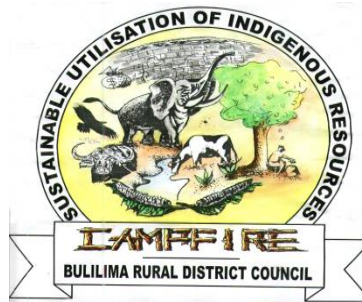


BULILIMA DISTRICT MASTER PLAN: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Bulilima District Vision and Mission Statement

'A strong and productive local economy capable of sustaining its district population by 2030', To improve the standard of living for the district population by providing quality infrastructure and social services

SUBMITTED BY: BULILIMA RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ASSISTED BY: PLAN AFRIC PVT LTD



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1. Nature of the Master Plan.	1
1.2. Aims of Bulilima District Master Plan	2
1.3. Consultation and Local Participation.....	3
2. KEY DEVELOPMENT ISSUES	3
2.2. Population.....	4
2.3. Economy and Employment	4
2.4. Social Infrastructure.	5
2.5. Economic Infrastructure	5
2.6. Institutions.	6
3. PRINCIPLES AND COMMITMENTS	6
4. MASTER PLAN PROPOSALS SUMMARISED.....	7
5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	10

1. INTRODUCTION

Bulilima Rural District Council is a local government institution under the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works whose mandate is to facilitate local governance and rural development. The activities of the rural district council are governed by the Rural District Council Act (Chapter 29:13). The district was initially proclaimed in 2002 after the split of the former Bulilimamangwe Rural District Council. It then attained district status in 2003. The district is located in Matabeleland South Province, western Zimbabwe. The district is bordered by Mangwe district in the south, Tsholotsho district in the north, Umguza district in the east, and the Republic of Botswana to the west. Bulilima District lies in Natural Region IV, which is characterized by low rainfall and low agricultural potential. The district has 22 wards: 17 communal, 3 old resettlement, one small commercial farming area, and one large commercial farming area (A1, A2, and A3).

1.1. Nature of the Master Plan.

The Bulilima Rural District Master Plan has been prepared in accordance with Part IV of the Regional, Town and Country Planning Act, Chapter 29:12, Revised Edition 1996 read with the Regional Town and Country Planning (Master and Local Plans) Regulations, 1977. This is also supported by a number of regulations, including: The Rural District Councils Act (Chapter 29:13), the Communal Land Act (Chapter 20:04), the Environmental Management Act (Chapter 20:27), the Parks and Wildlife Act (Chapter 20:14), the Forest Act (Chapter 19:05), the Traditional Leaders Act (Chapter 29:17), the Museum and Monuments Act (Chapter 25:11), the Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 20:10), the Public Health Act (Chapter 15:17), the Roads Act (Chapter 13:18), the Water Act (Chapter 20:24) and the Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013).

The preparation of the Master Plan required the study of the planning area and analysis of existing conditions, the opportunities, potentials, and constraints of the planning area in terms of development. The master plan aimed to analyse trends and identify key development issues. The Written Statement, which was the second stage of the Master Plan preparation process, established a comprehensive strategy for the Bulilima district and outlined more specific strategies, policies, and proposals for the duration of the Master Plan. The Master Plan as such is not static but will require the regular monitoring and review of the policies and aims during the 10 to 15-year planning period. The form of the Written Statement is a document made up of a series of goals and strategic commitments and the policies needed to achieve

the goals and objectives of the plan. The key development issues identified in the Report of Study serve as guiding principles in the derivation of the goals, objectives, and strategies.

1.2. Aims of Bulilima District Master Plan

The goal is to identify, state, and justify strategies, policies, and general proposals for the development and other uses of land in the district to the district's public and government, thereby offering guidance for the development of issues of structural importance.

- To interpret, translate and apply the policies of Vision 2030 together with the NDS1 in terms of environmental and physical planning.
- To create a statutory framework for the preparation of detailed plans at the local level, which in turn provide the necessary guidance for detailed development control, project implementation and coordination.
- To open up opportunities for investment and wider use of resources by public and private agencies and for the coordination of their decisions with regards to the district.
- To conserve the essential visual and social quality of the district that has evolved over many years.
- To conserve the natural resources of the district for the benefit of the district and the nation as a whole.
- To cater for the existing and emerging range of administrative, commercial, industrial, social and economic needs of this potentially rich district.
- To identify areas and sectors with the greatest potential for economic growth so that investments are directed to these areas and sectors.
- To foster the closely related agricultural potential and the development of wildlife and coordinate these with the requirements of the economic growth of the district.
- To utilize to maximum advantage and efficiency the district's existing and potential wilderness resources.
- To encourage investment in industry by exploiting the district's competitive advantage in agriculture and wildlife resources.
- To make the best use of existing and committed physical infrastructure and encourage more investment in infrastructure so as to allow movement both public and private to take place without hindrance and to foster the economic development of the district.

