

TEACHERS' COPING STRATEGIES IN ZIMBABWE DURING THE 2000-2008 SOCIOECONOMIC CRISIS

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Abstract

This article traces how Zimbabwean primary and secondary school teachers responded to the drastic decline in education services during the socioeconomic crisis from 2000 to 2008. The paper uses data from two rural communities and argues that teachers played a critical role in sustaining the delivery of education during the crisis. Teachers adopted varied coping strategies ranging from exit, voice, moonlighting, and producing other services that the state could no longer provide.

1.0 Introduction

Basic education is considered a public good in most countries and therefore, its delivery is the responsibility of the state and sub-states. The failure of the state to deliver education has calamitous effects on the overall welfare of citizens especially the poor who cannot afford the high fees charged by private school providers. This paper investigates how teachers as agents in the delivery of education responded to the Zimbabwean state's inability to meet its obligations in the delivery of education during the socioeconomic crisis between 2000 and 2008. State failure is mostly in three dimensions: legitimacy; authority; and service delivery. This paper focuses on service delivery which is the most visible dimension of state failure. Whilst acknowledging that a number of agents such as state actors, community, students, parents, and teachers respond differently to the decline in service delivery in education, this paper focuses on teachers as key agents in the delivery of primary and secondary education. Extant studies on the provision of public services in 'failing states' have centred on the role of the state actors and less on professionals such as teachers. In that regard, the question of how teachers respond to the decline in state delivery capacity in education remains unanswered.

At the attainment of independence in 1980 the new socialist-oriented Zimbabwean government made primary education free and compulsory resulting in a hike in school enrolments (Narman 2003, 143; Nziramasanga 1999, 9). From 2,401 primary schools enrolling 81,958 learners in 1979, the number of primary schools rose to 4,504 enrolling over 2,274,178 learners by 1989. Equally, phenomenal increases were recorded in secondary education from 177 secondary schools enrolling 66,215 learners in 1979 to 1,502 secondary schools with a learner population of 695,882 by 1989. Significant budgetary allocations supported the increased enrolments. Central government provided 100 percent grant for teachers' salaries in both government and non-government schools and provided pupil unit based tuition and building grants (annually). Tuition grants covered the costs for teaching materials (books, stationery) and the building grant was for the construction and maintenance of infrastructure. However, grant allocations were 'based on the

revenue available to government rather than the actual cost of the pedagogic materials' (Singleton 2006, 31).

As a direct result of these government initiatives, major indicators in education improved, literacy levels for 15-24 years age group rose to 98 percent by 1999 (GoZ 2004, 23). However, the high demand for education resulted in many pupils failing to access adequate learning material and infrastructure, “pupils often met with buildings that were far from ready, or constructed for temporary use, or even classes that were held in the open under trees” (Narman 2003, 145). Despite achieving quantitative growth, the output quality was on the decline and creating a dichotomy of well-resourced urban and private elite schools offering elitist education versus the poor rural schools producing poor results (Nziramanga 1999, 12).

The 1990s witnessed the adoption of an economic structural adjustment programme (ESAP) and the abandoning of socialist informed development policies. ESAP entailed inter-alia: the reduction in public spending, reduction in central government deficit, the introduction of cost recovery in health and education (CSO 1998, 2) and the greater role of the private sector in the market. The Zimbabwean economy experienced a down turn beginning in 1997, triggered by a decision to grant veterans of the 1970s nationalist liberation movements, pensions and gratuities from unbudgeted funds (Rotberg 2007, 169; Hammar et al 2003, 7). Equally damaging to the economy was the deployment of Zimbabwean troops in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1998 at an annual cost of US\$360 million (Moore 2005, x; Sachikonye 2002, 14). In January 2000, a few months before the Parliamentary elections, the government awarded civil servants a 69-100 percent increase in salaries (Kanyenze 2003, 68) well above the then prevailing annual inflation rate of 55,9 percent. The economic decline also got spur and impetus from ‘farm occupations’ that triggered a breakdown of rule of law and subsequently Zimbabwe’s isolation by the western world since 2000 (Bratton et al 2005, 79; Narman 2003, xvi). Real GDP growth rate declined to -14,5 percent per annum in 2002 (PRF 2003, 11). Official inflation reached 231 million percent per annum by July 2008 (RBZ 2011).

