

UCAZ President leads delegation on a study tour of Germany



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The President of the Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe (UCAZ), Clr Josiah Makombe, who is also the Mayor of Gweru recently led a six-member delegation on a study tour of Germany. The delegation included the First Vice President of UCAZ, Clr Blessing Tandii who is the Mayor of Mutare; Presidential Committee Members, the

Study tour participants at the German Association of Water, Wastewater and Waste (DWA) offices in Hennef, Germany.

Mayor of Kwekwe, Clr Angeline Kasipo and the Town Clerk of Bindura, Mr Shangwa Mavesera, the UCAZ Secretary General Mr Livision Mutekede and Communications Officer Mr Chrispen Musekiwa. The Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ) also participated and was represented by its President Clr Christopher Kang'ombe and Secretary General Mr Morris Mbolela. The Head of GIZ Zimbabwe office Mr Stephan Lidsba, his Governance and Gender Advisor, Ms Iris Wilhelm and Senior Advisor, Mr Nerio Nyabvure were also part of the study tour. Mr Jitrenda Hargovan, a GIZ consultant was the facilitator on the tour.

The tour was undertaken from 2 to 6 December 2019 as part of the international cities platform, Connective Cities and GIZ project whose theme is "Improving public service delivery at local level". The tour was conducted from the 2nd to 6th of December 2019.

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Secretary General's remarks



Greetings.
Welcome to the December 2019 edition of our newsletter, *the Urban Voice*. This issue covers the 78th Annual Conference and Local Government Investment Conference held last month at the

Zimbabwe International Trade Fair in Bulawayo as well as the recent study tour to Germany under the international cities platform, Connective Cites and GIZ project whose theme is *"Improving public service delivery at local level"*. I am also pleased to inform you that under the same UCAZ-GIZ partnership we managed to train councilors from all urban local authorities. The training covered Principles of Good Governance.

The year 2019 was a very difficult year economically as inflation rendered local authorities' budgets inadequate to implement planned activities. This affected service delivery as prices of goods and services continued to increase on a daily basis. This also negatively impacted the Association as some members fell behind with membership subscriptions.

However, we continued to soldier on despite these challenges. We remain optimistic of the future. As we wind up 2019 I would like to thank the UCAZ members for their unwavering support to their Association and providing funding for the successful hosting of the 78th Annual Conference. They showed unit of purpose.

Our development partners GIZ, the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF), the Municipal Development Partnerships and UNDP deserve a special mention on their support for UCAZ activities throughout the year.

The Ministry of Local Government and Public Works (MLGPW) and other government departments also deserve special recognition for their support and recognition of UCAZ as the voice of local government.

Our advocacy through a position paper on Devolution which was presented at the 78th Annual Conference resulted in government thrusting upon UCAZ the role of coming up with a Devolution Matrix. It is my fervent hope that UCAZ will not be found wanting as we have already seized the opportunity with great enthusiasm. We will submit the Devolution Matrix to the MLGPW soon for onward presentation in Cabinet. We will not leave anyone behind on this critical journey of transformation and I call upon all stakeholders to make their contribution.

As we approach 2020 the UCAZ family looks forward to great year ahead. Exciting and interesting events are in store as we forge ahead with reforms which will give the Association a new impetus to serve its members more effectively and efficiently.

Meanwhile, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Livison Mutekede
SECRETARY GENERAL

From the Editor's desk



As the curtain comes down on the year 2019 it is once again that time to reflect on achievements, the missed opportunities and the lessons learned during the course of the year. From an economic point of view, 2019 was a very

difficult year with many challenges which affected service delivery. Major among the challenges was the galloping inflation which has affected all sectors of the economy.

However, we should approach the New Year 2020 with renewed determination and vigor based on the lessons learned throughout the year.

We will continue to face challenges as we enter the second year of government's austerity measures. This requires innovation and forward planning from local authorities. Disaster preparedness is critical as we have entered the rainy season which comes with floods and water borne diseases. In the past we have experienced Cholera outbreaks which have claimed thousands of lives over the years. It is pleasing to note that the private sector has in recent years been getting involved in assisting government at both national and local level.

Higherlife Foundation, a charitable organization linked to Econet Wireless Zimbabwe is working with government to eliminate cholera under the National Task Force Cholera Elimination. This is one of the best public private partnerships to emerge from Zimbabwe. The partnership seeks to serve lives by

eliminating cholera in the country by targeting the hot spots.

Transforming our urban centers into resilient cities as climate change related challenges are real.

UCAZ has been afforded an opportunity to formulate a Devolution Matrix which, if implemented fully, will see service delivery improve. Residents should play their part by supporting their local authorities through the payment of bills.

Let me take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas a prosperous 2020.

