Republic of Zimbabwe

ZIMBABWE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN 2022–2025

for Strengthening Labour Market Information System and Skills Anticipation Practices

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SERVICE, LABOUR AND SOCIAL WELFARE
AND
MINISTRY OF HIGHER AND TERTIARY EDUCATION, INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

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FOREWORD

The Government of Zimbabwe has emphasized the necessity for a reliable and high-quality Labour Market Information and Skills Anticipation System as one of the most important tools for boosting economic competitiveness and supporting social growth. In line with the National Development Strategy 1 (NDS1) 2021–2025 and its key priorities on Human Capital Development and Innovation, the Government of Zimbabwe has been responding to the fast-changing world of work through Human Capital Development as a huge resource with significant economic value. In Zimbabwe, significant progress has been made over the past two decades towards increasing access to skills development at all levels through different interventions including ensuring that there is a polytechnic or industrial training centre in every province. In order to complement these efforts and maintain sustained growth and development of skills development in Zimbabwe, reliable information about current and future labour market trends and skills shortages is needed. Such information is key to inform the implementation of the government's human capital development strategies as a means to ensure the attainment of the government's vision for skills development and employment promotion in line with the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Act No. 20 of 2013, Zimbabwe Manpower Planning and Development Chapter (28:02) as amended, Vision 2030, National Development Strategy 1 (2021–2025), grounded on the implementation of the Heritage Based Education 5.0 Philosophy, and the Zimbabwe National Qualifications Framework (ZNQF).

The International Labour Organization (ILO), as part of its contribution to the NDS1 – Human Capital Development and Innovation Priority, in collaboration with the Government of Zimbabwe and its tripartite-plus partners, implemented the Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA) Programme focusing on Skills Anticipation. SIFA as a Programme of the African Union and AUDA-NEPAD, with financial assistance from the German Government and European Union partnered with the ILO to build the skills anticipation capacities of African Union Member States, as a means for improving evidence-based skills policy and strategies development and implementation. The implementation of the Skills Anticipation Project was led by a **National Task Team (NTT)** constituted by a tripartite plus and inter-ministerial 10-member committee led by the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development and the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare. The other members of the NTT were from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce; business, employer' and workers' organizations, National Statistics Agency with policy research institutions and academic institutions responsible for the design and conceptualization of education and training provision. The NTT provided support and strategic guidance in the implementation of the situational analysis of the Zimbabwe Labour Market Information and Skills Anticipation Systems and practices. The NTT was also responsible for the development of a National Action Plan that should guide strengthening of current systems and practices with the view to improve the alignment of skills development to the skill and competency requirements of the labour market. This process started in 2021 with a Skills Mapping Study to critically understand Zimbabwe's existing data sources/providers, its practices, capacities, and institutional arrangements for LMI and skills anticipation. The exercise was prompted by a growing recognition that Zimbabwe's needs to harness its 'youth bulge' to reap the demographic dividend that can put the country on a sustainable growth path.

The mapping study established, among other things, that Zimbabwe's LMI and Skills Anticipation System has significant weaknesses that hinder it from delivering the expected results, and that the country needs to enhance all aspects of its LMI and skills anticipation system including its coordination and management mechanisms. It came to light that organized labour, organized business, and both formal and informal Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) were mostly unaware of the current LMIS system and its operations.

The situation analysis study further established skills identification and anticipation exercises where not systematically undertaken in the country. That most of the country's universities, training and TVET schools rarely perform skills tracer studies to understand their graduates' adsorption in the labour market. It was established that, labour market players are generally excluded from the processes of analysis and integration of LMI and skill anticipation insights into employment, education and training policies. The analysis also established that private sector was not effectively involved in the country's skills development process, which adds to the low rate of graduate absorption in industry.

With the support of the ILO and the Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA) Programme, the government set out to develop a National Action Plan for strengthening Zimbabwe's Labour Market Information and Skills Anticipation System. The National Action Plan is the first step in bolstering institutional mechanisms to promote policy coherence, ongoing stakeholder participation and dialogues, and greater coordination of the country's LMI and skills anticipation system. The Action Plan seeks to improve and harmonize LMI analysis methodologies and tools, and to strengthen data and data gathering processes, as well as building capacities to analyze LMI and to use the related IT system more effectively. This National Action Plan was developed in collaboration with key labour market actors and stakeholders. It highlights practical and actionable steps that must be taken to strengthen Zimbabwe's LMI and Skills Anticipation Systems.

The Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare and the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development present this National Action Plan, as a strategic document which will provide clear framework and comprehensive initiatives to support the government and its partners in strengthening the much-needed labour market information and skills anticipation systems in Zimbabwe.

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Honourable Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare

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Honourable Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development

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The role that well defined national action plans play in supporting the repositioning the economy is well-documented. The purpose of this National Action Plan is to create a springboard for enhancing Zimbabwe's Labour Market Information (LMI) and Skills Anticipation System. The Government of Zimbabwe through the strategic leadership of the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare and the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development is committed to operationalizing this national action plan in the spirit of promoting equitable, accessible to labour market information for all and to ensuring, that anticipation of skill needs is focused on securing preparedness for the future and on improving quality of life for all.

The Government of Zimbabwe expresses its gratitude to members of the Tripartite-plus National Task Team, chaired by Dr Dennis Murekachiro, Director of Higher Programmes, Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development, and Ms Vimbai Chiza, Deputy Director Employment Services, Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare and comprising of the following members;

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The development of the National Action Plan would not have been possible without the participation and assistance of labour market information actors, including key government institutions, the private sector, organized business, organized labour, and skills development stakeholders, who collectively provided invaluable inputs and data. The Government of Zimbabwe is grateful to all the representatives for their dedication and enthusiastic participation in the development of this Action Plan.

