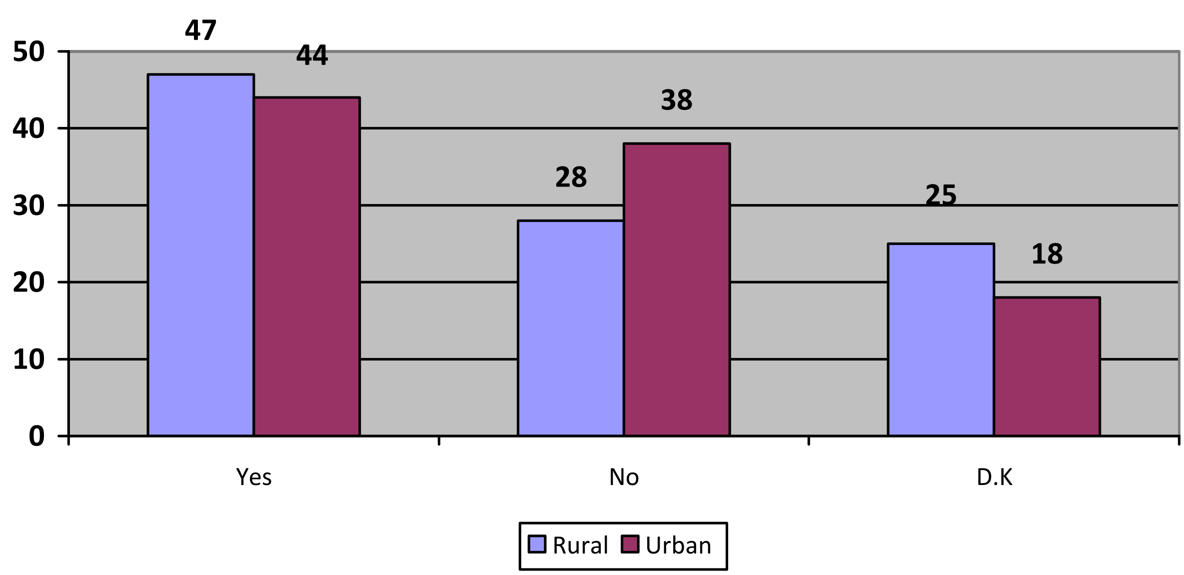
Figure 37: Fairer Distribution of Humanitarian Assistance, by Political Party Affiliation



On the Power-Sharing Agreement: Is it Genuine?

The power sharing agreement between ZANU PF and the two MDC formations was viewed from two different perspectives. Some applauded it and rather see it as the best that Zimbabwe could have ever had under the abnormal situations that the country was in. However, some viewed it with scepticism, raising questions on how; the three principals who have been opponents for so long can possibly work together in government. It is observed by some as being tainted and short lived. Those who are cynical have dismissed the all-inclusive 'government as a short-lived marriage, in which bride and groom go to the altar to exchange vows while they have divorce papers in their pockets'[7]. For the reason that there are divergent views to the genuineness of the power sharing, the MPOI Study thus sought to find out what the generality of Zimbabweans have to say about this. A plurality (45%) think this is a genuine power sharing while three in ten (32%) view it with suspicion and two in ten (23%) said they 'don't know' whether this is genuine or not. Half of the total youths (50%) take the power sharing as genuine. More amongst the youth (50%) disclose optimism about the PSA as compared to the middle aged (45%) and the old aged (39%). Across place of residence, more rural residences (47%) believe in the agreement as compared to the urbanites (44%), Figure 38.

Figure 38: Genuineness of the PSA by Place of Residence



Interesting to note is that political party affiliation affects the way respondents assessed the power sharing pact with more of those aligned to ZANU PF (55%) stating that it is genuine while 24% said 'no' and 21% 'don't know'. For those affiliated to other political parties a

[7] Government and civil society in Zimbabwe's economic recovery, Richard Kamidza, Pambazuka News, March 26, 2009

plurality seem to be very suspicious. From the MDC-T sympathizers, four in ten (44%) affirms to the accord. This is closely followed by 40% who think other wise whereas one in ten (16%) said they don't know. The MDC party led by Arthur Mutambara has well above half (60%) of its backers who think the agreement is not genuine and four in ten (40%) who expressed confidence. None of the Mavambo party sympathizers stated that the agreement is genuine, rather, three quarters (75%) said 'No' and 25% said the don't know whether the agreement is genuine or not.

Participants in the Focus Group Discussions had mixed views regarding the power-sharing agreement. Some participants in the Focus Group Discussions applaud the power sharing agreement, labeling it as a cure for the ailing economy and governance crisis.

> *That is a positive step, so we are now hoping that the situation will normalize but on the other hand we can see that MDC will be swallowed in this case things will worsen. (Urban* Harare Male)

> *Those countries which had wanted to help us once MDC is in power will readily come and give us aid. The worsening of things will be when MDC does not support some of the prevailing policies. (Urban* Harare Male)

While some participants applaud the power-sharing accord as a very positive step, others are of the opinion that it is not the best that Zimbabwe ought to have had. Rather it was better if the one who won the 29 March election was given a chance to rule because he is the people's choice.

