

# Chapter 14 of the Constitution and Implementation of Devolution in Zimbabwe

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**Abstract-** This article examines the constitution driven process of devolution in Zimbabwe. With a particular focus on local governments, the paper highlights the objectives of the 2013 Constitution in revamping local governance and improving good governance. The most critical objective is the devolution of power from central government to local government, a fundamental principle of good governance which was virtually absent in a centralised system of governance. With the enactment of the 2013 Constitution, it was hoped that through local governments, public participation, peace and unity would be enhanced as well as an improvement in the equitable distribution of resources. However, the events on the ground show that since 2013, devolution is still a fallacy as evidenced by the underdevelopment and marginalisation of resource rich provinces in Zimbabwe. The paper notes that the delays in implementing devolution can be attributed to the non-alignment of local governance legislative pieces to the constitution and the lack of political will by the central government to devolve authority and resources to local governments. To expedite the devolution process, the paper concludes by suggesting the alignment of legislative pieces to the constitution and the amendment of the entire Chapter 14 under thorough public consultations and debates.

**Index Terms-** devolution, local governance, constitution, central government, good governance

## I. INTRODUCTION

The constitution is the supreme legislative instrument of a country and all laws, Acts and practices should be aligned to the constitution. According to Kersting et al. (2009), a constitution is a legislative instrument that defines, organises and distributes governance and state power. It is a higher law that manages the operations of a government's institutions, political power and the rights of the citizens in a given country. At the epicentre of local governance, as outlined in the 2013 Constitution of Zimbabwe under section 264 (2) is the issue of devolution. Devolution refers to the transfer of legislative, administrative, executive and fiscal decision making power to local governments that have a clear jurisdiction to which they provide public services (Muchadenyika, 2013). When the highest level devolves its functions, it transfers authority for decision making to the lower tiers of local government. For example,

devolution involves the transfer of responsibilities for services to local authorities that elect their own mayors and councils and raise their own revenues (World Bank, 2020).

This paper specifically examines the concept of devolution as stipulated under section 264 of the 2013 Constitution. Sub-section 2 of 264 outlines the six objectives of local government as follows; *to give powers of local governance to the people and enhance their participation in the exercise of the powers of the State and in making decisions affecting them; to promote democratic, effective, transparent, accountable and coherent government in Zimbabwe as a whole; to preserve and foster the peace, national unity and indivisibility of Zimbabwe; to recognise the right of communities to manage their own affairs and to further their development; to ensure the equitable sharing of local and national resources; and to transfer responsibilities and resources from the national government in order to establish a sound financial base for each provincial and metropolitan council and local authority.*

This paper seeks to find common ground upon which devolution as outlined in section 264 (2) can improve good local governance. It also discusses the implications of the delays in aligning local governance legislature to the 2013 Constitution. The next section provides a conceptualisation of devolution, followed by an interpretation of section 264 (2) with respect to the devolved objectives of local government in Zimbabwe.

## II. UNPACKING THE CONCEPT OF DEVOLUTION IN ZIMBABWE

Devolution refers to the transfer of power and resources by central government to local governments that have clear jurisdictions or constituencies which they provide public services to. In a devolved system, Muchadenyika (2013) explains that, the central government does not exercise full control over local governments, rather, it plays an oversight role to ensure that local governments operate within the framework of national policies. A key function of devolution is the equitable transfer of natural resources management to local communities and institutions both within and outside of government (Edmunds et

al., 2003). Therefore, devolution can be viewed as a vehicle to drive economic growth.

In the Zimbabwean context, devolution is enshrined in Chapter 14 of the 2013 Constitution. Chapter 14 devotes section 264 to the devolution of political power, decision making, distribution of resources and governance to the three tiers of government. These three tiers include; the central government, provincial and metropolitan councils and local governments. In terms of local governments, which are the main focus of this paper, these are the grassroots level institutions which are more in touch with local communities and whose functions are conferred by the central government. Local government is the nearest link between central government and local communities and acts as a conduit through which central government manages individual communities.

Local governments are composed of urban and rural councils which are led by elected officials. Some of the officials are appointed on the basis of their expertise and ability to interpret national laws and policies for the effective running of local government. In addition, local government is also composed of councillors who are elected by community members using constitutional provisions outlined in Chapter 14 section 274 (urban councils) and section 275 (rural councils). This enables local governments to identify and address the needs of local communities. The election of councillors also allows communities to access their representatives thus enabling their voices to be heard in decision making processes that impact service delivery and development of their communities. The constitution also outlines the objectives of devolution for local governments within which they will implement their functions. These are interpreted in the next section.