Finally, the Government of Zimbabwe wishes to express its gratitude and appreciation for the financial support of the Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA) Programme from the the African Union and AUDA-NEPAD, with financial assistance of the German Government and European Union, and the technical and financial support from the International Labour Organization, led by Ms Hopolang Phororo with support the technical and programming officials, Ms Naomy Kanyemba Lintini, Mr Adolphus Chinomwe and Mr Tafadzwa Chirinda which made this initiative possible.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

EAZ	Engineering Association of Zimbabwe
EISAZ	Engineering Iron and Steel Association of Zimbabwe
EMCOZ	Employers Confederation of Zimbabwe
HTEIs	Higher and Tertiary Education Institutions
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LMDA	Labour Market Diagnostic Analysis
MHTEISTD	Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development
MoIC	Ministry of Industry and Commerce
MPSLSW	Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare
NAMACO	National Manpower Advisory Council
NCSA	National Critical Skills Audits
NDS1	National Development Strategy 1
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
NTT	National Task Team
PEA	Private Employment Agencies
QLFS	Quarterly Labour Force Survey
SIFA	Skills Initiative for Africa
TFE	Training for Enterprise
TNF	Tripartite Negotiating Forum
TSP	Transitional Stabilization Programme
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions
ZEPARU	Zimbabwe Economic Policy Analysis and Research Unit
ZFTU	Zimbabwe Federation of Trade Unions
ZIMCHE	Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education
ZIMRA	Zimbabwe Revenue Authority
ZIMSTAT	Zimbabwe Statistics Agency
ZNCC	Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce
ZNQF	Zimbabwe National Qualifications Framework
ZWL	Zimbabwean Dollar

1. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

1.1. Overview of the macroeconomic and social context

The Second Republic instituted policy reforms starting with the Transitional Stabilisation Programme (TSP, 2018–2020) that improved policy consistency, strengthened institutions, improved resilience against shocks and set the foundation for economic recovery[1]. The National Development Strategy 1 (NDS1) is consolidating the reform measures made under the TSP to provide the economy momentum for faster growth, with the capability to create decent jobs, increase economic resilience and establish a more competitive private sector-led economy. Improvement of vital infrastructure in roads, energy, water and sanitation, housing, transport and information and communication technology (ICT) are being prioritized as key enablers to attaining the country's upper middle income status.

According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF,2022), the output recovery that resumed in 2021 is expected to continue, albeit at a slower pace, with growth projected at about 3.5% in 2022 and 3% over the medium term in line with Zimbabwe's growth potential.

According to the Government of Zimbabwe 2023 National Budget, the economy is now projected to grow by 3.8% in 2023, compared to the NDS1 target of not less than 5%, due to an uncertain global economic outlook and potential domestic adverse factors. However, the average growth rate for the period 2021–2023 is estimated at 5.4%, which is in line with the NDS1 target. In the medium term, GDP growth is projected to improve to approximately 4.8% and 5% in 2024 and 2025, respectively.

The projected positive economic growth performance is conditional on improvements in the macroeconomic environment characterized by exchange rate instability; high debt overhang of approximately US$18 billion that limits access to affordable lines of international credit. The continued depreciation of the Zimbabwean dollar (ZWL) against the US$ and major currencies is eroding disposable incomes of the citizens leading to poverty and reduced living standards. This situation is exacerbated by the negative economic effects of the Covid-19 pandemic that have resulted in disproportionate impacts for women, the youth and people living with disabilities in terms of employment outcomes and livelihoods. Other external shocks such as the Russia-Ukraine conflict and import inflation have disrupted international markets resulting in fuel and food price hikes in the domestic market.

Some of the policy areas that government is grappling with to improve is macroeconomic performance

1 The 2021 National Budget Statement pp. 8–9 provides a comprehensive summary of progress on reforms see the following link: http://www.zimtreasury.gov.zw/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=65&Itemid=790

which includes containing exchange rate and currency instability. Exchange rate and currency instabilities are imposing downside risks on macroeconomic performance as well as eroding domestic and international competitiveness. Several policy pronouncements have been directed towards stemming the illegal trade of foreign currency and indexation of prices of goods and services at parallel market exchange rates as well as strengthening the auction system. Enhancing the use of and stability of the ZWL is being pursued as one of the issues of speculative behaviour by traders and businesses driving exchange rates. Other strategies being pursued to restore macroeconomic stability include re-engagement with the international community; fiscal consolidation; reduction of budget deficits; and the implementation of the Monetary Targeting Framework to induce price stability.

1.2. Analysis of Zimbabwe's labour market and Labour Market Information System

In terms of the labour market, Zimbabwe suffers from huge skills deficits (averaging 61.75%) with wider gaps in science related areas and applied arts and humanities compared to business and commerce which is oversubscribed by 21% (Government of Zimbabwe, National Skills Audit Report of 2018). In addition, the Zimbabwean labour force participation rate dropped from 90.8% in 2014 to 42.8% in 2019, with the employment of women declining from 48.6% in 2014 to 41.7% in 2019. This rate slightly recovered to 42.3% as revealed by the Zimbabwe Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT) labour force survey conducted in the fourth quarter of 2021. This survey also revealed that 86% of the employed population were informally employed. The nature of work in this sector is associated with decent work deficits which present barriers to strengthening resilience and achieving inclusive, sustainable growth and development in the country.

Zimbabwe's share of youth Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) increased from 35.2% in 2014 to 44.7% in 2019 for the youth aged between 15 to 24 years[2]. A similar trend was noted for the youth aged between 15 to 35 years where their NEET increased from 27.4% to 47.1% over the same period[3].

Several institutions are involved in the collection of data on Labour Market Information (LMI) in Zimbabwe. These include the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare (MPSLSW); ZIMSTAT; Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA); business membership organizations; sector associations; labour unions; national employment councils; and private employment agencies (PEAs). The absence of a national central repository on LMI has resulted in a major challenge in data collection. Compounded by the lack of coordination between the institutions that collect data on the labour market, resulting in fragmented market statistics and a lack of standardized templates for collecting and organizing data into a format that is comparable and aggregated. The absence of an integrated Labour Market Information System (LMIS) further undermines real time analysis of the LMI to determine skills gaps and skills anticipation. Some of the labour market statistics are currently captured manually and there is a need for digital formats to facilitate easy sharing and analysis of labour market data. The labour force survey instruments do not have modules or questions on skills gaps and skills anticipation. Currently there is no policy for data sharing among the producers and compilers of labour market data. The problem is further compounded by poor involvement, collaboration and financial support among labour market actors to support the development of an integrated LMIS.

There is a serious lack of coordination between supply and demand of LMIS – no interaction between suppliers and users.

