



MINISTRY OF SKILLS AUDIT AND DEVELOPMENT

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION REPORT Towards

*“An Improved Skills Development Ecosystem for
Social and Economic Transformation.”*

2024



FOREWORD

The world over, the demand for skilled labour is rapidly evolving driven by technological advancements, labour market dynamics, and shifts in economic landscapes. Zimbabwe has not been spared and the need to align our workforce capabilities with these global trends is more pressing than ever. Despite Zimbabwe having a high literacy rate, the nation still grapples with significant



*Hon. Professor Paul Mavima (MP)
Ministry of Skills Audit and Development*

critical skills shortages in key sectors such as Engineering and Technology, Health Sciences, Mining, and Agriculture. There is an urgent need for reskilling and upskilling to keep pace with global trends such as the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), climate change adaptation, and emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, and Drone Technology, among others.

The skills shortage points to a mismatch between what is produced by skills training institutions and skills required by industry and commerce. It also points towards possible redundancy of some of the available skills and the need to develop the new needed skills for both the present and the future. Therefore, it becomes imperative to align the educational and training systems with industry skills needs to ensure employability and economic productivity. Across all sectors, there is a strong need to embrace a new paradigm in skills development which promotes employability, lifelong learning, skills transfers, and enhances socio-economic transformation while mitigating the effects of climate change.

As the Ministry responsible for leading the country's skills revolution, we are committed to implementing the recommendations outlined in this Report. We will pursue key policy recommendations and action plans which include among other things the establishment of a National Skills Council, conducting regular skills audits and the implementation of the Triple Helix Model of Innovation. The transformed skills development ecosystem should be anchored on social dialogue and close collaboration between Government, industry, and academia to address skills gaps, the growing mismatch between skills that training institutions are producing, and the skills that the industry desperately needs. My Ministry also recognizes the crucial role of rural industrialization and indigenous knowledge systems in skills development and the necessity to decentralize skills training in the spirit of devolution, **'leaving no one and no place behind'** in Zimbabwe's developmental journey.

In conclusion, my Ministry remains largely ready for engagement with all stakeholders, development partners, people with disabilities, and religious denominations and counts upon the able guidance of His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Comrade Dr. E. D. Mnangagwa in championing the much-needed skills revolution in Zimbabwe.



Honourable Professor Paul Mavima (MP)
MINISTER OF SKILLS AUDIT AND DEVELOPMENT

PREFACE

It is with great pride and a deep sense of duty that I present this National Skills Assessment Stakeholders Consultation Report, a culmination of the decisive action to comprehensively assess and understand the skills landscape in Zimbabwe. As we strive towards the realization of our National Vision, to attain an upper middle-income economy that provides a high quality of life to all its citizens by 2030, we must create a highly skilled and competitive workforce that is adaptable to the evolving skills demands for industry and commerce.



*Ambassador R. M. Chitiga
Secretary for Skills Audit and Development*

This report is a product of extensive stakeholder engagements and consultations across multiple socioeconomic sectors, underscoring our collective commitment to address the critical skills gaps impeding our socio-economic transformation. The findings of this report reveal a pressing need for a paradigm shift in our approach to skills development. The skills shortages and an overemphasis on theoretical education at the expense of practical and experiential learning have contributed to a persistent mismatch between industry skills demands and workforce capabilities. Furthermore, the ongoing skills flight has exacerbated these challenges, making it imperative that we develop robust strategies for skills retention and capacity building. As we advance towards the attainment of Vision 2030, we must commit wholeheartedly to build a workforce that is not only skilled but also resilient and adaptable.

The recommendations presented in this Report are clear and actionable, including the establishment of a National Skills Council, the modernization of Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) institutions, the promotion of industry-academia dialogue and collaboration, and the expansion of rural industrialization initiatives.

These strategic interventions will not only bridge the skills gap but also foster innovation, technological adoption, and sustainable development. Furthermore, addressing the critical issue of skills migration is imperative to retain our talent and fully harness our human capital's potential.

The Ministry of Skills Audit and Development remains steadfast in its commitment to spearheading a skills revolution, ensuring that Zimbabwe's human capital development aligns with our national aspirations and priorities. This Report serves as a blueprint for all stakeholders including Government, Academia, Industry and Commerce; and Civil Society Organizations to work collaboratively towards building a resilient and competitive workforce that will drive our national developmental agenda.

On behalf of the Ministry of Skills Audit and Development, I extend my sincere gratitude to all stakeholders who contributed their invaluable insights and expertise during the consultation process. Your dedication, passion, and drive to ignite a skills revolution are commendable. Together, we will continue to build Zimbabwe brick by brick, skill by skill, creating a vibrant, skilled, and competitive economy.



Ambassador R. M. Chitiga
SECRETARY FOR SKILLS AUDIT AND DEVELOPMENT

ACRONYMS

AfCFTA	Africa Continental Free Trade Area
AI	Artificial Intelligence
BUSE	Bindura University of Science Education
CAATS	Computer-Assisted Audit Techniques
CALA	Continuous Learning and Assessment
CMED	Central Mechanical Equipment Department
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CUT	Chinhoyi University of Technology
ECD	Early Childhood Development
FBO	Faith-Based Organizations
GZU	Great Zimbabwe University
HEXCO	Higher Education Examinations Council
ICT	Information Communication Technologies
IECMS	Integrated Electronic Case Management System
IoT	Internet of Things
IPMZ	Institute of People Management Zimbabwe
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JSC	Judicial Service Commission
JTIZ	Judicial Training Institute of Zimbabwe
MDAs	Ministries, Departments, Agencies
MoHCC	Ministry of Health and Child Care
MoHTEISTD	Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development
MoLAFWCRD	Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water, Climate and Rural Development
MoPSE	Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
MoPSLSW	Ministry of Public Service, Labour, and Social Welfare

MoWACSMED	Ministry of Women's Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development
MoYEDVT	Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Development and Vocational Training
MSU	Midlands State University
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PSC	Public Service Commission
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SRF	Skills Retention Fund
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education Training
UN	United Nations
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NRZ	National Railways of Zimbabwe
NUST	National University of Science and Technology
PEDP	Provincial Economic Development Plan
VTCs	Vocational Training Centers
WTO	World Trade Organization
ZEC	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission
ZERA	Zimbabwe Electricity Regulatory Authority
ZETDC	Zimbabwe Electricity Distribution and Transmission Company
ZHRC	Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission
ZIDA	Zimbabwe Investment and Development Agency
ZIMCHE	Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education
ZIMDEF	Zimbabwe Manpower Development Fund
ZOU	Zimbabwe Open University
ZPCS	Zimbabwe Prisons and Correctional Services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This National Skills Assessment Stakeholders Consultation Report gives a detailed overview of the national skills landscape and provides the human capital framework towards inclusive socio-economic transformation. Informed by Vision 2030, the national report highlights the urgency of aligning the skills development ecosystem with national aspirations, focusing on fostering innovation, modern industrialization, adoption of emerging technologies, and sustainable development.

National Skills Landscape and Challenges

Despite a literacy rate exceeding 90%, Zimbabwe faces a critical skills shortage across many socio-economic sectors. The 2018 National Critical Skills Audit revealed deficits of 93.57% in Engineering and Technology, 95% in Health Sciences, and 88% in Agriculture. This skills deficit is exacerbated by a mismatch between skills development and the needs of industry and commerce. Skills development across the public and private sectors needs to be in sync with technological advancement in industry and commerce. Furthermore, both the public and private sectors find it difficult to keep skilled and experienced workers as they cannot match the salaries and conditions of service offered in the region and globally. Skills flight has further deepened this gap, with Zimbabwe becoming a training ground for external markets.

Overemphasis on theoretical training at the expense of practical and experiential training has also aggravated the skills situation in the country. Additionally, the market bemoans the death of soft skills such as leadership, problem-solving, strategic and critical thinking, negotiation, and communication skills, among others. Emerging global trends, such as

the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR) and climate change mitigation, necessitate reskilling and upskilling to meet contemporary skills demands. However, insufficient educational infrastructure, old and outdated policy frameworks, low investment in vocational and technical education, and societal over-recognition of certificates undermine efforts to create a skills-oriented workforce. Rural communities have limited access to learning opportunities, facilities, and resources.

Sectoral Skills Insights:

Agriculture: The sector employs 67% of Zimbabwe's rural population but suffers from an 88% skills deficit. Stakeholders emphasized integrating ICT and smart agricultural technologies into training, alongside short courses on vaccinology, crop protection and pathology, veterinary (animal disease control), and soil science.