By 2004, morale among education professionals plummeted due to increased workloads and worsening working conditions as government reduced funding for education (GoZ 2004, 24). Schools increasingly lacked basic teaching and learning materials (Chimhete 2007). A social protection programme - Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) - introduced by government in late 1990s to support children from disadvantaged backgrounds had reduced impact beginning 2000. BEAM’s main objective was to reduce the number of vulnerable children dropping out or not attending primary and secondary school due to economic hardships by providing tuition fee waivers. Due to the deteriorating economic situation applicants for BEAM increased markedly. As a direct result, BEAM allocations declined in real terms and the high inflation rates eroded the value of the grant before it reached the beneficiaries².

Faced with an astronomical rate of inflation, in a populist bid to protect the citizens against ‘profiteering’ by business and service providers the government responded by instituting a wide range of price controls including regulated increases in school fees. School authorities were required to obtain written ministerial consent before increasing fees. This was against a backdrop of the reduced real value of government grants due to increasing rate of inflation. Schools responded to the regulation by applying projected inflation rates to peg school fees rates. However, due to delays in the release of official inflation figures, the estimated rates were invariably higher than the official rate³. A study on public opinions of ordinary Zimbabweans in 2004 also revealed that 54 percent considered their living conditions to be bad (Bratton et al 2005, 83).

In 2007, Zimbabwe's economy hyper inflated and schools proposed increases in fees more frequently. For instance, Serima secondary school opened the third and final term of 2007 with a fees charge of Z\$4 million per learner per term. Four weeks into the term, the school demanded an additional Z\$35 million per learner. Four weeks before the end of a thirteen-week term, they demanded an additional Z\$450 million per learner to complete the term. These steep and sustained increases in school fees were buoyed by hyperinflation that reached a peak of 6723.7 percent annually for 2007. In 2007, Mtanhaurwa primary school in Shumba opened the academic year with a fees charge of Z\$2,000 per learner per term. As determined by its enrolment, the school was eligible for a BEAM grant of Z\$72,000 for the first term. However, when the BEAM grant was available for collection at the beginning of the second term, school fees had gone up to Z\$15,000 per term per learner and the cost of bus fare to and from the bank totaled Z\$200,000. The school could only withdraw a maximum Z\$5,000 per day as the central bank had (in a bid to tame the rampant inflation) imposed a daily cash withdrawal limit. Understandably, the school avoided withdrawing the BEAM grant that had turned 'toxic'. In a related case, in October 2007, a teacher at Tsatse secondary school reported avoiding accessing his salary for the previous three months, as doing so would cost him more in transport charges. These actions were part of the broader state avoidance strategy.

2.0 Methods

The study is based on data from two rural communities in Zimbabwe - Shumba ward in Goromonzi district, Mashonaland East province and the Maotsa ward in Gutu District, Masvingo province⁴. Shumba had a population of 5,551 and 1,168 households and Maotsa had 2,903 inhabitants and 626 households. Maotsa has three primary schools (Kanongovere, Mukwasi, and Mushipe) and two secondary schools (Kanongovere and Serima). Serima secondary school is a missionary run high-fee boarding school and the local Rural District Council (RDC) administered Kanongovere secondary school and the three primary schools. In Shumba, the RDC owned one primary school (Tsatse) and a secondary school (Tsatse). In 2004 a church had taken over another primary school (Mtanhaurwa) from the RDC.

Data was collected between July 2007 and December 2008 through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGD), questionnaires, and non-participant observation. The head or deputy head and a teacher from each school were sampled creating a total of sixteen respondents for the in-depth interviews. A questionnaire was administered to 56 respondents in Shumba and 51 in Maotsa.

The guiding ethical principle adopted in this study ensured that data generation and use did not harm participants. The Ministries of Education, Sport, and Culture; Health and Child Welfare; and the Department of Social Welfare granted permission for the research. In addition, the local chiefs and village heads also granted permission. The objectives and uses of the research were explained to participants when seeking their clearance and consent. Respondents were alerted to the fact that the nature of in-depth interviews could only guarantee confidentiality as anonymity was impossible. Therefore, respondents gave informed consent to participate in the study.

