THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

An Evaluation of Disaster and Development Policy Practice in Zimbabwe

Gift Chatora
Ph. D. Candidate, Department of Development Studies, University of Fort Hare, South Africa
Aminur Rahim
Professor, Department of Development Studies, University of Fort Hare, South Africa

Abstract:
This article evaluates the disaster and development policy practice in Zimbabwe theoretically and practically. The findings in this article revealed that the disaster and development policy structure and its implementation in Zimbabwe is centralized (top – bottom) approach and it is heavily fragmented. In particular, the overarching recommendation for this article is for the adoption of a disaster risk reduction theoretical framework in cementing the disasters and development linkages theoretically and pragmatically.

Keywords: Disaster, development and policy practice

1 Introduction

An analysis of disaster management and development policies in Zimbabwe reveals a mismatch in policy and practice. This further reflects incoherence in the crafting or implementation of disaster and development related policies and practices in Zimbabwe. In this view, understanding the problem of disaster and development relationships in a developing country like Zimbabwe is left hanging in the air and requires a thorough analysis that helps in plugging the inadequacies. This article critically and analytical evaluates the disaster and development policy practice in Zimbabwe. Evidently, the findings in this study revealed that the disaster and development policy structure and its implementation in Zimbabwe is centralized (top – bottom) approach and it is heavily fragmented. For example, a thorough analysis of Zim Asset (2013) policy blue-print clearly shows that policy articulation takes a top-bottom style yet in principle the Zim Asset is expected to champion both development and disaster management programmes in the country.

Likewise, a partisan approach is reflected in some key government policy documents thereby compromising on the nationality of such key policies. In particular, policy partisan perspectives are reflected in the Zim Asset (2013:1) which acquiescently pronounces that: "As the country moves forward, post the 31st July 2013 Harmonised Election, there is an urgent need to put in place an economic blue-print that is guided by the ZANU PF Manifesto…"

Furthermore, policy implementation in Zimbabwe is affected by structural-bottlenecks, weak institutional capacity and absence of a robust governance policy framework particularly in parastatals, public authorities and corporate world (Zim Asset, 2013). Resultantly, this leads to weak policy cohesion. Equally, in such cases, the manifestation of policy discord during implementation cannot be doubted. The implications of this are that disasters will continue to impact on the most vulnerable people in Zimbabwe. On the same note, development takes a snail's pace due to erosion of development gains and incoherent policies. In particular, failure to have well-articulated policies on disaster and development have resulted in a reactive approach in Zimbabwe that has been heavily dependent on humanitarian aid in response to frequent and recurring disasters rather than having a nation with increased capacity that has high levels of resilience to withstand disaster shocks. Zimbabwe should learn from the Hyogo (2005) and the Sendai Frameworks for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) that put emphasis on a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.

Disaster and development policies do not operate in a vacuum, but rather in an environment in which Zimbabwe interacts regionally with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) (SADC), continentally (Africa) and with global actors. In this discussion, Zimbabwean policies on disaster and development are also compared or referenced to regional and global policy frameworks like the Hyogo Framework for Action (2005), Sendai Framework for DRR (2015), the MDGs (2000) and SDGs (2015). Similarly, other policies and agreements where Zimbabwe is signatory are discussed analytically. Such discussion in this article, provides insights into the disasters and development theoretical and practical gaps in Zimbabwe, where the vulnerable and poor continue to suffer from disaster impacts and entrenched in realms of poverty passed on as a relay button from generation to generation in both rural and urban settings.

2. Methodology

It is worth mentioning that in this study, qualitative and quantitative research methodologies were employed as a way of data and methodological triangulation (Pearson, 1998). This was achieved qualitatively through the use of interviews, focus group discussions, observations, field visits and document analysis, while quantitatively structured questionnaires were administered. This allowed collection, triangulation and analysis of data from overlapping complex social studies web that is intricately inter-woven. Study respondents and interviews or participants were drawn from Buhera, Muzarabani and Harare in Zimbabwe numbering 158 (60 interviews, 85 focus-group participants and 13 questionnaire respondents). In sum, 46% females and 54% males participated in this study on disaster and development policy practice in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, the study used the mixed non-probability purposive sampling that combines; mixed variation in the selection of (rural - Buhera, peri-urban – Centenary-Muzarabani and urban - Harare settings). In addition, stratified purposeful sampling was used, which allowed the researcher to equally sample from each of the layers. Stratified sampling has the advantage of guaranteeing representation of each of the identified stratas (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005:202), and emergent sampling was used during field work allowing for capturing major variations and common themes in this disaster and development discourse whose target population; a sample was drawn from Buhera, Centenary-Muzarabani and Harare.