Mining: The sector contributes 13% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and its growth is hindered by a lack of practical training in modern mining technologies and the prevalence of artisanal mining. There is a need to resuscitate foundries, the iron and steel industry, and tool-making industries while focusing on automation and sustainability.

Tourism and Hospitality: With a vision to generate USD5 billion by the year 2025, stakeholders urged improved customer care training, the rebranding of Zimbabwe as the prime tourist destination in the region, and the teaching of foreign languages to ease communication with international tourists.

Health and Childcare: A staggering 95% skills deficit undermines healthcare delivery, and this is worsened by the emigration of health

professionals to regional and international destinations. Enhanced skills retention packages, improved working conditions, and attractive remuneration were proposed to bridge this gap.

Energy: The shift to renewable energy demands skills in solar energy systems, grid integration, and energy modeling. Stakeholders advocated for Diaspora engagement for skills transfer and the designation of emerging trades.

Education and Youth Empowerment: While Education 5.0 aims to foster modern industrialization and innovation, inadequate industry-academia collaboration and curricula misalignment with market needs impede relevant skills development in Zimbabwe. Vocational and Technical Training Centers, particularly for women and youths, require retooling to meet evolving skills demands.

Recommendations

To address these challenges, stakeholders proposed the following:

- Establishment of a National Skills Council for strategic skills development planning and coordination.
- Conducting regular skills audits to identify gaps.
- Enhancing collaboration between academia and industry.
- Frequent curriculum reviews to keep pace with emerging technologies and skills.
- Investment in rural industrialization, indigenous knowledge systems, and decentralization of skills training facilities.
- Promotion of a mindset shift from certificate orientation to skills competencies.

The Ministry of Skills Audit and Development, in line with His Excellency President Dr. E.D. Mnangagwa's Vision 2030 of achieving an Inclusive Upper Middle-Income Society, is spearheading a Skills Revolution and creating a competitive and innovative workforce capable of realizing the national developmental aspirations. Attaining Vision 2030 requires a unified and inclusive approach to human capital development and ensuring that 'no one and no place is left behind' in the pursuit of skills and competencies that will give us optimal national productivity.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

.....	i
ACRONYMS	vi
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	viii
1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	14
1.1 OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS ...	16
1.2 Specific Objectives of Stakeholders' Consultations were to:.....	18
2.0 OVERVIEW OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT LANDSCAPE IN ZIMBABWE ..	18
3.0 CURRENT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTIONS IN ZIMBABWE	21
4.0 SECTORAL SKILLS ANALYSIS	22
4.1 The Agricultural Sector.....	22
4.2 The Mining Sector	25
4.3 Tourism and Hospitality Industry	27
4.4 Industry and Commerce	299
4.5 Health and Child Care	311
4.6 Energy and Power Development	333
4.7 Youth Empowerment.....	344
4.8 Transport and Infrastructure	344
4.9 Women Empowerment and SME Development	355
4.10 Media.....	355
4.11 Justice, Legal, and Parliamentary Affairs	366
4.12 Sports, Recreation, Culture and Heritage	377
4.13 Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and People with Disabilities (PWDs).....	388
4.14 Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology.....	40
5.0 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES IN ZIMBABWE	41

5.1	Continuous Professional Development Programs	41
5.2	Lack of Current Information on Available Skills and Gaps	411
5.3	Overemphasis on theory without enough experiential learning..	42
5.4	Outdated Tools, Equipment and Training Infrastructure	42
5.5	Lack of Standardization of Training Programs	43
5.6	Lack of Skills Retention	44
5.7	High Cost of Skills Development	44
5.8	Skills Development for ‘O’ Level School Leavers	45
5.9	Entrepreneurship Development	45
5.10	The Match between Scholarship Programs and National Skills Requirements.....	46
5.11	Learning Facilities in Rural Areas	46
5.12	Delivery of Soft Skills	46
5.14	Innovation-Driven Industrialization	48
5.15	Policy Coherence	48
6.0	RECOMMENDATIONS (POLICY AND PRACTICAL ACTIONS NEEDED) .	48
7.0	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ARCHITECTURE..	51
8.0	CONCLUSION	52
	ANNEXURE	54

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Human Capital Development is the engine for social and economic transformation. It is the human resources of any nation, rather than its physical capital and material resources, that ultimately determine the character and pace of its economic and social development. All nations that have transitioned from low-income to high-income status in the past have done so premised on a deliberate focus on skills development. Zimbabwe cannot be an exception. It is with this in mind that His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Comrade Dr. E. D. Mnangagwa, created the Ministry of Skills Audit and Development on 23rd September 2023.

The Ministry's mandate, which cuts across all socioeconomic sectors, is to carry out comprehensive skills audits, develop strategic plans for skills development, promote entrepreneurial skills to create jobs, adopt and adapt to emerging technologies, and increase workforce employability and productivity. The establishment of the Ministry of Skills Audit and Development demonstrates a great commitment by the Zimbabwean Government to embrace a new paradigm in skills development which promotes employability, lifelong learning, skills transfer and enhances socioeconomic transformation while mitigating the effects of climate change.

The transition to an empowered upper-middle-income economy requires attaining a per capita income of over US\$5000.00 up from a 2018 baseline of US\$1440.00. This goal can only be achieved if it is underpinned by a successful skills revolution. As the situation stands, Zimbabwe is one of the countries with the highest literacy rates in Africa, yet, according to the 2018 National Critical Skills

Audit, the skill level stands at only 38%. This undermines the developmental trajectory of the country. Zimbabwe requires critical technical skills and other fundamental soft skills to be industrially competitive. Across all sectors, there is a need to inculcate mindsets and attitudes that are innovative, and entrepreneurial and embrace problem-solving and critical-thinking orientations.

The 2018 National Critical Skills Audit Report revealed that Zimbabwe has a skills shortage of about 62%, with wider shortages in Engineering and Technology (93.57%) and Natural and Applied Sciences (96.91%). There is also a skills deficit of 88% in Agriculture, a 95% deficit in Medical and Health Sciences, and an 18% deficit in Applied Arts and Humanities. The transition towards a Green Economy at a global scale, especially in the energy sector, and adapting to the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR) and its associated disruptive technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, necessitates reskilling, upskilling, and development of completely new skills and competencies. Business and Commerce is the only sector with a skills surplus of 21%.

Despite the country having a huge unemployed population of young and educated people, there are acute skills shortages. Out of an estimated 5.4 million youths in Zimbabwe, approximately 3.2 million are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). The skills shortage points to a mismatch between what is produced by skills training institutions and what the industry requires. It also points towards possible redundancy of some of the available skills and the need to develop the needed new skills for both the present and the future.

The call by the 2nd Republic for an inclusive development that ‘leaves no one and no place behind’ has seen Zimbabwe adopting a Devolution Policy as well as

policies to promote rural economic development and industrialization. This aims to increase industrial activities at provincial and district levels. Such economic activity at the sub-national level necessitates taking stock of the skills and competencies available in all the provinces and districts of Zimbabwe and seeing how these can be exploited to meet the goals of the Provincial Economic Development Plans (PEDPs). The production of these subnational development plans requires special skills at the provincial and district levels of Government. These skills need to be developed and /or honed so that competent plans may be produced.

The mass exodus of skilled personnel from Zimbabwe in the last two decades has also created a skills gap, which needs to be filled through a skills revolution that includes skills retention programs, identifying critical skills in short supply, and developing programs to fill these gaps.

1.1 OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

The Ministry of Skills Audit and Development recognizes that skills audit and development are at the intersection of multiple policy fields, including education and innovation, labour market, industry, trade and investment, environment, migration, devolution, and rural industrialization, to mention just a few. Therefore, there is a need for strong coordination and stakeholder dialogue with Government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), as well as Non-Governmental Stakeholders, including employers, employees, industry associations, trade unions, teachers, training providers, career guidance providers, student unions and informal sector players.

It is only through stakeholder engagement and dialogue that the Ministry can effectively generate, disseminate, and use high-quality skills intelligence to support employers, citizens, education and skill training providers, and other stakeholders in making informed decisions and choices on human capital development.