3.0 Theoretical Framework

Hirschman (1970)'s exit, voice, and loyalty framework on consumer responses to decline in quality of service guided this study. Hirschman (1970) equates the state to any private service provider and postulates that when faced with a decline in the quality of services consumers of state services have three

response options. Firstly, consumers can exit the service provider and get services from other providers. Secondly, they can exercise voice making representations to authorities in order to improve the situation. Thirdly, the response can be influenced by the loyalty, with the more loyal likely to remain and apply voice and the less loyal being prone to exit. Campbell, Dowding, and John (2007) and Buchanan and Faith (1987) reformulate Hirschman's exit, voice and loyalty framework and postulate three types of exit, three types of voice, and two types of loyalty. The next section discusses findings on in light of exit, voice, and loyalty framework.

4.0 Findings

4.1 Exit - Voting with one's feet

Faced with declining conditions of service, some teachers responded by exiting the service. Between January and April 2007, 4,500 teachers left the civil service for South Africa, Botswana, Namibia and Swaziland, a high figure considering that 5,000 left in the whole of 2006 (Ndlovu 2007). Teachers also resorted to internal public exit. In both Shumba and Maotsa, teachers who consistently produced outstanding results at day secondary schools were invited to join boarding schools that offered better salary and working conditions. In 2006, four science and mathematics teachers transferred from Kanongovere secondary school to neighbouring Serima secondary school because it offered higher salaries and allowances. In Shumba (in 2007), the head of the history department and long-serving staff member left Tsatse secondary school to join a Catholic boarding school in the district.

5.0 Voice- Complaining and correcting

Teachers increasingly exercised collective voice through perennial strikes 'downing tools' at least once every term from the beginning of 2007 because of grievances over salaries and other conditions of service. Except for Serima secondary school that paid an allowance to teachers, all schools surveyed were affected by the nationally organized industrial action used by the teachers to exercise their collective voice. Such labour actions threatened the delivery of education services as the contact time between teachers and learners was reduced. Paradoxically, parents opted not to persuade teachers to end the strike and openly expressed hope that the collective job action by teachers and other civil servants would contribute towards the 'struggle' and lead to a change of government in the general elections scheduled for March 2008. A woman in an FGD in Shumba remarked, "We feel their pain. Teachers have ceased to enjoy high status in society. I am lucky because I did not go to school and become a teacher, otherwise I would have been as poor as a teacher. Someone has to attend to their problems".

However, teachers were not always successful in using electoral voice. During the 2002 Presidential elections, a teacher at Kanongovere secondary school suspected of being an MDC supporter was instructed by the local ZANU-PF youth league leader to plead illiteracy before the returning officer so that his assisted vote would make his choice of candidate known. The teacher transferred from the school soon after those elections. In this instance, when local political actors obstructed the deployment of collective voice through voting, the teacher responded by exiting. In the run up to the 2005 parliamentary elections, a teacher at Mukwasi was banished from the school (temporarily) by ZANU-PF youths because of his known sympathy for the MDC. The ZANU-PF strategy was effective in limiting the teacher's ability to freely exercise collective voice.

6.0 Asset broadening as coping strategy

Under the weight of the collapsing economy and declining salary levels in real terms due to inflation, the rural salaried elites resorted to individual direct actions to broaden their asset bases in diverse ways. The most common asset-broadening strategy was to engage in income generating ventures. The second strategy was for civil servants to seek redeployment near their villages in order to reduce escalating transport bills and fully engage in agriculture. Resultantly, three out of the five school heads in Maotsa were from the neighbourhood and at Mukwasi primary school, all the teachers were local.

7.0 Income generating ventures

Civil servants from Shumba and Maotsa engaged in a variety of income enhancing ventures. In Shumba, teachers bought goods (that were no longer available on market such as sugar, cooking oil, exercise books and pens) from the city for resale in the rural areas. In Maotsa, two heads of schools were established shopkeepers. The involvement of teachers in rural trade was a long-standing coping strategy. In a study in Zaka (southern Zimbabwe in mid 1980s), teachers were observed to be active participants in rural trade (Leys 1986, 267). The community tolerated trading by the teachers but raised concerns when the trading impinged on their teaching responsibilities. At Mtanhaurwa primary school in 2006, the parents protested against a teacher who was habitually absent on sick leave and when at school always had stock of goods (for sale) commonly procured from South Africa or Botswana. Following the protest, the teacher transferred to the capital, Harare. Community protests that disrupted the teacher's income generating venture led them to take the exit strategy.