Analysis of the LMI is mainly done by research institutions, business membership organizations and other interested stakeholders. The existing data analysis does not systematically cover skills needs and anticipation to provide evidence to inform curriculum development by skills development institutions. There is limited capacity among labour market players including the lead MPSLSW to undertake rigorous analysis of LMI to ascertain the level of mismatch in the demand and supply of skills in the labour market to inform policy decisions. Furthermore, data analysis is constrained by the absence of the LMIS data infrastructure or analysis standard tools and methodologies that consolidate LMI from different actors. In this regard the country is lagging behind other countries that have been supported by ILO to establish an integrated LMIS.

2 http://www.zimstat.co.zw/wp-content/uploads/publications/Economic/Employment/Labour-Force-Report-2019.pdf

3 http://www.zimstat.co.zw/wp-content/uploads/publications/Economic/Employment/Labour-Force-Report-2019.pdf

1.3. Current strategies for matching skills development to labour market skills needs in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's legal framework provides for the creation of the National Manpower Advisory Council (NAMACO) whose role is to advise the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development (MHTEISTD) on skills required in industry as well as the training programmes needed to close that gap. Based on its institutional mandate NAMACO is expected to provide advice on:

i. Schemes for manpower development and training that will ensure an adequate supply of trained manpower for industry and for all professions, trades and occupations in Zimbabwe;
ii. Measures to improve national manpower development and training programmes;
iii. Techniques for detecting, in advance, the possible impact on any profession or trade of technological developments;
iv. Conditions or requirements for the establishment and conduct of Teachers' colleges and Technical or Vocational institutions;
v. The standard of facilities to be provided by employers for apprenticeship and skilled worker training;
vi. The designation of trades; standards for the certification of skilled worker qualifications and for the recognition of qualifications or levels of competence;
vii. The standardization of training programmes and examinations for the purposes of any trade or industry; and
viii. Promoting and mobilizing support for manpower development and training programmes of the government, including the organization of congresses of representatives of such institutions and agencies.

However, NAMACO has not been fully executing its mandate resulting in matching of skills being done in an *ad hoc* manner. Furthermore, the current structure of NAMACO does not include the key stakeholders such as MPSLSW and its social partners as well as ZIMSTAT

Crafting of strategies for matching skills development to labour market skills needs requires effective institutional collaboration and consultation. In this regard the need for NAMACO, in line with its mandate, to undertake quarterly stakeholder consultations on skills needs and anticipation through its sectoral committees to provide evidence-based advice on skills development was noted as key in addressing mismatches between the supply and demand for skills. This may entail a strengthening and restructuring of NAMACO to strengthen its institutional capacity to fully execute its mandate. There is also a need for increased publicity of the role of NAMACO through conducting inclusive outreach programmes to create awareness of its functions and broaden its reach. NAMACO is also expected to review its current committee structures to take into consideration the current and emerging sectors to fully understand the existing and new skills requirements in the economy.

NAMACO's Councilors are expected to be knowledgeable about skills demands, challenges and developments in their respective industries or organizations which will identify skills gaps and provide advice on skills development for NAMACO. The sectoral committees are expected to gather and consolidate information from stakeholders for Council's action through various activities which include: committee meetings, surveys, occupational profiling and compilation of skills requirements. NAMACO then forwards the recommendations from the sectoral committees to the MHTEISTD. However, the functionality of NAMACO has been compromised in recent years and thus adversely affects its capacity and effectiveness in undertaking skills needs assessments. Some of the factors identified that hinder NAMACO from fulfilling its mandate include: resource constraints that prevented the council from conducting skills assessment studies and consultations; long delays in nominating council members; a lack of dialogue between council members and industry stakeholders; and a lack of synergy between NAMACO and other sectorial and professional bodies like the Engineers Association of Zimbabwe (EAZ), accountants, pharmacy bodies, and medical associations as they also play a key role in skills mismatch and anticipation in their respective sectors.

1.4. Existing institutional framework and coordination for LMIS and skills anticipation and matching

There is neither a functional LMIS nor a coordination framework for skills anticipation and matching in Zimbabwe. These are however, being developed through the MPSLSW that is mandated to be the custodian of LMIS. ZIMSTAT through its labour force surveys is the main source of labour market statistics. The Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) provides key labour market indicators which include but are not limited to: levels of employment both formal and informal; unemployment and some labour underutilization indicators; income levels; labour migration; and job losses. To date ZIMSTAT has not been estimating skills mismatches or skills anticipation. The labour market statistics produced by ZIMSTAT are based on household surveys premised on the 2013 labour force framework adopted at the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians that provided new guidelines for measuring and compiling statistics on work, employment and labour underutilization.

While the institutional framework exists to undertake labour force surveys there is scope to enhance the capacity of ZIMSTAT through the training of its Labour Market Statisticians on the ILO skills mismatch module. This will equip them with the necessary knowledge and competencies to measure skills mismatches from the available data and review the QLFS instruments to integrate skills anticipation. Sharing of administrative data between ZIMSTAT and government ministries and departments; statutory bodies like the National Social Security; labour unions; employers organizations and private employment agencies needs to be facilitated through the development of data sharing policies and supportive legislative frameworks to enable ZIMSTAT and the MPSLSW to tap into labour statistics produced by these institutions and administrative data in compiling labour market statistics that will feed into the LMIS. Capacity building of ZIMSTAT and other stakeholders is required to fully implement all possible methodologies for collecting data on skills anticipation. ZIMSTAT mainly focuses on quantitative approaches, yet skills anticipation can be enhanced through various methodologies (qualitative, establishment surveys, tracer, Delhi method, big data, etc).

Skills anticipation and matching are imbedded in the following strategic objective of the MHTEISTD Strategic Plan (2019–2023)[4]: *"to educate graduates for the 21st Century market with strong academic qualifications and strong employability skills"*. To achieve this strategic objective the MHTEISTD seeks to:

i. Develop and implement the Zimbabwe National Qualifications Framework (ZNQF);
ii. Implement the ZNQF Statutory Instruments: SI 132, SI 133, SI 137 and SI 140 of 2018;
iii. Conduct regular National Critical Skills Audits (NCSA);
iv. Implement programmes addressing outcomes of the NCSA;
v. Review and redirect curriculum towards producing graduates with relevant knowledge, attitudes and skills;
vi. Promote, register, monitor and regulate the quality in Higher and Tertiary Education Institutions (HTEIs) as stipulated in the Manpower Planning and Development Act (28:02) 1995 and the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE) Act (25:27) 2006; and
vii. Strengthen administration of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) assessments including trade tests, apprenticeships and national examinations.