To that end, the Ministry of Skills Audit and Development undertook broad and inclusive stakeholder engagement workshops to enlighten all stakeholders on the Ministry's mandate, consult and identify their skills needs, and lobby for stakeholders' buy-in and cooperation to the fulfilments of its mandate, programs, and plans. The consultations were also meant to provide the Ministry with baseline information on the skills landscape across all sectors. The consultations provided an opportunity for industry, social partners, and other stakeholders to reflect on changing technology, emerging skills, and the need to anticipate the skills for the future. The Ministry also sought to facilitate linkages, partnerships, and investments in skills audit and development. The first phase of the stakeholder engagement exercise was at the national level with MDAs and their associated organizations, faith-based organizations, Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). A total of twenty-nine (29) consultations were held, and over 1,000 participants attended the consultative sessions. Participants were drawn from the following cluster organizations:

- Government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), including sub-national structures and local authorities.
- Training institutions, both public and private.
- Industry and Commerce as well as Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) associations.

- Workers' unions.
- National Employment Councils (NECs).
- Informal Sector Associations/Organisations.
- Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs).
- Civil Society Organizations and the Media Fraternity.

A list of participants is attached as **Annexure**.

1.2 Specific Objectives of Stakeholders' Consultations were to:

- To enlighten stakeholders on the mandate of the Ministry.
- To have an appreciation of the national skills landscape in Zimbabwe.
- To identify the current skills development initiatives and the challenges being faced thereof.
- To identify skills gaps and forecast skills for the future.
- To solicit suggestions on what could be done to address the skills gaps in various socioeconomic sectors.
- To explore opportunities for possible partnerships in skills development for enhanced delivery of the Ministry's mandate.

2.0 OVERVIEW OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT LANDSCAPE IN ZIMBABWE

The skills development architecture in Zimbabwe is complex and comprises various players. The primary players are the training institutions including Primary and Secondary Schools, Technical and Vocational Centres, Polytechnic Colleges, Universities, Nurse Training Schools run by the Ministry of Health and Childcare, Agricultural Colleges run by the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, and Rural Development, Hospitality Industry schools that fall under the Ministry of Tourism and Hospitality Industry, the School of Mines and the Public Service

Academy which falls under the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare. Government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) are involved in in-house human capital development. In addition to these MDAs, the Private Sector, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), the Informal Sector, and Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) are also participants in skills development processes, programs, and activities.

Stakeholders underscored that Zimbabwe requires nothing short of a skills revolution aimed at resetting skills training institutions, prospective employers, and job seekers from a certificate-oriented mentality towards skills and competency-based mindset catapulted with an attitude to create their jobs. Skills development plans should start with clearly defining the national ambition within Vision 2030 and beyond, re-aligning skills development efforts to these national ambitions and the global economy.

Currently, there is limited modern infrastructure at technical and vocational training institutions, polytechnic colleges, and universities to match international standards for contemporary skills training. The industry is also using traditional methods of production, which are time-consuming and labor-intensive, hence less productive. New employees are not getting enough skills from the industry. The curriculum is not being frequently reviewed to keep pace with ever-changing industrial and commercial skills demands, emerging new technologies, and ensuring that graduates/learners are ready/fit for the industry.

The high rate at which Zimbabwe`s higher and tertiary learning institutions are churning out graduates has created a surplus in some sectors of the economy, such as the commerce and teaching disciplines. Due to the economic downturn

from the effects of imposed economic sanctions on Zimbabwe and other related factors, the industry's absorptive capacity for graduates from learning institutions has not kept pace with the rate at which graduates are being produced. This has resulted in some graduates migrating in search of greener pastures abroad. As such, the current skills development efforts in Zimbabwe do not fully benefit the nation but other countries. Zimbabwe is therefore becoming a skills training ground and hub for skills search from organizations in Africa and beyond. It is, therefore, critical that graduates have the capacity and ability to create their own jobs through the acquisition of a blend of soft and entrepreneurial skills.

Stakeholders highlighted that addressing the skills development challenges requires concerted efforts to realign educational training programs with the evolving demands of the local and global economy. Efforts should be made to make Zimbabwe an innovation and industrialization hub and a skills destination for the region and beyond. Industry players raised the need for tailor-made programs and mentorship programs for graduates. This will ensure that learners gain both theoretical and experiential training by having the right industrial attachments and internships. Strengthening of on-the-job training was highlighted as of primary importance in enhancing the employability and productivity of graduates. Industry and academia need to collaborate and craft ways to critically evaluate the efficacy of internship and attachment programs. Industrial attachment should be standardized across identical professions and programs.

3.0 CURRENT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTIONS IN ZIMBABWE

The Zimbabwean economy invests significantly in skills development through the following Government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), among others;

- Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE)
- Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development (MoHTEISTD)
- Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water, Climate and Rural Development (MoLAFWCRD)
- Ministry of Women's Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (MoWACSMED)
- Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare (MoPSLSW)
- Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Development and Vocational Training (MoYEDVT)
- Ministry of Health and Child Care (MoHCC).
- Public Service Commission (PSC)
- Zimbabwe Manpower Development Fund (ZIMDEF)
- National Manpower Advisory Council (NAMACO)
- Universities, Polytechnic Colleges, Teachers Colleges, and Vocational Training Centres (VTCs)
- Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs)
- State Enterprises Apprenticeship Schemes, such as those for National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ), Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA), and TelOne.
- Private sector through apprenticeship and graduate trainee programmes

In addition, the informal sector skills development efforts at places such as Siyaso in Mbare (Harare), Makokoba (Bulawayo), Gazaland in Highfields (Harare), Glen View Furniture Complex in (Harare), and the entrepreneurial skills development by faith-based organizations have led to the growth of the SMEs sector. Skills in the informal sector are not fully captured in skills development statistics for the country. In addition, there are barriers to trade testing for those without formal schooling, particularly those without General Certificate of Education (GCE) Ordinary Level passes.

4.0 SECTORAL SKILLS ANALYSIS

4.1 The Agricultural Sector

As stated in the National Development Strategy 1 (NDS 1), the agricultural sector is responsible for feeding the nation and providing livelihoods to 67% of the country's population in rural areas and is also vital for job creation, recovery, and growth of the economy. The Agriculture, Food Systems, and Rural Transformation Strategy (AFSRTS) was adopted in 2023 to create a USD 13.75 billion agricultural industry by 2025. The thrust of agriculture, under Vision 2030, is to create a self-sufficient and food-surplus economy that will see the re-emergence of Zimbabwe as the 'Bread Basket' of Southern Africa. However, NDS 1 notes that one of the major factors driving food insecurity in the country includes, among others, the low skills and knowledge base of farmers. This is supported by the 2018 National Critical Skills Audit, which indicated that critical skills in agriculture from the country's universities and agricultural colleges are below the national requirement towards Vision 2030 and are below Organization

for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) member countries` levels, with an average deficit of 88%.

During the stakeholders' consultations, it emerged that most graduates in the agricultural value chain are not competent in ICT and emerging smart agriculture technologies. This is exacerbated by the fact that agricultural colleges in Zimbabwe are not adequately equipped in terms of technological advancements. The machines being used are outdated and do not provide opportunities for cutting-edge skills development. However, Kushinga Phikhelela Polytechnic College and Gwebi Agricultural College have been reported to possess modern equipment like center pivots to support skills development in irrigation development.

The rest of the agricultural colleges in Zimbabwe do not incorporate cutting-edge equipment and tools such as drones, remote sensing, and center pivots for skills development. The lack of appropriate training materials results in graduates completing their studies without experiential training and being conversant with modern farming technology.

Stakeholders in the agricultural sector also highlighted the need to intensify short courses for farmers as well as specialized training in vaccinology and vaccine production, artificial insemination, genome editing, crop protection, plant pathology, grafting and budding, groundwater surveying, soil science, textile production, leather production, oils expression, environmental impact assessment, feasibility studies, negotiation and conflict management (including transboundary conflict management) systems thinking and stakeholder management.

Stakeholders noted current initiatives to address skills challenges in the sector. These include the Zimbabwe Online Agricultural College and the Agricultural Education for Development 5.0 (AE4D 5.0). This is a curriculum adopted in 2021 to respond to the needs of the economy by providing learners in agricultural colleges with skills, knowledge, and competencies relevant to the demands of the agricultural labour market. The Horticulture Sector Skills Strategy (2022-2025) and Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification (Fruits and Vegetables Value Chain) are among the current efforts to promote skills development in the sector. The Horticulture Skills Strategy facilitates the integration of skills development into horticulture value chains, ensuring that the supply of skills is tailored not only to meet the skills demands of the fruit and vegetable value chain but also to drive the necessary growth in productivity, which when sustained, will produce decent employment in the sector. The sector urgently needs targeted training programmes to address the existing gaps.