> *I don't think it'll work because it is not proper for the winning candidate to invite the losing candidate to a power-sharing agreement. That shouldn't be done instead the winning candidate should just be allowed to rule on grounds that he is the people's choice. I believe that if he was the one ruling now everything would have been normal by now. So these talks were not properly arranged.* (Rural Masvingo Male)

> *In my view the agreement will not work because it has dragged over a long period of time, if there was any light that it would work we would have started to see some signs, so that is why we want a new election with one president and not these formations that we see. Currently they are spending a lot of money travelling to other countries and that money could be used productively here.* (Rural Matabeleland South Male)

Some however think that it cannot be a cure especially to the governance crisis and economic problems.

> *I think this is a futile attempt because I believe it's not meant to be a remedy for the governance crisis but to consolidate the rule of ZANU PF which is no longer desirable to the masses. So I don't see change as a viable outcome of these talks.* (Rural Masvingo Male)

> *As for me I do not see the agreement being a cure for our economy because there is a tag of war between the negotiators with everyone wanting to be seen that he wield more power. So a new election is necessary that we choose one leader and remove all those*

negotiating and start anew and also do away with corruption. (Rural Matabeleland South Female)

Some participants are also very suspicious of the process involved in coming up with the Global Political Agreement (GPA). According to their view, it is an elitist thing that did not involve the input of the general Zimbabweans and moreso; no other stakeholders seem to be involved as well.

> *This agreement is one sided for it only benefit those who are in power and with their corrupt nature no one will ever remove them from power, they alone know the agreement, it is not a people driven agreement because they should consult the people first like you are doing in this research, but they treat us like sacs and a people without rights.* (Rural Matabeleland South Female)

For those that do not trust the agreement, they draw a deep mistrust from what happened in 1987 when ZANU and PF ZAPU joined to form ZANU PF. Participants believe this agreement was not done in good faith thus it saw the demise of ZAPU. They are therefore sceptical that this might be a trick by ZANU PF to swallow and silence the MDC.

> *If we are to observe closely we shall see that back then ZANU PF and ZAPU combined and vowed to work together but ZAPU was swallowed from within and up to now ZANU PF is still leading, so let these people give us an election so that we choose someone we want. In the rural areas they sent their helicopters to scared us and we ended up voting for a candidate we did not want.* (Rural Matabeleland South Female)

> *Surely, the absence of trust among these parties is blocking the agreement. There is no trust among these parties. And we know that Zanu-Pf is not trustworthy it does not negotiate in good faith. So trust actually lacks among these parties.* (Urban Harare Male)

> *I believe that there is no trust. ZANU-PF once entered into a unity pact with Nkomo, as if they were really genuine. I am adamant that our President is power hungry and not trustworthy. So even currently, he agrees on something to trick his counterparts only to turn back tomorrow. They fooled Tsvangirai into signing the agreement only for him to refuse with a certain Ministry. This is an indication that there is no trust amongst these parties whatsoever.* (Rural Mashonaland Central Female)

> *I think that the lack of trust when it comes to ZANU PF results when it comes to the sharing of departments with their demands of core–sharing the Home Affairs department and also when it comes to the issue of Governors, Ambassadors and Permanent Secretaries. They all want those posts to be headed by ZANU PF members and not be core-shared so ZANU PF is not trustworthy.* (Rural Masvingo Male)

Duration of the IG

The GPA, that culminated in the formation of the IG entered into full force upon its signatures by the three principals in the witness of the facilitator. However, cognizance should be taken of the fact that the inclusive government is and indeed, should be a transitional arrangement that should one day come to an end. What then is the view of Zimbabweans regarding the duration of the IG? Do they dream that the inclusive government should last forever or are they keen to choose their leaders through democratic, free and fair elections? Answers to the question of the duration were tapped by asking, "How long do you like the Inclusive Government to last? Responses were then divided into 6-12months (23%), 12-24months (21%), 3-5years (13%), more than 5years (29%), don't support the existence of the IG (8%) and don't know (6%). Overally, a majority (57%) of the respondents would like the IG to last at least for a period below 5years.

What picture is inferred to by the political party affiliation variable? Table 19 below shows that a plurality among both ZANU PF (33%) and MDC-T (29%) would like the IG to go for more than five years. However, majorities from both parties prefer less than five years, though split into different time-frames. For Mavambo and MDC, a majority, 75% and 50% respectively wish if the IG will last for a period falling between 6 and 12months.