Furthermore, Liaison Committees established by some university departments and TVET institutions, engage with captains of industry on skills developments to infuse into their curriculum development. However, a more systematic process of skills needs assessment and skills anticipation needs to be institutionalized through the development of an integrated LMIS that provides labour market statistics that can be used for further analysis and decision-making by diverse labour market actors. While skills mismatches are acknowledged by industry players there is no institutionalized mechanism or framework to undertake systematic studies on the nature and extent of skills mismatches within business membership organizations and employers organizations.

4 http://www.mhtestd.gov.zw/

1.5. Existing programmes and strategies relating to LMI, skills anticipation and skills development systems

There are no systematic programmes and strategies relating to LMI and skills anticipation. However, there have been commissioned studies and skills audits that have informed skills development in Zimbabwe. For example, the Nziramasanga Presidential Commission of Enquiry into Education and Training (1999) necessitated the creation of a new Primary and Secondary Education Curriculum commissioned in 2016, the Competency Based Education and Training curriculum review for TVET commissioned in 2012 and the Curriculum Review exercise for teacher education completed in 2015 created a shift in the national skills complement.

Further, the Government of Zimbabwe has committed to standardize and harmonize basic education, tertiary and higher education through the ZNQF and complementary programme infrastructure frameworks; and promote critical specialist skills through policy and legislation. In addition, the MHTEISTD reconfigured the country's education curriculum to Education 5.0 from 3.0 adding innovation and industrialization pillars to the traditional pillars of teaching, learning and community development.

1.6. Existing institutional arrangements and dialogue mechanisms

Few pieces of legislation in Zimbabwe provide for social dialogue on matters relating to LMI and skills anticipation. Section 19(1) of the Manpower Planning and Development Act (Chapter 28:02) provides for the creation of NAMACO. Moreover, Section 3(3)(f) of the Tripartite Negotiating Forum (TNF) Act, 2019 outlines one of the roles of the TNF as that of consulting and negotiating Zimbabwe's labour laws in line with the Constitution and other international best practices. The Labour Act (Chapter 28:01) provides for social dialogue at bipartite level as well as at the sectoral level where there are collective bargaining agreements.

While these legislative frameworks are in place there has been no social dialogue that focused on skills needs assessments and skills anticipation. In this regard, there is scope to leverage institutional mandates and convening powers of the different institutions to promote social dialogue on skills needs assessment and skills anticipation. The Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA) National Task Team (NTT) also provides a platform that should promote social dialogue on skills needs assessment and anticipation through the implementation of this National Action Plan.

1.7. Initiatives related to LMI and skills anticipation (including donor supported programmes)

There are no systematic initiatives related to LMI and skills anticipation. However, there are efforts by different partners that have raised the issue of skills and elevated it to become a key policy issue. For example, ILO undertook a study on the State of Skills[5] in 2018; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2018) TVET Policy Review[6] and United States Agency for International Development (USAID, 2016) Road Map for the Development of Labour Market Information Systems[7]. The recommendations from these initiatives which were summarised in the mapping study remain relevant for the current ILO supported initiative to develop a robust and integrated LMIS that will facilitate skills anticipation as well as the development of a TVET Policy that addresses the shortcomings identified in previous studies including the UNESCO 2018 review of the TVET Policy. There are also initiatives in place to revamp the operations of NAMACO to effectively fulfil its institutional mandate that include undertaking skills needs assessment and anticipation to inform curriculum development by skills development institutions. Development partners or donors need to consolidate their efforts and not compete, pooling resources together and having one goal and integrated approach.

5 https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/documents/genericdocument/wcms_736696.pdf

6 https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000366321

7 https://www.fhi360.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/resource-lmis-system-roadmap.pdf

2. MAIN POLICY PRIORITIES

2.1. Problem identification and analysis and justification for intervention

The mapping exercise identified skills mismatches; an absence of surveys and studies on skills anticipation to inform skills development; the lack of an integrated LMIS; and the lack of coordination and sharing of LMI and data among labour market players as the main factors justifying the intervention. Additionally, the gap in national dialogue on skills anticipation and mismatches was identified. For example, in 2018 the NCSA established the current skills, skills gaps, redundancies, skills surpluses, future skills and emerging skills required for Zimbabwe's industrialization and modernization. The report revealed that Zimbabwe has an average skills deficit of approximately 61.75%, with wider shortages in engineering and technology (93.57%), natural and applied sciences (96.91%), agriculture (88%), medical and health sciences (95%) and applied arts and humanities (18%). Business and commerce had a skills surplus of 21%. To address the skills shortages the NCSA (2018) recommended a holistic approach to improving infrastructure and equipment in the teaching and learning of mathematics and science subjects at all levels as a way of enhancing retention of experts in specialized areas within the skills development matrix.

It also highlights the role of skilled foreign labour coming in to fill in the critical skills gap and the need to strengthen the transfer of skills through understudy programmes, a role played by the MPSLSW through its Foreign Recruitment Committee.

Furthermore, the Engineering Iron and Steel Association of Zimbabwe Strategy (EISAZ, 2022–2026, p.33) noted that the baseline study conducted, by EISAZ showed that the engineering, iron and steel sector were heavy consumers of artisans and technicians (71%) compared to engineers (29%). Most firms (50%) employed up to five engineers and artisans or technicians (combined). About 23% of firms employed over 20 engineers and technicians combined, whilst 15% employed over 50 engineers and technicians combined. Indicatively, the sector employed on average 20 engineers and technicians (combined) per firm (six engineers and 14 technicians). These statistics show that the engineering, iron and steel sector has the potential to employ a significant number of engineers and technicians if it were to grow. The EISAZ Strategy also provides other skills required by the engineering iron and steel sector. Analysis of sectoral or national skills needs and anticipation studies and surveys are not being done on a regular basis at national or sectoral level to inform skills development in the country.