3. Significance of the Study

Using primary data (e.g. quantitative and qualitative data), the authors have presented a new perspective on disaster management and development in Zimbabwe. The authors' view does indeed challenge the official position and practice on the ground. It reminds scholars and practitioners to pay systematic attention to the social and economic constraints that shape people's attitude to disaster and development.   Furthermore, this article illuminates those areas that still require a paradigm shift toward enhancing disasters and development nexus with regard to policy and practice

4. Disaster and Development Policy Perspectives

A review of a scholarly definition of policy pointed to the following: first, Braman (2006:66) suggests that "traditionally the word 'policy' has been reserved for public sector decisions." This definition views policy in a narrow sense of public sector, yet policies can apply to a wider context that includes institutions or society or household. Nakamura and Smallwood (1980) view policy as a set of instructions from policy makers to policy implementers that spell out both goals and the means for achieving those set goals. This conceptualization of policy relates policies to goals and highlights the roles played by policy makers who are there to develop policies while implementers execute the policies based on set goals. Disaster and development policies are all set on goals to reduce disasters, reduce vulnerability and promote sustainable development gains in a resilient community.

Rist (1994:550) weighs in by emphasizing that: "Policies imply theories. Whether stated explicitly or not, policies point to a chain of causation between initial conditions and future consequences." In this sense, policies are equated to theories and their impact to current and future implications. This definition also holds water considering that in disaster management and sustainable development, one has to consider both the current and future implications of hazards and development gains respectively. This is in view that disasters and development are strongly correlated (Collins, 2009).

In addition to Rist's definitions above, Hogwood and Gunn (1984:13-19) assert that policy is a label for a field of activity, an expression of general purpose or desired state of affairs, specific proposals, decisions of government, formal authorization, a programme, output, outcome, a theory or model, and process. Hogwood and Gunn (1984:19-24) amplify policy definitional look by reiterating that: policies involve behaviour, intentions, inaction as well as action. Further, policies, therefore, have outcomes which may or may not have been foreseen. Hogwood and Gunn (1984:19-24) assert that policy is "a purposive course of action but purposes may be defined retrospectively," More specifically, policy arises from a process over time, policy involves intra- and inter-organizational relationships. Likewise, public policy involves a key but not exclusive role for public agencies, and policy is subjectively defined.

Hogwood and Gunn (1984) and Guba (1984) put forward the ideal policy practice situation that should be holistic and involving all key stakeholders. However, a review of policies like Zim Asset pointed to the opposite. Specifically, Zim Asset (2013:2) clearly highlights that consultation process in crafting the policy was carried out "…within Government and private sector and a review of previous national development programmes, greatly informed the formulation this blue-print, aptly named the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (Zim Asset)…"

Guba (1984:70) defined and conceptualized policy as: an assertion of intents or goals; the accumulated standing decisions of a governing body . . . within its sphere of authority; a guide to discretionary action; a strategy undertaken to solve or ameliorate a problem; policy is sanctioned behaviour, formally . . . or informally through expectations and acceptance established over (sanctified by) time. Guba (1984:70) goes on to say: policy is a norm of conduct characterized by consistency and regularity in some substantive action area; likewise, policy is the output of the policy-making system and in sum, policy is the effect of the policy-making and policy-implementing system as it is experienced by the client.

Put simply, policy is, therefore, a course or principled action approved or proposed by a government, institution, organization or society/individual that gives operational parameters. Nyoni (2007) is of the view that for policy architecture to be effective there is need to have a strong conceptual understanding of the policy framework (craft-literacy), coupled with effective capabilities to apply regulatory guidelines enshrined in a policy or law (craft-competency).

For purposes of disaster management and development policy practice, evaluation in Zimbabwe, the study adopted Guba's (1984) broad-based definition of policy.

Contextually, Zimbabweans are good in craft literacy generally, but what lacks is a pragmatic focus on policy implementation and resourcing the different institutions and goals enshrined in policies. In some cases, the political will gathers momentum but fails to get cascaded to community levels. Why? one wonders? The answer lies in wider consultation (top-down, bottom-up) and driving the policy as a national agenda by reaching out to all stakeholders including civil society, traditional leadership and religious groups. In two focus group discussions in this study, participants indicated that once policies are implemented along partisan lines, there are challenges and resistance in their implementation which derails success. Disaster management and development policies in Zimbabwe are not spared from this fractured implementation process. When put to context, it therefore requires a paradigm shift in the way people view policies whether they are driven from a political manifesto or not, the key issue is, that is, people need to look at positives and advocate on the improvement of the negatives.