Table 19: Duration and party affiliation

	ZANU PF	**MDC-T**	**MDC**	**Mavambo**
6-12months	23	26	50	75
12-24moths	18	21	20	25
3-5years	16	11	10	0
More than 5 years	33	29	10	0
Not supportive of the IG	3	10	10	0
Don't know	7	3	0	0

Across gender lines, a plurality of females (34%) would like the IG to go beyond 5 years and 25% from the male fraternity shared similar sentiments. After combining statistics falling within 5 years and below, we discover that more males seem to be supportive than their female counterparts. Just below half (49%) of the total females and well above half of the males (63%) are of the opinion that the IG should not stretch further than 5 years, Table 20.

Table 20: Duration and gender

	Female	Male
6 - 12 months	20	25
12 - 24 months	19	22
3 – 5 years	10	16
More than 5 years	34	25
Don't support existence of the Inclusive Government	8	8
Don`t Know	9	5

The provincial representation reflects that a plurality of the respondents in six provinces would prefer an IG that would last for more than five years. In Harare (29%), Mashonaland East (36%), Mashonaland West (33%), Mashonaland Central (30%), Matabeleland North (25%) and Manicaland (34%) stated that they feel that the IG should go beyond five years. A plurality in Bulawayo (31%) and Masvingo (28%) stated that they want it to last between 6 and 12 months. Pluralities in Midlands (31%) and Matabeleland South (26%) prefer between 12 and 24 months.

However, over and above all, majorities across all the ten provinces fell below five years time – frame.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

Zimbabweans are facing acute levels of poverty and deprivation. The years 2006-2008 were by and large extremely difficult years, with the most pronounced one being the 2008 as majorities went by without the necessary basic needs that sustain life. Still the year 2009, did not end these economic turmoil as the survey reveals. A significant proportion of the respondents went by without a cash income, medicines/ medical treatment, enough food to eat, transport, electricity/ energy in the home and enough clean water. This picture depicts alarming levels of poverty and a horrendous situation for many. In order to survive these challenges Zimbabweans employed a number of survival strategies. Whereas in the previous years many survived through the use of a salary, the years 2008 and 2009 brought in a shift in survival strategies, since many, an estimated 94% of the population are out of the job market, whilst the few employed can only take home meagre income. Thus to obtain food, money and health more and more people are now relying on project income, farming and remittances from relatives and friends.

However, despite the highlighted challenges, most Zimbabweans reveal a lot of optimism about their living conditions and that of the nation. The year, 2009 has been a better year for many in comparison to the last three years (2006-2009). All this sanguinity seems to be hinged on the formation of the IG, to which many approve. This all-inclusive government created a crisis of expectations as Zimbabweans hope that a new political dispensation will ease the majority out of abject dearth. Despite lingering suspicions, Zimbabweans now pin their hopes on the new government, which they see as the only viable option to solve the country's problems. Instead many Zimbabweans believe the Inclusive Government brought with it more of the positives than negatives in Zimbabweans' socio-economic and political conditions. Within the political sphere, a majority stated that there is now less/no political violence in their communities. There is preponderance of those who think that after the formation of the IG, they can now vote freely in the upcoming elections and are now freer to express their views than before the IG came into existence. It therefore remains, the people`s wish that the three principals should remain united for a common cause, i.e. to bring sanity to the social, economic and political life of all Zimbabweans

Following the level of optimism that the Zimbabweans vested in the IG, one would recommend that this government should stay away from petty politics and put people`s desires first. They should strive to meet the peoples' expectations so that it gains credibility. Furthermore, in order not to let down the general populace of the country, elections should be conducted as given in the GPA.

The survey also reveals that the IG, in order to rectify all the social, economic and political crises, the country`s leaders need to restore their relations with the global community (FGDs findings), create employment where people become more self sustainable and are able to cater for themselves. There is need to boost agricultural production to ensure that food security is guaranteed. This can be attained by proper management of the land question, through restoring land back to the white commercial farmers (FGDs Findings). Provision of clean and adequate water should be properly managed to ensure that there is enough clean water. This entails proper sewer reticulation, sourcing for enough chemicals and equipment and repairing burst pipes. There is need to revamp the health sector by incentivizing health personnel, channelling more resources to buy adequate equipment, medicines and drugs and ensuring that fees charged are not exorbitant. However everything hinges on proper management of the economy and safeguarding good governance. When an economy is properly managed benefits will trickle down and boost other sectors. However, this apparently seems to be a mammoth task for the IG, because all hinges on financial assistance, which has proven difficult to access. The last best option as many participants alluded to is a complete change of the country`s leadership: ‘the old man must go’, many participants continuously chanted.

Lastly, the dollarization which somehow restored sanity to the economy, vanquishing the black market and stabilizing prices was well commented. The Institute believes this policy should be maintained upto a level when the economy can fully sustain itself through local production. Notably respondents believed that it increased the availability of goods and services with empty shelves filling again. Feelings towards the policy were generally positive, which is an indication of the impact it has had on people’s lives. The dollarization policy thus by and large managed to restore stability. In order for the economy and Zimbabweans at large to benefit, there is need to source for more funds to boost industry so that goods are manufactured locally, which will go a long way in rationalizing prices.