The 2021 Zimbabwe Labour Market Diagnostic Analysis (LMDA)[8], observed that workers with secondary and higher education are more likely to participate in the labour market than workers with primary or no education. However, education does not seem to reduce the risk of unemployment. One reason is that the skills acquired from universities and TVET institutions are not always relevant in the labour market. Another reason is that those with university degrees are likely to wait longer for the right employment match, which increases the unemployment rate. Still, among workers who find a job, more educated workers have better opportunities in the formal sector.

The above context promoted the development of the National Action Plan which seeks to strengthen the LMIS and skills anticipation as well as foster alignment between the skills being produced and the job opportunities available in the labour market. Skills anticipation surveys and studies will inform the alignment of curriculum for skills development institutions to the labour market's demand for skills. In this regard, the anticipation of future skills requirements becomes a key preventative measure to avoid costly skills mismatches and anchors the country's training and skills development ecosystem.

2.2. Priority policy actions

Key priority policy actions identified in the mapping exercise include the need to develop a TVET Policy; and review the employment and labour migration policies to integrate skills needs assessment and anticipation. The need to develop a data sharing policy and supportive legislative framework as well as the incorporation of the Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification (STED) methodology on skills anticipation in the Zimbabwe National Industrial Development Policy (2019–2023) during its mid-term review process were also noted as priority policy areas. The NTT noted the need for all national and industry surveys to include modules and questions on skills anticipation. The need for harmonization of LMI concepts and definition of terms among LMI data sources in line with international standards as well as the development of standardized templates for the collection of administrative data were also noted. Furthermore, the NTT agreed that the TVET Policy needs to:

i. Articulate strategies to address fragmentation of the TVET system;
ii. Design sustainable and inclusive TVET funding models;
iii. Cater for a skills recognition and certification system of workers with tacit skills in the informal sector;
iv. Promote inclusivity of leaners from remote areas, people with disabilities and economically disadvantaged learners and communities;
v. Articulate strategies for skills retention, skills value propositions and the development of skills sector strategies; and
vi. Consider Training for Enterprise (TFE) programmes offered by the Ministry of Youth, Sport, Arts and Recreation, Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises; non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the skills to produce goods and services offered by MHTESITD in skills anticipation strategies.

8 https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---africa/---ro-abidjan/---sro-harare/documents/publication/wcms_819125.pdf

3. NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON STRENGTHENING SKILLS ANTICIPATION PROCESSES

3.1. What is a National Action Plan?

The National Action Plan is an operational document which sets direction and guides the establishment of structured and systematic skill needs assessment and anticipation in the country. Skill challenges are relevant to several policy domains, thus information on skills needs has the potential to inform various policy dimensions and contribute to developing a systematic and comprehensive policy response to skills imbalances. In employment policy, skills needs information is commonly used to update occupational standards and to design apprenticeships, re-training courses and on-the-job training programmes. In education policy, it is used to inform curriculum development and set the number of student places at all levels of education including TVET programmes. Skills needs information also feeds into career guidance to inform students' choices. In migration policy, this information is also used to update shortage lists and to identify candidates to fast track for migration with skills that are in high demand. The relevance to such a broad range of stakeholders calls for the results of skills assessment and anticipation exercises to be widely disseminated in order to maximize its impact on policy making.

3.2. The need for LMIS planning

The identification of labour market issues rests on the availability of data, information and analysis. A LMIS provides an essential basis for employment and labour policies, and informs the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies that are better focused and targeted. A LMIS also contributes to the reduction in transaction costs of labour markets as it helps overcome incomplete information of labour market actors. Additionally, LMIS provides monitoring of outputs including employment elasticities at national and sectoral level.

In planning the development of an integrated LMIS, there is a need to be cognisant of the various constraints that can hamper the effective functioning of the LMIS. Data limitation is one such constraint that inhibits indepth analysis of complex issues such as informality and employment protection and the availability of high frequency data on employment and unemployment. Monthly or quarterly statistics on employment and unemployment assist in formulating policy interventions to stimulate employment creation. Data limitations can also emanate from other constraints such as resource scarcity, limited analytical capacity and structural factors which need to be addressed. In this regard institutional capacities of workers' and employers' organizations need to be strengthened to enable them to effectively feed information into the LMIS and LMI analysis into their decision-making.

Three main functions of LMIs' include:

i. Facilitating labour market analysis;
ii. Providing the basis for monitoring and reporting on employment and labour policies, such as labour law reviews, Decent Work Country Programme and the related Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs); and
iii. Constituting a mechanism to exchange information or coordinate different actors and institutions that produce and utilize LMI and analysis.

The main purpose of the LMIS is to produce information and analysis for policymakers and other labour market stakeholders. It is therefore important to establish institutional arrangements in order to make the information and analysis widely available, and to provide opportunities for labour market stakeholders to influence the agenda of the LMIS.

3.3. Goals of the National Action Plan

The goal of the National Action Plan is to contribute to the strengthening of the broader LMIS, which should in turn contribute to the NDS1 goals. This National Action Plan on skills anticipation is linked to the NDS1 priority on Human Capital Development and Innovation. Achievement of this priority requires a robust LMIS, skills needs assessment and anticipation system that fosters more responsive skills development and a more efficient labour market.

The National Action Plan has included the development of TVET and data sharing policies and legislative frameworks; and a review of the industrial, employment and migration policies to integrate skills needs anticipation issues.

3.4. Objectives and targets of the skills anticipation system

The main objective of the National Action Plan is to strengthen the LMI skills needs assessment and anticipation system in the country. Skills mismatches exact high economic and social costs at all levels: individual, business and government and is both a result and a contributory cause of structural unemployment. A number of factors are influencing the evolution of skills demand and supply, and if left unaddressed they are likely to contribute to further skills mismatches in the future. For example, demographic changes influence labour supply in different ways. Large numbers of youths are entering the labour market every year. The question is whether these young people have appropriate skills to be absorbed in the labour market. Levels of educational attainment have also increased significantly over the years. This means that more talent is available for employers, but also makes it harder for lower skilled workers to find jobs in an increasingly competitive labour market.