SKILLS GAP CONT'

9. The skills gap in technology cannot go unnoticed e.g. the use of drones and aeroplane spraying.

- Traditional methods are time consuming, labour intensive
- Need to embrace the new ways
- Need to be innovative and adaptive



Figure 1: Slide from a presentation by NEC Agriculture during consultations

4.2 The Mining Sector

The mining sector in Zimbabwe is a critical driver of the national economy, contributing over 60% of export receipts, more than 50% of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), and approximately 13% of GDP. As the Government works towards achieving Vision 2030, the sector is poised to play a central role with significant growth projections, particularly in gold, platinum group metals (PGMs), and lithium. However, the sector has a substantial skills gap that threatens the sustainability and competitiveness of its operations. This gap, especially in science-related fields such as mining engineering, metallurgy, and mineral processing, hampers the sector's ability to harness the potential of the country's vast mineral resources.

Zimbabwe's mining industry is undergoing a transformation, driven by global shifts toward technological advancement, automation, digitalization, and sustainability in operations. As these trends reshape the global mining landscape, there is a growing demand for a workforce equipped with new skills to manage and implement these changes. The development of human capital, particularly in modern mining technologies and sustainable practices is crucial. Current educational and training programs are not sufficiently aligned with the industry's evolving needs. Specialized training programs are urgently required to equip the workforce with the competencies needed to thrive in a modern, sustainable mining environment.

The sector primarily relies on local universities and polytechnics for skilled personnel. The Zimbabwe School of Mines provides training in mining engineering. Additionally, both state enterprises and private mining companies offer apprenticeships. A major challenge identified by stakeholders was the lack of practical training in some colleges that are not in partnership with mines. Students could graduate without ever having been to a mine. Colleges lack equipment that can simulate a mining operation in ways that could enhance students' hands-on training.

Stakeholders in the mining sector made a clarion call for the resuscitation of the foundry and toolmaking industries, emphasizing that these two industries are the backbone of manufacturing industries. It was, however, noted that the resuscitation of the industries and training in these two fields should be based on modern digital technology to compete favourably with imports from countries like China. Similar modernization was also recommended for related fields such as robotic welding, where manual welders were said to be unable to work in

modern industrial setups such as the Manhize Steel Plant. The Stakeholders also noted with concern the absence of ready industries to absorb graduates from certain fields such as cutting and polishing of minerals. As a result, these fields end up failing to continue training. Learning foreign languages such as Chinese was also highlighted as important given the need for effective skills and technological transfer from China and other non-English speaking countries.



Figure 2: Manhize steel plant (Disco Steel)

4.3 Tourism and Hospitality Industry

Vision 2030 for the tourism sector is to make Zimbabwe a leading global competitive tourist destination of choice while also facilitating domestic tourism. Vast tourism attractions, ranging from natural to man-made historical sites, offer opportunities for investment in areas such as hotels/lodges and catering, safari and tour operations, gaming, hunting concessions, conferencing and conventions,

and the production of wildlife documentaries. Investment in these areas can only be successful if supported by skills development in the same areas.

Under the National Tourism Recovery and Growth Strategy, the Government expects to increase tourism earnings to US\$5 billion by 2025. However, Zimbabwe's tourism and hospitality industry has been severely hit with skills shortages, a development that is threatening the growth of the sector. The Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA) recognizes the serious skills shortage that is affecting the industry, which depends entirely on the excellence of service.

Most universities and colleges offer tourism and hospitality programs, however, not all of them have relationships with the industry to provide practical experience to students. The private sector also offers training in the different skills required for the sector. The Higher Education Examinations Council (HEXCO) undertakes trade testing for waiters and cooks. Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (Zim Parks) also offers training in wildlife management. In addition, the country benefits from Tourism and Hospitality Scholarships offered by cooperating partners, such as the World Bank and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

Stakeholders in the tourism sector called for the resuscitation of the Zim Host type of training initiative. It was noted that the initiative was crucial for the development of skills such as grooming, etiquette, deportment, and customer care. These soft skills are key to creating the best customer experience for tourists and can contribute positively to national branding. Stakeholders also noted with concern the slow pace at which trades were being designated in the sector, with only two trades (cook/chef and waiter) designated to date. Other

trades, such as housekeeping, tour guiding, master chef, and bartending, are not gazetted, which, makes skills development more difficult. Training in foreign languages was also identified as key for the sector.



Figure 3: Stakeholders from the Tourism and Hospitality sector during the consultative workshop

4.4 Industry and Commerce

Consultations in this sector involved participants from the Engineering, Iron, and Steel Industry, Food and Beverages Manufacturing Industry, Motor and Automobiles Industry, Dairy Processing, and Funeral Services Industry, among others. The overarching call from this sector was to rebuild self-confidence in the people of Zimbabwe and to inculcate innovativeness and entrepreneurship. The sector also called for industry involvement in training, the provision of modern learning facilities and laboratories for scientific research, as well as training programs that are industry integrated.

Engineering, Iron, and Steel industry

The Engineering, Iron, and Steel industry highlighted that it is facing a critical skills shortage, with a staggering 93.57% deficit reported in the 2018 National Critical Skills Audit. This shortage is largely due to the exodus of skilled workers seeking better opportunities abroad, leaving companies reliant on unskilled employees. The shift towards technology-focused roles has further compounded the issue, as many current workers lack the training to operate modern machinery. Consequently, this skills gap has led to increased operational costs, decreased productivity, and missed growth opportunities. Our industry needs to quickly move to embrace modern technologies in line with the global 4IR trends as well as ensure that human capital is equipped with the new skills to operate in the changing landscape. Otherwise, Zimbabwe will miss the bus on global competitiveness.

Motor and Automobile Industry

Stakeholders from the motor and automobile industry lamented the decline or loss of motor companies such as Willowvale Motor Industries, Dahmer, and Zambezi Coaches, among others. However, the industry views the possible transition from fuel to electric vehicles as an opportunity to leapfrog the industry into its former glory. This entails upskilling and reskilling most of the workers in this sector. The sector employs 10,000 workers, with 60% of them in fuel retail (service stations). Most of the machinery used in the industry is outdated, and for the personnel to be able to use modern equipment, they need to be reskilled or trained in new motor industry technologies. Zimbabwe needs to prepare human capital that fully appreciates the fast-changing motor industry and can participate competently in the revival of this industry.

Funeral Services Industry

The funeral services sector is training morticians, undertakers, and consultants through collaboration with international partners and central hospitals. Other generic business skills are also offered, such as customer care, general business management, inspections on infrastructure in the sector for quality control and assurance, job evaluation of the sector, and skills audits, among others.

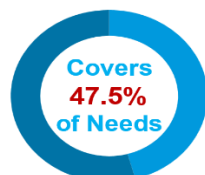
4.5 Health and Child Care

The health of a nation is one of the most important factors influencing socioeconomic development, and the quality of medical and health sector skills plays a pivotal role in the performance of a nation's healthcare system. The 2018 National Critical Skills Audit reported that there was an overall 95% skills shortage in the medical and health sector in Zimbabwe. Universities in Zimbabwe, such as the University of Zimbabwe, the National University of Science and Technology (NUST), Great Zimbabwe University (GZU), and Midlands State University (MSU), have medical schools and bioscience studies. For the training to be effective, stakeholders highlighted the need to fully equip the laboratories and teaching hospitals with the latest equipment. Central hospitals and church hospitals carry out training for General and state-certified nurses, medical laboratory technicians, physiotherapists, and radiology assistants. A major challenge identified was low remuneration, which has led to skills flight. This resulted in a shortage of tutors and the country training for other markets without benefiting from the investment. A presentation by the Ministry of Health and Child Care summarised the current demand and supply of health workers in Zimbabwe as shown below:

SUMMARY OF SUPPLY VS NEED FOR HEALTH WORKERS

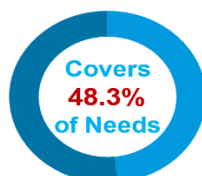
CURRENT SUPPLY

There are currently 52,103 health workers (including CHWs) across 64 occupations.