1.3. Consultation and Local Participation

From the onset, ownership of the plan by the people of Bulilima was the guiding principle upon which the whole planning process was based. Participation from stakeholders, field surveys, and at the district level facilitated the preparation of the draft Report of Study. Consultations were held in Bulilima with key stakeholders, the Rural District Council, parastatal organisations, business organisations, and government departments. The consultation process involved discussing in detail key development issues identified by people at the ward and district level.

2. KEY DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

2.1. Natural Resources and Environment

The Bulilima district as a whole is predominantly rural, with no urban centres. Plumtree Town is the nearest urban center. There are no industries, mines, or large commercial businesses in the district that provide employment. As a result, the natural resource base in the Bulilima district largely drives the economy and livelihoods of its people. People depend on agriculture, as well as the sale of wildlife and non-timber forestry products (i.e., Macimbi, Marula) as a source of livelihood. This has resulted in severe pressure on the limited existing natural resources. There has been an increase in wildlife poaching, human-to-wildlife conflicts, deforestation, and streambank cultivation, among other impacts as people try to survive. All these are taking a toll on the environment and natural resource base. The situation is also being aided by other factors such as climate change, poor soils, lack of adequate water resources, poor farming methods, high temperatures, and low rainfalls, as well as the sprouting of unplanned settlements across the district. Climate change, in particular, has made rainfed crop farming in the district totally impossible, as evapotranspiration rates now exceed rainfall amounts. This has left the people with limited sources of livelihoods. To that end, there is a need to ensure the sustainable use of the available natural resources for the benefit of the whole district. This can be achieved by strengthening natural resources conservation programs in the district, like CAMPFIRE, and by strengthening the enforcement of laws meant to protect the environment. There is also a need to create other sources of livelihoods such that people won't entirely rely on the environment so as to relieve pressure on the natural resource base. Furthermore, given that the economy of the Bulilima district largely depends on its natural resource base, there is also a need to develop natural resource-based industries in the district aimed at adding value (beneficiating) to the available resources. Such industries may include Macimbi/Mopane Worms Processing Plants and Marula Juice Processing Plants, among others. This will create employment for

the people and significantly contribute to the growth of the district's economy, as well as promote the wise use of natural resources.

2.2. Population

As at 2022, ZimStats put the population at 85 600 made up of 39 488 Males and 46 112 Females. The district population distribution is highly decreasing as compared to 2002 census which was 94320 and in 2012, 90561 which had an annual decrease of -0.58% by 2022. The district has a very young population: 44,865, or 52.4% of those under the age of 17, and 40735, or 47.6% of those in the economically active category. There is also a predominance of females, the ratio ranged from 86 males per 100 females in Bulilima (ZimStats, 2022), especially the young adult age groups mainly due to high migration rated to South Africa and Botswana. The district as a whole has an apparent low population density.

2.3. Economy and Employment

Council's vision and mission for Bulilima District is of building 'A strong and productive local economy capable of sustaining its district population by 2030' and to improve the standard of living for the district population by providing quality infrastructure and social services. The (2022) census used the new standards of measuring statistics on employment in line with the 19th International Conference on Labour Statistics (ICLS). It focused on the characteristics of employed persons in their main jobs. In Matebeleland South province, a total of 104,129 persons were currently employed of whom 68.8 percent were male and 31.2 were female. While for Bulilima District employment rate is at 6.0% and employment to population ratio by district was 13.0%, 5.3% Male and 7.6% Female. The provincial unemployment rate for Matebeleland South was 19.8%, Bulilima was the second from Beitbridge Rural with 28.1%. The district's primary economic sectors are agriculture, wildlife use, commerce, light and service industries, public sector, and informal sector. When considering the development of wealth and income, these sectors are important. To protect society and the environment, community farmers must modify their farming practices. The district's irrigation schemes are inadequate and the ones that are now in place include field structures that require maintenance. In the district, wildlife is growing more and more significant. It is necessary to support it as a particular kind of diversification for low-yield communal agriculture. Even while CAMPFIRE has increased in importance as a district economic driver, concerns about the program's sustainability require careful consideration. The use of wildlife is

becoming increasingly significant on commercial farms, where it is associated with the expansion of the nearby tourism sector.

