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# URBAN DEVELOPMENT STAKEHOLDERS RELATIONSHIPS IN PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS: A CASE STUDY OF RUWA TOWN, 1986-2015

**ABSTRACT**

*The article qualitatively analyses the relationship among stakeholders in the history of Ruwa Town development since the town's inception in 1986 up to 2015. Ruwa Town is among the post-colonial established towns in Zimbabwe which were developed using the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) approach. The PPP approach has been adopted as one of the urban development models in post-colonial Zimbabwe, though not entirely effective and efficient. Hence, this article argues that harmonious relationships among stakeholders in PPP-led urban development were fundamental in achieving efficient urban development. A tripartite relationship which includes the local authority, private land developers and residents was critical to the development of the town. The study uses both primary and secondary sources to derive research data. Primary data reviewed was mainly collected from the Ruwa Town Repository (archive) and was complemented by personal interviews. Secondary sources (Journals, books, articles and newspapers) were useful in situating the Ruwa case in broader urban studies and historiography of Zimbabwe and the world at large. The study found out that there were both cordial and hostile relationships among stakeholders during the development process of the town. Most of the hostile relations were detrimental to the development and derailed the process. This historical analysis of urban development stakeholders in Ruwa proves that good management of hostile relations is the major determinant of effective and efficient PPP-led urban development.*

**Key Words:** *Urban, Development, Ruwa, Relationships, Stakeholders, Zimbabwe, Public-Private Partnerships*

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

This paper uses a multi-disciplinary approach which employs history and development studies to analyse the relationship among stakeholders in the development process of Ruwa Town. This development process was based on the public-private partnership (PPP) model. Ruwa Town, located 27 km east of Zimbabwe's capital city of Harare, developed out of a tripartite relationship of the Local Authority, private land developers (PLDCs) and residents of the town. PLDCs are companies that subdivide land which they own or purchase from individual private owners into urban residential and industrial plots in line with permits given to them by the Government or local authorities for the purpose of making a profit.<sup>1</sup> These companies service the land by constructing offsite and onsite infrastructure, which includes water supply and sewerage facilities. The developers also develop road networks and other public facilities and amenities. Though Ruwa has been used as a model of PPP-led urban development in Zimbabwe, the development process of the town has not been a fairy tale and was characterised with many tensions among the development partners. Hence, this article brings out lessons learnt from the relationship among developers of Ruwa Town, thereby offering insights into viable partnerships in urban development in Zimbabwe in particular and Africa in general. The Ruwa case suggests intuitions into the development of emerging towns involving PLDCs in future.

PLDCs were invited by the Ruwa Local Authority to create a partnership in service provision and town development because they owned 99 per cent of the land in the area and had better financial resources as compared to the Local Authority.<sup>2</sup> The town was founded on a white commercial farming area in 1986. Within the period 1986 to 2015 there were eight major active developers which operated in Ruwa.<sup>3</sup> The companies had a role to satisfy both residents and the Local Authority in terms of offsite infrastructure and public amenities construction. The Local Authority, in turn, had to satisfy the needs of the residents and served as the major link between the residents and developer companies.

This discussion is deeply embedded in the public-private partnership approach to urban development. A review of literature on PPP has unveiled scholars such as Tony Bovaird, Chris Skelcher, Erick Hans Klijn and Geert

1 TT Muzorewa, The role of private land developers in urban development in Zimbabwe: The case of Ruwa Town, 1980-2015 (Dphil, Midlands State University, 2017), pp. 1-2.

2 M Nyandoro and T Muzorewa, "Transition from growth point policy to liberal urban development in Zimbabwe: The emergence of Ruwa Town, 1980-1991", *The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa* 13, 2017, pp. 1-10.

3 Muzorewa, The role of private land developers in urban development in Zimbabwe: The case of Ruwa Town, 1980-2015, p. 3.

Teisman, Graeme Hodge and Carsten Greve, and Roger Wettehall who defines PPP as inter-organisational arrangements that combine resources such as skills and knowledge from a public sector organisation with a private sector organisation (for-profit and nonprofit) in order to deliver societal goods.<sup>4</sup> Although there are varying theoretical perspectives underpinning PPPs, scholars generally refer to PPP as a hybrid organisational arrangement that has characteristics of both private and public sectors. In Ruwa, the PPP approach has been used as a vehicle for bringing together skills and knowledge from the Local Authority, together with funds and land from private land developers.

Anti-neoliberal scholars have heavily criticised PPPs for promoting profit oriented development. Faranak Miraftab criticises PPPs and views them as the “Trojan horse of neo-liberal development”.<sup>5</sup> She establishes the relationship between partnership theory and neo-liberalism. To her, the partnership approach traces its roots to neo-liberalism. She argues that historically PPPs were implemented by leaders such as Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, who were influenced by neo-liberalism.<sup>6</sup> Other anti-neoliberal scholars such as Neil Brenner and Nik Theodore, Phillip Mirowski, Adam Peck and Jamie Tickell, and Bob Jessop argue that neo-liberalism has imposed a pervasive market mentality in urban development.<sup>7</sup> Hence, it is impossible for developers to serve their profit-seeking interest while at the same time, seek the residents’ betterment of cities.

David Harvey also criticises PPP-led urban development for alienating ordinary citizens from “the right to the city”. The main thesis of “the right to the

4 T Bovaird, “Public-private partnerships: from contested concepts to prevalent practice”, *International Review of Administrative Sciences* 70, 2004, pp. 199-215; C Skelcher, “Public-private partnerships and hybridity”. In: E Ferlie *et al* (eds.), *The Oxford handbook of public management* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); EH Klijn and GR Teisman, “Institutional and strategic barriers to public private partnership: An analysis of Dutch cases”, *Public Money and Management* 23, 2003, pp. 137 – 146; GA Hodge and C Greve, “Public-private partnerships: An international performance review”, *Public Administration Review* 67, 2007, pp. 545-558; R Wettehall, “Mixes and partnerships through time”. In: GA Hodge *et al* (eds.) *International handbook on public private partnerships* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2010).

5 F Mifftab, “Private-Public Partnerships: The Trojan horse of neo-liberal development”, *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 24, 2004, p. 91.

6 Mifftab, “Private-Public Partnerships: The Trojan horse of neo-liberal development”, p. 91.

7 N Brenner and N Theodore, “Cities and geographies of actually existing neoliberalism”, *Antipode* 33, 2002, pp.349-379; P Mirowski, *Never let a serious crisis go to waste: How neoliberalism survived the financial meltdown* (London: Verso, 2013); J Peck and A Tickell, “Neoliberal space”. In: N Brenner and N Theodore (eds.), *Spaces of neoliberalism: Urban restructuring in Western Europe and North America* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002.); B Jessop, “Liberalism, neoliberalism and urban governance: A state theoretical perspective”, *Antipode* 34, 2002, pp.452-472.

city” is a call for ordinary individuals to take control of the process of planning in urbanisation.<sup>8</sup> Hence, the right to the city challenges residents of Ruwa to rise against PLDCs and the Local Authority and take control of planning powers in the town. Harvey developed this approach from the works of Lefebvre who calls for urban revolution, to confront politically based capitalism in urban development.<sup>9</sup> A revolution is sometimes violent and can result in hostile relationships among stakeholders in urban development. To Harvey, the process of using private capital for the promotion of urbanisation gave more urban planning power to the private sector at the expense of ordinary people. PLDCs were invited to Ruwa because of the dire need of capital by the Local Authorities. Hence, Harvey’s work remains a useful analytical tool to study PLDCs and their relationship with other stakeholders of urban growth in Ruwa.