5. The Administrative Policy Structures and Institutions Related to Disaster and Development

An analytical review of the policy and practice in Zimbabwe clearly shows that the two are not adequately engaging each other, thus resulting in policy and practice mismatch. For instance, the Environmental Management Act (2006) highlights the protection of wetlands, but on the ground in cities like Harare building structures have been constructed on wetlands. This might be attributed to the fact that Zimbabwe as a nation state has not yet completely weaned itself from the pre-colonial centralized administrative structures even in its post-colonial era. In practice, the centralized hierarchical administrative policy structures do not adequately dove-tail with a society whose people are democratized, though on the other hand, Zimbabwe herself claims to be swimming in a democratized state governance structure.

Illustratively, figure 1: reflects a centralized and hierarchical administrative policy structure in Zimbabwe. In sum, the Zimbabwean Government structure consists of the executive headed by His Excellency the President who is deputized by two vice Presidents. This is cascaded to Ministerial levels. Some ministries have departments headed by a Director (see Table 2) whose level is equivalent to a Provincial Administrator. From provinces, the structure drops to districts, wards, villages and finally household level (see figure 1). Notably, some departments have human resources and institutional representation from head office to ward or village levels, for instance, the department of Agriculture Technical and Extension Services, education and to some extent, health services. Structurally, there are Village Development Committees that meet on ad hoc basis depending on projects, but they do not have strategic or master plans for their villages or wards serve for the district, province and national levels.
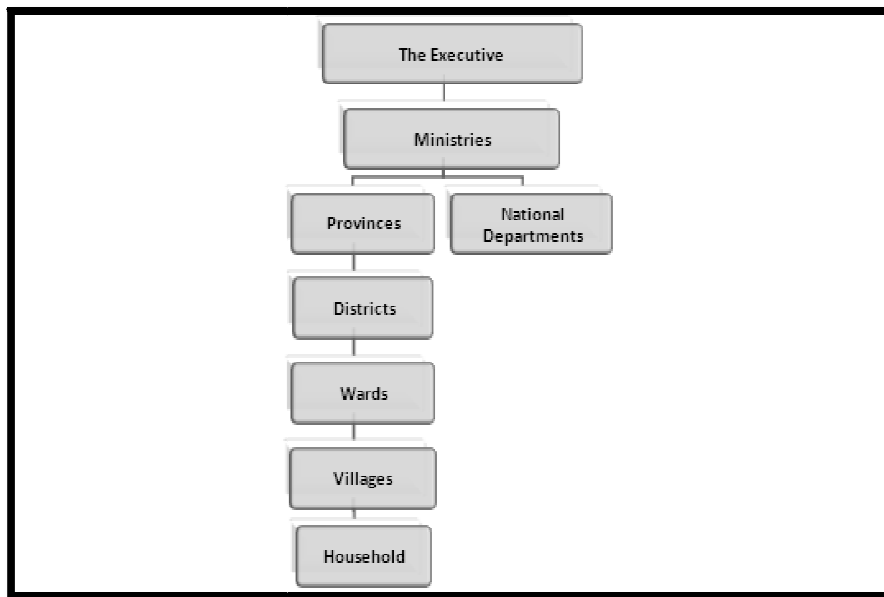

Figure 1: Zimbabwe Government Administrative Structure
Source: Http://Www.Zim.Gov.Zw Retrieved on 10 March 2016

In Zimbabwe, executive powers are exercised by the government, while the legislative powers are vested in both the government and parliament. The parliament is involved in the crafting, review and passing of most policies and Acts. Similarly, the administrative arm of government also issues administrative policy instructions and the equally local authorities and urban authorities in the form of by-laws.

Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanisation and Irrigation	Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing
Ministry of Defence	Ministry of Mines and Mining Development
Ministry of Environment, Water and Climate	Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
Ministry of Energy and Power Development	Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare
Ministry of Finance and Economic Development	Ministry of Lands and Rural Resettlement
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperative Development
Ministry of Health and Child Care	Ministry of Sports and Recreation
Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development	Ministry of Tourism & Hospitality Industry
Ministry of Industry and Commerce	Ministry of Transport and Infrastructural Development
Ministry of Information, Communication Technology, Postal and Courier Services	Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development
Ministry of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs	Ministry of Youth, Indigenization and Economic Empowerment
Ministry of Media, Information and Broadcasting Services	Ministry of Home Affairs
Ministry of Micro-Economic Planning and Investment Promotion	Ministry of Rural Development and Preservation of national Cultural Heritage

Table 1: Zimbabwe Government Ministries (2016)
Source: Http://Www.Zim.Gov.Zw Retrieved on 10 March 2016