Technology development and innovation on the other hand increase the demand for higher-level skills and accelerate the rate of change in skills demand. The transition to the green economy in response to the adverse affects of climate change influence skills demand through the introduction of new green technologies, new market opportunities in green economic activities and the 'creative destruction' of brown jobs, and various policy and regulatory requirements. These processes change the skills requirements within existing occupations, giving rise to new occupations and skills needs, and increasing the need for retraining and skills upgrading, including environmental awareness. It is within this context that a robust skills anticipation system is required to inform skills development programmes and avoid costly skills mismatches in the labour market. In this regard a skills anticipation system benefits all labour market actors (government, business and labour).

3.5. Core elements of the LMIS

Skills anticipation should be an integral part of Zimbabwe's LMIS which consist of the following four main components:

i. Collection and compilation of data and information;
ii. Repository of information;
iii. Analytical capacity and tools; and
iv. Institutional arrangements and networks.

Regarding the first component, and given that LMIS should provide analysis of labour markets in their economic context, collection or compilation of data consists not only of data on labour markets but also on the broader economy. For example, data on trade flows and remittances are indispensable for an analysis of the labour market affects on economic crises. Pre-requisites for using the ILO supported platform (LMIS.Stat) to store and disseminate LMIS indicators include the following:

i. National statistical office conducts a household survey, preferably a labour force survey, at least annually; and
ii. Minimum system requirements for hardware and software are met.

3.6. Institutional arrangements and networks in place

Institutional arrangements are needed for the LMIS to effectively facilitate analysis of LMI, for example by providing access to data (from statistical agencies, administrative bodies and other entities) but also to allow for the effective dissemination of information and analysis. An example of a straightforward institutional arrangement is the establishment of an LMI Advisory Panel that includes policymakers, the statistical agency and workers' and employers' organizations[9].

9 https://ilostat.ilo.org/resources/labour-market-information-systems/#:~:text=Labour%20market%20information%20systems%20(LMIS)%20provide%20an%20essential%20basis%20for,are%20better%20focused%20and%20targeted.

4. IMPLEMENTATION AND COORDINATION MECHANISMS

The implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the National Action Plan will be jointly coordinated by implementing stakeholders led by the MPSLSW. Implementation will be monitored regularly and reports produced quarterly by the Department of National Employment Services. Review meetings will be convened by the NTT to assess implementation progress of the National Action Plan against the identified indicators of success and to provide direction to all stakeholders regarding implementation progress as well as, where necessary, adjustments that need to be made. The final evaluation of this National Action Plan will be independent in nature and will involve an independent evaluator.

The LMIS can also be directly involved in monitoring and reporting on employment and labour policies. In this regard the institutional mechanisms to facilitate the exchange of information or coordination of the LMIS activities of labour market stakeholders needs to be strengthened. This may include mechanisms for dissemination of information on concepts, definitions and standards, to the allocation of resources regarding data collection or specific analytical activities.

4.1. Policy coherence

This National Action Plan is intended to facilitate the strengthening of institutional mechanisms (ensuring that there is policy coherence, continuous stakeholder engagement and dialogues, and improved coordination of the LMI and skills anticipation system); building of capacities to analyse LMI and for the utilization of the LMIS IT system; improving and harmonizing methods and upgrading tools used in the analysis of LMI; and strengthening data and data collection processes. The proposed actions are well aligned to the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP). In particular, the proposed actions will lead to increased capacity to identify skills mismatches and anticipate future skills needs as demanded by industry. It will also lead to increased capacity to strengthen skills and lifelong learning policies, governance models and financing systems as well as increased capacity for the country to design and deliver innovative, flexible and inclusive learning options, which encompass work-based learning and quality apprenticeships.

4.2. Key stakeholders

Table 1: Key Stakeholders Matrix

Stakeholder	Name	Abbreviation	Role
Government	Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare	MPSLSW	Hosts the LMIS IT system and is responsible for the coordination of policy making and planning related to employment, labour, and social security; provides labour statistics; disseminates LMI in formats that meet the needs of all labour market players.
	Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science Technology and Development	MHTEISTD	Provides access to relevant quality education at all levels to all citizens; taking into account all issues of efficacy, equity and special needs. Main entity responsible for implementing TVET Policy. NAMCO falls within the purview of the MHTEISTD and plays a key role in consulting industry on skills needs and anticipation to inform skills development programmes by training institutions.
	Ministry of Industry and Commerce	MoIC	Responsible for the formulation of policies and promulgation of laws and regulations that ensure fair trade and a competitive business operating environment in the Zimbabwean economy; formulate and implement appropriate industrial development policies and strategies. MoIC is the lead Ministry in the implementation of the STED approach which is a sectoral level methodology that assists in the identification of skill needs in the formation of skills development policies.
	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development	MoFED	Responsible for restoring macroeconomic stability in Zimbabwe by formulating and implementing fiscal and monetary policies that optimize economic growth and improve the welfare of its citizens.
Training and Skills Development Institutions	Universities (Public and Private) and TVET Institutions		Institutions of higher and tertiary learning, responsible for curriculum design, training and skills development. Jointly working together with the public and private sectors to design, develop and implement skills training and development programmes.
Organized Labour	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Union	ZCTU	Participate in project implementation and advise on workers' rights; participate in skills identification and anticipation exercises to determine competency standards; coordinate awareness and promotion of activities among members; and provide labour inputs in national strategies or policy frameworks.
	Zimbabwe Federation of Trade Unions	ZFTU	
Employer Organization	Employers Confederation of Zimbabwe	EMCOZ	Participate and advise on project implementation; coordinate promotion and awareness of agreed project objectives; coordinate and mobilize members to participate and contribute to the project implementation; and participate in validating and endorsing national strategies or policy frameworks.
Private Sector	Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries and Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce	CZI, ZNCC	Provide technical and other advice on designing labour market relevant skills programmes; determine skills gaps and competencies; mobilize members to participate in training; and provide financial support.
Provider of Official Statistics	Zimbabwe Statistics Agency	ZIMSTAT	Main nodal body dealing with the collection, analysis, and publishing of statistics in Zimbabwe.

Notes: All institutions listed in this table are expected to directly contribute to the LMI and skills anticipation system in Zimbabwe.