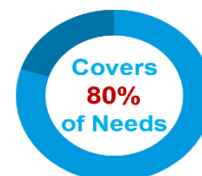
ANTICIPATED SUPPLY BY 2030

With the current level of training, by 2030, the stock would likely be 60,041



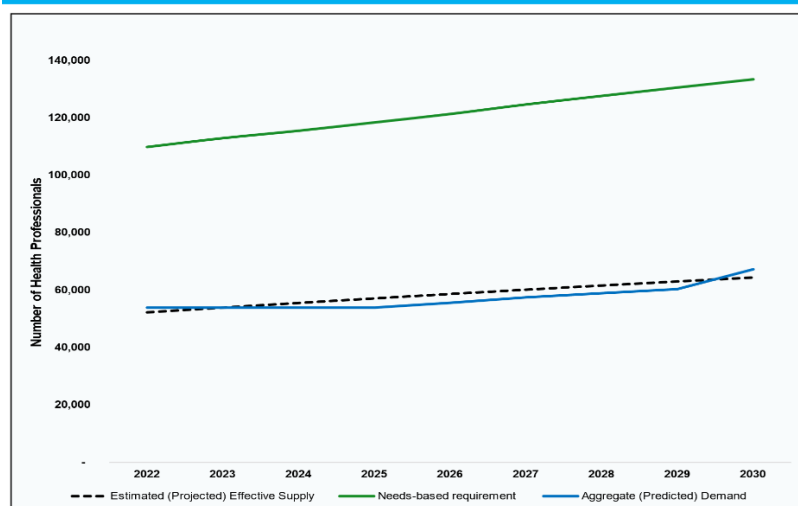
NEED-BASED REQUIREMENTS

Additional 68,822 health workers are needed to address the disease burden and support the attainment of 80% UHC from the current 55%.



But there is a critical question: Are the current health workers working at optimal productivity?³³

NEED VS DEMAND AND SUPPLY OF HEALTH WORKERS



Future Scenarios:

- The current supply is highly linked to employers' ability to absorb (demand) **but not meet the need (47.5%)**
- At the current rate of attrition, the supply will meet **only 48.3% of needs** by 2030
- If Attrition is **reduced by 50%**, the supply will meet **53% of needs** by 2030
- If **training is expanded by 50%** and **attrition reduced by 50%**, **62% of needs will be met by 2030**

Figure 4: The summary of the current demand and supply of health workers in Zimbabwe

It was highlighted that the outward migration of health workers is one of the major challenges affecting the health sector, and measures for skills retention are critical in closing the skills gap.

4.6 Energy and Power Development

The energy sector is at the epicentre of the green transition and a key enabler for socioeconomic development. In response to technological, climatic, regulatory, and economic factors, investment in renewable energy is increasing. The National Energy Policy 2012 calls for the promotion of energy efficiency and the uptake of renewable energy technologies. The Renewable Energy Policy 2019 targets 1100 Megawatts (MW) by 2025 and 2100MW by 2030 for renewable energy. This transition necessitates the reskilling and upskilling of workers in the energy sector.

This sector relies on universities and vocational and technical training centres for skills development. In addition, in-house training programs are used to enhance skills. The ZESA Training Centre is involved in in-house skills development. The sector has suffered from skills flight, with most engineers leaving for greener pastures in United Arab Emirates (UAE), Australia, and Canada, among others.

During the consultations, stakeholders called for upskilling in areas such as petroleum energy development, contract engineering and project financing negotiation, solar systems development and installation, electric vehicle technology development, gas and oil exploration and extraction, grid integration, energy storage, boiler-making, energy modelling, and simulation, among others. The sector highlighted that skills development in these emerging occupations was being limited by the slow pace of designating these trades despite the submissions by the industry. The energy sector expressed keen interest in diaspora engagement and diaspora skills profiling for possible skills transfer.

4.7 Youth Empowerment

Out of an estimated 5.4 million youths in Zimbabwe, an estimated total of 3.2 million are not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). This has increased drug and substance abuse. Seventy-one percent of young people who sit for GCE Ordinary Level Examinations do not achieve five Ordinary level passes. This limits their chances of employment or training. The Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Development, and Vocational Training offers skills development at its forty-five Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) Centres and twenty-five satellite centres. Training is in technical and vocational skills like sewing and embroidery, poultry and piggery farming, welding and metal fabrication, plumbing and furniture making, and carpentry. The training centres are poorly resourced in terms of trainers and equipment. Most of the youths, especially women, benefit from pieces of training by NGOs and churches. The informal and private sectors also play a major role in skills development. Unfortunately, most of this training is not certified. The TVET centres under the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Development, and Vocational Training are in urgent need of retooling and modernization. The Ministry does not benefit from the manpower development funds that the industry contributes. Since TVET centres cater to the skills that are needed at the lowest levels in the production value chain, they potentially have the highest impact on transforming the nation and stimulating rural economic growth and industrialization.

4.8 Transport and Infrastructure

This sector relies on universities and polytechnic colleges for skilled personnel. Air Zimbabwe and the National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ) offer specialized training for artisans, aircraft engineers, and other related trades. The private sector and state enterprises, such as the Central Mechanical Equipment

Department (CMED), also offer training for motor mechanics, and drivers and for handling yellow equipment used for road rehabilitation and construction. The sector reported a shortage of artisans, with the ratio between engineers and artisans skewed in favour of engineers. The country also partners with regional and international maritime institutions, such as the World Maritime University (Sweden), the International Maritime Law Institute (Malta), and the Arab Academy (Egypt), to develop skills in the sector.

4.9 Women Empowerment and SME Development

Several organizations under the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, and Small and Medium Enterprises Development are involved in skills development programs. In addition to the Ministry's training centres, the sector relies on universities, polytechnic colleges, and the informal sector for skills development. NGOs offer training in gender issues as well as reproductive health and rights. There are several online learning platforms on gender mainstreaming and gender strategy development. Development partners, especially United Nations (UN) agencies, also offer a variety of training programmes. The Ministry also works with NGOs that provide communities with entrepreneurial, project management, and business management skills.

4.10 Media

Most media professionals are trained at universities and polytechnic colleges. However, many media organizations have in-house training and graduate trainee programs. With the advent of social media, new online publications have emerged, and new occupations have developed, including content creators, influencers, bloggers, and many others. This makes it difficult to set and monitor standards in the sector. Contemporary skills are needed to revitalize and

rejuvenate the industry with the incorporation of emerging technologies for journalism, communication and publicity, and information management.

4.11 Justice, Legal, and Parliamentary Affairs



Figure 5: Participants from the Justice, Legal, and Parliamentary Affairs sector during a consultative workshop

The sector reported considerable skills development around digitalization. The adoption and implementation of the Integrated Electronic Case Management System (IECMS) and supporting training programs provide a case study for other sectors. The sector is dependent on higher and tertiary learning institutions for skills development. In addition, the Judicial Training Institute of Zimbabwe (JTIZ) produces magistrates and court workers. In-house training is also a major part of skills development in the sector.

4.12 Sports, Recreation, Culture and Heritage



Figure 6: Participants from the Sports, Arts, and Recreation sector during a consultative workshop

Stakeholders from the sector underscored that there is an acute shortage of sports educators, leading to the absence of sports training from Early Childhood Development (ECD) through to high school. Teachers who are trained in this area are not prioritized in ongoing new teacher recruitment because most schools do not offer this learning area due to a lack of sporting facilities. There are no Government-sponsored schools for sports, arts, culture and heritage studies in Zimbabwe; however, there are several independent colleges for music and the arts. This compromises effective skills development and the growth of the creative arts, culture and sports in the country. Stakeholders noted that this resulted in a lack of professionalism in the industry and the proliferation of producers, managers, promoters, and content creators for social media without quality control. Universities such as Chinhoyi University of Technology (CUT) offer

a Museum Management Degree, while Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU) and Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE) offer Sports Education Degrees.

4.13 Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and People with Disabilities (PWDs)

Faith-based organisations make a significant investment in skills development. These include building schools, universities, colleges, vocational and technical skills training centres, civic education, and entrepreneurial skills. In addition, they train workers in the sector, including priests and preachers. Some of them run hospitals and are involved in training nurses and ancillary workers.

Civil Society Organisations make a significant investment in skills development. They offer skills development in almost all sectors. The majority specialize in rural development skills such as smallholder farmers' training, projects and cooperatives management, business management, civil leadership, counseling, life skills, leadership development, and technical and vocational skills training. The sector comprises mostly women and young people in rural areas. Graduates receive in-house certificates of attendance rather than competency-based certificates.

People with disabilities highlighted exclusion as the major challenge in accessing skills development and called upon the Government to pay particular attention to the special needs of people with disabilities in all programmes and initiatives. Children with disabilities and children with parents with disabilities face immense challenges in accessing education as the educational system, including the teachers and lecturers, is often not disability friendly. Language barriers due to lack of training in sign language at conventional schools as well as visual

impairment were highlighted as major barriers in acquiring education and skills for people with disabilities.