Table 1 provides a snapshot view of the ministerial structures in Zimbabwe responsible for carrying out policy development implementation and review as of 2016. The structure looks ballooned for a developing nation, and there are risks of duplication and overlaps among ministries that may compromise on the efficacy of policy practice in the country. Accordingly, achieving disaster mitigation and development linkages in Zimbabwe faces a myriad of challenges, which if not pragmatically addressed, may erode the development gains and subject people to poverty and vulnerability. For instance, the government structural and institutional bottle-necks. Evidently, a review on the government ministries and departments in tables 1 and 2 shows that duplicity cannot be ruled out. For example, there are three key ministries endowed with economic development namely: Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Ministry of Micro-Economic Planning and Investment Promotion and Ministry of Youth, Indigenization and Economic Empowerment. This is in addition industry and commerce, small and medium enterprise development. Furthermore, duplication can result from ministries of Local Government and rural development whose constituencies and operations overlap. Instead of complementing each other, there will be competition and duplication. Responses in this article raised concerns regarding those aspects of duplicity as this affects holistic disaster management and development in the country.

The issues of disaster management and development are dealt with in multiple and fragmented ministerial or departmental structures, for instance, Department of Civil Protection (DCP) falls under the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing. The DCP, therefore, is expected to champion Disaster Management issues in the country as functional directorate. However, a close analysis of the Zimbabwe Government in table 1 shows that issues of Climate change are independently dealt with in the Ministry of Environment, Water and Climate. More specifically, Zim Asset (2013) in its cluster outputs bestows the responsibility of championing disaster management policy to the Ministry of Environment. Specifically, Zim Asset (2013:33) suggest that "climate and disaster management policy strengthened and implemented; … Ministry responsible for Environment". This leads to policy discord and grandiloquence policy implementation that has fragmented accountability. Fragmented policy practices have a huge impact particularly on the rural populace in Zimbabwe who are exposed to multiple hazards, increased levels of vulnerability and poverty. This is against a backdrop of 67% of Zimbabweans living in rural areas (ZIMSTAT, 2012).

Zimbabwe's administrative structure consists of eight provinces plus two metropolitan provinces (Harare and Bulawayo) totalling ten. This structure is supported by respective districts in each province, while a number of wards constitute a district and a village being the smallest unit after a ward. More specifically, provincial, district, rural and urban councils' administration falls under the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing. The same applies with the Department of Civil Protection (DCP). The DCP consists of only seven (7) officers at Head Office (Zimbabwe Government, 2016). This leaves a void at provincial and district levels where such structural functions are not replicated. In this regard, the issues of disaster risk management are assigned to Provincial and District Administrators who are also endowed with other responsibilities. Resultantly, lip-service is given to disaster management in Zimbabwe. Hence, the vulnerable continue to suffer from disaster consequences, and a sluggish development path manifests as development gains are eroded by disasters and relief aid.

Nevertheless, empowering the Provincial and District Administrator as chairperson for local civil protection units is a noble idea in making sure that this function gets attention from senior public servant at district level. However, in practice, in the Zimbabwean context their involvement has been disaster response focused as they do not have much time to invest in other aspects of the disaster continuum. Further, if the provincial and district structures are well resourced (human, material, financial, time) with clear functional disaster risk management units, there are high chances of defragmenting the silos at local level and work as teams based on identified hazards in the respective province or district.

Department of Agriculture Technical and Extension Services	Department of National Archives
Department of Central Computing Services	Department of Research & Specialist Services
Department of Civil Protection Directorate	Department of Immigration
Department of Deeds, Companies and Intellectual Property	Department of The Auditor General
Department of District Development fund	Department of The Registrar General
Department of Livestock and Veterinary Services	Department of The Surveyor General

Table 2: Zimbabwe Government Departments (2016)
Source: Http://Www.Zim.Gov.Zw Retrieved on 10 March 2016

Table 2 tabulates the various central government departments in Zimbabwe, including the Department of Civil Protection (DCP). The DCP is established through the Civil Protection Act [Chapter 10:06]. The Department of Civil Protection is primarily established to execute its functions when disasters occur and also consider the planning part of it through the involvement of local government structures, security forces, civil aviation, fire brigade, the Health Ministry and Zimbabwe Red Cross Society.

Notably, structural defects are identified in the above National Civil Protection Committee as it is response-oriented and leaves out other ministries and departments that should be involved when compared to holistic disaster risk management approach. For instance, the Ministry of agriculture for drought mitigation, metrological department for early warning and preparedness planning, EMA and Ministry of Environment, Water and Climate for environmental issues, hydro-metrological issues and climate change, vulnerability and adaptation. These are just a few of the missing departments and ministries from the Civil Protection Act's Part III section four of 1996.