Since Ruwa is a new town developed in the independence era, there is little literature on it compared to big cities like Harare and Bulawayo. One of the few works on Ruwa is Mark Nyandoro and Terence Muzorewa’s article on the transition from growth point policy to liberal development in the emergence of Ruwa Town. The authors argue that private developers were influential in liberal urban development which replaced government monopoly in urban development during the post-colonial period in Zimbabwe.<sup>10</sup> According to Nyandoro and Muzorewa, PLDCs were effective instruments in ensuring the success of the liberal urban development strategy.<sup>11</sup> This article further evaluates the role of PLDCs by observing inter-organisation relations in the development process of the town.

This research deals with inter-organisations relationships in urban development. Inter-organisations relationship scholars such as Christine Oliver, Joseph Galaskiewicz, Donna Woods and Barbra Grey, and Christine Huxham have sought to establish the major determinants of relationships, and strategic partnerships proved to be the most crucial determinant.<sup>12</sup> Strategic partnership resulted in the partnership in Ruwa where private developers benefited from the platform given to them by the Local Authority to sell their

8 D Harvey, “The right to the city”, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 27, 2003, pp. 939- 94.

9 Harvey, “The right to the city”.

10 Nyandoro and Muzorewa, “Transition from growth point policy”, p. 2.

11 Nyandoro and Muzorewa, “Transition from growth point policy”, p. 10.

12 C Oliver, “Determinants of Interorganisational relationships: Integration and future directions”, *Academy of Management Review* 15, 1990, pp. 241-265; J Galaskiewicz, “Interorganisational relations”, *Annual Review of Sociology* 11, 1985, pp. 281-304; DJ Wood and B Gray, “Towards a comprehensive theory of collaboration”, *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* 27, 1991, pp. 139-162; C Huxham, *Creating collaborative advantage* (London: Sage, 1996).

land for profit while the latter benefited from the land and revenue in the form of endowments from the former. This meant that the Town Council and PLDC merged and agreed to develop the area for the benefit of both parties.<sup>13</sup> The Local Authority created a framework and an environment in which private land developers thrived. Developers invested in projects which benefited residents by providing public amenities.

Conflict is one inherent aspect of inter-organisations relationships. According to William Zartman, "conflict is an incompatibility of positions, stagnant circumstances when mutually exclusive views prevail".<sup>14</sup> He argues that conflicts are inevitable, normal, and an inherent feature of human beings.<sup>15</sup> The Ruwa case confirms the three views on conflict in organisations which have emerged within the discipline of conflict management. The first is the traditional view which argues that conflict is always destructive and has negative impacts on development.<sup>16</sup> The second view on conflict has been identified as the behavioural or contemporary view, which states that conflict is natural and inevitable. According to the contemporary view, conflicts have either a negative or positive effect, all depending on how they are managed.<sup>17</sup> The third view is called the interactionist perspective. This perspective assumes that all conflicts are important and increase performance given that appropriate levels of the conflicts are maintained to keep projects viable, creative, innovative and self-critical.<sup>18</sup> In Ruwa all the three views are used to assess the conflicts that arose among the stakeholders, but the traditional view of conflicts which argues that conflict is detrimental to development is a more appropriate description of relationships among stakeholders in Ruwa. This is because inter-organisational conflicts among the partners in the development of Ruwa were common.

Conflict in the context of urban development is an issue which is not peculiar to Ruwa but common in other African towns such as Norton in Zimbabwe, Kalanga Town in Malawi and Obuasi Town in Ghana. AbdouMaliq Simone discusses contestation in terms of fundamental rights embedded in relationships among families, between men and women, patrons and clients,

13 Note, the word "Council" is used interchangeably with "Local Authority" to avoid monotonous reading, this also applies to "PLDC" which is interchangeably used with "the developer" or "the company".

14 W Zartman, *Negotiation and conflict management: Essays on theory and practice* (New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis, 2008), p. 11.

15 Zartman, *Negotiation and conflict management: Essays on theory and practice*, p. 11.

16 VK Verma, "Conflict management", *The Project Management Handbook* (Berkeley: Project Management Institute, 1998), pp. 1-12.

17 Verma, "Conflict management", *The Project Management Handbook*, p. 1.

18 Verma, "Conflict management", *The Project Management Handbook*, p. 1.

and citizens and government in African cities.<sup>19</sup> He argues that states often find it difficult to act for the benefit of their citizens and thus take measures to avoid being accountable to them.<sup>20</sup> To him, there is no guarantee that various stakeholders in urban development such as municipalities, property developers, foreign and domestic investors, multilateral institutions, and popular movements can forge complementary interest.<sup>21</sup> Although there are many stakeholders in urban development as shown in Simone's work, my study in Ruwa focuses on the tripartite relationship of residents, the Local Authority and PLDCs

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To analyse the historical relationship among stakeholders in the development of Ruwa Town, diverse qualitative methodological approaches were used. The approaches include a multi-disciplinary approach which draws from history and development studies. To tap into the history of relationships in urban development, secondary literature (academic books and journals), print and electronic media, field research, and interviews with residents, PLDCs and local authorities' administration personnel were utilised as the basis of the research and survey. Multi-disciplinary secondary sources which focus on history, urban studies and development studies were consulted. Oral interviews were employed to gain more insights into the stakeholder's/peoples' notions and perceptions/reflections about the partnership in the town's development. Purposive sampling was used to pick informants who had experience and knowledge of the history of the town. The Ruwa Town Repository was a major source of local primary archival documents used to complement other sources of data.

## 3. STAKEHOLDERS IN RUWA'S DEVELOPMENT

There were three main stakeholders in the development and growth of Ruwa, and these were the residents, local authorities and PLDCs. The local authorities and PLDCs were responsible for providing offsite services to the residents. Eight major companies developed different areas and suburbs in Ruwa from 1986 up to 2015. Every PLDC was assigned specific areas to develop. Mashonaland Holdings Private Limited was the first company to establish itself in Ruwa, and it developed the Ruwa industrial site and the Ruwa

19 A Simone, *The social infrastructures of city life in contemporary Africa* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2010).