Chris Musekiwa
Communications Officer

City of Mutare launches massive urban renewal project



The City of Mutare on 18 December 2019 launched a massive urban renewal project at a site in the city's oldest high density suburb, Sakubva. President Emmerson Mnangagwa commissioned the project, dubbed Sakubva Urban Renewal Project through a ground breaking ceremony. The ceremony was witnessed by the two Vice Presidents of Zimbabwe, Hon General (Rtrd) Constantino Chiwenga and Hon. Kembo Mohadi, Minister of Local Government and Public Works, Hon. July Moyo, Manicaland Minister of State for Provincial Affairs and Devolution, Dr Ellen Gwaradzimba, senior government officials, mayors and town clerks from other urban local authorities, City of Mutare councillors and officials and residents of Sakubva.

Sakubva was established in 1925 and most of the houses were constructed during that time and are now in a poor state and inadequate for the families occupying them. The project will see the demolition of dilapidated houses and the construction of high rise flats with the capacity to accommodate 50 000 people when complete.

According to the City Council Public Relations office, Phase I of the project, which is being bankrolled by BancABC to the tune of US\$40 million, will see construction of modern high-rise apartments, Sakubva Flea Market and Green Market. Under Phase II, a world class stadium will be constructed, Over 20 000 locals will be employed while about 25 000 provide downstream services.

In his welcome remarks, the Mayor of Mutare Clr Blessing Tandi said that the urban renewal program required innovative approaches for its successful implementation. He added that there was greater need for strong interface between the Mutare City Council and the Central Government in order to develop the city.

President Mnangagwa appreciated the vision of the City of Mutare which he said dovetailed "with our national vision 2030 of creating a middle-income economy". He commended the Sakubva Urban Renewal model adding that it was in line "with our quest to ensure that all infrastructure and housing developments are accompanied by facilities that will see the gainful employment of our people".

The President went on to say that the urban renewal project would also enable the transfer of technologies such as solar, waste-to-biogas and other sustainable technologies.

"My government has granted this Sakubva Urban Renewal Project, National Project Status to ensure speedy implementation and completion. We expect to see progress on the ground as early as March 2020," said the President.

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The tour was a follow up to the dialogue event jointly organised by Connective Cities in and UCAZ in Harare in August this year and the subsequent Local Government Associations Exploratory meeting held on the sidelines of the 4th World Congress of the United Cities and Local Governments held from 11 to 16 November 2019 in Durban, South Africa.

The aim of the Study Tour was to further develop understanding of the roles and functions of local government associations for improving service delivery and good local governance. The tour was implemented in cooperation with the GIZ project “Strengthening the Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe” in Zimbabwe.

Participants interacted with officials from the Germany Association of Cities (DST) in Cologne, and Berlin and learned about the structure of the local government system of Germany, the legislative framework, the legal system as it relates to local governance, the operations of DST and how it relates with the federal government and the functions and responsibilities of local authorities.

The participants also visited the German Association for Water Management, Sewage & Waste (DWA), in Hennef, the GIZ office as well as the German County Association and the Association of Municipal Companies in Berlin.

Discussions were also held with a communications company, ZebraLog who shared their information about their



Tour participants following a presentation at the DST Offices in Cologne, Germany.

contribution to citizen participation in local planning and development.

With support from GIZ UCAZ is working on programme aimed at improving services to its members. The Association is expected to make a significant contribution to improving the operations of its members. A lot of lessons were drawn from the study tour and participants made recommendations for implementation in the UCAZ and Zambian models. A full report will be shared with members.

Mr Stephan Lidsba in his remarks he said that the leadership of UCAZ needed to drive the process. He further said that GIZ had a two-year budget to see the process through.

The UCAZ President said that GIZ support would not go to waste. He said UCAZ valued the process seriously and promised that at the next UCAZ Presidential Committee he would make a report on a completed process and take it to the Executive Committee for adoption. Once adopted, the recommendations will be implemented, he said. The UCAZ Executive Committee will be held before the end of the year.

“Annual Conference and LOGIC a huge success,” – UCAZ Acting President



Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe (UCAZ) First Vice President Clr Blessing Tandhi (above), described the recently held 78th Annual Conference and Local Government Investment Conference as a huge success. Clr Tandhi was Acting President in the absence of Clr Josiah Makombe who was out of the country on business.

Clr Tandhi, who is the Mayor of Mutare had this to say: “We had a powerful conference and all presentations were great. The conference was a huge success. Attendance was overwhelming because all local authorities were represented by Mayors and Chairpersons, all councillors, Town Clerks and Town Secretaries, departmental heads from all members. We had a meeting with the President and the Minister (Local Government and Public Works) and briefed them about our devolution aspirations,” said Mayor Tandhi.

“Our major concern was the role and responsibilities for the three tiers of government (central, provincial and local) in health, education, water and sanitation, social welfare, infrastructure among other issues,” said the Acting President of UCAZ.