8.0 Cross border trading

Teachers in both Shumba and Maotsa were involved in cross border trade. Cross-border trading was easier and accessible as civil servants got visas at Republic of South Africa entry ports on the production of pay advice slips - courtesy of an arrangement between the Zimbabwean and South African governments. Such cross border activities resulted in increased absenteeism from duty by the teachers. At all of the eight schools surveyed, there was at least one teacher absent during term time due to active involvement in cross border trade. A few teachers worked for brief periods in neighbouring countries and on return trip would import goods for resale in Zimbabwe. In Maotsa, the short-term trips to South Africa were more common. Due to close proximity to South Africa, a teacher at Mukwasi indicated she "could leave for South Africa after Friday classes and travel to the border town of Musina, procure goods and be back in class by the following Monday".

At Mukwasi primary school, the teachers had developed a system of covering for those absent on trading sojourns. Colleagues took turns attending classes of teachers absent due to cross-border trade. In turn, the migrant teacher took orders from fellow teachers and delivered goods at cost price. If the trip abroad was prolonged, free gifts were then given to the school head and colleagues who would have taken over teaching during the teacher's absence. Despite being active participants in informal cross border trade, civil servants remained present in the formal sector. Teachers used their workplaces as trading posts for imported goods and public sector employment gained them access to foreign countries. A teacher from Mushipe quipped, "I still remain in employment for the salary advice slip that gives me easy access to South Africa". Therefore, a symbiotic relationship between the formal and informal economies emerged. In

responding to decline in the value of public sector salaries, civil servants simultaneously employed engagement and disengagement strategies.

9.0 Farming to augment income

Civil servants also benefited from the land reform programme as many acquired land in the government-acquired farms. In Maotsa, the civil servants got favourable treatment and were allocated land near their workplaces. The perennial strikes by civil servants also guaranteed the teachers adequate time to attend to their farming enterprises. Farming became a lucrative venture for a few teachers with links to the central bureaucracy who benefited from the government-funded new farmer input support scheme. The civil servants (turned farmers) typically used their relationships and status in the community to access the government subsidized farm inputs.

In Maotsa, the civil servants were initially excluded from the farm input schemes on the basis that they were salaried employees. However, they were later included and given preferential treatment after using collective voice to lobby the local Chief, a teacher by profession – who argued that civil servants ought to get favourable treatment in the allocation of inputs if they were to remain in the area that provided few other income-generating opportunities. From 2004, teachers and other civil servants ‘resettled’ in Maotsa were guaranteed a share from the farmer input scheme. As noted by Bratton et al (2005, 96), civil servants being politically strategic constituency, used collective voice to benefit from ZANU-PF patronage.

Farmers participating in the agricultural inputs scheme typically used a small portion of the inputs and offloaded the remainder on the black market for high returns. Indeed it was more profitable to trade the inputs than undertake farming. For example, a teacher in Shumba received one tonne of fertilizer for the 2007 to 2008 farming season and quickly offloaded about 5 percent of the fertilizer on the black market to raise enough money to repay the full loan for the one tonne of fertilizer. Selling a further 10 percent gave a teacher an amount more than the state grain marketing utility would give them upon selling the harvest after a good farming season. Teachers (like other farmers) sold their agricultural harvest on the shadow market, only remitting a minimal amount to the state grain company to guarantee continued access to inputs. Farmers sold their produce (invariably a portion) to the state company for continued access of inputs. In one transaction, the teachers (and other farmers) through collective voice, sought to engage the state to access farm inputs as patronage benefits and disengage the state when marketing produce. This finding was consistent with the observation by Chazan (1988, 134) that the state is often treated as “both oppressor and ally”.

10.0 Providing private lessons for a fee

From 2004, teachers witnessed accelerated erosion of their incomes due to the rising inflation. To cope with reduced income, teachers (who were central government employees) demanded that parents augment their low salaries. Teachers also offered private lessons for a fee - a strategy that benefited learners directly. This practice was at the instigation of both parents and teachers. A parent initiated the extra lessons when the learner was perceived to be performing poorly or was in a class taking a public examination. The need for extra lessons also arose when pupils missed classes due to teachers’ absences because of industrial actions. Teachers organized extra lessons held during the school holidays. However, in 2007 for the first time since 2000, Serima secondary failed to offer the traditional holiday classes due to food shortages.