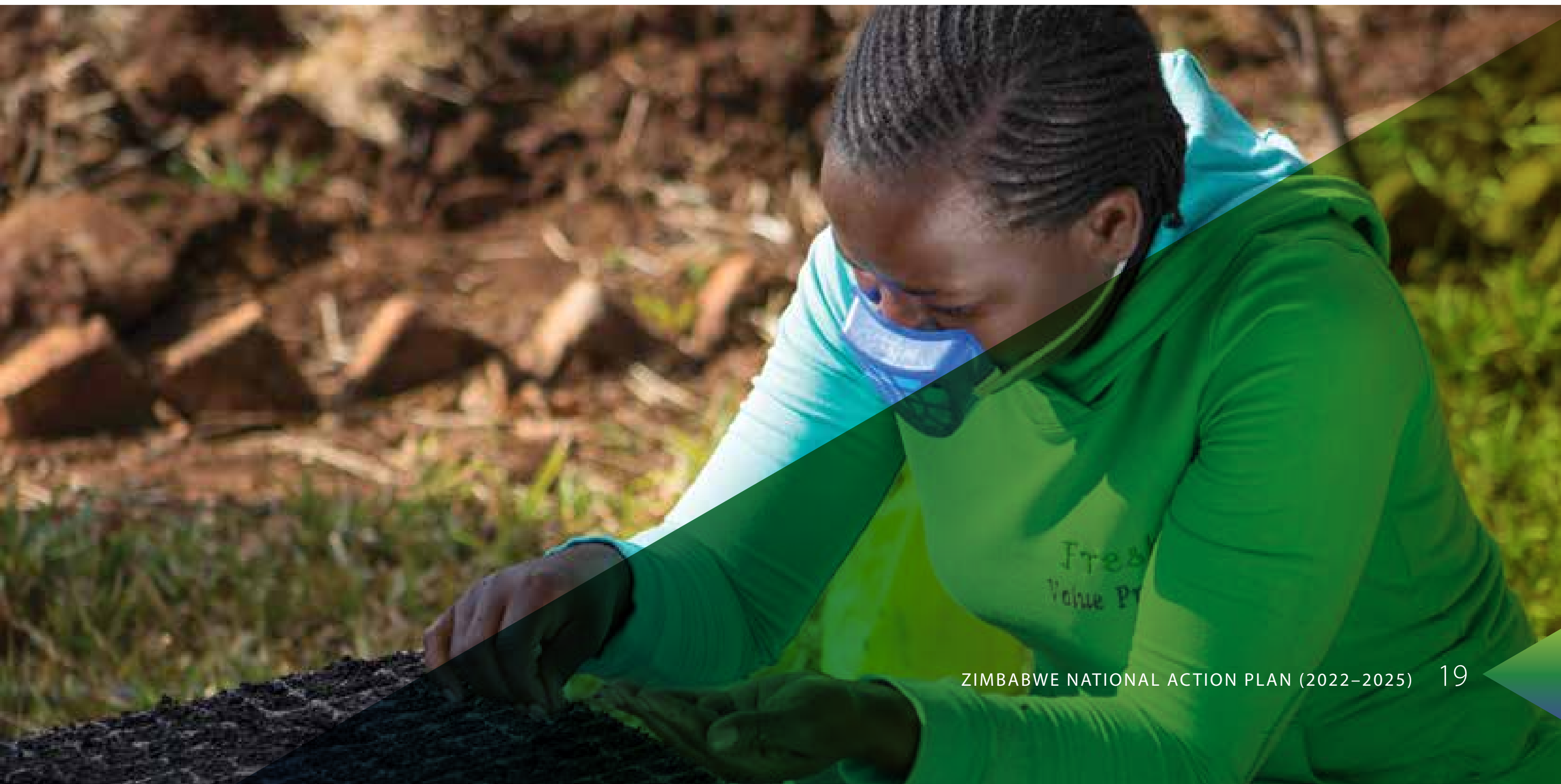
4.3. LOGFRAME – Expected outcomes, outputs, activities and indicators of achievement

Outcome 1: Strengthened institutional mechanisms for policy coherence, social dialogue, and coordination of LMI and skills anticipation systems

Activity	Responsibility	Timelines	Budget (USD)	Source of Funds
Output 1.1 Institutional coordination, governance of skills anticipation and dialogue mechanisms strengthened				
Activity 1.1.1 Integrate the coordination and governance of skills anticipation and matching into the roles and responsibilities of the MPSLSW and MHTEISTD	MPSLSW and MHTEISTD	Ongoing, commencing September 2022	$50 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 1.1.2 Develop a MPSLSW LMIS to adequately address skills anticipation needs to ensure effective coordination and dialogue	MPSLSW	Completed by December 2023	$2 000 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 1.1.3 Establish a central repository of LMI managed by MPSLSW which links with the diverse institutions generating LMI	MPSLSW	Completed by December 2023		Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 1.1.4 Design an LMIS implementation plan for developing skills anticipation	SIFA NTT	Completed by June 2023		Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 1.1.5 Develop an effective institutional and monitoring evaluation mechanism that ensures the full implementation of the resolutions from social dialogue on LMI	SIFA NTT	Completed by 31 July 2023	$30 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 1.1.6 Design an effective communication strategy to enhance broader stakeholder awareness and buy-in	SIFA NTT	Completed by 28 February 2023	$30 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 1.1.7 NAMACO to undertake quarterly stakeholder consultations on skills needs and anticipation through its sectoral committees to provide evidence-based advice on skills development	NAMACO	Quarterly, starting from Q1 of 2023	$197 360	Zimbabwe Manpower Development Fund (ZIMDEF) and development partners
Activity 1.1.8 NAMACO to conduct inclusive outreach programmes to create awareness of its functions and broaden its reach	NAMACO	Quarterly, ongoing	$ 79 800	ZIMDEF and development partners
Activity 1.1.9 NAMACO to review the current and emerging sectors to understand the existing and new skills requirements	NAMACO	Quarterly, starting from Q1 of 2023	$43 600	ZIMDEF and development partners
Activity 1.1.10 Strengthen the National Dialogue Mechanism on skills anticipation and skills matching	MPSLSW	Quarterly	$20 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
	SIFA NTT	Annually	$20 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners

