Chapter 15

Application of Isenberg Model for Entrepreneurial Ecosystems as a Blueprint for Zimbabwe Socio-Economic Devolution

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship plays a significant role in national economies around the world, including the Republic of Zimbabwe, which has largely focused on the socio-economic devolution program. The necessity for entrepreneurship and policymakers around the world currently is to advance the quality of the entrepreneurship outcomes rather than just increase the number of entrepreneurs. To strengthen the context of entrepreneurship and innovation, the authors suggested that governments need to move to what is called an entrepreneurial ecosystem approach. Isenberg's model for the entrepreneurial ecosystem is applied as a catalyst for building a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem under circular economies.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents stakeholder views and evaluation of devolution form of governance, entrepreneurial ecosystems models, opportunities, challenges, circular economy and application of the Isenberg's model to the Zimbabwean Devolution Model context. A review of the Zimbabwe Devolution Act (2013) key legislation objects, progress of implementation including the evolving policy framework, barriers and benefits is also presented. The data and information for this study were collected through an extensive literature review, interviewing of experts, and the author personal's experience. Key informants views and data were collected from government ministries, local authorities, community elders and business associations. The feedback and insights from stakeholders is supported by theory and existing literature on circular economy and entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Objectives

- Review and evaluate Zimbabwe Devolution Act and progress of implementation;
- Presents Entrepreneurial Ecosystem models benefits and barriers;
- Discuss the application of the Isenberg Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Model;
- Discuss the theory of Circular Economy;
- Presents Models for successful implementation.

BACKGROUND

Zimbabwe is a unitary state with one source of state authority underpinned by a local government system decentralized to provide services to a heterogeneous citizenry in geographically defined and demarcated areas of jurisdiction. Prior to the promulgation in 2013 of a new Constitution, local government in Zimbabwe was a creature of statute, operating in a delegated capacity and largely dependent on central government. Local government functions, while defined in law, were open to central government variation and re-assignment to other national agencies.

Pre- and post-independence policy and structural developments have sustained centre-local relations that undermine the emergence of strong and devolved local governance. In the 1980s, associations of local authorities began to advocate for the 'constitutionalisation' of local government. A long and arduous process beginning in 1999 led to a referendum in 2000, at which point the draft Constitution was rejected. However, civil society groups and political parties re-initiated the process after a successful advocacy campaign in the post-2008 Government of National Unity (GNU) era.

The government set up the Parliamentary Constitution-making Committee (COPAC), with a mandate to produce a new Constitution. Through a series of debates and consultations, as well as a referendum in March 2013, the COPAC process culminated in the adoption of the 2013 Constitution, within which devolution is a key component and civic participation a cherished principle.

Local authorities were created through statutes or acts of parliament and therefore operate within the legislative framework enacted and promulgated by central government (legislature) as the primary legislative authority. Basically, there are two types of local authority in Zimbabwe: (i) Urban Councils and (ii) Rural District Councils. Local authorities are governed by the Urban Councils Act, the Rural District Councils Act and the Regional, Town and Country Planning Act. The three Acts form the principal legislative basis for the implementation of local government policy in Zimbabwe and establish the relationship between local authorities and central government. It is important to note that due to the doctrine of ultra vires, local authorities are not allowed to perform functions not specifically mentioned in the legislation.

Zimbabwe under its 2013 constitution created devolution under chapter 14 provinces sound framework for devolution. There are 92 local authorities in Zimbabwe; composed of 32 urban councils and 60 rural districts.

The urban councils are made up of the five city councils, 11 municipalities, 13 town councils and three local boards. Section 274(2) and 275(2)(b) provides that these councils will be managed by councilors elected by registered voters in the urban and rural areas concerned. The government of Zimbabwe anticipates that the devolution model of governance will help enhance socio-economic growth and bring political stability through the equitable distribution of wealth. The new constitution provides for increased

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