2.4. Social Infrastructure.

Following the country's independence, major building and development projects were launched, and as a result, there are currently 64 primary schools, 20 secondary schools, and 22,247 primary school students enrolled. But a lot of schools lack basic supplies like tables and books and are ill-equipped. There are not enough postsecondary institutions to meet demand. Few local youths benefit from Solusi University, which is the only institution in the district. Bulilima has two rural health centers and sixteen clinics. A district hospital is required in Bulilima. The quantity of health facilities appears sufficient, but they still require additional staff, medications, and means of communication. In Bulilima, a variety of new community facilities are required, including sports facilities and community centers. The district has a very high unemployment rate, and shortage of sporting facilities.

2.5. Economic Infrastructure

The Zimbabwe National Water Authority Act of 1998 led to the creation of ZINWA, a parastatal agency responsible for water planning and bulk supply. To sustainably provide quality water through strategic infrastructure development and management to facilitate socio-economic transformation. The major sectors which are being planned for are the Agricultural Sector and the Communal areas. Domestic water supply in the rural areas of Bulilima District is provided from 1573 sources. They comprise boreholes and deep wells. Sand abstraction technology is also being undertaken in some parts of the district to supply water to communities, schools and clinics. The road network in the district consists of state roads (surfaced), state road (unsurfaced). Department of Roads, RIDA and RDC roads. People in the common areas reported that one of the main issues they faced was the crumbling condition of the roads. It has been observed that there are issues with road maintenance and quality in the district. The most frequent routes served by public transportation are those connecting Plumtree Town to communal regions, Bulawayo and Plumtree Town, and Bulawayo and Botswana. The transportation options that connect these places are excellent and include private vehicles, buses, and commuter omnibuses. There is no airport or commercialized flights in Bulilima, but an airstrip exists close to Plumtree town.

2.6. Institutions.

Financial, material and technical support from being sought from multilateral and bilateral organizations to assist district development, especially in the fields of environment, gender and participation. The trust by some of these donors is to try and assist local organizations in achieving some of these goals by building their capacity. Non-governmental organizations have even gained much prominence in the district. They are funding projects and programs in the district but their efforts lack coordination and an overall strategy that, hopefully this plan provide. There are several government agencies which operate at district level. The relationship between the RDC and some central government departments is undergoing significant change as decentralization proposals gather pace. Bulilima Rural District Council like most Rural District Councils is inadequately financed to meet the social and economic needs placed upon it. The lack of a sound economic base and reduced support from central government adds to the council problems. More sources of revenue have to be explored particularly, income generating projects, wildlife and tourism ventures. Bulilima staffing position is not adequate to meet current demands. As more responsibilities are added to the RDC there is need to upgrade the skills and enhance the capacity of its staff. There is need for the RDC to put in place incentives which may encourage more inward investment and incorporate these into a wider promotional strategy.

3. PRINCIPLES AND COMMITMENTS

- To promote sustainable development; that is, to utilize the district's natural resources such as land and water in a manner which safeguards the future development potential of the district and the livelihood of those dependent upon the resources.
- To protect the interests of the local inhabitants of the Master Plan area, increase the benefits they get from its natural resources, and maximize the extent to which they are involved in, and have control over, the development of the area, either directly or through their representative institutions.
- To rationalize the administration of the area and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the various central and local government agencies involved in the district.
- To facilitate the coordinated planning and management of the District.
- To provide a framework for detailed planning within which balanced growth, detailed planning and development in the district may take place.

4. MASTER PLAN PROPOSALS SUMMARISED.

Bulilima Master Plan proposals and policies addressed in the written statement concur with the council's vision and mission of "A strong and productive local economy capable of sustaining its district population by 2030", and "To improve the standard of living for the district population by providing quality infrastructure and social services".

GOAL A: GENERAL DEVELOPMENT.

To establish a sustainable planning framework based on growth and development for Bulilima District. Planning and implementing conservation measures in order to improve management of natural resources in its domain and establishment of broad land use areas within Bulilima District so as to create confidence for future investment. These areas will tend to coincide with existing land classification areas in the district. The district has an integrated development plan which will promote growth and improve the quality life for Bulilima people.

GOAL B: THE NATURAL RESOURCE AND ENVIRONMENT

Bulilima district lies in a fragile environment. The condition is also worsened by the fact that the district lies in Natural Regions IV where rainfall amounts are low. To ensure the conservation of the natural resources base of Bulilima District. The natural resource base is fragile and consists of poor soils and high summer temperatures which has resulted in evapotranspiration rates which exceeds rainfall amounts.