Teachers offering private lessons charged different rates depending on their experience, expertise, level taught and subjects concerned. Teachers increasingly demanded payment in foreign currency or commodities (mostly grocery items, grain, or chickens) as a cushion against inflation. Indeed, many teachers refused payment in Zimbabwe currency as it lost value too quickly. The commercialization of teachers' skills posed an ethical and accountability dilemmas. Parents often accused teachers of not doing enough during official times in order to create a ready market for their paid services. However, the practice could be viewed as progression in the teaching field as what transpired in the medical field where professionals from the public sector were free to undertake locum duties in the private sector. The response by the teachers was typical of suffer-manage approach (Azarya & Chazan 1998), meant to increase their income and simultaneously covering the teachers against the effects of inflation whilst maintaining their presence in the profession. When the income-generating strategies failed to address their needs, teachers left the civil service to join the informal sector or migrated to neighbouring countries. The individual direct actions by parents to access individualized tutorship were complemented by the teachers' internal public exit strategies as they engaged in the informal economy.

In Maotsa, the practice where learners contributed towards an allowance for the teachers was well established at two schools. No schools had such a practice in Shumba. At Kanongovere primary school, when the teachers went on strike in September 2007, a grade seven teacher did not join and continued teaching. From interviews with the teacher, his main motivation to continue teaching despite countrywide industrial action was to have his school maintain a lead position in grade seven results in the circuit of fourteen schools. The teacher also entertained the ideal of joining a private school - a career adjustment dependent on a record of outstanding learners' results. In appreciation of the teacher's unwavering commitment to duty, parents of the seventh grade learners contributed individually an amount that was in total worth three months of the teacher's gross salary. At Serima secondary school, the allowances for teachers were factored into the school fees and each teacher received their portion at the beginning of each term. As a result, since the introduction of allowances in 2006, the teachers at Serima secondary school did not participate in the nationally organized industrial actions. In both Kanongovere and Serima cases, the teacher's individual interests undermined their desire to contribute to collective voice by taking part in nationally organized work stoppages.

The co-financing of teachers' salaries was achieved despite lack of a public policy framework to support it. Indeed, the Public Service Commission, the employer of all civil servants, prohibited teachers from receiving any emoluments without its written consent. The 'double dipping' by teachers blurred their reporting responsibilities and obligations to the principal employer and the community. The communities that gave teachers additional allowances effectively became subsidiary employers exerting demands on the teachers and were quick to punish for any perceived transgression than the remote, central government employer. The teachers however, resisted being accountable to the community alleging the process was subject to abuse.

The teachers' unions also encountered a dilemma; though they concurred that the extra payments were a practical strategy of keeping teachers alive and in the profession, such payments weakened the unions' ability to exercise collective voice through organizing industrial actions in quest for improvements of salary and conditions of service at a national scale. Therefore tension grew between individual teacher's

interests and the collective union interests. The strategy where teachers received extra allowances from the community could not be enduring as the rural communities were not immune to the effects of the economic implosion and the communities' ability to afford extra payments was also being constantly compromised. In an interview in October 2007, a Zimbabwe Teacher Association representative aptly summed up the situation of members of her union, "there is no teacher in Zimbabwe surviving on salary alone. They are all involved in income-generating activities to survive. Some strategies are legal whilst others are extra-legal". Teachers occasionally exacted gifts from the community in the form of grain, vegetables and milk. They purchased goods from the community at concessionary prices as a token of appreciation for their services and recognition of the low salaries they earned.

11.0 Direct action: Producing the services

Teachers also resorted to direct action – producing the goods and services that the state and the students could no longer provide. Teachers demonstrated an amazing level of ingenuity in substituting and improvising learning and teaching materials. In Maotsa, teachers commonly used relief food containers as chart material. However, after the 2005 general elections, police in Gutu arrested some teachers for allegedly using election posters as substitute for charts well after the elections⁵. Faced with a collapsing education system and insignificant support from central government, the teachers also adopted classroom based coping strategies. A small proportion of the parents could not supply the required number of exercise books on time. In that event, the teachers in cooperation with the school development committee changed the rules. The teachers responded to the shortage of stationery by allowing the poor learners to use one exercise book for more than one subject. However, the solution provided only temporary relief as such learners required exercise books at more regular intervals as they filled quickly.