20 Simone, *The social infrastructures of city life in contemporary Africa*, p. 8.

21 Simone, *The social infrastructures of city life in contemporary Africa*, p. 8.

“Location”<sup>22</sup> residential suburb. The “Location” was the first major suburb to be established in the town in 1986. Several companies followed Mashonaland Holdings and these include Chipukutu Properties responsible for developing Chipukutu Park and the Zimbabwe Reinsurance Corporation (ZIMRE) which developed ZIMRE Park. In addition ZB Bank/Wentspring Investments Private Limited developed Springvale Park, Damofalls Investments Land Developers developed Damofalls Park, Fairview Land Developers developed Fairview Park, the Zimbabwe Housing Company (ZHC) developed Cranbrook Park, Barochit Property Developers developed Barochit Park, and Tawona Gardens Private Limited developed both Tawona Gardens high-density suburb and Marcus Park. Since he who name bears the most power, most of the suburbs in Ruwa were named after the developers and this is a reflection of PLDCs’ domination and power within the tripartite relationship.

The Local Authority or Council was the Legal custodian of service delivery and policy in the area. Since the inception of Ruwa in 1986 up to 2015, the area has been administered by three local authorities who were all appointed by the government. Ruwa was established as a growth point in 1986, and the government gave the Urban Development Corporation (UDCORP) the mandate of local administration of the growth point. Operating as a growth point from 1986 to 1990, Ruwa became an urban area under the administration of the Ruwa Local Board (RLB) set up in September 1990.<sup>23</sup> Ruwa was subsequently granted town status in 2008, and the Ruwa Town Council (RTC) was set up and given the role to administer the town. The responsibilities of the three stakeholders in the area created the base for their relationship. They all interacted on various platforms in the process of developing the town.

#### 4. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE DEVELOPERS AND THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

The Ruwa Local Board (RLB) invited private developers to create a partnership in service provision and town development. Hence, the PLDCs became a crucial stakeholder in the development of the town and complemented the Local Authority in service delivery. Although the two acted as service providers, the Local Authority had the legal mandate of monitoring the work of the companies. The *Regional Town and Country Planning Act* (RTCPA) of

22 The suburb is popularly known as the “Location” because it resembles colonial-established high density suburbs in Harare which were called locations.

23 Muzorewa, The role of private land developers in urban development in Zimbabwe: The case of Ruwa Town, 1980-2015, p.14.

1976 updated in 1996 which was enacted to guide planning in both urban and rural areas in the country, created the base for the partnership between the Local Authority and private developers. The Act gave municipalities power to engage other stakeholders in the planning and development of their towns.

The RTCPA which provided for the introduction of the land development permit in Ruwa was a step taken by the government to create regulations for the town's development. Its provisions, which included the land development permit, guided and regulated the relationship between the companies and the local authorities.<sup>24</sup> Before any construction or development commenced, PLDCs were therefore obliged to apply for a development permit to the Department of Physical Planning of the Ministry of Local Government. Development was only allowed to commence upon the approval of the application. The Department of Physical Planning was mandated to work with local planning authorities to draft the permit and to make decisions on the permit application.<sup>25</sup> Involving the Ruwa planning authorities in making a decision on the permit application gave the Council a sense of ownership of the development project being applied for by a developer.

The RTCPA, in addition, stipulates that the applicant for land subdivision for development purposes should set aside land for public amenities development and pay development endowments to the Local Authority.<sup>26</sup> After successfully developing the area, PLDCs were entitled to a certificate of compliance by the Local Authority. The certificate of compliance was important to the developers because it was one of the documents required by the Registrar of [Title] Deeds to transfer ownership from the companies to those who would have purchased land.<sup>27</sup> This process of transfer released the PLDCs from the legal mandate of delivering services such as road maintenance and water supply to the area. The permit process gave the Ruwa local authorities control over PLDCs' development activities. Since the developers needed the certificate of compliance from the Local Authority upon finishing their projects, they were forced to comply with the Council's set standards stated in the development permit and expectations on infrastructural development. In this manner, the land development permit

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24 A development permit or planning permission is a document issued to a land developer by the Department of Physical Planning before any development is carried out. The document contains conditions to be achieved by the developer and some guide lines during the development process.

25 Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ), *Regional, Town and Country Planning Act* (Harare: Government Printers, 1996).

26 GoZ, *Regional, Town and Country Planning Act*.

27 Ruwa Town Repository, Permit for the subdivision of land: Chipukutu Properties, 1998; Permit for the subdivision of land, J and H Enterprises, 2001; Permit for the subdivision of land: Mashonaland Holdings LTD, 1993.



established the partnership between the Local Authority and the developer companies. Following the debate on PPPs, David Osborne and Ted Gaebler's analogy of the "rowing and steering of a boat" can be used to explain the Ruwa partnership with PLDCs.<sup>28</sup> For them, the local government should steer the boat (guiding development) and let the private sector row it (providing basic infrastructure). To steer development, the local authority must offer legislative and regulatory services.<sup>29</sup> This was done through the RTCPA permit.

Cordial relationships between the Local Authority and developer companies proved to promote development as illustrated by several events that occurred during the development process of the town. The RLB protected the companies' interest during the land reform exercise by facilitating dialogue between PLDCs and the government. The Local Authority directly corresponded with the Government in delisting farms belonging to PLDCS which were listed for acquisition during the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) in 2001. The FTLRP was a Government land redistribution approach which was adopted in the country, culminating in extensive repossession of commercial farmland by 2004.<sup>30</sup> Several farms belonging to PLDCs were listed for acquisition for redistributive purposes.<sup>31</sup> Some PLDCs challenged the decision by the government to list their farms for land distribution purposes. Chipukutu Properties Private Limited, for example, wrote letters to the Minister of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement pleading for its farm to be delisted but the company's efforts were to no avail as the name of the farm continued to appear on the list of the farms to be acquired.<sup>32</sup> In July 2001 the Local Authority intervened on behalf of all developers to negotiate with the government for their farms to be delisted or removed from the acquisition list. The Council asked for farms in the Ruwa Growth Point area to be removed from the list of farms that were designated

28 D Osborne and T Gaebler, *Reinventing government: How the entrepreneurial spirit is transforming the public sector* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1992), p 10.

29 Osborne and Gaebler, *Reinventing government: How the entrepreneurial spirit is transforming the public sector*, p. 10.

30 S Moyo, "Land poverty reduction and public action in Zimbabwe", ISS/UNDP Land, Poverty and Public Action Policy Paper 11 (Hague: Institute of Social Studies, 2005), p. 2. For further reading on the land reform see, book chapters in B Raftopoulos and S Jensen (eds.), *Zimbabwe's unfinished business: Rethinking land, state and nation in the context of crisis* (Harare: Weaver Press, 2003); S Moyo and P Yeros, "Land occupations and land reform in Zimbabwe: Towards the national democratic revolution". In: S Moyo and P Yeros (eds.), *Reclaiming the Land: The Resurgence of Rural Movements in Africa, Asia and Latin America* (London: Zed Books, 2005).

31 *The Herald*, 11 February 2001.

