Governance in Zimbabwe:
Analysis of Global Involvement in Zimbabwean Conflict
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History of Zimbabwe

- As a colony of England, many white settlers moved to and gained power in Southern Rhodesia in the late 1800s as political leaders and taking fertile farmland.

- A 7-year war between black nationalists and the country’s army broke out. 2 guerrilla factions were not allowed to vote in 1976 election.

- New election held, all groups voted and a member of a guerrilla faction, Robert Mugabe, gains power and changes country name from Rhodesia to Zimbabwe.

1923 - Southern Rhodesia is formed as a self-governing colony of England

1961 - National constitution is formed favoring whites in power

1979 - UN sanctions and uprisings lead to free elections and independence.

2002 - Mugabe rigs election to stay in power

2008 - Economic crisis is rampant. Mugabe intimidates supporters of counter-party, who would be elected democratically but pulls out. Power Sharing deal is signed.

2017 - Military takes control from the government and Mugabe resigns

1965 - Ian Smith declares Rhodesian independence but UK does not recognize due to impartial voting rights on majority.

1980 - Southern Rhodesia changes to Zimbabwe

1987 - Mugabe takes the position of President of Zimbabwe

Sources:
- Photo: Google Maps / ZimGuide
- CIA Factbook / Popular Social Science
Zimbabwe Post Independence

- Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia) has experienced a roller coaster of growth and decline in its history. 1999 marked the start of heavy economic decline that lasted until 2008 when the currency was replaced. Since 2008, the economy has quadrupled from 4.4B $US to 16.8B $US.

- After 1980, the government attempted to shift land ownership from solely white to a more inclusive demographic.

- The 1990s prompted many land reforms that did not produce results for the people of Zimbabwe until the mid 2000s, and they were limited. 350,000 household of 16M people were relocated.

- In 1992, a law was enacted that allowed the government to seize unproductive land or farm for any compensation price that they thought fair- often incredibly lower than market value.

- Reuters reports that Zimbabwe loses almost 1B $US to corruption (government, police, etc.) per year. Corruption continues to be a common trend in the country.

Sources: Photo: The World Bank (WDI) / Photo: TradingEconomics / Reuters / Mabaye
The Power Sharing Agreement of 2008

**Socio-Political Issues**

- Mugabe has been the president (dictator) of Zimbabwe since he took power in 1980, until he recently resigned in 2017.

- Morgan Tsvangirai is a member of the Movement for Democratic Change in Zimbabwe and was leading in the polls during an election when he pulled out of the race due to Mugabe using his military powers to forcefully intimidate Tsvangirai’s supporters.

- Political corruption was continuing to keep (most) of the wealthy in power and in high standing disregarding the lower classes entirely.

- The UN and the US have put sanctions on and condemned the nation on their corrupt policies.

- According to BBC, inflation of the Zimbabwean dollar reached 231M % in 2008 before it’s completely devalued.

- Wage freezes and food shortages cause many to turn to thievery and violence to survive. Human rights are very limited.

**Power Sharing Fixes**

- Mugabe agrees to share his political power with a rival, Morgan Tsvangirai, whom he would have lost to in a truly democratic election.

- Tsvangirai’s oversees 31 cabinet members including the President while building and preserving international relationships.

- The US and UN vow to remove sanctions when Zimbabwe shows economic and political progress.

- After 2008, real GDP quadruples in 8 years, HIV prevalence is down, there is economic and population growth and the country is no longer under the rule of Mugabe. This agreement was an overall success for Zimbabwe’s economy but human rights have not been expanded. Rule of law must be enforced.

- Agreement was brokered by South African President Thabo Mbeki, building a relationship and showing international support of the new government.

*Sources: Wall Street Journal / BBC News (1) / The World Bank / Human Rights Watch*
**Economic Collapse**

**Poverty Rates from 2011**
- 21% lived on $1.90 or less per day
- 47% lived on $3.20 or less per day
- 74% lived on $5.50 or less per day

**Social Unrest**
- Veterans arrange groups to take commercial farms to use for their families. Government does nothing to stop this.

**Unemployment Rate**
- This rate varies from 60-95%
- The CIA Factbook places unemployment in 2017 at 95%

**Economic Impact of Inflation**
- Economic growth was declining at nearly (-30%) before stopping the use of the Zimbabwean dollar.
- 35 Quadrillion $Z = 1 $US in 2008

**Material Production**
- Production fell from 8.3B $US in 1996 to 4.4B $US in 2008
- Agricultural production dropped due to farms being decommercialized.

*Sources: BBC News (2) / ZDHS Key Findings / The World Bank / Photo: World Integrated Trade Solution*
Mugabe’s Resignation

• The impeachment process initiated by lawmakers led Mugabe into sending a letter of resignation to the Speaker of Parliament, which he read out loud to the assembled group live.

• Mugabe attempted to fire the vice president to make a path for his wife To succeed him. Soon after, he also tried to have the nations top military commander arrested. Lawmakers had factual evidence of corruption by the president and his cabinet.

• The vice president, Emmerson Mnangagwa, was named to become the acting president.

• While the government is in this transition phase, South Africa should intervene and promote a new, truly democratic form of government that enforces the Rule of Law. South Africa should also ensure that their leaders cannot become dictators with ultimate power themselves.

• South Africa would have influence with Zimbabwe as their biggest trade ally and they would also be able to offer a new economic system if the old system cannot be revised; influence Zimbabwe to follow in the footsteps of South Africa.

Sources: New York Times / photo: Wikimedia Commons


• Mabaye, Tapiwa M. LAND REFORM IN ZIMBABWE: An Examination of Past & Present Policy, Shortcomings & Successes and Recommendations for Improvement. 2005, pp. 1–22, LAND REFORM IN ZIMBABWE: An Examination of Past & Present Policy, Shortcomings & Successes and Recommendations for Improvement, web.stanford.edu/class/e297a/Land Reform in Zimbabwe.doc.