### III. INTERPRETATION OF CHAPTER 14 SECTION 264 (2) OF THE CONSTITUTION

As part of devolving the powers of central government to local governments, Section 264 (2) of the Constitution outlines six objectives for devolution.

The first objective, section 264 (2a), empowers local governments with the responsibility of strengthening public participation in development and democratic processes. By so doing, devolution affords members of the community with a greater voice on local governance and control of issues that affect the very essence of their lives. According to Chikerema (2013), public participation is a necessary component for community development and should be incorporated in local governance processes. Makumbe (1996) also views public participation as only meaningful if people are empowered to actively participate in various developmental and democratic processes.

As such, local governments have several platforms which can transfer powers of local governance to the people and strengthen their participation in democratic processes. For example, local government can strengthen citizen participation through participatory budgeting processes. Ganuza and Baiocchi (2019) define participatory budgeting as the process of democratic

consultations and decision making where citizens are able to decide how a local government's budget can be disbursed or allocated. In the Zimbabwean local government system, budget proposals are published in newspapers to give the public a chance to analyse and deliberate on the budget. The transfer of local governance to the public as provided for in section 264 (2a) is further reinforced by the Urban Councils Act of 2015 which includes participatory budgeting as a strategy to promote local democracy in local government. Therefore, this ensures a guided budget in a devolved system of governance as well as promoting public participation within the local government system.

Citizens can also take part in local government elections where they can express their views and choices. By selecting local leaders of their choice, citizens can freely select suitable officials to hold public office. A major advantage of this is that, leaders chosen from the local community are able to understand and articulate the needs of their community members from a grassroots perspective. In addition, locally elected leaders are in touch with their local communities on a day to day basis hence, increasing accountability and transparency of local government processes, which are provided in the second objective, section 264 2(b) which states that local governments are to 'to promote democratic, effective, transparent, accountable and coherent government in Zimbabwe as a whole'. That said, democracy is achieved when citizens are allowed to elect leaders of their choice in a free and fair environment.

Proponents of devolution such as Chigumira et al. (2019) and Fonshell (2018) argue that devolution curbs corruption and inefficiency. According to Ngigi and Busolo (2019), devolution helps to establish institutions that are more accountable and an effective system of good governance. The fact the local government in Zimbabwe is entrusted with the role of promoting public participation in local governance in the first objective 264 (2a), also means that the good governance systems that are created are bound to be more efficient and transparent. When resources are distributed to local communities, it makes it easier to manage them in an accountable and transparent manner (Chikerema, 2013).

The third objective, section 264(2c), presents the need 'to preserve and foster peace, national unity and indivisibility of Zimbabwe'. In this objective, the 2013 Constitution recognises the power of local governments in national peace and reconciliation efforts. For example, in the implementation of the Gukurahundi healing and reconciliation, local governments in the Matebeleland and Midlands provinces have been assisting central government in conducting mapping exercises to ascertain the affected communities and special needs of survivors of Gukurahundi. In addition, local governments have also facilitated dialogue between affected community members and the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) as part of the central government's plan to foster peace and unity amongst the victims of the 1980s atrocities.

This comes in the wake of the new dispensation, led by President Mnangagwa, which is eager to bring closure to the grievances of local communities and families which were affected by the

killing of civilians in the south-western parts of Zimbabwe in the 1980s. These grievances if left unresolved may lead to disunity and tribal conflicts between the aggrieved persons who were mostly of Ndebele origin, the central government and other tribes perceived to more privileged. Moreso, the devolution of power to local governments by the 2013 Constitution, will also empower marginalised communities to raise their own revenues to ensure effective service delivery.

According to Chirisa et al. (2013), Matabeleland has suffered developmental neglect stemming from the Gukurahundi atrocities which left the region marginalised and devoid of any development initiatives from the central government. Before the 2013 Constitution, local governments in the region depended on central government for financial resources and decision making which was mostly 'red taped' to stifle any development (Rwodzi, 2018). This resulted in limited authority to manage key services such as health and water provision, bureaucracy and weak local councils. Thus, the devolution objectives in the Constitution will engender peace, unity, good governance and local participation to previously marginalised communities.

The fourth objective, Section 264 (2d) assigns local governments 'to recognise the right of communities to manage their own affairs and to further their development'. Devolution strengthens local democracy by acknowledging the right for communities to make decisions on issues affecting their lives. Thus, local democracy allows local communities to make their own decisions on matters that affect them directly. In the context of local governance, democracy is then referred to as the participation of the public in decisions that affect them (Tsobanoglou, 2018). By recognising local democracy, the Constitution also strengthens people's voices and equitable access to resources through their chosen leaders.