32 Ruwa Town Repository (1C11), Letter from Chipukutu Properties to the Minister of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement, 21 December 2000; Ruwa Town Repository (1C11), Letter from J Vidler of Chipukutu Properties to the Provincial Administration Office Mashonaland East, 15 January 2001.

for redistribution because these had been set aside for urban development. This move resulted in a number of farms being removed from the FTLRP list. The farms that were delisted included Hofmoor Estate, Inverangus Farm, Chipukutu Farm, Fresness Farm, Tawona Estate, Glamis Farm and Fairview Farm.<sup>33</sup> Clearly, the Local Authority represented the PLDCs, and this was proof of good relations between the two entities.

However, although the Local Authority represented the PLDCs as they negotiated with the Government for land, there were cases where conflict emerged. Conflict is revealed in that the Local Authority sometimes faced challenges in collecting debts and fees from some PLDCs. An example can be given of Chipukutu Properties who were reluctant to pay directional billboard sign fees for the year 2011 to the extent that the Council threatened to dismantle the boards without notice.<sup>34</sup> The Council at other times had difficulties in collecting endowment fees from some PLDCs. The RLB complained to Damofalls Land Developers that the endowment they were paying was being paid in trickles.<sup>35</sup> The PLDCs wanted to dodge paying development and endowment fees because they wanted to maximise profits at all cost. This scenario confirms Pierre Bourdieu argument that private entities are interested in profit more than public welfare.<sup>36</sup> As a result, there were elements of conflict over payments between the Council and some developers.

Another source of conflict was the competition between PLDCs and the Local Authority in acquiring land for development in Ruwa. In 1997, the Local Authority wanted to acquire Cranbrook Farm of Galway Estate for the expansion of Ruwa Township.<sup>37</sup> This failed to materialise after the ZHC, which had better financial capacity, acquired the farm before the Council made any meaningful manoeuvres towards acquiring the farm.<sup>38</sup> Harvey in the “right to the city” approach emphasised the role of capital in elevating private developers planning influence over other stakeholders.<sup>39</sup> The Local Authority was, therefore, forced to identify another piece of land because it lacked

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33 Ruwa Town Repository (1C11), Correspondence between RLB and the Provincial Administrator, 24 July 2001.

34 Ruwa Town Repository, Letter from RLB to Chipukutu Properties, 31 March 2011.

35 Ruwa Town Repository (CBB), Minutes of the meeting held between the RTC and Damofalls Land Developers, 6 April 2001.

36 P Bourdieu, *Acts of Resistance: Against the Tyranny of the Market* (New York: Free Press, 1998), p. 32.

37 Ruwa Town Repository (C/17), Correspondence between the Ministry of Local Government and RLB, 4 September, 1997.

38 Ruwa Town Repository (C/17), Correspondence between the Ministry of Local Government and RLB, 4 September.

39 Harvey, “The right to the city”, p. 3.

the financial muscle to challenge the PLDC.<sup>40</sup> This situation resulted in the straining of relations between the Local Authority and the ZHC.

One of the conflicts between the Ruwa Local Authority and PLDCs emanated from lack of cooperation from the companies. In one case, the council invited the ZHC for a meeting to discuss delays in infrastructure development in 2005. The developer turned down the invitation on the bases that the agenda was trivial.<sup>41</sup> The Local Authority was offended by the response from the developer. In retaliation, a month later after the incident, the Local Authority declined to write a letter of support for the ZHC to procure diesel from the government for their land development project.<sup>42</sup> A similar example of lack of cooperation is when some PLDCs including Chipukutu Properties failed to turn up for a meeting which was called by the RLB in July 2000 to discuss a query they had raised on rates.<sup>43</sup> Only two PLDCs turned up for the meeting, and the Local Authority expressed its disappointment through letters to the developers who had absented themselves from the meeting.<sup>44</sup> These examples show that some PLDCs did not cooperate with the Local Authority, and this was detrimental to development progress.

It was not only the Local Authority which complained about lack of cooperation by the PLDCs, but the companies also complained against the Local Authority. Some developers complained about their projects being delayed by the Town Council while others accused the Council of distancing itself from development activities in Ruwa. In 2007, the chairperson of Wentspring Investments complained about the Local Authority's bureaucratic tendencies that delayed development projects.<sup>45</sup> Another company, the Zimbabwe Reinsurance Corporation, also felt that the Local Authority was unsympathetic to them by not giving them unlimited support for their projects they expected.<sup>46</sup> The problem of bureaucracy within the Local Authority is one reason why neo-liberalism gives preference to private sector administration over public sector administration.

Tawona Gardens claimed that the Council sometimes shifted terms of agreement for their gain thereby disadvantaging the developers. One example

40 Ruwa Town Repository (C/17), Correspondence between the Ministry of Local Government and RLB, 4 September.

41 Ruwa Town Repository (C/17), Letter from Zimbabwe Housing Company Private Limited to the RLB, 31 October 2005.

42 Ruwa Town Repository (C/17), Letter from Zimbabwe Housing Company Private Limited to the RLB, 31 October.

43 Ruwa Town Repository, Letter from RLB to Chipukutu Properties, 10 August 2000.

44 Ruwa Town Repository, Letter from RLB to Chipukutu Properties, 10 August.

45 Ruwa Town Repository, Letter from K Macdonald of Wentspring to the RLB, 8 September 2007.

46 Ruwa Town Repository (CPP), Letter from ZIMRE to the RLB, 25 November 1996.

is where the members of the developers' consortium made an agreement in 2007 with the Local Authority that the northern suburbs would benefit from the pump station and the main water pipeline the Consortium had constructed from Zimre Park to Ruwa Location.<sup>47</sup> However, even though the developers' consortium established the water pumping station and the main pipeline, the northern suburbs were cut off from water supplies because the RTC wanted to satisfy demand from the southern suburbs first, where there was greater population concentration in the town.<sup>48</sup> In another case, Tawona Gardens entered into an agreement with the RTC that they would pay their endowment in the form of land, but the Council shifted goal posts and started to demand in 2009 endowment payments in cash.<sup>49</sup> As indicated by Simone, it is sometimes difficult for municipalities and developers to forge complementary interest in the development process of African towns.<sup>50</sup> In Ruwa, the flouting of agreements compromised the integrity of the Local Authority as the leader of development projects in the town.

In most cases, conflicts between the Local Authority and the PLDCs were resolved through dialogue and negotiation as the major conflict management techniques. In organisations, negotiation is a process of combining dialectical conflict resolutions through communication.<sup>51</sup> In Ruwa, whenever the Local Authority was aggrieved by PLDCs, it would communicate with them through letters as happened in 2007 and 2008. Upon receiving the letters from the Local Authority, the PLDCs, for example Chipukutu and Damofalls sometimes responded by paying the money they owed the Council. At other times, developer companies which had grievances against the Local Authority used diplomatic ways to iron out their differences. An example was when the RTC demanded endowment payment in 2009 from Tawona Gardens in cash as opposed to land as agreed initially in their permit. In this case, the developer did not contest the Local Authority's position, but went and explained their financial predicament to the Council.<sup>52</sup> In the end, the PLDC successfully persuaded the RTC to accept land as endowment payment as per the initial agreement.<sup>53</sup> The approach used, forced the Local Authority to agree to receive part of the endowment from Tawona Gardens in the form of land. Tawona Gardens had realised that antagonising the Local Authority was counterproductive since the Council was responsible for approving private

47 Interview: Author with N Bakaris (Director of Tawona Gardens), Ruwa Supermarket, Ruwa, 11 January 2015.

48 Interview: Author with N Bakaris.

49 Interview: Author with N Bakaris.

50 Simone, *The social infrastructures of city life in contemporary Africa*, p. 8.

51 Zartman, *Negotiation and Conflict Management: Essays on Theory and Practice*, p. 11.

52 Interview: Author with N Bakaris.

53 Interview: Author with N Bakaris.

land developer infrastructure. Hence, PLDCs tried to be as diplomatic as they could in order to maintain good relations with the Local Authority.