In some desperate situations, teachers permitted pupils to use scrap paper for exercises and assignments. The problem with the use of scrap paper was that the learner could not collate the loose sheets for further reference and study. In 2007, a third grade teacher at Tsatse primary school recorded the most desperate in-class coping strategy adopted in response to shortage of stationery. The learner in that class had to use the classroom floor as chalkboard to do daily exercises. Since chalk was also scarce, the learner used charcoal. In 2007, schools in Shumba experienced an acute shortage of examination material. For the end of term examinations at Tsatse primary and secondary schools, the teachers had to write the tests on the chalkboard - a laborious task given the limited number of chalkboards. The efforts of the teachers in this regard had only partial success as diagrams for technical subjects at secondary level that were difficult to represent on chalkboard were simply left out. Teachers were improvising to offer a service that neither the government nor community could provide.

12.0 Preserve coping: Pilfering school provisions

Occasionally teachers appropriated food donations meant for learners. In Maotsa, teachers partook in lunches donated for learners by an international humanitarian organization. Teachers at all three primary schools benefiting from the feeding programme invariably got some 'leftovers' for supper. Two guards, one stationed at Mukwasi primary school and another at Mushipe primary school revealed that the donor agents had emphasized that the guards' principal terms of reference included guarding against thefts by teachers and a team of women hired to prepare the food - the two parties suspected of pilfering food provisions. Across the two areas, teachers adopted perverse strategies when they found themselves without

material such as chalk, dusters, pens, and record books some teachers responded by using their own resources to procure the stationery. However, it was not a sustainable strategy, as teachers usually lacked sufficient resources to meet the basic materials for instruction. Whenever teachers demanded reimbursements from the parents it was late in coming and parents did not appreciate the generosity of the teachers and suspected them of having used school funds. Both parties invariably felt cheated undermining the potential collaborative efforts in other areas.

Following a general election in March 2008 whose outcome was contested, the main political parties (Zimbabwe African National Union - Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) and the two factions of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC)) signed a global political agreement on 15 September 2008. The agreement was consummated with the establishment a government of national unity on 13 February 2009 signaling the end of the crisis. The coalition government decommissioned the Zimbabwe dollar and embraced a multiple currency regime immediately arresting inflation that declined dramatically to a rate of -7.7 percent by December 2009 (RBZ 2011). Public services including education are being reconstituted gradually. The reflections on the crisis period could provide lessons of experience in the post-crisis reconstruction of Zimbabwe.

13.0 Conclusion

The study substantiates existing theory on traditional coping strategies of voice and exit and augments it through the addition of asset-broadening by teachers who moonlight and improvise teaching and learning materials. Some moonlighting had adverse effects on teachers' discharge of duties. Some became cross-border traders, hawkers and provided extra lessons for a fee. Teachers also engaged in informal trading (legal and extra-legal) ranging from the sale of stationery to trading in foreign currencies at the illegal parallel market. Teachers remained largely present in the sector due to their entrepreneurial activities that enabled them to supplement their meager public sector incomes. However, some of the perverse coping strategies such as moonlighting and appropriation of provisions might be habit-forming and resultantly difficult to eradicate in the post-crisis recovery phase.

In cooperation with local community, teachers constitute the last line of defence in education as they continue to invent new ways of producing public services that the state is unwilling or unable to provide. Therefore, investment in empowering communities and teachers could act as a bulwark against state decline and its negative effects. The economies of the two rural areas under study (which were agricultural based) influenced the asset broadening coping strategies that teachers adopted. Future studies could determine if teachers in urban and mining settlements cope differently to augment their salaries. It could also be worthwhile to establish how learners cope with the decline of services.

Notes

1. This paper draws from a doctoral research that examined adjustments, adaptations, and evolving coping strategies of rural communities, to 'state failure' in the provision of education and health services in Zimbabwe between 2000 and 2007.
2. In December 1997, over 50,000 surviving war veterans received from the state a gratuity of Z\$50,000 (US\$4500) and a subsequent monthly pension of Z\$200 thereafter (Muzondidya 2009; Kanyenze 2003, 68).
3. Interview with Programme Officer- Department of Social Welfare on 19 May 2008 at Harare.

4. Up to 2005, the government through the Central Statistical Office released inflation figures of preceding month by the end of the first week of each month. Thereafter, there were delays in the release of inflation figures and by end of 2007 figures were released three months late.
5. Interview with Progressive Teachers' Union of Zimbabwe national coordinator (29 May 2008).

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