“On recapitalization of local authorities, we informed the Minister that our infrastructure was now dilapidated and requested that local authorities should be capacitated to issue municipal bonds, obtain soft loans, grants.

One of the major highlights of the conference, said Mayor Tandhi, was the development of a Devolution Implementation Matrix by participants. “As part of a UCAZ advocacy thrust on devolution implementation, we will submit the matrix to Cabinet for consideration,” he said.

The UCAZ Secretary General Mr Livison Mutekede echoed Mayor Tandhi’s comments saying that the conference was a huge success.

“Compared to the previous conferences, this one stands out as the best in terms of participation and deliverables. All urban councillors attended. Ministers and senior government officials attended. We set aside a Policy Dialogue Day on the programme to interact with the State President. We came up with a devolution implementation matrix which we will submit to government for implementation.

“A precedent has been set for future conferences, to give all councillors an opportunity to attend this very important event on our calendar. It gives the councillors an opportunity to participate in the activities of their Association. As we move towards attaining Vision 2030, UCAZ will not leave anyone behind,” said the Secretary General.

President commends UCAZ for engaging key stakeholders

The Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe (UCAZ)'s 78th Annual Conference and Local Government Investment Conference (LOGIC 2019) which was held recently at the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair in Bulawayo was a resounding success. The conference, whose theme was ***Urban Local Authorities: Embracing Devolution towards Attaining Vision 2030*** was attended by a record 1 500 participants who included government ministers, mayors, all urban councillors, Town Clerks, senior council officials, representatives of government ministries, industry and commerce, development partners and the South African Local Government Association and regional local authorities' representatives.

The State President, His Excellency Emmerson D. Mnangagwa (right) was the Guest of Honour. He commended UCAZ for engaging key stakeholders such as government ministries, industrialists and members of the business community. "This culture is commendable and should continue for it is only through dialogue that sustainable solutions can be found and the national cake fairly shared," he said.

The President said that local authorities were the drivers of the local economy and that "our success or failure as a nation is best depicted by your collective performance".

"You must therefore take it upon yourselves to gear up for higher productivity, growth and job creation as we accelerate our journey towards the achievement of Vision 2030," said the President.

He further said that the provision of key services such as clean water, modern and efficient solid waste management systems, good roads education institutions, well stocked primary health care facilities, among other social amenities could only be realised "if we constantly dialogue and collaborate with one another".

The President said that urban settlements were the face of Zimbabwe to the outside world and that the ambience or lack of it and the general wellbeing of the residents left a lasting impression to visitors and tourists.



"The performance of all our urban local authorities must therefore be a summation of what Zimbabwe is and aspires to be," he said.

Local authorities were therefore obliged to carry the weighty responsibility of delivering affordable, efficient, reliable and sustainable services to residents.

He urged local authorities to streamline their operations and prioritise activities in line with the national development agenda.

He underscored his government's desire to give full meaning to devolution adding that it was only through devolution that the country could achieve equitable and sustainable development that left no one behind. "The days of our Capital City, Harare being *"bambazonke"* (take it all) as far as development is concerned are over," he said.

On the Ease and Cost of Doing Business reforms, the President challenged local authorities to accelerate the creation of conducive environments for investment.

Government commits ZW\$74,4 million for provincial, metropolitan councils

Government has committed ZW\$74,4 million in the 2019 national budget for provincial and metropolitan councils. More resources have been availed in the 2020 national budget to ensure that the operations of the provincial and metropolitan councils are sufficiently funded.

This was announced by President Emmerson Mnangagwa in his speech as Guest of Honour at the just-ended 78th Annual Conference and Local Government investment Conference held from 13 to 15 November 2019 at the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair in Bulawayo.

To date we have set in motion the process of establishing fully functional provincial and metropolitan councils. “You mayors and chairpersons of councils of urban councils are expected, together with your fellow members, to be responsive voice of the needs of your communities in the formulation of the Provincial and metropolitan development priorities and agendas.

The President said that he was aware of the gross infrastructure development gaps within the local authorities and that government remained committed to facilitate the resourcing of capital expenditure for local authorities.

“It is my fervent hope that these funds, some of which have since been disbursed to respective councils, are being used to compliment priority projects especially for critical services such as water, sanitation and other capital projects,” he said.

He exhorted local authorities to develop innovative and robust strategies for plant and equipment acquisition to accelerate infrastructure projects.

“Desist from issuing building permits on wetlands” – President



There has been increased construction on wetlands, especially in urban areas.

President Emmerson Mnangagwa has discouraged local authorities from issuing building permits on wetlands. He was speaking as the Guest of Honour at the UCAZ 78th Annual Conference and Local Government Investment Conference (LOGIC 2019) held from 13 to 15 November 2019 in Bulawayo.