## 5. RELATIONSHIPS AMONG PRIVATE LAND DEVELOPERS

Bad relationships among the developers retarded coordination which was an important tenet of town development. Private land developer projects did not usually overlap as each company developed its own piece of land and adhered to regulations on a given permit. This may seem to have reduced interaction among the developers. However, there were instances where the companies formed development alliances and cases where developers crossed each other's path.

For instance, the developers of the northern part of Ruwa exhibited rapport by creating alliances to improve infrastructure by forming the Ruwa River Consortium (RRC) water development alliance in 2007. According to the United Nations (UN) Habitat, "private actors have a peculiar ability to share a variety of resources and technologies in a cooperative way to improve urban infrastructure".<sup>54</sup> This was demonstrated by four developers, namely ZB Financial Holdings, Tawona Gardens, Fairview Land Developers and Barochit Property Developers, who created the RRC which was a group of PLDCs dedicated to constructing water and sewerage infrastructure.<sup>55</sup> The group entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Council to construct some offsite infrastructural facilities on behalf of the Local Authority.<sup>56</sup> This decision was reached after the developers had discovered that the Local Authority did not have adequate funds to put the required infrastructure in place.<sup>57</sup> Since it was financially impossible for one developer to undertake the task, a coalition of developers became the remedy for constructing the required offsite infrastructure to service Ruwa's northern Suburbs. Their contributions positively impacted infrastructure development in Ruwa. The RRC, for example, was responsible for constructing the Springvale Water Reservoir and the northern suburbs' main water pipeline. The RRC, thus, reflected cordial relationships among the PLDCs.

Not all PLDCs were able to work in harmony. Chipukutu Properties, through their legal practitioners, complained in 2005 that Damofalls Land

54 UN Habitat, *Public-private partnerships in housing and urban development* (Nairobi: UN Habitat, 2011), p 5.

55 Ruwa Town Repository, Proposed meeting to be held between RLB and Wenspring Investments PVT LTD, 23 March 2007.

56 Ruwa Town Repository, Proposed meeting to be held between RLB and Wenspring Investments PVT LTD, 23 March.

57 Interview: Author with N Bakaris.

Developers interfered with their development project. Chipukutu claimed that Damofalls illegally connected water pipes from their main water system.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, during its road construction in 2005, Damofalls was allegedly said to have damaged a 200-millimetre sewer pipe that connected with Zimre Park.<sup>59</sup> In the process of establishing a sewerage reticulation system, the developer connected their sewerage pipes to the main pipeline through Chipukutu Park, damaging the Chipukutu Bridge.<sup>60</sup> In another incident, during rock blasting by Damofalls, flying debris damaged the Chipukutu Park main waterhole and rocks and debris were left scattered along most of the roads.<sup>61</sup> Damofalls' actions retarded Chipukutu's work. These incidents demonstrate that as much as the PLDCs played a significant role in infrastructure development, disagreements that derailed progress sometimes arose among them.

Some PLDCs like ZIMRE were not comfortable in sharing offsite infrastructure with other companies because of the stiff competition among them in the Ruwa land market. In 2000, Chipukutu Properties had a problem with linking roads and services with Zimre Park. Chipukutu Park needed access to the main Harare-Mutare highway, but the road had to go through the Zimre Park.<sup>62</sup> The possibility of creating road access through Zimre Park into Chipukutu Park was premised on the ability of Chipukutu Properties to construct a bridge across the river on the boundary of the two suburbs.<sup>63</sup> However, the construction of the bridge proved to be expensive. The solution was to connect the road at Zimre Park with the Chipukutu road at an old bridge in Zimre Park.<sup>64</sup> The two developers had a hard time negotiating in order to reach an agreement. This problem delayed the land survey and development of Chipukutu Park. ZIMRE did not have the will to share resources to aid the development of Chipukutu Park.

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58 Ruwa Town Repository, Correspondence between Hantor and Imerman Legal Practitioners on behalf of Chipukutu Properties and the RLB, 21 November 2005.

59 Ruwa Town Repository, Correspondence between Hantor and Imerman Legal Practitioners on behalf of Chipukutu Properties and the RLB.

60 Ruwa Town Repository, Correspondence between Hantor and Imerman Legal Practitioners on behalf of Chipukutu Properties and the RLB.

61 Ruwa Town Repository, Correspondence between Hantor and Imerman Legal Practitioners on behalf of Chipukutu Properties and the RLB.

62 Ruwa Town Repository, Chipukutu Properties, Letter from B. Saich to Chipukutu Properties, cc Department of Physical Planning, 1 February 2000.

63 Ruwa Town Repository, letter from B Saich to Chipukutu Properties, cc Department of Physical Planning, 1 February 2000.

64 Ruwa Town Repository, letter from B Saich to Chipukutu Properties, cc Department of Physical Planning.

## 6. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN DEVELOPERS AND RUWA RESIDENTS

The relationship between the PLDCs and Ruwa residents was established mainly through the process of selling and buying of property on the property market. PLDCs were responsible for subdividing and developing land through constructing offsite and onsite infrastructure before selling it to individuals. As postulated by Adam Smith, "It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest".<sup>65</sup> In the same way, it was not out of the benevolence of PLDCs that Ruwa Town was built, but from their (developer companies) utmost desire to make a profit. Hence, capital was the bases of the PLDCs/residents relationship.

After being impressed by the work of a developer in Gweru, the Minister of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development, Ignatius Chombo, praised PLDCs for delivering quality offsite infrastructure to the residents of Gweru and promised to avail more land for urban development to PLDCs.<sup>66</sup> PLDCs were trusted by both the Government and the general public. Transparency by some PLDCs created a good reputation for them and gave customers (their clients) confidence in them as compared to public-led plot development. When PLDCs delivered on their promises, they established trust from the residents and enjoyed cordial relationships which were healthy for town development.

As a result of good relations, in times of crisis, the residents and prospective residents sympathised with the companies when they failed to deliver on promises they made to the residents. For example, in 2004, Barochit Property Developers Private Limited was financially crippled and was unable to finish developing offsite infrastructure for its customers to move in. In this case, the prospective residents of Barochit Park assisted the PLDC by contributing ZW\$ 10 million towards purchasing a water pump which was required to upgrade the USAID pumping station which was a sanitary prerequisite before people were allowed to settle in the area by the Local Authority.<sup>67</sup> The prospective residents proved their willingness to help the developer because there were good relations between them.