- To safeguard and enhance the quality and character of the natural environment.
- Revenue from problem animal control and periodic culling shall be ploughed back into the affected communities.
- Rural District Councils shall return the majority of the revenue gained from the exploitation of wildlife to the communities from which the revenue was derived.
- Utilisation of Natural Resources – These are fees earned by Council from using its natural resources or from allowing others to exploit those resources and paying Council for doing so e.g. pit and river sand extraction in most of Bulilima District rivers, hunting and safaris.
- Monitoring and evaluating sustainable use of resources.

GOAL C: AGRICULTURE

To exploit to the optimum, the district's agricultural potential for the benefit of all the people. These are some of the strategic considerations

- The potential for irrigation in the district should be fully exploited, from large- scale food production units right down to small, seasonal, bucket-irrigated, riverbank garden.
- There is a lot of pressure for a determined and quicker movement towards community management of irrigation schemes.
- There is need for a review of high value crops, particularly horticultural crops; versus the food security argument in the face of escalating costs of development and running of irrigation schemes.
- Development of vertically linked enterprises and on-scheme beneficiation makes economic sense

GOAL E: PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

To provide appropriate and adequate physical infrastructure to meet the development needs in Bulilima during the Master Plan period.

Allocation of Communal Land – in terms of Traditional Leaders Act (Chapter 29:17) of Zimbabwe, No land shall be allocated in terms of this Act except with the approval of the appropriate rural district council, which shall be the administrative authority with overall control over the use and allocation of all Communal Land.

Roads - The road network in the district is mainly gravel roads except for major highways which are surfaced. Most of the gravel roads are in bad state and require maintenance. The existing road network is poorly done and one can safely say, Bulilima as a district does not have any tarred roads except for just a strip along Somnene -Tsholotsho Road and Figtree residential area. Upgrading and tarring of most roads, in particular those utilized by public transport to all weather standard so that they are useable throughout the year. Priority will be given to the following roads in each category: Plumtree-Madlambudzi, Maitengwe -Border Post, Plumtree - Ndolwane, Plumtree -Somnene and Plumtree – Tsholotsho.

Air Transport - The four aerodromes in the district to be upgraded for use mainly by tourist and hunters. The purpose of this policy statement is to recognize that Bulilima has aerodromes and needs upgraded in order to cater for tourists.

Rural Water Supply - The Rural District Council shall at all times keep under review the provision of potable water supply in the district and seek to enhance and compliment facilities already in existence.

GOAL F: SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Policies and resources that ensure people can participate in productive social and economic activities in the District during the Master Plan period. Social infrastructure includes housing, education, health, community services, urban water supplies and waste disposal. The issues are social in that they must reflect social need of the Bulilima District. Inadequate provision of social infrastructure can be a barrier to economic and social activity. The Master Plan needs to make provision for social needs, Land allocations should ensure that social needs are a priority.

GOAL H: LOCAL ECONOMY

To establish a strong and sustainable economic base and encourage a diversified and integrated local economy of the district.

Tourism - Provision will be made for attractive places for tourists to stop in Bulilima such as Maitengwe Dam. Propose eco-tourism initiatives that promote sustainable practices while benefiting local communities. Initiatives such a hiking trails and land to be reserved for a hotels, motel, chalet/camping and caravan facilities, guided nature walks, bird watching, and community-run lodges that showcase local culture, and to create cultural heritage sites and museums. The district to have strategy in Tourism in order to promote and develop their district.

GOAL J: ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

To promote a capable and forward thinking management system within Council with adequate resources to meet the development needs of the district. It is designed to ensure that Council has the requisite human and managerial and financial expertise to meet development needs of the district. It also needs to address the need to broaden the Rural District Council's financial base in an effort to generate adequate resources to meet current and capital expenditure and creating an enabling environment for investors who would like to undertake capital projects.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

Successful implementation of goals, proposals and policy guidelines depends on coordination and collaboration between Bulilima Rural District Council, Non-Governmental Organizations, Stakeholders and Civic Organizations and the local communities from ward level and the involvement of all stakeholders from the planning process to evaluation through a multi-stakeholder participatory approach in guiding development for Bulilima District. The District lies in Natural Region IV, characterised by low rainfall, low agricultural potential and promote livestock husbandry. There is need to improve in infrastructure mainly tarred roads that connects the district. The council must have a strategy to develop tourism and create employment. Areas such as Madhlambuzi, Ndiweni and Figtree require Local Development Plans for effective growth. Enforce partnership-orientated, participatory and integrated planning management. Local Authority will formulate local investment and development plans, which are in tandem with National Investment and Master Plans.