Figure 7: Consultative workshop with people with disabilities

The disability community cited the need to train and orient teachers/skills trainers to be disability friendly. They also acknowledged the existence of skills development institutions for people with disability like the Danhiko Project. However, they highlighted that these institutions need to be modernized to be accessible to people with disabilities through the construction of convenient ramps, the installation of elevators, and other related infrastructure. The training programs for people with disabilities also need to be reviewed and upgraded to meet their needs and those of the labour market. In sports, the absence of modern equipment was cited as a major obstacle. People with disabilities called for continuous ‘direct engagement’ with the Government on issues that relate to their skills development and the challenges they face in acquiring skills.

4.14 Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology

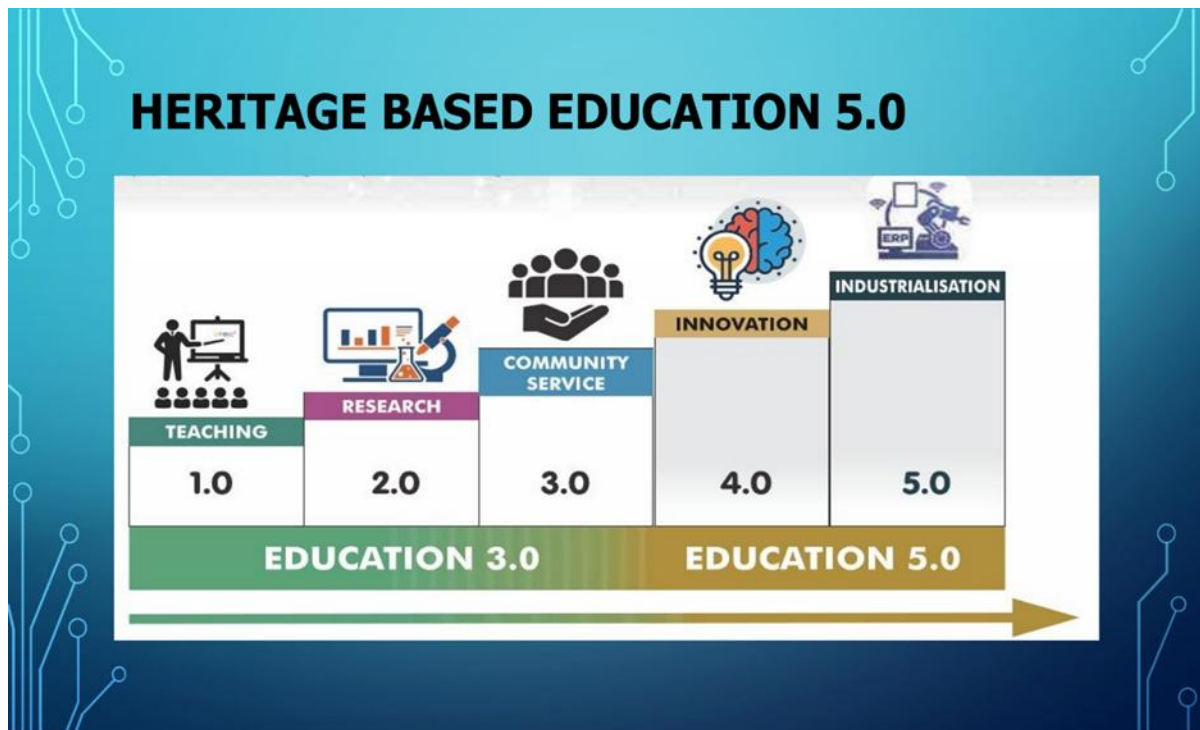


Figure 8: Concepts behind the Heritage Based Education 5.0

The thrust for this sector is to respond to Vision 2030 aspirations through Heritage-based Education 5.0. Heritage-Based Education is made up of 5 mandates: Teaching, Research, Community Engagement, Innovation, and Industrialization. This is aimed at producing graduates/learners with skills that can provide homegrown solutions to local real-life problems using the country's own physical and financial resources. Stakeholders in the sector, particularly the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE), pointed out that for a study program to be introduced at higher and tertiary learning institutions, it must be demanded by industry and commerce. Captains of industry and commerce are consulted before a study programme is approved. However, the sector bemoaned the little support they get from industry and commerce in human capital development. The Triple Helix Model (Government, Academia, and Industry) was

identified as the best framework for ensuring that training responds to the needs of industry and society. The model ensures close interactions between universities, industries, commerce, and Government to promote skills development dialogue and ensure that higher and tertiary learning institutions produce graduates/learners fit for industry, commerce, and society. This close cooperation should also generate needed resources for research and development from industry and tertiary institutions.

5.0 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES IN ZIMBABWE

5.1 Continuous Professional Development Programs

There is no systematic continuous training, reskilling, and upskilling requirements for the workforce in both the public and private sectors. In the case of human capital educators, this results in them teaching students outdated modules/course outlines. The general view of continuous education and training is the perpetual acquisition of additional academic degrees without regard for attaining the relevant competencies. This needs to be reoriented to the development of cutting-edge skills and competencies.

5.2 Lack of Current Information on Available Skills and Gaps

The last National Critical Skills Audit was conducted in 2018. Although other sectors have conducted their own sectoral skills audits for internal use, there has not been a comprehensive national skills audit. A comprehensive skills audit would enable skills training institutions to plan skills development in response to the needs of the labour market. The next skills audit planned by the Ministry of Skills Audit and Development should be widely communicated so that skills development efforts respond to the gaps identified. This will avoid the continuous production of graduates who cannot be absorbed in the private and

public sectors. It would also help in identifying skills that are obsolete and desist from further enrolments and training in those areas.

5.3 Overemphasis on theory without enough experiential learning

Education at all levels apart from the polytechnics, technical and vocational training centres is largely theoretical. There is very little practical or experimental learning at secondary school and university levels. The universities require that students take a year of industrial attachment so they gain practical skills. Captains of industry and commerce reported that they were overwhelmed by requests for industrial attachments and could not absorb all the prospective applicants. It was also reported that there was minimal follow-up of the attaches by the sending institutions. The assumption that all the managers in the public service and industry have the skills to mentor and supervise attaches is not always correct. Without proper guidelines for the skills revolution to take effect. es and procedures for apprenticeship/internship, the quality of skills training derived from attachments is compromised. It was underscored that most of the current lecturers have never worked in the industry therefore, they rely mostly on theory. To exacerbate the situation, the levels of cooperation between universities, VTCs, and industry is very low. Industry sponsorship of study programs has also been very low; hence, this cooperation is essential for the skills revolution to take effect. Therefore, there is a need for the rationalization of available resources (e.g., ZIMDEF) to support the effective acquisition of skills and competencies by trainees from TVET Centres and Polytechnic Colleges.

5.4 Outdated Tools, Equipment and Training Infrastructure

Equipment in most of the training colleges is outdated. It has been difficult to keep up with technological changes due to the economic downturn and imposed economic sanctions on Zimbabwe. Training equipment is considered capital

equipment in the preparation of the budget. Funding for capital equipment has not been readily available in the last twenty years. Outdated equipment also compromises innovation and research and development. Consequently, graduates or learners will be exposed to the machinery they are supposed to operate for the first time when they join the industry. In some instances, the equipment is outdated and no longer in sync with emerging technologies. Government intervention is needed to modernize equipment and facilities on a phased approach. A Public Private Partnership approach can result in the complete overhaul of targeted TVET centres and Polytechnic colleges, starting with a few that will be distributed across the country.

5.5 Lack of Standardization of Training Programs

Skills development is offered by Government, private, and informal sector institutions. While efforts have been made to standardize training programmes through the National Qualifications Framework, there still is a need to ensure the implementation of a common and standard curriculum for the different skill sets offered by these different institutions. Also, all the skills training institutions should be registered under the respective Government Ministries or by the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development. Trade testing does not extend to all the institutions that offer training. As a result, there are many skilled persons without trade certificates, qualified but not certified. Thus, there is a need for follow-up to ensure the standardized curriculum is being implemented and that all institutions are registered and monitored for standards. Avenues for trade testing need to be opened so that skilled people may be certified.