This is followed by the fifth objective, Section 264 (2e) which speaks to the equitable distribution of local and national resources. This sub-section realises that natural resources provide immense potential for the development of local communities. As Shackleton et al. (2002) notes, natural resources, if distributed fairly, can lead to improved livelihood opportunities, revenue generation, infrastructural development and employment generation. The concept of devolution also involves the beneficiation and value addition of resources found in each district. Instead of exporting them in their raw state for further processing, value addition should occur in their places of origin in order to benefit local communities (Chigumira et al., 2019). This can also foster mutually beneficial partnerships between local communities, local governments and the central government.

Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE philosophy is evidence of the equitable distribution of local and national resources as outlined in Section 264 (2e). It is considered as one of Africa's most successful devolution projects where authority was transferred to Rural District Councils (RDCs) by the department of National Parks and Wildlife Management through the Parks and Wildlife Act Chapter [20:14] for the protection of natural resources. Devolution allowed the community to share the benefits accrued

by wild life utilisation in those lands (Biggs et al., 2019). Employment was also generated for the local people. Thus, section 264 (2) is premised on the fact that for economic development to take place, local development needs to occur first. For these reasons, proponents of devolution argue that devolution of power boosts local development and promotes efficient public service delivery by local governments.

The final objective, Section 264 (2f) is concerned with the transfer of responsibilities and resources from central government to local government. This will enable local governments to establish their own financial reserves for the efficient delivery of services. It is without doubt that local governments' ability to generate revenue also determines their success and viability. Although central government continues to have an oversight role on local governments, the degree to which local governments generate their own revenue and make decisions on how to use this revenue is a determinant of local autonomy. Hence, the transfer of powers to local governments to enable them to establish a sound financial base as enshrined in the Constitution is an important indicator of financial autonomy.

This section concludes that there is a symbiotic relationship between each objective of devolution of local governance as outlined in Section 264(2). One objective cannot function without the other and a break in the link can have a negative impact on the total devolution process. For example, if local governments are corrupt and unaccountable, it means that they cannot sustain or generate revenues for effective public service delivery to their communities. Consequently, this would cause disgruntlement amongst community members and conflict between community members, local governments and central government. Having interpreted section 264 (2), the paper proceeds to analyse the current state of devolution in Zimbabwe's local government. The next section questions how the events on the ground have complied with (or contradicted) with Section 264 (2).

#### IV. EVENTS ON THE GROUND

Whilst the 2013 Constitution has made several provisions for devolution in Zimbabwe, the events on the ground show that there are delays in implementing devolution. This delay can be attributed to lack of political will by the central government to distribute power and resources to local governments. At present, central government holds a tight grip on the management of natural resources which are a fundamental source of national revenue. Three provinces in Zimbabwe; Manicaland, Matabeleland and Midlands are heavily endowed with natural resources. Yet they are characterised by high rates of unemployment and poor infrastructure as compared to Harare province where central government is located, signalling a case where resources are extracted and processed for the benefit of other provinces.

It is therefore not surprising that during the constitutional making period (2009-2013), the three provinces, Manicaland, Matabeleland and the Midlands were at the forefront pushing for the devolution agenda (Moyo and Ncube, 2014). These provinces have immense potential of benefiting from their natural

resources, but the central government has implemented measures to retain central control by extracting the resources and shifting processing and marketing to the capital city (Moyo, 2013). As evidenced by the Marange Diamonds phenomenon, the equitable distribution of local resources as per section 264(2) is still marred by central control. The unfolding events since the discovery of the precious mineral in 2006 show that the tight grip on resource management has become a political tool against devolution in the name of compensating for resource imbalances across the country.

