

# Call for Expressions of Interest

## Politics of Domestic Resource Mobilization for Social Development: Zimbabwe Case Study

*The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) invites expressions of interest from researchers for two further research papers for its ongoing project case study on Zimbabwe for the research project on the Politics of Domestic Resource Mobilization for Social Development.*

### The project in brief

The project seeks to contribute to global debates on the political and institutional contexts that enable poor countries to mobilize domestic resources for social development. It aims to contribute to discussions about how to:

- bridge the funding gaps for meeting key global development targets and social programmes in poor countries;
- enhance national ownership of development programmes and policy space, which is linked to improved fiscal capacity;
- improve understanding of the politics of revenue and social expenditure bargains and effective accountability of governments to citizens; and
- connect the literatures on the politics of resource mobilization and the politics of social provision in poor countries.

This project focuses on three themes that will help connect the politics of domestic resource mobilization and demands for social services.

**Contestation, bargaining and outcomes.** Domestic resource mobilization generates conflicts over types of resources to be mobilized, who pays, who and what is exempted, how much should be paid, and how the resources collected should be allocated across sectors, groups and communities. This theme will examine the nature of resource bargains, types of resources and social programmes involved in bargains; trade-offs among competing programmes and resources, and resource yields.

**Changes in key relationships.** These can be traced to the dynamics of resource mobilization and allocation. It will engage the literature on taxation and governance, which emphasizes the importance of contractual relations between citizens and states for effective mobilization of resources. Two types of relationships will be examined: state-citizen relations; and donor-recipient relations. To what extent do the politics of resource mobilization lead to a redefinition of state-citizen relations? Does improvement in domestic resource mobilization lead to more fiscal space and autonomy in policy making?

**Institutional development.** Success in resource mobilization and service provision requires institutional development. While institutions in the financial sector have been strengthened, those concerned with service provision have been neglected and are usually the first targets for expenditure cuts. This theme will examine the extent to which the politics of domestic resource mobilization generate pressures for upgrading of institutions entrusted to deliver services.

## About this call

The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) invites expressions of interest from scholars with a proven track record in research and publication on issues related to domestic resource mobilization. Researchers should have extensive expertise on Zimbabwe, either on taxation or social policy, and ideally be based in the country of research, although the latter is not a requirement.

This call relates to an ongoing case study on the Politics of Domestic Resource Mobilization in Zimbabwe (visit [www.unrisd.org/pdrm](http://www.unrisd.org/pdrm) for further information). Two papers will be commissioned as a result of this call:

- The Political Economy of Taxation and Fiscal Governance in Zimbabwe
- Social Policy and Social Spending in Zimbabwe

### Paper 1: The Political Economy of Taxation and Fiscal Governance in Zimbabwe

This paper will analyse the evolution, main characteristics and performance of the tax system in Zimbabwe, studying relevant reform processes and outcomes as well as performance in terms of revenue yields and distributive outcomes (incidence). It will situate tax policy in a broader context of fiscal policy and fiscal governance. To do so, it will explore in comparative manner shifting fiscal policies and regulatory mechanisms since 1980 and consider the adequacy of successive sets of institutions, laws and regulatory practices in promoting domestic revenue mobilization. An important focus of the paper will be fiscal laws and statutes including the Finance Act, Income Tax Act, Value Added Tax Act, Customs and Excise Act and Capital Gains Tax Act. New provisions on public financial management and parliamentary oversight over revenues and expenditure contained in the recently approved and enacted (2013) Constitution of Zimbabwe will also be addressed. The impact of these laws, policies and institutions, related negotiation and bargaining processes, and the new Constitution in promoting (or undermining) fiscal capacity in the country will be central questions for this paper.

#### Key questions to be addressed:

- What are the legal and regulatory mechanisms pertaining to tax mobilization and how have they evolved in the development models of successive governments?
- What vision and policy have underpinned successive models of tax policy, and what conditions have constrained and empowered tax policy making?
- What role have donors, business and citizens played in extending and reforming taxation regimes, and in influencing the direction of allocation of tax funds?
- What is the performance of the tax system in terms of revenue yields and distributional outcomes, transparency and institutional capacity?

### Paper 2: Social Policy and Social Spending in Zimbabwe

This paper will examine the ways in which social policy and social spending have developed over time in Zimbabwe, analysing the levels of social expenditure in different sectors, its scale, financing and outcomes. It will consider the provision of social services such as health, education and social protection, the ways in which successive governments have used social policy to shape state-citizen relationships, the role social investments have played in aid conditionality and donor relations, as well as the prospects of longer term institutional development and national ownership for the provision of social services and social transfers.

**Key questions to be addressed:**

- What is the historical background of social policies in the country? How has social spending (disaggregated according to key sectors/programmes) evolved over time?
- What are the key institutions providing social services and what reforms have been implemented since the 1980s (actors and drivers)?
- What are the outcomes in terms of service delivery, coverage rates, adequacy and quality of benefits and services?
- How is the provision of social services/social protection programmes financed?

### **Specifications**

This is a call for expressions of interest from individual researchers to join an existing country research team in Zimbabwe. Participating researchers will undertake primary research, write a scholarly paper on one of the topics described above, and engage in conferences, policy dialogues and other communication activities in 2015.

**Length of paper:** 10-000 – 12,000 words

**Language:** English

**Deadline for first draft:** 15 April 2015

**Deadline for final revised draft:** 30 June 2015

### **Researcher competencies, experience and skill requirements**

- Post graduate degree in Economics, Political Science, Development Studies or other social science discipline (PhD desirable)
- Experience in development policy research
- Country expertise
- Proven publication record
- Solid methodological and research skills
- Ability to write clearly and concisely

**To submit your expression of interest (EOI):**

Please ensure that you have read the [project brief](#) on the Zimbabwe case study for the ongoing PDRM project. This brief, together with the key questions to be addressed in the two papers provided above, gives indications as to how you should approach the research.

Please send the completed submission form, along with the following attachments, to [pdrm@unrisd.org](mailto:pdrm@unrisd.org), using the subject line “EOI submission”:

- a full CV (including academic record and list of publications); and
- a sample of a recent single authored piece of academic work on a topic related to the chosen research paper.

**Deadline: 15 February 2015, 23:59 (CET).**

**More on this Call:**

- UNRISD particularly welcomes expressions of interest from women, young researchers and researchers from and based in developing countries.
- Due to limited staff resources, only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.
- If you are not submitting an EOI, but you are interested in participating in other ways, such as conferences, e-dialogues etc., please get in touch.
- For further information contact Katja Hujo or Harald Braumann at [pdrm@unrisd.org](mailto:pdrm@unrisd.org).