

## **FIFTH POST-CABINET PRESS BRIEFING: 14 MARCH, 2023**

### **1.0 ZIMBABWE'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, AND REPORT ON THE PROCUREMENT AND ROLL-OUT OF VACCINES**

Cabinet received an update on the Country's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, and a Report on the Procurement and Roll-Out of Vaccines, as presented by the Chairman of the Ministers' Committee on the National COVID-19 Response, Honourable Vice President and Minister of Health and Care, Gen. (Retd.) Dr. C.G.D.N. Chiwenga.

The nation is being informed that 1 death was recorded during the week under review, compared to the 3 recorded the previous week. The number of new cases continued to decrease. However, during the week under review, there were 26 new admissions, compared to the 21 recorded the previous week, with 3 being in intensive care unit. As at 11 March 2023, the country's cumulative cases since the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020 had reached 264 385, with 258 313 recoveries and 5 672 cumulative deaths. The recovery rate was 98%, with 370 active cases having been reported.

Regarding the national vaccination programme, Cabinet wishes to inform the nation that a total of 6 865 048 first doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have so far been administered, while 5 089 413 people have received their second dose, and 1 637 094 their third dose. There was an increase in the

national vaccination coverage for the first dose to 61.1% from the 60.8% which was recorded previously.

## **2.0 NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 1 (NDS1) PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 2022**

Cabinet received and adopted the National Development Strategy 1 (NDS1) Performance Report for the Fourth Quarter of 2022, which was presented by the Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Honourable Mthuli Ncube.

Cabinet is reminding the nation that following the launch of the NDS1 in October 2020, implementation commenced in 2021, under the fourteen Thematic Working Groups that were created to drive the Programme and achieve set targets.

Under the Economic Growth and Stability TWG, the nation is being informed that the NDS1 target for inflation in the Fourth Quarter of 2022 was 26.3%. Government tightened the monetary and fiscal policy stance, maintained Central Bank accommodation rates at 200% and ordered a review of public procurement process to ensure value for money payments to contractors. The budget deficit declined from an NDS1 target of 1.65% to 0.9%, reflecting

conformity with the SADC Macro-economic Convergence Criterion of fiscal deficits below 3%.

At the centre of inclusive growth during the Fourth Quarter of 2022, the nation is being informed as follows:

- the mining sector grew by 10% in 2022, driven by higher international mineral prices, the resuscitation of closed mines, and expansion and opening of new mines;
- gold production in 2022 improved to 36 tonnes, from 31.5 tonnes in 2021;
- construction of Gold Service Centres such as Makaha in Mutoko made significant progress; and the manufacturing sector grew to 66%, surpassing the year's target of 65%.

The nation is being informed that under the Food and Nutrition Security TWG,

- milk production was boosted by the increase in the dairy herd from 22 000 to 38 000.

In the water sub-sector, Government procured additional rigs and drilled 437 boreholes, surpassing the Fourth Quarter target of 240 boreholes.

Under the Infrastructural and Utilities TWG, the nation is being informed as follows:

- a cumulative 400 kilometres of the Harare-Masvingo-Beitbridge Highway was upgraded and opened to traffic, and
- as many as 19 airlines were flying into Zimbabwe by the end of 2022;

The nation is being informed that under the Digital Economy TWG,

- the Broadband penetration target of 60% was exceeded by 0.8%, while internet speeds increased in line with technological advancements;
- the geographic broadband network coverage exceeded the 70.61% target and reached 70.68%
- the provision of localities with Public Internet Access Centres exceeded the targeted 8% and reached 12.8%;
- the proportion of central Government organisations with a web presence reached 100%, exceeding the planned 59% quarterly target. A survey will be undertaken to establish the functionality of the websites.

On Housing Delivery, the nation is being informed as follows:

- financiers and other stakeholders are preparing to commence preliminary works on the Smart Cities pilot projects for Melfort, Figtree and Chirundu;
- 77.5% households are now accessing clean and safe water; and
- 63.8 hectares was allocated for the settlements densification programme.

Under the Human Capital Development and Innovation TWG, the nation is being informed as follows:

- the qualified critical skills workforce target of 30 500 artisans, technicians and technologists performed exceptionally well, and received 38 119 graduates from the November-December 2022 HEXCO examinations.
- the population of learners taking up STEM subjects rose to 44% from the initial target of 43%;
- innovation hubs and industrial parks increased significantly during the Fourth Quarter of 2022. In particular, Manicaland State University of Applied Sciences established a state-of-the-art Agro-Innovation Industrial Park on the Headlands Farm. The Midlands State University's National Pathology and Diagnostic Centre was operationalised;
- several secondary schools were able to access mobile science laboratories manufactured at the National University of Science and Technology;
- the NDS1 target of rehabilitating infrastructure at 250 schools achieved 100%; and
- new schools were constructed through Public Private Partnership schemes and the use of devolution funds disbursed by Government.

On Health and Well-Being, the nation is being informed as follows:

- Government is prioritising the capacitation of village health workers to promote early maternity bookings and delivery in health institutions.
- Government is making concerted efforts to address the conditions of service of health care workers; and
- the proportion of occupationally exposed workers is also being monitored, and is well on target.

Cabinet is informing the nation that the Image Building, International Engagement and Re-Engagement TWG achieved several milestones.

- national radio coverage expansion exceeded the 70% target. The programme enhanced the creation of a knowledgeable society and also promoted diversity and plurality which leaves no one and no place behind. Radio and television transmitters were installed at the Lupane State University Campus and at Manama Mission in Gwanda; and
- four Bilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreements, international treaties and protocols were signed or ratified, out of the initial target of two.