Maguwu (2013) argues that the Marange diamond fields have been patronised by the Zanu-PF party, showing that there is a strong link between politics and natural resources. The same people who sit on the Zimbabwe Consolidated Diamond Company (ZCDC) which is owned by the government, are members of the Zanu-PF party (Moyo, 2016), thereby compromising transparency of the resource's extraction. In 2015, Fifteen Billion Dollars (USD\$15 Billion) accrued from diamond sales was reported to be missing (GovZim, 2018). Sadly, none of these proceeds were channelled towards the development of the Marange community. To this day, Marange is characterised by dilapidated roads, clinics and its schools are in a deplorable state despite housing one of Southern Africa's diamond fields. Beneficiation and value addition which are the heart of devolution have not taken place in Marange. The same can be said of the Midlands province where the profits accrued from platinum and gold sales have not been channelled towards the social and economic development of the province. Similarly, Hwange and Kariba produce electricity for nationwide consumption, yet the schools and homes surrounding Hwange, Kariba and Binga do not have electricity. Three of the country's border posts in Matebeleland province (Kazungula, Beitbridge and Plumtree) and several tourist resort areas (Victoria Falls, Hwange National Park, Kariba dam and the Matopos) generate high foreign currency revenues which are all remitted to the state (Mhlanga, 2012). These areas remain poor and underdeveloped.

Consequently, the delays in implementing devolution spurred court cases particularly in the Matebeleland province in a bid to address the marginalisation and underdevelopment of the provinces. Two cases have been brought before the Constitutional Court (Concourt) of Zimbabwe, both compelling the state to uphold the Constitution's provisions for devolution highlighted in section 264(2). In the first court case, the Mthwakazi political outfit led by Paul Siwela, approached the Concourt in 2014 to challenge the state to take appropriate steps to expedite implementation of devolution. Siwela argued that the state had failed to implement devolution within a reasonable timeframe since the enactment of the Constitution in 2013. The resultant delays in devolution had negative impacts on the development of the Matebele region which has been marginalised since the massacre of several Matabele civilians in the 1980s. Hence, Mapuva (2015) argues that devolution could contribute to the development of the region once local government was transformed from being a creature of the statute to being a constitutional provision.

In the same year, the state was again challenged by a former Minister of Water Resources, Development and Management, Samuel Sipepa Nkomo. Nkomo challenged the state for its failure to effect the provisions of the Constitution which brought into effect devolution in Zimbabwe. Devolution would allow the government to decentralise power from Harare to other provinces including Matebeleland, to enable all local governments to set their own priorities (Moyo, 2014). Devolution would also allow central government to establish provincial councils which would encourage social and economic development of the provinces. Currently, the government is in the process of amending the constitution in Constitution Amendment Bill Number 2. This Bill proposes a number of changes in the Zimbabwean Constitution. However, due to the prevailing global Coronavirus pandemic, the Parliament has not been able to convene public consultations of this Bill, though it accepted written submissions until the 17th of April 2020.

Of interest to the process of devolution, is the establishment of Provincial and Metropolitan councils. This amendment is part of the government's initiative to cascade devolution to the local level. The amendment will see the removal of Members of Parliaments and Mayors from Provincial councils which would demarcate the legislative and national branch of governance from council business which is more concerned with resource mobilisation and allocation at the local level. This would be facilitated by the establishment of a 10 member council through a system of party list proportional representation.

Whilst these are positive steps towards the implementation of devolution, there are concerns that by creating a separate provincial chair and council body which runs alongside the city council and Mayor could result in a duplication of duties and jurisdictions and wastage of resources. Party list proportional representation could also create gaps for the political manipulation of the composition of council.

It can also be argued that the amendment is a piecemeal approach to devolution as it only targets section 272 of the Constitution. It seems that more focus on devolution has been afforded to provincial and metropolitan councils whilst neglecting local authorities. Such deliberate neglect in devolution debates leaves too much free play for central government to rescind powers and responsibilities given to local authorities as and when it sees fit. Yet, the Constitution in section 264 (2) recognises provincial, metropolitan and local authorities with equal measure. Therefore, the entire Chapter 14 should be carefully revised under thorough public consultations and debates to close such loopholes.

#### V. THE NEXUS BETWEEN DEVOLUTION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

There are several perceived benefits to be accrued if devolution is implemented properly in Zimbabwe. Chief among them is the argument that devolution can improve good local governance in Zimbabwe. Given the weaknesses of decentralisation prior to the Constitution of Zimbabwe, devolution is argued to be the most effective form of decentralisation in that authority is transferred to local institutions that are best equipped to address specific issues (Tanyanyiwa, 2015). Compared to past local governance

structures which were creatures of the statute, devolution provides a better platform to solve problems whilst taking into cognisance the local contexts and local knowledge. Thus, devolution engenders democratization, good local governance and local participation.

On the one hand, local governments must be able to articulate the needs of the people at grassroots level (Olowu, 2009). On the other hand, local governments must act as a conduit through which central government implements policies and provides public services to the people (Mapuva, 2015). Good local governance reflects this dual function of local government. Good local governance is thus connected to those institutions and processes that work to meet the needs of local people, whilst making the best use of the available resources (O'Driscoll, 2018).