6. Disaster Management and Development Policies Practice Review

An examination of the Civil Protection Act Chapter 10:06 reveals that the policy is totally silent of Disaster Risk Reduction and key aspects of the disaster continuum serve for civil protection plans, declaration of disaster and response. Actually, the Civil Protection Act Chapter 10:06 focuses on structural establishments and their functions. Subsequently, such policy silence might be the reason why Zim Asset assigned the Ministry of Environment, Water and Climate the lead role for ensuring climate and disaster management policy strengthening and implementation. Such actions by central government may result in topsy-turvy policy practices. In this regard, the policy becomes more of a placeholder Act that is distant from realities, hence a mismatch in disaster management theory and practice in Zimbabwe, as revealed in this article.

The findings in this article reveal that the Civil Protection Act [Chapter 10:06] defined civil protection as "…any service provided or measure taken for the purpose of preparing for, guarding against or dealing with any actual or potential disaster". This definition narrowly confines itself to 'civil protection' as opposed to the global thinking of disaster risk management. Specifically, disaster risk management refers to: "The systematic process of using administrative directives, organizations, and operational skills and capacities to implement strategies, policies and improved coping capacities in order to lessen the adverse impacts of hazards and the possibility of disaster" (ISDR, 2009:10). This reveals the out-dated nature of the Civil Protection Act and the need for accelerating the enactment of the 2011 Disaster Management Bill into an Act.

In addition to the aforementioned, responses in this article revealed that an outstanding majority of 96.4% concurred that the Civil Protection Act Chapter 10:06 in Zimbabwe, needs a review in line with regional and global standards. The remaining minority of 3.6% disagreed with view with some not being clear of the policy its self and showing limited contemporary disaster risk management thinking. Additionally, the study reveals that 97.1% of the study response are of the view that a rhetoric approach on theory (policies) and practice increases the risk of disasters and vulnerability, and affects sustainable development. Only 2.9% of the responses did not affirmatively agree to this view. A reality check further shows Zimbabwe being ranked on a very high 5.1 risk index according to INFORM (2015) indicating high levels of vulnerability and weak capabilities or resilience. Thus, Zimbabwe cannot continue to rhetorically prioritise disaster risk management. A situation that is worsened by fragmented central government institutions. In particular, the same government institutions are responsible for policy development and articulation like the Department of Civil Protection. Hence, the need for adopting a broader DRR approach as proposed in this thesis.

Fundamentally, if the central and local government structures are not well streamlined, duplicity increases and eradication of poverty in Zimbabwe will remain a pipe dream. At the same time, people will continue to suffer from predictable and recurrent disasters. United Nations (2014:36) in Zimbabwe's analysis report indicated that: the country was experiencing high and widespread poverty and inequality which is presenting major challenges to the country's economy and people's wellbeing, including the rural, urban and working poor. United Nations (2014:36) further reported that 62.6% of Zimbabwe households are poor, as displayed by the per capita consumption expenditures below the Total Consumption Poverty Line (TCPL). Of these poor households, 76% live in rural areas compared to 38.2% in urban areas. This, therefore, raises policy practice concerns if disaster and development nexus is to be enhanced so that hazards/disasters are mitigated at the same time curtailing the progression of vulnerability. In sum, weak institutions, fragmented policy practice and policy discord contributes to a sluggish development path in Zimbabwe if they are not adequately addressed both structurally and operationally. This is a view openly acknowledged in Zim Asset (2013).

Disasters normally happen at community level, with the initial response being given at that level before external support. However, a review of the Civil Protection Act Chapter 10:06 makes no mention of community-based disaster management committees. Specifically, the Civil Protection Act and its structures falls short of aligning with Zimbabwe's administrative structure that consists of: households, villages/location/suburb, ward, district, province and central government. This is clear theoretical gap that affects policy practice. In this regard Zimbabwe should consider the framework for disaster risk reduction as proposed through the Hyogo (2005) and Sendai (2015) Frameworks for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Theoretically, the recent Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk reduction (2015 -2030) is pillared on four priorities that build that take into account of the experience gained through the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (2005-2015). The four priorities for Sendai Framework for DRR are: understanding disaster risk; strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk; investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience; and enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response, and to 'Build Back Better' in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

As earlier alluded, the Civil Protection Act Chapter 10:06 is not crafted in any way close to these key priorities besides Zimbabwe appending its signature on the Sendai Declaration of 2015. On a positive note, Zim Asset (2013) acknowledges the importance of resilience building and sustainable development as means to end poverty and vulnerability.