5.6 Lack of Skills Retention

All sectors of the economy have suffered from skills flight due to the economic downturn and the inability of the economy to pay salaries comparable to other countries in the region and globally. As a result, most sectors are unable to retain staff, resulting in continuous recruitment and training. The country has become a training ground for other countries without benefiting from the human capital investment. There is a need for a robust programme for the retention of critical skills. Alternatively, it will be essential to develop a skills flight management programme to ensure the nation benefits from labour emigration. In the case of teachers, the Government of Zimbabwe signed an agreement with the Government of Rwanda to send teachers. In other cases, the skills flight is not organized through the Government but by private means. The current skills retention strategies are not comprehensive and leave out several critical workers with a temptation to leave for greener pastures. As a result of skills flight, many MDAs have several vacant posts. It was reported that there is excessive multitasking of staff members as they have to undertake other jobs for which they are not formally trained to do. There is no institution or facility which recognizes and monitors skilled labour migration out of and into the country. There is a lack of skills data and a Labour Market Information System (LMIS). This situation requires rectification through programmes of the Government.

5.7 High Cost of Skills Development

Due to the high cost of human capital development, private sector organizations are no longer investing in graduate trainee programs and apprenticeships at the same rate as before. Additionally, the industry is also recovering from serious economic challenges in the past two decades, and its focus has been more on basic survival. National Employment Councils (NECs) reported that there was

insufficient Government contribution to skills development despite the contributions that companies make to the Government. A review of the sources and application of these funds would assist in ensuring skills development is supported adequately.

5.8 Skills Development for ‘O’ Level School Leavers

School leavers who do not get the required five Ordinary Level Passes struggle to access skills training. They often must resort to private sector institutions that charge high fees. Given that some of the students who sit for GCE Ordinary Level do not get the five Ordinary Level passes, the current system leaves most of them behind. The requirement for five ‘O’ Level passes has also not been proven to be necessary for technical and vocational skills training. An approach that allows people without 5 “O” levels access to hands-on training through TVET institutions will address the quandary of 70% of “O” level school leavers who fail to get the requisite passes to proceed to tertiary institutions. The development of technical high schools is a possibility that the country should pursue to offer learners an early entry into the TVET pathway.

5.9 Entrepreneurship Development

The current inability of the economy to absorb job seekers requires that entrepreneurship be taught in schools from an early age. While a competence-based curriculum (now Heritage Based Curriculum) emphasizing these skills has been in place since 2015, the efficacy of its implementation has not been comprehensively assessed. There is a need to create a mindset that, upon completion, students will create jobs as opposed to being employed. Currently, there is not enough training in entrepreneurship and financial literacy among many school leavers.

5.10 The Match between Scholarship Programs and National Skills Requirements

Zimbabwe benefits from scholarships offered by friendly countries as well as Development Partners. In addition, the Government offers scholarships for study in different disciplines to countries around the world. A recent study by the Ministry of Skills Audit and Development revealed that the scholarships are mostly supply-driven and not related to the country's strategic needs/skills demands. Recipients of scholarships are not required to sign a bonding agreement requiring them to come back and work in the country for a specified period. Comprehensive recommendations have been made for improving the running of the scholarship programmes.

5.11 Learning Facilities in Rural Areas

Internet data has remained unaffordable, making it difficult, especially for rural youth and women, to access free online learning platforms. There are no libraries or community learning centres that can be used by rural communities for skills development. Where these learning centres exist, they need revamping and modernization. This is an area that can be addressed through the effective implementation of the nonformal education programme under the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education.

5.12 Delivery of Soft Skills

Although Zimbabweans may be technically and vocationally skilled, they lack soft skills that enable workers to operate effectively in any environment. These include effective communication skills, planning and management, leadership, critical thinking, strategic planning, negotiation, and client service. These skills are not part of the curriculum in many academic programs. A lack of soft skills

undermines the employability and effectiveness of the workforce. A massive programme needs to be developed for such skills and a positive overall national mindset.

5.13 Mismatch between Graduates' Skills and Industry Needs

Before any course is approved by the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE), colleges must seek input from the related industry in the development of the curriculum. Industry, however, bemoaned that after these initial consultations, there were no platforms for regular dialogue between the academe and industry. Such platforms would update academia on current industry trends, resulting in the academe continuously adapting the curriculum to new developments. For example, it was noted that universities were only starting to include Artificial Intelligence as a course, years after many countries had developed programs. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, no study programs dealing with pandemics had been introduced among the universities that participated in the consultations. Despite the discovery of lithium, none of the universities has started a program on the lithium value chain, resulting in the country continuing to export raw lithium and import lithium batteries. The same scenario applies to oil and gas value chains in line with potential developments in Muzarabani.

The slow pace at which institutions adapt to the changing environment and opportunities was a matter of concern for participants in the consultations. Manufacturing inefficiency is deepened by old technology and the absence of new skills in the manufacturing value chain.

5.14 Innovation-Driven Industrialization

There is not enough research and development leading to innovations that would stimulate new industries. As a result, the country continues to rely on imported goods while exporting raw materials. Reliance on an unskilled workforce leads to a decline in industry, product, or service competitiveness. Some of the industries currently affected by the skills challenge include the leather and leather allied industry, cotton to textile industry, iron and steel industry, etc.

5.15 Policy Coherence

There are as many skills development policies as there are skills development institutions. This leads to a lack of coherence, coordination, and policy consistency. There is, therefore, the need for a comprehensive skills development policy for the country.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS (POLICY AND PRACTICAL ACTIONS NEEDED)

The stakeholders recommended the following to the Ministry of Skills Audit and Development;

- There is a need to plan beyond 2030 and identify the country's strategic direction and ambition, ensuring alignment and skills development to achieve these national ambitions.
- Create a robust system for identifying skills gaps and future workforce needs.
- Facilitate the development of a national skills development plan and policy; this should stimulate the development of provincial and sectoral plans.
- Lead in the development of a national policy on the retention of skills in both the private and public sectors, which includes succession planning, continuous professional development, and skills transfer from the Diaspora Community.
- Develop a database and system to monitor labour/skills migration.

- Identify ways to speed up curriculum review to facilitate continuous adaptation to fast-changing technology.
- Organize skills expos and innovation fairs to showcase skills and talents in the country and work towards their development.
- Develop a bonding system for scholarship recipients.
- Facilitate increased collaboration between trainers and industry to address the widening gap between theory and practice.
- Conduct a review of the attachment programs and their effectiveness in skill development.
- Spearhead a multi-sectoral system and process of skills forecasting.
- Create a central database of training institutions and courses in Zimbabwe.
- Undertake regular comprehensive skills audits to identify skills gaps in the country and each sector.
- Facilitate continuous in-service training through the Public Service Academy (PSA).
- Design a Diaspora Engagement Program, Skills Transfer Policy, and Database to harness skills in the Diaspora. This should cover labour migration agreements.
- Facilitate stakeholder engagement programs to ensure coordination in line with the Whole-of-Government transformation initiatives.
- Foster international collaborations with exemplary countries in the area of skills development and skills transfer.
- Embark on a nationwide mindset transformation initiative covering national pride, skills orientation, productivity, transformative entrepreneurship, rural industrialization, and manifestation of Vision 2030.
- Advocate for robust induction and orientation programs in the public sector.

- Active involvement by the Ministry of Skills Audit and Development in curriculum reviews and development at all levels ~ Early Childhood Development (ECD), primary and secondary education, higher and tertiary education, polytechnic education, technical and vocational education.
- Engage training institutions for tailor-made programs that address the skills gaps and supply of skills in critical value chains.
- Promote apprenticeships, internships, and on-the-job training opportunities by providing incentives to industry and commerce.
- Fast-track the implementation of technical skills pathways in the new education curriculum.
- Create a National Skills Council that brings together key stakeholders including the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE), Zimbabwe Schools Examinations Council (ZIMSEC), National Manpower Advisory Council (NAMACO), and Scholarship Departments, to collaborate in curriculum development, implementing the national qualification framework and harmonization of standards and course modules.
- Identify priority skills for the achievement of Vision 2030 and National Development Strategy (NDS) 1 and 2. Identify centres of excellence for their development.
- Introduce skills-based recruitment and trade testing for all occupations
- Review the Manpower Development Fund and its coverage in terms of national skills development.
- Widen trade testing to the informal sector and rural communities.
- Encourage workplace-based skills development by investing in employee training and development while fostering a culture of continuous and lifelong learning.