According to UNDP (2009), there are eight indicators of good local governance which include; transparency, rule of law, efficiency and effectiveness, accountability, representation, participation, consensus oriented and equity. However, citizen participation is considered to be an important marker of good local governance by the European Union and the UN Habitat. Good local governance involves citizens exercising their rights through their involvement in solving local problems. That said, devolution has the capacity to promote local democracy by enhancing citizen participation in the formulation and implementation of community development initiatives. This is clearly highlighted in the objectives of devolution set out in section 264 (2) that seek to devolve power and responsibilities to local governments in order to enhance citizen participation; promote democracy; preserve peace; empower citizens to manage their own affairs and; ensure the equitable distribution of local and national resources.

Proponents of devolution such as Zinyama and Chimanikire (2019) argue that it facilitates greater transparency and accountability which are also indicators of good governance. Improved transparency and accountability leads to increased efficiency and effectiveness of public services by bringing governance to the people. Nevertheless, Olum (2014) cautions that the success of devolution depends on the establishment of conducive conditions which support the implementation of devolution. These conditions include the alignment of legislative instruments of local governance to the Constitution, financial resources, political will and the engagement and participation of relevant actors involved in local governance. It remains to be seen whether the conditions for successful implementation are in place in Zimbabwe, in view of the fact that devolution is expected to drive Zimbabwe into upper middle income status by the year 2030.

Tanyanyiwa (2015) also adds that devolution should be seen as a vehicle to drive local development through citizen participation, good governance and efficient delivery of public services. Through devolution, previously marginalised groups are included in local policy making thus increasing equity in resource distribution whilst cementing peace and unity. In addition, devolution to the lower tiers of government is further expected to

improve citizen participation in policymaking as well as improving transparency and accountability. Citizen participation also increases the sense of ownership of the process, especially where development initiatives are drawn using an informed bottom up approach.

Pro-democracy groups and other community based organisation are also pushing for the implementation of devolution (Mushamba et al., 2014). They point out that devolution of responsibilities and resources will improve the lives of ordinary people. This is premised on the argument that through devolution, local governments are more likely to implement government projects that reflect regional and local needs as they are more in touch with the people at grassroots level. Local governments are like a conduit through which the central government provides public services to communities. Thus, these pro-democracy groups believe that devolution will address the ineffective public service system which was existent prior to devolution.

Devolution is also argued to be a remedy to the personalisation of power that had dominated local governments in the last two decades (Chigwata, 2019). Devolution is a shift from the previous decentralised local government legislature such as section 4 of the Urban Councils Act of 2002 which vested most executive powers to the Minister of Local Government (Mapuva and Miti, 2019). Hence, local governments can benefit from devolution of authority and responsibilities and cease to depend on a central authority for guidance in their decision making which breeds inefficiencies. Thus, devolving responsibilities and resources is expected to improve the decision making capacities of local governments which will also produce better development outcomes.

However, other critics have mixed views on the implementation of devolution. As argued by Moyo and Ncube (2014), instead of improving good local governance, devolution can be used as a political tool to create buffer zones against opposition parties. They note that the Zanu-PF party in particular, may use devolution to create a buffer zone against the MDC party which has previously combined advocacy for devolution with criticising Zanu-PF's policies.

To foster good governance, devolution must transcend beyond local government levels down to the communities concerned. This is because, in a democratic environment, governmental powers belong to the people. If implemented properly, devolution can provide economic development to regions that were previously marginalised by centralised forms of development. Thus, devolution has the potential to address the grievances and marginalisation of provinces such as Manicaland, Matebeleland and the Midlands which have suffered from years of resource extraction without benefit to the local communities.

#### VI. IMPLICATIONS OF THE DELAYS IN HARMONIZING LEGISLATIVE INSTRUMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

It is without doubt that the delay in the alignment of various pieces of local government legislation to the Constitution has

affected the implementation of devolution. Consequently, local governments have remained as creatures of the statute, dependent on central government for decision making power and financial resources. This in turn, has had negative implications on the efficiency, effectiveness and accountability of local governance structures in Zimbabwe.