Cabinet is further informing the nation that the Devolution and Decentralisation Programme is targeting the implementation of projects that facilitate increased equitable development for empowered communities across all provinces and districts.

- in the Fourth Quarter of 2022, four key legislations had their Principles approved by Cabinet, paving way for drafting at the Attorney-General's Office.
- Z\$26 million targeted for Inter-Government Fiscal Transfers was transferred; and
- 6.5 million out of the initially targeted 6 million citizens were able to directly access services from projects funded through Inter-Governmental Fiscal Transfers.

Under the Youth, Sport, Arts and Culture TWG, the nation is being informed as follows:

- youth participation in decision making positions was enhanced by 5.2%;
- youths who accessed empowerment opportunities in all sectors of the economy exceeded the initially targeted 20 000 and reached 1.1 million. The massive increase was attributed to enhanced entrepreneurship training, access to business loans through Empower Bank, and business management training conducted by the Zimbabwe Youth Council.

Under the Second Republic's Social Protection TWG, the nation is being informed as follows:

- 4 601 primary schools benefited from the Schools Feeding Programme;
- Government supported 64 566 children under the Harmonised Social Cash Transfer programme, surpassing the annual target of 45 000 children, mainly under the National Disability Policy.
- 2.9 million households received maize and traditional grains inputs under the Climate-Proofing Pfumvudza/Intwasa Programme;
- the number of Gender Based Violence cases reported to responsible authorities and Assisted One-Stop Centres reached 45 410, against a target of 50 836.
- 2 000 survivors of dangerous drugs and substance abuse were rehabilitated and re-integrated, and four percent of the population was covered by social insurance programmes, against an initial target of 5%;
- a social insurance scheme is being designed to target the informal sector, and more pension contributors are being identified.

Under the Environmental Protection, Climate Resilience and Natural Resources Management TWG, Cabinet is informing the nation as follows:

- early warning systems were established in 61 districts by the end of the Fourth Quarter of 2022. Ecologically sensitive areas were gazetted for protection in Harare Metropolitan the seven rural catchment areas of the country;



- rehabilitation of mined areas was conducted across all provinces, with the cumulative rehabilitation coverage reaching 6 029.05 hectares;
- 24 629 tonnes of plastic waste were recycled, exceeding the initial target of 20 000 tonnes, while 36 114.18 tonnes of paper were recycled out of the initial target of 15 000 tonnes; and
- US\$1.8 billion targeted from tourism receipts was exceeded by 56.2% after US\$2.8 billion was received .

Finally, under the Governance TWG, Cabinet is informing the nation that the Second Republic seeks to improve public service delivery and justice and to uphold national unity, peace and reconciliation as building blocks for achieving equitable and sustainable national development. Progress achieved stands as follows:

- out of the targeted 95.5% case clearance rate for 2022, the rate achieved was 98% in 2022, compared to 95% in 2021.
- in a bid to improve peace and national cohesion, 73% of conflict incidences received were resolved;
- the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission received 255 complaints and finalized 186 cases, while 69 were at various stages of investigations. Conflict cases encompassed land and boundary disputes, malicious damage to property, assault, rape and unfair trial and detention;
- Peace Committees were established in 33% of the country's 70 districts during the Fourth Quarter of 2022, that is, in Buhera, Bulawayo, Harare, Hwange, Gweru, Kariba, Masvingo, Mutare,

Mutoko, Nkayi, Lupane, Matopo, Tsholotsho, Guruve, Mutasa, Nkulumane and Goromonzi districts.

### **3.0 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE AND THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LOWER ZAMBEZI MANA POOLS TRANSFRONTIER CONSERVATION AREA (LOZAMAP TFCA)**

Cabinet approved the Memorandum of Understanding between the Republic of Zimbabwe and the Republic of Zambia on the Development of the Lower Zambezi Mana Pools Transfrontier Conservation Area (LOZAMAP TCFA) which was presented by the Attorney-General, Honourable Prince Machaya, as the Acting Chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Legislation.

The nation is being informed that Government seeks to conclude a Memorandum of Understanding with the Republic of Zambia to foster transnational cooperation in ecosystems management through the establishment, development and management of the LOZAMAP TFCA. More specifically, the MOU intends to:

- create a conducive environment for the development of the LOZAMAP TFCA;
- foster transnational collaboration and cooperation in ecosystem management through establishment, development and management of the LOZAMAP TFCA;

- promote alliances in the management of biological natural resources by encouraging social, economic and other partnerships among the stakeholders;
- enhance ecosystem integrity and natural ecological processes through harmonisation of environmental management procedures and the removal of artificial barriers, thereby allowing natural movement of wildlife without restrictions;
- develop frameworks and strategies to enable local communities to participate and derive tangible benefits from the management and sustainable utilisation of natural resources; and
- develop transboundary tourism as a means for fostering regional socio-economic development.

The Lower Zambezi Mana Pools Transfrontier Conservation Area will cover Mana Pools National Park, Hurungwe, Sapi and Chewore Safari Areas, and the adjacent Communal, State and privately held land on the Zimbabwean side and the Lower Zambezi National Park, Chiawa and open areas within Siavonga and Chirundu Districts as well as State and private land in Zambia. The TFCA Development Plan will be funded by the Global Environmental Facility 6 at a cost of US\$170 000.

I THANK YOU.