Despite the cordial relationship between the developers and residents, in some instances, sour relationships emanated from PLDCs' slow pace

65 A Smith, *An inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations* (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd, 1904), p. 19.

66 *The Sunday Mail*, 14-20 April 2013.

67 Ruwa Town Repository (C/18), Minutes of the meeting held between RLB, Sebassa Developer and prospective residents of Sebassa, 9 June 2004.

in infrastructure development. Companies such as Damofalls, Barochit, Fairview and ZHC angered residents because they sold their plots to people before they were fully serviced. They used the revenue from the sales of such plots to complete offsite infrastructure development. Servicing of plots, therefore took longer to complete. Delays in completing the construction of infrastructure as required by the Local Authority frustrated the residents. Further frustration came from the fact that certificates of compliance were not issued by the Council unless the offsite infrastructure was complete. This also meant that plot owners did not receive title deeds which deprived them of ownership rights.

While PLDCs such as Mashonaland Holdings, ZIMRE and ZB Holdings engaged in honest and transparent transactions with customers, other cases in Ruwa exposed irregularities in land transactions resulting in bitter relationships which compromised the integrity of developers. The ZHC case can be used to illustrate the hostility which was created after developers had short-changed their clients. The company started selling plots in July 2000. The developer had told clients/customers that the plots would be completely serviced within two years.<sup>68</sup> However, five years after the commencement of the project, the development of offsite infrastructure was not even halfway complete.<sup>69</sup> At the same time, the Local Authority did not allow the PLDCs' clients to settle in Cranbrook Park since infrastructure development was still incomplete.<sup>70</sup> This did not please plot owners who were desperate for homes. They then made frantic efforts to communicate with the developer, but it was to no avail since they got negative responses from the company's head office.<sup>71</sup> The developer always gave empty promises on the state of development in Cranbrook Park.

The Local Authority tried to mediate to facilitate communication between the PLDC and the plot owners, but the company remained "arrogant", resisting dialogue.<sup>72</sup> Thus, the conflict reached an impasse and had to be resolved through the courts. In 2007 the Cranbrook Stand Owners Association filed

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68 Ruwa Town Repository (C/17), Letter from Stand Owners Association to the RLB, 21 August 2005.

69 Ruwa Town Repository (C/17), Letter from Stand Owners Association to the RLB.

70 Ruwa Town Repository (C/17), Information to be used at a meeting to be held between the Permanent Secretary for Local Government, RLB and three developers namely: Tawona Portion of Galway Estate, Lot 1 of Cranbrook, Sebassa and their respective beneficiaries' representatives, 9 February 2006.

71 Ruwa Town Repository (C/17), Minutes for the meeting held on 16 April 2006 at Cranbrook Park, 16 April 2006.

72 Ruwa Town Repository (C/17), Minutes for the meeting held on 16 April 2006 at Cranbrook Park.



a lawsuit against the developer at the High Court of Zimbabwe.<sup>73</sup> The Court ruled in favour of the applicant (the Association), and the ZHC was placed under provisional judicial management on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June 2007.<sup>74</sup> The process of going to court took significant time and resources which could have been channelled towards the growth of the suburb. PLDCs' scandals exposed at the courts drew much attention from the media. This resulted in some people losing faith in many PLDCs.

PLDCs' slow pace in developing plots did not result in conflicts in Cranbrook only, but developers such as Barochit, Fairview, Damofalls and Tawona Gardens faced the same challenge though to a lesser extent than Cranbrook. A field trip to Barochit Park in 2014 revealed much resentment towards the company from the residents. Most of the residents had bought their plots in 2000, but the development of infrastructure was still incomplete by 2014.<sup>75</sup> Over the decade from 2000 to 2010, the development of offsite infrastructure was slow.<sup>76</sup> Residents of these suburbs continued to show their unhappiness about delays in offsite infrastructural development in their area.

Fraudulent cases where bogus PLDCs duped some prospective residents in Ruwa thus increased. Such PLDCs took clients' money under the pretence that they owned land, but once they had been paid, they disappeared into oblivion. The Metof Investment scandal was one of the cases of grand duping in the history of Ruwa. More than 7 000 home seekers were deceived and had their money ripped off by Metof Investments who sold land that it did not own.<sup>77</sup> Metof Investment was a company owned by a "conman" who used the name Kay Makhela and sometimes used aliases Peter Elo and Jealous Mamudza.<sup>78</sup> Metof started selling plots in 2000 when the company's adverts

73 Ruwa Town Repository, In the High Court of Zimbabwe held at Harare Case: No. HC 7438/00, 4 July 2007.

74 Judicial management is a legal system used to rehabilitate or help companies that are financially crippled but have room for resuscitation. The aim of judicial management is to avoid liquidation or winding up of a company under a financial turmoil caused by mismanagement. A judicial manager is appointed by the Court under the provisions of the *Companies Act (24:03)* to work on revival initiatives. For further reading on the judicial management system in Zimbabwe see, R Dzvimbo, *Should the Zimbabwean Companies Act Move Away from Judicial Management and Adopt Business Rescue* (LLM, University of Cape Town, 2013); Ruwa Town Repository, *Cranbrook Housing Development, Being Administered by Zimbabwe Housing Company (Private) Limited (Under Judicial Management)*, Progress Report, February 2008.

75 Interview: Author with R Jakachira (Barochit Park Home Owner), Barochit Park, Ruwa, 20 November 2014.

76 Interview: Author with T Nyamande (Barochit Park Home Owner), Barochit Park, Ruwa, 20 November, 2014.

77 *The Financial Gazette*, 21 -27 December 2000.

78 *The Financial Gazette*, 21 -27 December 2000.

for residential plots in Ruwa started to appear in newspapers.<sup>79</sup> The company demanded between ZW\$ 65 000 and ZW\$110 000 upfront as deposit or ZW\$ 125 000 for 300m<sup>2</sup> plots.<sup>80</sup> This bogus PLDC sold land which did not belong to them, but to J and H Enterprises which was allegedly owned by a retired army chief, General Solomon Mujuru.<sup>81</sup> Metof did not hold any title deeds for the land it was selling. The Department of Physical Planning and the RLB confirmed that they did not issue any development permit to Metof.<sup>82</sup> The PLDC had just made an offer to Mujuru to buy land at his Inverungus Farm in Ruwa, but the developer had breached the terms of the agreement resulting in the agreement being cancelled.<sup>83</sup> The bogus company went on to sell the land under the guise that it had bought it.

There were also cases where the bogus company deceived Zimbabweans in the diaspora who wanted to invest back home. In total, Metof sold around 5 000 bogus plots at Inverungus Farm.<sup>84</sup> The company made between ZW\$ 33 and 56 million from deposits for these bogus plots.<sup>85</sup> The fraudster, Kay Makhela, was subsequently arrested in January 2000 and put to trial in March of the same year.<sup>86</sup> Even though Makhela was imprisoned and Metof was dissolved, the home seekers lost valuable money which they never recovered. This scandal affected other developers as well since home seekers in Ruwa lost faith in PLDCs.<sup>87</sup> There were many incidents that involved PLDC coning home seekers, but the ones discussed here merely illustrate how bogus companies undermined the role played by genuine PLDCs in the development of Ruwa.