The President urged local authorities to work closely with the Ministry of Environment, Climate, Tourism and hospitality Industry to educate residents about the adverse effects of climate change.

“Climate change is a reality for all of us to see. Presently, several urban local authorities are facing critical raw water shortages, resulting in severe water rationing,” said the President.

The President encouraged local authorities to embrace and participate in the ongoing National Clean-up as well as undertaking beautification and landscaping projects in their areas.

“The culture of not paying for services must stop” – President



needs around which the two tiers of government can engage.

“My government is desirous to assist local authorities to grow, modernize and expand. We are ready and willing to help,” Said President Mnangagwa.

President Emmerson Mnangagwa urged residents to adopt a culture of paying bills and paying for services offered to them. He added that services offered by local authorities were not for free. The President was speaking at the 78th Annual Conference and Local Government Investment Conference held from 13 to 15 November 2019 at the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair in Bulawayo.

“The culture of not paying for services must stop. Let us all be responsible citizens,” he said. The Presidents also urged local authorities to prioritise robust strategies to improve revenue bases as provided under the Urban Councils Act [Chapter 29:15].

“As central government we remain committed to supporting the urban local authorities through policy guidance, fiscal transfers and other financial support, capacity building and technical back-up to enhance your operations,” said the President.

He promised that Devolution funds would be disbursed to local authorities as indicated in the 2020 National Budget.

The President called for frequent dialogue between central government and local authorities. He expected that the conference would come up with a comprehensive list of

Highlights of the UCAZ President's Annual Report to the 78th Annual Conference and LOGIC 2019

In his Annual Report which was read on his behalf by the 1st Vice President Clr Blessing Tandi, the President of UCAZ said that the National Constitution bestowed powers and autonomy to Provincial and Local Governments to govern the local affairs of their respective areas of jurisdiction.

The President highlighted the achievements the Association made in promoting sustainable and cost-effective services, improving quality of life and promoting socio-economic development despite the harsh economic climate that the country is going through.

He said during 2019 the Association achieved the following results;

- Government debt to local authorities: UCAZ negotiated for a debt swap arrangement with treasury and local authorities have recovered part of their debts owed by Government.
- Takeover of water supply from ZINWA: The Ministry responsible for water has instructed ZINWA to handover this function to affected urban local authorities. UCAZ will continue to lobby and ensure that there total handover of water in line with the government policy and statutes governing the provision of water. Eight out of 32 local authorities are still to have water provision services handed over to them.
- UCAZ has continued to explore areas of revenue leakages with a view to increase revenue inflows. One such revenue stream identified relates to payment for wayleaves by ZESA. The matter spilled into the courts and local authorities won the case and local authorities are in the process in implementing the court ruling.
- The new procurement regulations brought about by the Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act had made it difficult for local authorities to procure goods and services. For instance, the local authority procurement thresholds were too low. UCAZ negotiated for an upward review of the procurement thresholds.
- In line with the requirements of the new Procurement Regulatory Authority (PRAZ) regulations, several trainings were undertaken to familiarise local authorities, both policy makers and officials with these regulations.
- As we approach the announcement of the 2020 National Budget before the end of this year, UCAZ has engaged the Portfolio Committee on Local Government and presented its input into the budget proposals. We are hopeful that the relevant Minister will take these into consideration.
- In partnership with the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing, the Association developed a Councillor Induction Handbook which was used by the Ministry to carry out the induction of all the 389 urban elected councillors. The same handbook was developed jointly with our rural counterparts, the Association of Rural District Councils of Zimbabwe.
- The Association also reviewed and updated of six (6) Committee Based Training Modules. The content of the modules covers the work of councils and will be the key resource material for the forthcoming training for all councillors before year end.
- The Association also carried out Service Level Benchmarking (SLB) Peer Reviews for all the 32 local authorities.

- A workshop for all women councillors and women managers was convened from which a work plan was developed.
- The six (6) UCAZ sub-committees were inducted on their roles and responsibilities in running the business of the Association.
- The Association has for a long time been lobbying government for the Establishment of Municipal Courts and Arresting Powers for Municipal Police. Proposals have been submitted to the Attorney General's office and we await the outcome. If approved, this will go a long way in taming the urban 'jungle' that prevails in our councils today. The errant pirate taxes and vending will be dealt with expeditiously and we hope that sanity will return to our towns again.
- Urban housing remains a challenge and will continue to negate our efforts in alleviating housing shortages the unforeseeable future given the acute shortage of land. We are working with Government to improve access to housing in our towns through the concept of urban renewal. Harare and Mutare have already started implementing this initiative. We are encouraging other local authorities to adopt this model where possible to reduce the housing backlog in light of the current land shortages for urban expansion.