In as much as agreements and commitments to disaster risk reduction have been made at global, continental, sub-regional levels, Zimbabwe still falls short of vigorously pursuing disaster risk reduction agenda compared to sister countries in the SADC region that have aligned their disaster management legal frameworks to global and regional standards. Masamvu (2011) concurs with the above observation by highlighting that countries like Botswana, Mozambique, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland had aligned their policies to include disaster risk reduction as core, while South Africa had gone a step further to decentralize disaster risk reduction to local administrative levels. It is those underlying passive factors or resistance to the noble disaster risk reduction that require in-depth scholarly analysis in Zimbabwe to mitigate a casual or cosmetic approach to disasters and development.

Notably, Africa Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in February 2013 reaffirmed the need for increased awareness on Disaster Risk Reduction; however, the awareness still needs to be fully translated into pragmatic steps and action by commitment of human, technical, institutional, political and financial resources. Zimbabwe is not spared from the need to translate the increased disaster risk reduction into practical actions, hence the significance of this article in illuminating those areas that still require a paradigm shift toward enhancing disasters and development nexus.

A review of disaster and development policies in Zimbabwe reveals some progress on the achievement of MDGs, in particular MDG six on combating HIV and AIDS, Malaria and other diseases and MDG two on universal primary education (Zim Asset, 2013). This was a step forward considering that areas like Buhera, Muzarabani, Zambezi valley, Gokwe, the Lowveld and other parts in Zimbabwe are endemic to malaria and a host of other diseases. Harare is not spared as it was affected heavily with cholera and typhoid out breaks in 2008/9 and 2014 according to the findings of this article. However, the aforementioned achievements cannot be celebrated because of limited achievement in six other MDGs that looked at poverty eradication, gender equality, child mortality reduction, mental health, environmental sustainability and global development partnerships.

The growing body of development literature has demonstrated that 'development' should be holistic in nature, with growth and development aiming at improvement in peoples living conditions. The breakdown of key social services and social safety nets like healthcare, nutrition, water supply, sanitation provision, ecosystems management and shelter provision can easily trigger hazards coupled with vulnerability to progress into disasters, on the backdrop of weak capabilities and resilience.

Zimbabwean Government in its Zim Asset (2013) publication openly admitted the existence of poor sanitation, high levels of pollution affecting urban drinking water as well as the dysfunctionality of equipment as well as institutional capacity challenges in urban areas. Zim Asset (2013:7) further postulated social protection programmes, particularly health, had suffered heavily in the years 2000 – 2013 therefore adversely affecting the welfare of the poor, orphans and vulnerable children. Resultantly, Zimbabwe suffered a major cholera outbreak in 2008/2009 claiming 4,288 lives when health and social services had broken down (WHO and Ministry of Health and Child Welfare 2009). Once vulnerability is high, as espoused by post-conventional disaster literature scholars, there are high chances of sliding into a disaster (Wisner et al., 2004). In such cases, the disasters and development linkages are reinforced even in situations where economic growth is thriving.

Further, the findings from policy analysis and evaluation confirmed earlier findings reached through fieldwork. For example, Zim Asset (2013:8) reiterates that: "Despite Zimbabwe being endowed with abundant natural resources, country continue to face multiple environmental management challenges including pollution, poor waste management, deforestation and land degradation, veldt fires, poaching and biodiversity loss". These aspects are expected to be addressed through the enforcement of the Environmental Management Act Chapter 20:27 and its related policies.

Besides the notable outbreaks of cholera in 2008/9 and typhoid in 2014, the Ministry responsible for executing the Public Health Act was commended by respondents for championing health for all and regularly communicating policy statements at all levels. A further review of policies indicated that the Public Health Act was due for a review during the period 2013 – 2018 in line with the outputs set in the cluster section of Zim Asset (2013). In doing so, the Public Health Act keeps abreast with national, regional and global trends in the field of health in implementing its key social services function. On another note, besides the fragmented nature of policies, the Zim Asset (2013) policy framework should be commended for taking an introspective approach and moving forward to bring together various ministries and departments to work towards achievement of qualitative and quantitative outputs. However, resourcing the set goals and outputs remain an obstacle for the country due to the economic challenges experienced from 2000 – 2016.