Beside fraud and conflicts on service delivery, PLDCs were involved in clashes with residents over land for peri-urban farming. Some residents had a tendency of illegally growing maize, vegetables and other crops on nearby undeveloped land belonging to PLDCs. In 2007, maize was planted by neighbouring residents on land belonging to ZB Building Society. Residents even ignored the prohibitive notices on the land and went on to cultivate. The maize was then slashed. The developer reacted by commanding its workers to slash the maize crop.<sup>88</sup> The workers were escorted by the Local Authority's

79 Ruwa Town Repository, Addendum to the 61<sup>st</sup> Environmental Management Committee meeting, 16 January 2001.

80 *The Financial Gazette*, 21 -27 December 2000.

81 *The Financial Gazette*, 21 -27 December 2000.

82 *The Financial Gazette*, 21 -27 December 2000.

83 *The Financial Gazette*, 21 -27 December 2000.

84 *The Financial Gazette*, 21 -27 December 2000.

85 *The Financial Gazette*, 21 -27 December 2000.

86 *The Financial Gazette*, 8-14 March 2000.

87 Interview: Author with S Nyamakupe (Ruwa Resident), Better Days Bottle Store, Ruwa, 4 February 2015.

88 Interview: Author with S Nyamakupe.

police who shielded them from furious residents.<sup>89</sup> The Local Authority was called to support the slashing of the maize because it had a security division which dealt with property trespassing. The residents had breached the law that prohibited trespassing of private property by cultivating on land belonging to the developer. However, the residents felt that the developer should have warned them before planting instead of slashing the maize without any form of communication.<sup>90</sup> Slashing grown maize was perceived by residents as sinister since it deprived them of the opportunity to secure grain for food. This scenario shows how PLDCs took away the peoples' "right to the city" as explained by Harvey. The residents of Ruwa did not have any power to use open land in their neighbourhood.

Although the developer was acting in accordance with the law on trespassing, good communication with residents would have created close relationships. As a consequence of the coalition of the PLDC and the Local Authority in applying the law, some elderly residents who cultivated on the land belonging to PLDCs started to resent the duo. Residents absconded meetings called by the Council, and according to the Town Secretary, this explains the low turnout of residents during Council meetings in 2007.<sup>91</sup> The lack of unity between residents and the other stakeholders was detrimental to the development and growth of Ruwa.

Bitter relations and conflict between the PLDCs and residents were usually solved through dialogue with the Local Authority as the arbitrator. In the Cranbrook saga, for example, the RLB facilitated dialogue between the developer and the residents over delays in the development of offsite infrastructure.<sup>92</sup> Sometimes the dialogue resolved conflict between the aggrieved parties. After a series of meetings between Barochit Property Developers and residents over the developer's slow pace in building offsite infrastructure, the latter sympathised with the former and even offered financial help towards infrastructure construction.<sup>93</sup> This revealed the effectiveness of dialogue in solving conflicts among different parties in Ruwa.

89 Interview: Author with S Nyamakupe.

90 Interview: Author with M Kisimana (Ruwa Resident), Better Days Bottle Store, Ruwa, 4 February 2015.

91 Interview: Author with J Makombe (Ruwa Town Secretary), RTC Offices, Ruwa, 8 April 2014.

92 Ruwa Town Repository (C/17), Cranbrook Park minutes for the meeting held on 9 March 2006 at Local Government Makombe Building Room 801 at 8:30hrs, 9 March 2006.

93 Ruwa Town Repository (C/17), Information to be used at a meeting to be held between the Permanent Secretary for Local Government, RLB and three developers namely: Tawona Portion of Galway Estate, Lot 1 of Cranbrook, Sebassa and their Respective Beneficiaries Representatives, February 2006, p. 2.

## 7. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN RUWA RESIDENTS AND THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

PLDCs indirectly shaped the relationships between the Council and the residents since the former was mandated to safeguard the interests of the latter when interacting with PLDCs. The Local Authority was the custodian of service delivery and infrastructure development in the town. The relationship between the Council and Ruwa residents was service-oriented where the Council was the service provider, and the residents were the consumers. The Council acted as a broker between the residents and the PLDCs in line with the partnership model. The model and the neoliberal theory have both been condemned on the basis that they promoted the involvement of the private sector yet the aims of the private parties are extremely opposite to those of the public.<sup>94</sup> The private sector's motive is to make profit at the expense of the public residents. However, the neoliberal theory admits the weakness of the private sector and has called for the public sector to monitor the former. The Local Authority then acted as the monitor of PLDCs in Ruwa. The RLB/RTC and the residents sometimes enjoyed cordial relationships where the former intervened on behalf of the latter as the Council bargained for quality services from PLDCs.

The Local Authority acted on behalf of the residents against some PLDCs' fraudulent activities which affected the residents. In such matters, the Local Authority intervened in an endeavour to save the residents from bogus developers. After discovering the illegal sale of plots by Metof in 2001, the RLB warned the company against such practices.<sup>95</sup> At first, the company did not take heed of the warnings, and the RLB threatened to put a warning advert in the newspapers.<sup>96</sup> The threat eventually compelled the bogus developer to stop advertising Ruwa plots in the newspapers. The Local Authority went on to use notices to educate the public on the legal procedures that had to be followed before paying for residential plots.<sup>97</sup> The education helped home seekers to avoid being duped by bogus PLDC.

In 2002, the RLB as the custodian of law in the town intervened on behalf of the residents for them to have free access to the Chipukutu road after a developer had closed the road for public use. The developer had closed the Chipukutu road and placed restrictive barriers (security guards) on

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94 Bourdieu, *Acts of Resistance: Against the Tyranny of the Market*, p. 32.

95 Ruwa Town Repository, Addendum to the 61<sup>st</sup> Environmental Management Committee meeting.

96 Ruwa Town Repository, Addendum to the 61<sup>st</sup> Environmental Management Committee meeting.

97 *The Herald*, 19 January 2001.

the road denying the residents access to the road saying that it was private property.<sup>98</sup> In response to this, the Local Authority reminded the developer that the road was public property and vested in the hands of the RLB in terms of the *RTCPA chapter 29:12* of 1996.<sup>99</sup> The RLB fined the developer an amount of ZW\$ 50 000 for contravening the law.<sup>100</sup> The company was then instructed to remove the barrier and its security personnel from the road.<sup>101</sup> Residents, in this case, did not confront the PLDC who was denying them access to the road. They were, in fact, not aware of their right to access the road.

Although there were good relations between residents and the RTC, there were some isolated conflicts noted. For example, in 1994, the Ruwa Residents Association was involved in a wrangle with the RTC over what they alleged to be corruption in the allocation of plots.<sup>102</sup> It was alleged that, the Board was collaborating with a developer in allocating plots to non-residents mostly from Harare.<sup>103</sup> The issue was not resolved, and the following year the residents resorted to demonstrations.