- Develop comprehensive career guidance programs starting from an early age to help individuals make informed choices about their education and career paths.
- Undertake a robust digital skills development programme targeting skills and competencies that put Zimbabwe at the cutting edge of 4IR and provide Zimbabweans with opportunities for remote employment with international corporations.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ARCHITECTURE

The following recommendations pertain to the overall skills development architecture in Zimbabwe;

- Link academic and public research institutions to ensure research and learning outcomes that address the needs of the various socioeconomic sectors.
- Utilize redundant buildings for skills development, such as unutilized community halls, closed public beer halls, and libraries.
- Develop staff retention strategies with a priority on establishing and enhancing the Skills Retention Fund (SRF).
- Retool and modernize infrastructure in all colleges, universities, and vocational training centres. The provision of funds for tools of trade to learning institutions should be a top priority.
- Facilitate the updating of trades to take into account new trades across all sectors of the economy, for example, new trades in the tourism and hospitality industry, mining, and agriculture. This will require reviews of occupations by the National Employment Councils (NECs).
- Review and streamline remuneration packages and conditions of work for employees to enhance staff morale and retention in the public sector.

- Introduce career mapping and progression plans for technical staff in different sectors to avoid losing them to managerial positions.
- Provide incentives to industry and commerce to support innovation hubs in learning institutions.
- Advocate for well-designed and customized Continuous Professional Development Programs (CPDPs) for both the public and private sectors.
- Support rural communities, particularly Growth Points, with skills for rural industrialization and entrepreneurship.
- Review professional registers to accommodate emerging professionals recognized in other jurisdictions.
- Facilitate or advocate for the reskilling and upskilling of educators/skills trainers. This can be enhanced through regular industry-academia collaborations.
- Recognize informally acquired skills as part of prior learning and merits for enrolment at skills training institutions like VTCs.

8.0 CONCLUSION

Despite huge investment in education and training, Zimbabwe is yet to produce the right mix of both technical and soft skills to drive the social economic transformation envisaged under Vision 2030. This calls for urgent re-engineering of the fragmented skills development ecosystem. The transformed skills development ecosystem should be anchored on social dialogue and close collaboration between government, industry, and training institutions to address the growing mismatch between the skills that training institutions are producing and the skills that the industry desperately needs.

The Ministry of Skills Audit and Development is grateful to the people of Zimbabwe for the spirit in which they participated in the stakeholder consultations. It was refreshing to witness a people so frank about current skills development challenges but upbeat about Zimbabwe's potential for transformation. The Government of Zimbabwe has already started to implement the recommendations emanating from the consultations and will continue to do so in the spirit of building our country brick by brick and skill upon skill. The Ministry remains ready for engagement with all progressive partners and counts upon the able guidance of His Excellency, the President, Dr. E.D. Mnangagwa, in championing the much-needed skills revolution in Zimbabwe.

ANNEXURE

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS FOR THE NATIONAL SKILLS ASSESSMENT STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTATION WORKSHOPS

#	Date	Invited Government Ministries & Stakeholders	No. Of Participants
1.	Feb 12, 2024	Ministry of Land, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water & Rural Development -Farmers Association, Grain Producers Association, Horticultural Associations, Agricultural Research Institutions, Parastatals and Pig Industry Board & other related institutions	56
2.	Feb 13, 2024	Ministry of Industry and Commerce -Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries (CZI), Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce (ZNCC), Business Council of Zimbabwe (BCZ), Private Sector	50
3.	Feb 14, 2024	Ministry of Mines and Mining Development -Chamber of Mines, Artisanal MINERS Associations, Women Miners' Associations and related organizations	50
4.	Feb 15, 2024	Ministry of Tourism and Hospitality Industry -Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA), Hoteliers and related associations/institutions	40
5.	Feb 16, 2014	Ministry of Women Affairs, Community and Small and Medium Enterprises Development -Chamber of SME, Women Associations and Cooperatives	40
6.	Feb 26, 2024	Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development -Universities, Polytechnic Colleges and Teacher Training Colleges	44
7.	Feb 28, 2024	Ministry of Public Service, Labour, and Social Welfare -National Employment Councils (NECs)	40
8.	Feb 29, 2024	Ministry of Public Service, Labour, and Social Welfare -National Employment Councils (NECs)	40
9.	Mar 01, 2024	Ministry of Public Service, Labour, and Social Welfare -Trade Unions and Trusts.	22

10.	Mar 04, 2024	Ministry of Public Service, Labour, and Social Welfare -Private Employment Agencies	28
11	Mar 05, 2024	Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development -Farmers Association, Grain Producers Associations, Horticultural Associations, Agricultural Research Institutions, Parastatals and other related institutions	40
12	Mar 07, 2024	Ministry of Youth, Empowerment Development and Vocational Training -National Youth Council (NYC), Youth Organizations, Youth Training Centers, Vocational and Technical Training Centres and related organizations	37
13	Mar 11, 2024	Ministry of Health and Child Care -Zimbabwe Nurses Association (ZNA), Medical Institutions, Zimbabwe Doctors Association (ZDA), Pharmaceuticals Association of Zimbabwe (PAZ), Hospitals and Health Related Associations	27
14	Mar 12, 2024	Ministry of Home Affairs and Cultural Heritage -Department of Immigration, Civil Registry Department, Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP), National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe and other related stakeholders	29
15	Mar 13, 2024	Ministry of Local Government and Public Works -Local Authorities, Institute of Engineers and other related stakeholders	33
16	March 14, 2024	Ministry of Energy and Power Development -Zimbabwe Energy Regulatory Authority (ZERA), Zimbabwe Electricity Transmission and Distribution Company (ZETDC), Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA) and related stakeholders	26
17	March 18, 2024	Ministry of Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services -Zimbabwe Broadcasting Holdings (ZBH), Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC), Media Houses, Zimbabwe	32

		Media Commission (ZMC), Zim Papers, Alpha Media Holdings (AMH) and other related stakeholders	
18	March 20, 2024	Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure Development -Vehicle Inspectorate Department (VID), Zimbabwe National Roads Administration (ZINARA), Central Vehicle Registry (CVR), Traffic Safety Council of Zimbabwe (TSCZ), Roads and Bridge Rehabilitation Contractors, and related stakeholders	40
19	April 3, 2024	Ministry of Environment, Climate and Wildlife -Environmental Management Agency (EMA), Forestry Commission of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (Zim Parks), Meteorological Services Department (MSD), NGOs related to the Ministry as well as other related stakeholders	32
20	April 4, 2024	Ministry of National Housing and Social Amenities -Housing Cooperatives, Property and Estate Management Agencies, Surveyor General`s Department and other related stakeholders	20
21	April 5, 2024	Ministry of Sports, Recreation, Arts and Culture -Sports and Recreation Commission (SRC), Sports Associations, National Arts Council of Zimbabwe (NAC), Zimbabwe Music Rights Association (ZIMURA), Zimbabwe College of Music (ZCM), Zimbabwe Football Association (ZIFA) and other related stakeholders	40
22	April 8, 2024	Ministry of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs -Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC), Judicial Service Commission (JSC), Deeds Office, Law Society of Zimbabwe (LSZ), Zimbabwe Prisons and Correctional Services (ZPCS), Parliament of Zimbabwe, Legal Firms, Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC), National Prosecuting Authority of Zimbabwe (NPAZ) and other related stakeholders.	40
23	April 9, 2024	Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) -Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) associated with	40

		skills development and International Development Partners (IDPs).	
24	April 10, 2024	Public Sector Unions/Organizations -Zimbabwe Confederation of Public Sector Trade Unions (ZCPSTU), Teachers Unions and related organizations.	22
25	April 11, 2024	Institute of People Management of Zimbabwe (IPMZ) -Human Resources Practitioners, Human Resources Training Organizations, Employment Agencies and related institutions.	26
26	April 12, 2024	People with Disabilities (PWDs) -All organisations representing people with disabilities.	61
27	April 15, 2024	Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) -Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC), Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), Zimbabwe Heads of Christian Denominations (ZHoCD), Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP), Zimbabwe Indigenous Interdenominational Council of Churches (ZIICC), Islamic Community in Zimbabwe (ICZ) and other religious organizations.	26
28	Sept 04, 2024	Industry-Academia Indaba -Business Member Organizations (BMOs), Captains of Industry and Commerce, Higher and Tertiary Learning Institutions, Skills Training Institutions, Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE), Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council (ZIMSEC), Development Partners (UNDP) and Government Ministries, Local Authorities, Parastatals, and Religious Organizations.	43
29	Sept 19, 2024	National Skills Assessment Validation Workshop -Participants in National and Provincial Skills Assessment Workshops.	55
		Total Number of Participants	1079