A detailed analytical comparison of the Public Health Act, Zimbabwe National Occupational Safety and Health Policy (2014), Environmental Management, EMA Statutory Instrument 10 of 2007, Zim Assest, the Forest Act Chapter 19:05, and the Water Act Chapter 20:24 shows that they are more detailed and focus on operational issues as compared to the Civil Protection Act Chapter 10:06 that narrowly focuses on structures and functions of those structures. The implications of this are that a policy that lacks details is challenging to interpret and operationalize. The deliberate focus on structural and functions of the structures as enshrined in the Civil Protection Act leave a lot of gaps in the policy, thus subjecting it to multiple unsynchronised interpretations that results in policy and practice mismatch. This confirms the earlier findings from respondents that the Civil Protection Act requires a complete and a thorough review to meet the benchmarks expected of a Disaster Risk Management (DRM) or Disaster Management (DM) policy of a nation that cover a range of disaster risk management aspects. For instance, emergency response preparedness (hazard, risk and vulnerability analysis), vulnerability and capacity analysis. Likewise, DM policies that embrace resilience building, early warning and triggers, contingency and preparedness planning, disaster risk reduction, response, recovery, rehabilitation (Building, Back, Better), as well as other micro-level disaster continuums.

Going forward, Zimbabwe has the potential to implement policies that can reverse vulnerability and eradicate poverty because of its high levels of literacy that results in policy craft literacy. Likewise, development gains can be scored if disaster mitigation is viewed in unison with development. To achieve this, a comprehensive disaster risk reduction approach is required by first challenging the public service compartmentalization and silo planning. Hence, DRR offers an opportunity for delivering as one. Pursuant, to this, Zimbabwe should capitalize on global frameworks like SDGs and Sendai DRR frameworks running in parallel from 2015 – 2030.

7. Conclusion

The article observes that disaster and development policy practice are in discord and this affects their nexus. Hence, this results in increased vulnerability and erosion of development gains if such key polies are not theoretically and pragmatically implemented. Further analysis of policies like Zim Asset (2013) and the Civil Protection Act [Chapter 10:06] revealed that key policy documents in Zimbabwe a macro-based. Hence, they lack the grass root realities leading to a more top-bottom approach. Equally, other development and disaster management policies reviewed for the purposes of this article revealed the same in the context of Zimbabwe. This is amplified by Zimbabwe's administrative structures and policy practice which require a paradigm shift to consider horizontal, vertical bottom-up and top-down policy development and implementation. This will enhance sustainability through increased buy-in and enhanced craft competency at all levels. The findings in this article revealed that policy practice in Zimbabwe is heavily fragmented, leading to incoherent policy implementation. This results in increased vulnerability to even predictable and recurrent disasters and erosion of development gains that affect sustainable development. Evidently, disasters and development have a strong nexus in both theoretical and practical perspectives. This confirms the hypothesis which argued that: disasters and development are correlated, as disasters can both destroy development initiatives and create development opportunities and that development schemes can both increase and decrease vulnerability. Furthermore, instead of viewing disasters negatively, the study findings confirmed that development gains and opportunities are congealed within disasters. Hence, the two variables should be viewed as union friends that can both interact theoretically and pragmatically through disaster risk reduction in curtailing incubation of hazards into disasters; likewise, mitigating the progression of vulnerability and promoting achievement of sustainable development goals.

8. Recommendations

Grounded on a thorough analysis of this disasters and development nexus and its policy and practice evaluation, the following recommendations offer the way forward in addressing key issues, challenges, gaps, hindrances identified and opportunities in promoting sustainable development and disaster management holistically. Henceforth, the following recommendations are put forward for consideration by policy makers, public/local authorities, humanitarian and development actors (NGOs, International Organizations and donors), the academia, the corporate world and the community.

In particular, the overarching recommendation for this article is for adoption of a disaster risk reduction theoretical framework in cementing the disasters and development linkages theoretically and pragmatically. In addition to the aforementioned, the nexus for disasters and development get aligned in tandem with global frameworks like Sendai 2015 – 2030 DRR framework and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2015 – 2030, if Zimbabwe takes a practical pragmatic shift on disaster and development policy practice. Indeed, Zimbabwe is signatory to these global frameworks although research findings revealed little evidence of these frameworks being cascaded at all levels in the country. Finally, there is need to review the various disaster and development policies so that they are coherent and in tandem with current as well as global trends.