Outcome 1: Strengthened institutional mechanisms for policy coherence, social dialogue, and coordination of LMI and skills anticipation systems				
Activity	**Responsibility**	**Timelines**	**Budget (USD)**	**Source of Funds**
Output 1.2 Key policies (TVET, employment, labour migration and data sharing) developed or reviewed				
Activity 1.2.1 Develop the TVET Policy that integrates aspects of LMI and skills anticipation	Inter-ministerial TVET Policy Committee. Lead Ministry MHTEISTD	Completed by 30 November 2022	$400 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 1.2.2 Develop a data sharing policy	MPSLSW	Completed by Q1 2023	$30 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 1.2.3 Develop a statutory instrument that enforces data sharing by labour market actors	MPSLSW	Completed by June 2023	$10 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 1.2.4 Review of the employment policy to integrate aspects of skills anticipation	MPSLSW	Completed by December 2022	$50 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 1.2.5 Review labour migration policy to include matters of skills anticipation	MPSLSW	Completed by December 2022	$50 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 1.2.6 Review Zimbabwe National Industrial Policy to mainstream STED	MoIC	Completed by December 2024	$100 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 1.2.7 Develop communication strategies for key policies (TVET, employment, labour migration and data sharing)	MPSLSW and MHTEISTD	TVET – Completed by December 2022 Employment, labour and data sharing – Completed by December 2022	$30 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 1.2.8 Develop implementation plans for the key policies and the National Action Plan for skills anticipation	MPSLSW and MHTEISTD	TVET – Completed by 31 December 2022 Employment, labour and data sharing – Completed by December 2022	$50 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
	SIFA NTT	Completed by 31 July 2023		Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners

Outcome 2: Informed skills planning and development to reduce skills mismatch				
Activity	**Responsibility**	**Timelines**	**Budget (USD)**	**Source of Funds**
Output 2.1 Labour market players, research and training institutions are able to analyze and utilize the LMI and skills anticipation system for informed decision making				
Activity 2.1.1 Request ILO and African Regional Labour Administration Centre to provide training on analysis of LMIS and skills anticipation methodologies and practices	MPSLSW	Completed by 31 December 2022		
Activity 2.1.2 Train labour market players on skills needs assessment and skills forecasting techniques; STED	MPSLSW and MHTEISTD	Ongoing, commencing Q1 2023	$100 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 2.1.3 Undertake regular labour surveys	ZIMSTAT	Quarterly, commencing Q4 2022	$430 000 per quarter	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 2.1.4 STED studies on the 10 prioritized NDS1 Value Chains	MoIC	Ongoing, commencing July 2022	$600 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 2.1.5 Research support to labour market actors in implementing the National Action Plan i.e., skills anticipation assessment and labour market analysis to collate data to feed information into the LMIS portal and disseminate to a broad spectrum of stakeholders	Labour market actors SIFA NTT Research institution and think tanks e.g., LEDRIZ, ZEPARU	Ongoing, commencing Q1 2023	$450 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Output 2.2 Instruments for monitoring skills trends and development devised				
Activity 2.2.1 Devise and operationalize instruments to monitor skills trends to inform skills needs assessment and anticipation through the migration centres	MPSLSW and ZIMSTAT	Quarterly, commencing Q1 2023	$1 050 000 per quarter	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners



Outcome 3: Credible and comparable data produced from the LMIS to inform policy making				
Activity	**Responsibility**	**Timelines**	**Budget (USD)**	**Source of Funds**
Output 3.1: Data collection tools for LMI and skills anticipation developed				
Activity 3.1.1 Conduct training for institutions responsible for data generation to understand the ILO integrated LMIS	MPSLSW	Completed by 31 December 2023	$100 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 3.1.2 Develop standardized templates for the collection of administrative data	MPSLSW and ZIMSTAT	Completed by 31 December 2023	$20 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 3.1.3 Procure hardware and software systems to support the integrated LMIS	MPSLSW	Completed by 31 December 2023	$500 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 3.1.4 Develop capacity to manage the integrated LMIS	MPSLSW	Completed by 31 December 2023	$250 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 3.1.5 Train statisticians to design modules and questions on skills anticipation	MPSLSW and ZIMSTAT	Completed by 31 December 2022	$100 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 3.1.6 Conduct training for trainers and enumerators	ZIMSTAT	Commence by 31 October 2022	$260 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 3.1.7 Develop LMIS relevant to the Zimbabwean context	MPSLSW	Completed by 31 December 2023	Covered under Activity 1.1.2	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 3.1.8 Adopt artificial intelligence and big data analytics for data mining to inform skills needs assessment and anticipation	MPSLSW	Completed by 31 December 2023	$150 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Output 3.2: LMI concepts and definition of terms standardized				
Activity 3.2.1 Create awareness and train institutions responsible for generating LMI	MPSLSW and ZIMSTAT	Completed by 31 December 2023	$100 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 3.2.2 Harmonize LMI concepts and definition of terms in line with International Standards (e.g., Industrial Classification (ISIC) and Industrial Standard Classification of Occupation) to facilitate data collection	ZIMSTAT	Commence by 31 December 2023	$20 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 3.2.3 Validate the standardized concepts and definitions	MPSLSW	Completed by Q1 2023	$20 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners

Outcome 4: Strengthened and institutionalized LMI and skills anticipation data access, sharing and dissemination				
Activity	**Responsibility**	**Timelines**	**Budget (USD)**	**Source of Funds**
Output 4.1 LMI and skills anticipation data regularly collected and updated				
Activity 4.1.1 Capture data in line with international standards and update quarterly	MPSLSW ZIMSTAT Other data generating institutions	Completed 31 December 2023	$15 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Output 4.2 LMI and skills anticipation data accessed and disseminated to all users				
Activity 4.2.1 Disseminate LMI and data in formats that meet the requirement of diverse needs of labour market participants	MPSLSW	Quarterly, commencing 31 March 2023	$10 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Activity 4.2.2 Prepare annual LMIS and skills anticipation reports	MPSLSW	Bi-annually, commencing 30 June 2024	$20 000	Zimbabwe Treasury and development partners
Output 4.3 LMIS and skills anticipation funded				
Activity 4.3.1 Prepare budgets for the annual activities	SIFA NTT	Ongoing, commencing 31 July 2022		
Activity 4.3.2 Advocate for the National Action Plan	SIFA NTT	Ongoing, commencing June 2022		
Activity 4.3.3 Mobilize resources	SIFA NTT	Ongoing, commencing 31 July 2022		

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