The existence of local governance legislations which do not speak to the Constitution has affected the implementation of devolution in Zimbabwe. Such legislature includes the Local Government Amendment Act of 2016 Section 157 (1), which empowers the Minister to suspend Mayors and councillors, with the final dismissal being carried out by an independent tribunal that the Minister establishes himself in Section 157 (2 a and b). At face value, this seems to reinforce Section 278 (2) of the Constitution which states that a Mayor or councillor can be removed following a trial before an independent tribunal were he/she is found guilty of gross incompetence, misconduct, corruption and mental incapacity. In actual fact, whilst the Constitution has dissolved the Minister's power to dismiss employees, he can still indirectly do so through an independent tribunal which he establishes under the Local Government Amendment Act of 2016.

Ideally, this means that nothing has changed since the promulgation of the Constitution in terms of central government's interference in local governments. Prior to the implementation of the Constitution in 2013, the Minister of Local Government could dismiss a Mayor or Councillor arbitrarily and replace him with an official of his choice by citing the Urban Councils Act of 2015 section 54 (1) and (2). Even though the power of the Minister to dismiss mayors and councillors was repealed by the Local Government Amendment Act of 2016, the fact that the independent tribunal is appointed by the Minister, means that it is not truly 'independent' and is prone to manipulation by the Minister. This in turn affects the efficient and effective running of local governments as it creates conflicts and disgruntlement between the central government, the concerned local authorities and residents (Zinyama and Chimanikire, 2019). Thus, delays in harmonising the Local Government Amendment Act of 2016 and Constitution of Zimbabwe will continue to delay any meaningful efforts towards devolution.

Mapuva (2015) attributes the delays in aligning such pieces of local governance legislature to the Constitution to lack of political will. He argues that these delays have created two parallel instruments of power, one emanating from local governance legislature and the other, from the Constitution. The use of both instruments has resulted in confusion and contradiction. In some cases, this has also created gaps which allow the instruments to be manipulated to suit the situation. Mapuva (2015) articulates the arbitrary use of the previous Urban Councils Act of 2008, which allowed the Minister of Local Government to appoint special interest councillors in all urban councils.

Invoking the same Act, the Minister could also appoint and dismiss mayors and councillors willy-nilly. The officials were appointed along partisan lines and not based on their expertise or contribution to local governance. As a result, this compromised the efficiency, effectiveness and accountability of local governments and at the same time causing disgruntlement and controversy amongst citizens and the civil society (Mapuva, 2015).

This paper argues that whilst the Constitution has dissolved the Minister's powers, the repackaging of the Urban Councils Act of 2008 and 2015 into the Local Government Amendment Act of 2016 still affords the Minister unfettered powers. Thus, the existence of parallel legislative systems is indicative of the lack of political will to harmonise existing legislation to the Constitution. Despite the objective of section 264 to devolve responsibilities and resources to local governments, the central government is still dominating the operations of local governments. As a result, the delays in devolution have had negative ramifications on the effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of local governments. The negative impact of the central government's interference can clearly be seen in road and water service provision in Zimbabwe.

Since 1980, local governments derived their revenue base from water services tariffs and user fees. However, this source of revenue was taken away from local governments by the central government and transferred to the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA) in 2006. ZINWA was given the authority to manage and distribute both primary and commercial sources of water. Primary water is water used for basic consumption whilst commercial water is bulk water from dams and rivers for agricultural purposes. This move, wedged conflicts between the central government and local governments as water constituted at least 80 percent of local councils' revenue source (Gideon and Alouis, 2013).

Muchadenyika and Williams (2018) argues that this transfer was for political gains as the Zanu-PF party used ZINWA as a cash resource to finance the party's operations. The service delivery was so poor that the role of urban water management and supply was returned back to local governments in 2009 after ZINWA failed to manage water and sanitation resources leading to the outbreak of cholera which claimed over 4000 lives in Harare (Muchadenyika, 2014). This is also prevalent in other parastatals which have been devolved to community levels but have failed to provide efficient services since they owe their accountability to the ruling party (Mutanda, 2014). For example, the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) has failed to ensure food security despite the low maize purchasing prices they offer and its numerous depots spread across the country. Directors and board members of most parastatals are appointed on the basis of political affiliation and not expertise.

## VII. CONCLUSION

To conclude, whether devolution is successfully implemented in Zimbabwe will depend on the political will and participation of all stakeholders. Perhaps, it is by amending Chapter 14 that implementation of devolution will be expedited. However, devolution is not a once off occurrence but is a long haul policy reform, which will take the alignment of legislative pieces of local governance to the Constitution. The delays in aligning these pieces of legislation will continue to support the centralized control of local government and reduce local governments' capacity to fully embrace the objectives of devolution. This will take time, but if devolution is supported by the people of Zimbabwe, implementation will soon be realized.

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