9. Acknowledgements

10. References

i.   Anon., 2013. Report of the 4th Africa regional platform on disaster risk reduction: protect development gains and build resilience of African nations. [Online]
ii.   Available at: https://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/publications/34612[Accessed 31 December 2015].
iii. Braman, S., 2006. Change of State: Information, Policy and Power. Cambridge: MA: MIT. Collins, A., 2009. Disaster and Development. London: Routledge.
iv.   Government of Zimbabwe, 2011. Disaster Risk Management Strategy 2012 - 2015 (Draft 1). Harare: Government of Zimbabwe - Department of Civil Protection .
v.   Guba, E., 1984. The Effect of Definitions of Policy on the Nature and Outcomes of Policy Analysis. [Online] Available at: http://www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/journals/ed_lead/el_198410_guba.pdf[Accessed 11 March 2016].
vi.   Hogwood, B.W., & Gunn, L.A., 1984. (1984). Policy Analysis for the Real World. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press..
vii. INFORM 2015. Index for Risk Management. [Online] Available at: http://www.inform-index.org/[Accessed 14 February 2016].
viii. ISDR, 2014. Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. [Online] Available at: http://www.unisdr.org/we/coordinate/hfa-post2015[Accessed 18 October 2014].
ix.   Masamvu, K., 2011. DRR Progress in Southern African Development Community (SADC). . In: Disaster Risk Reduction in Africa. Geneva: UNISDR Africa Informs, p. 30.
x.   Nakamura, R.T., & Smallwood, F., 1980. The Politics of Policy Implementation. New York : St. Martin's.
xi.   Nyoni, 2007. School Admissions and Principal's Craft-Competency and Craft-Literacy in Case Law Compliance. Pretoria: University of Pretoria.
xii. Rist, R. C., 1994 . Influencing the Policy Process with Qualitative Research. In Norman K. Denzin & Yvonna S. Lincoln (Eds.), Handbook of qualitative research (pp. 545-557).. Thousand Oaks, CA : Sage.
xiii. Stephenson, R.S & DuFrane, C. , 2005. Disasters and Development: Part 3: Assessing Trade-Offs in Investing in Vulnerability Reduction. Prehosp Disaster Med, 20(1), pp. 66 - 9..
xiv. Stephenson, R.S. & DuFrane, C., 2002. Disasters and Development: Part 2: Understanding and Exploiting Disaster - Development Linkages. Prehosp Disaster Med, 17(3), pp. 170 - 175.
xv.   Stephenson, R., 1994. Disasters and Development. Geneva: UNDP and DHA.
xvi. UNISDR, 2005. Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005 - 2015. [Online]Available at: https://www.unisdr.org/we/coordinate/hfa [Accessed 16 August 2016].
xvii. UNISDR, 2009. 2009 UNISDR terminology on disaster risk reduction. [Online] Available at: http://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/publications/7817[Accessed 31 December 2015].
xviii. UNISDR, 2015. Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 - 2030. Sendai: UNISDR.
xix. United Nations Environment Programme, 2010. Assessing the Environmental Impacts of Consumption and Production: Priority Products and Materials. Geneva: United Nations Environment Programme.
xx.   United Nations, 2000. Millennium Development Goals. [Online] Available at: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/[Accessed 11 August 2013].
xxi. United Nations, 2014. Zimbabwe Country Analysis, Harare: United Nations.
xxii. United Nations, 2015. Sustainable Development Goals - Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. New York: United Nations.
xxiii. United Nations, 2015. Sustainable Development Goals - Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. New York: United Nations.
xxiv. Wisner, B., P. Blaikie, T. Cannon, & Davis, I,, 2004. At Risk, Natural Hazards, People's Vulnerability and Disasters. London: Routledge.

xxv.   Zimbabwe Government , 2007. Statutory Instrument 10 of 2007: Environmental Management (Hazardous Waste Management Regulations, 2007). Harare: Printflow, Government Printers.

xxvi.   Zimbabwe Government, 1996. Civil Protection Act - Chapter 10:06. Harare: Government Printers.

xxvii.   Zimbabwe Government, 1996. Forest Act [Chapter 19:05]. Harare: Printflow, Government Printers.

xxviii. Zimbabwe Government, 1998. Water Act [Chapter 20:24]. Harare: Printflow, Government Printers.

xxix.   Zimbabwe Government, 2006. Environmental Management Act [Chapter 20:27]. Harare: Government Printers.

xxx.   Zimbabwe Government, 2007. Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act [Chapter 14:33]. Harare: Printflow, Government Printers.

xxxi.   Zimbabwe Government, 2011. Disaster Risk Management Bill. Harare: Printflow - Government Printers.

xxxii.   Zimbabwe Government, 2012. ZIMSTAT. [Online] Available at: http://www.zimstat.co.zw/ [Accessed 12 November 2012].

xxxiii. Zimbabwe Government, 2013. Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZimAsset): Towards an Empowered Society and Growing Economy - October 2013 to December 2018. Harare: Government Printers.

xxxiv.   Zimbabwe Government, 2014. Zimbabwe National Occupational Safety and Health Policy. Harare: Printflow, Government Printers.

xxxv.   Zimbabwe Government, 2016. Zimbabwe Government. [Online] Available at: http://www.zim.gov.zw[Accessed 12 March 2016].Zimbabwe Government, n.d. Public Health Act [Chapter 15:09]. Harare: Government Printers.