Essential services had to be managed well. Failure to deliver vital water supply services resulted in strained relations between the residents and the Local Authority. Since the establishment of the RLB in 1990, the Local Authority had failed to provide the residents with adequate water. This became one of the major grievances of the residents against the Council. Newspaper interviews with residents revealed that residents were not happy with erratic water supplies in Ruwa. They felt that they were being short-changed and this was partly why most ratepayers were not honouring their obligations to the Council.<sup>104</sup> The challenges faced by the Local Authority in supplying water were clear. The Local Authority was failing to meet the water demand of the growing population, given the limited water infrastructure they had.<sup>105</sup> One of the reasons the Local Authority partnered with PLDCs was to improve offsite infrastructure, but despite the existence of a partnership, residents continued to complain about erratic water supplies. PLDCs' failure to establish adequate water infrastructure and water sources haunted the Local Authority. This,

98 Ruwa Town Repository, Correspondence between RLB and Lorraine Castedo Real Estate, 21 January 2003.

99 Ruwa Town Repository, Correspondence between RLB and Lorraine Castedo Real Estate.

100 Ruwa Town Repository, Correspondence between RLB and Lorraine Castedo Real Estate.

101 Ruwa Town Repository, Correspondence between RLB and Lorraine Castedo Real Estate.

102 *The Herald*, 21 August 1994.

103 *The Herald*, 21 August 1994.

104 *The Herald*, 15 September, 2005.

105 CA Davison, "Urban governance and the effective delivery and management of infrastructure services in urban areas in Zimbabwe: An appraisal of water and sewerage services delivered in Ruwa", *Urban Forum* 12 (2), 2001, pp. 139-170.

despite the effort that was made, diminished the role of PLDCs in the eyes of the public.

Ruwa residents also had problems with water and sewerage bills which they alleged to be too high considering the poor services they were getting. A case in point was the 1996 water billing demonstrations in the town where angry residents converged at the Local Authority's offices seeking explanations on how they had accumulated huge water bills by more than 80 per cent.<sup>106</sup> The RLB admitted that they were guilty and added that the huge water bills were caused by computer errors.<sup>107</sup> Under normal circumstances, the Local Authority should have noticed that there was an error before distributing the billing statements to the residents. Disagreements concerning water billing continued to be an issue between the Local Authority and the residents from 1996 to 1999.

In Zimre Park there was a news bulletin called the *Zimre Park Citizen* which was established by some residents mainly to criticise the Local Authority on service delivery. In 2003, the editor, called for a petition against the Council because she felt that it was failing to deliver its duties.<sup>108</sup> The editor of the bulletin listed a number of residents' grievances against the Council. The grievances included continuous water cuts, dysfunctional public street lights, hawkers at street corners, trucks parked along the main road and the Local Authority's failure to supervise the cutting of grass.<sup>109</sup> Residents in Zimre Park felt that the Local Board had to be dissolved making way for capable and creative professionals.<sup>110</sup> The bulletin also called for the residents to take united action in suing the RLB after the chairman, the councillors and their technical team had failed to fulfil their promise that they would complete a new water reticulation project in Zimre Park within two weeks.<sup>111</sup> This was the same action and collective vision described by Harvey's "right to the city", action which calls for residents to overthrow pervasive capitalist establishment and revolutionaries the city.<sup>112</sup> Although no legal action was taken against the Local Authority, *Zimre Park Citizen* became the mouthpiece of the Zimre Park residents pointing out the flaws of the RLB.<sup>113</sup> The issues that were raised in the bulletin demonstrate that there were hostile relationships between the

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106 *The Herald*, 26 June, 1996.

107 *The Herald*, 28 June, 1996.

108 *The ZIMRE Park Citizen*, September, 2003.

109 *The ZIMRE Park Citizen*, September, 2003.

110 *The ZIMRE Park Citizen*, September, 2003.

111 *The ZIMRE Park Citizen*, October, 2003.

112 Harvey, "The right to the city", p. 3.

113 Interview: Author with C Banda (Zimre Park Resident), Ruwa Post Office, Ruwa, 10 February 2015.

residents of Zimre Park and the Local Authority, and this was caused by poor service delivery.

In 2009, Chipukutu Park Owners Association accused the Local Authority of providing uneven services to suburbs in Ruwa, neglecting their area. They were concerned that Chipukutu Park was not receiving the same benefits as those being offered to their sister suburbs such as Damofalls and Ruwa Location.<sup>114</sup> They complained about potholes not being rehabilitated, uncut grass and erratic refuse collection.<sup>115</sup> The residents of Chipukutu expected to be treated as residents of their sister suburbs by receiving the same services as those given to other suburbs. It seemed, Chipukutu Park was alienated from council services on political grounds. The area was likely neglected because it was seen by the RLB councillors as a low-density suburb with a smaller electorate than its sister suburbs. The suburb had only 600 homesteads which were less compared to the Ruwa Location high-density suburb which had more than 3 000 residential houses. To get more votes in the councillors' elections, the RLB officials concentrated on suburbs that had higher populations at the expense of low-density suburbs.

The relationship between the Local Authority and residents reflected the position of PLDCs in the development of Ruwa. The Local Authority was the legal instrument for administration in Ruwa and was there to serve the residents and protect them against PLDCs. After partnering with the PLDCs in developing the area, it remained the Local Authority's mandate to protect the residents' interests against unscrupulous PLDCs. However, the relationship between the Local Authority and residents became sour when the Local Authority, together with the PLDCs failed to deliver services.

## 8. CONCLUSION

The history of the interaction between the three stakeholders demonstrates some negative aspects of the PLDCs and the Local Authority that undermined their role in the development of Ruwa Town. Shoddy service delivery was the main source of conflict in the tripartite partnership. Other sources of conflict included fraudulent cases and the lack of compliance with the Local Authority's regulations. There were also inter-organisation conflicts among the developers, which mainly emanated from competition for land markets in the town. However, turbulent relationships cannot completely discredit the PLDCs' role in the development of Ruwa, since in other instances the relationships

114 RTC, Letter from Chipukutu Park Owners Association to the Ruwa Local Board Secretary, 23 December, 2009.

115 RTC, Letter from Chipukutu Park Owners Association to the Ruwa Local Board Secretary, 23 December, 2009.

were cordial and developers made an effort to improve Ruwa's urban infrastructure, sometimes under difficult economic conditions. The historical account shows that cordial relationships among development stakeholders are crucial in achieving efficient PPP-led urban development. Communication, transparency, honour, and service are crucial tenets of conflict management under PPPs. It is the role of the public entity (local authorities and the Government) to ensure that conflict is managed among urban development stakeholders. As illustrated by Simone, residents' participation advances the larger project of the city building. Residents in Ruwa should be encouraged to participate in urban affairs that affect them. The study shows that residents were mere backbenchers and did not participate in the town planning and decision-making processes. Hence, the PLDCs and the Local Authority wielded all power in the towns' development process.