

# **Creating a Sustainable Zimbabwean Film and Television Industry**

**Fortunate Tatenda Mauyakufa**

Department of Quality and Operations Management  
University of Johannesburg  
Johannesburg, South Africa  
[mauyakufafortunate@gmail.com](mailto:mauyakufafortunate@gmail.com)

**Anup Pradhan**

Department of Quality and Operations Management  
University of Johannesburg  
Johannesburg, South Africa  
[anupp@uj.ac.za](mailto:anupp@uj.ac.za)

## **Abstract**

This article unveils the current situation in Zimbabwean film and television industry based on its history, regulatory laws, digitalization and the new technological innovations. The paper attempts to conceptualize on how to create a viable and consistent film and television industry in Zimbabwe. Based on the secondary sources and random interviews with filmmakers, it was observed that more research is required to strengthen the Zimbabwean film and television industry in order to produce quality films and compete with the current market demand. The industry needs qualified personnel to run companies effectively, investment to produce films, new equipment to operate efficiently, co-productions with other countries to exchange skills, and public support especially from the government and the citizens to promote the sales of the film for it to become sustainable. Furthermore, the industry needs to take measures to establish a well-defined policy that promote films in Zimbabwe and accommodate foreign investment in order for the industry to develop.

## **Keywords**

Sustainable, Digitalization, Film, Television, Zimbabwe

## **1. Introduction**

The Zimbabwean film and television industry is under developed compared to other African countries like Botswana, South Africa and Nigeria. Currently, the Zimbabwe's airwaves are dominated by Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC), however most of Zimbabwean audience do not watch it because it usually broadcasts outdated content. The 1990 Korean series and South African old soap episodes, like Generations, have been aired repeatedly over the past 10 years. The broadcasting television is still transmitting its content (audio-visual moving images) using electronic transmitters, which does not reach very well in every parts of Zimbabwe. Currently, the Zimbabwean film and television industry is one of the industries which needs to be resuscitated. In contrast to the agriculture sector, the film and television industry is not considered as an employment and income generating industry. Therefore, there is a need to find feasible measures to create a sustainable entertainment industry. Some African countries, like Nigeria have a well-developed film industry which have gone as far as having different channels and websites too, such as Africamovies.com, tvnolly.com and ibakatv.com, however Zimbabwe doesn't have one yet. The Zimbabwean film and television industry has many obstacles, which include censorship, insufficient funding, lack of government support, regulatory laws by Broadcasting Services Act, and unqualified and inexperienced people in the field.

## **1.1 Background of Zimbabwean Film and Television Industry**

### **1.1.1 Era of Pre 2000s**

Since 1980 when Zimbabwe acquired its independence, the film industry looked promising as there were various strategies which were put in place for the sustainability of film and television industry. One of the strategies which was implemented was to strike a partnership deal with the Canon studios to produce a film titled 'King Solomon's Mines' which was directed by J. Lee Thompson in 1985 making it one of the first-ever Hollywood co-productions (Hungwe, 2001). The objective of that partnership was to create and establish viable film and television industry so that local Zimbabwean filmmakers, such as Steve Chiombori, would benefit from the leading industry in the world (Hollywood) on how to produce quality productions for the television broadcasting. By then, the major challenge was human resources and shortage of skilled actors in Zimbabwe, hence the Zimbabwean film industry have films such as King Solomon's Mines (1985), Cry Freedom (1987), and Mandela (1987) with Hollywood artists as main characters whereas Zimbabwean actors were only given peripheral roles. For instance, King Solomon's mines have Allan Quatermain (Richard Chamberlain), Jesse Huston (Sharon Stone) as main actors from Hollywood, and Zimbabwean actors like Innocent Choga, Brian Kagure and the late Simon Shumba (famously known as Mutirowafanza) as peripheral actors. The production of Cry Freedom in 1987 gave birth to a funding challenges that most of the filmmakers in Zimbabwe suffered due to the lack of return on investment from the film. Since that time, the government has desisted from funding feature film production.

The Ministry of Information acknowledged the importance of film and television industry as it was part of the department of information, and wanted the industry to succeed. They took the initiative to publish an article in 1987 on 'Why You Should Film in Zimbabwe' as a form of advertising. The article was written as a strategy of attracting filmmakers from different countries to use the perfect film-making locale with a favourable climate and good infrastructure (Hungwe, 2001). The objective of the article was to unravel the beauty of Zimbabwe's locales and attract some of the international film-makers. He states that filmmakers were attracted with the services that Zimbabwe offered, like reliable and credible banks, which were efficient in delivering their services when one needs to withdraw their money without any hiccups or corruption involved. However, this is a different case in present Zimbabwe.

According to Hungwe (2001), the positive image that was constructed in the 1980s deteriorated due to the corruption from different industries, which lead to economic downfall of Zimbabwe. Hence, most investors pulled out to other neighbouring countries, like South Africa, where infrastructure itself was placing the country's city of Johannesburg as the world's first class city. As a result, the Zimbabwean film industry ended up relying on limited funds from donors in the 1990s since the government had withdrawn its financial support to finance film and television industry. Most filmmakers were left with no choice but to work with the NGOs who by that time wanted to disseminate their educative messages through different mediums. The main objective of NGO films was to educate the Zimbabweans about HIV& AIDS. For instance, More Time (1993) with the slogan "more time" is to ("wait") before indulging into sexual activities. The idea was to encourage the youth to abstain as a safer way of protecting themselves from HIV/AIDS. Everyone's Child (1996) mandate was to fight against stigmatizing of people affected with HIV/AIDS in communities, especially to orphans whose welfare were totally ignored because of segregation.

The NGOs funding somehow killed the creativity of most script writers' skills because they had to adhere to work as per the investor's terms, and had to write scripts that contained the theme and message that donors wanted to finance. Hence, there was limited freedom for a scriptwriter to artistically write a film and express their passion. For instance, the film 'Yellow card' was brilliantly acted and directed but the film failed to reflect on the realistic scenarios similar to what young adults of Zimbabwe were experiencing making it difficult to understand for the youths. This clearly illustrates how donor funded films made the industry active but not sustainable because they did not reflect Zimbabwean communities and thus contributed to the loss of Zimbabwean television audiences.

It is essential to note that the NGO film was made in collaboration with the Media for Development Trust (MFDT), a local project of the Media for Development International (MFDI). The 1990s decade also saw several isolated instances of independent filmmaking (such as Jit, Flame, and I am the Future), documentary (such as Soul in Torment, Biko, and The Untold Story). And most of these films, like Flame (1992), faced a lot of criticisms as it demonstrated all forms of abuse that women went through during the liberation struggle. This included the scene of rape which angered most of war veterans including women indicating that the film was distorting the history of liberation struggle and denigrating the reason behind the war. As the result, the war veterans demonstrated against Flame. Hence, films

that were produced in the 1990s lacked research and failed to receive a lot of recipients because of wrong signals and messages that did not represent communities or interest of Zimbabwean audiences.

The establishment of Zimbabwe Film Festival (ZIFF) in 1997 and UNESCO-DANIDA are the two most substantial events that bridge the 1990s with the 2000s. Ever since its inception, ZIFF has been holding Zimbabwe's film festival and it sought to support local film production. According to Mboti (2016), ZIFF has been a lifeline for emerging filmmakers in the difficult economic climate from 2000 up to date. UNESCO-DANIDA, based in Harare, was also funding Zimbabwe Film and Video Training Project for Southern Africa. The Zimbabwe Film and Video Training Project partly closed in April 2002 because its funding term had expired and also because of the prevailing economic and political climate. However, the government established a National Film and Video Production foundation but the initiative went nowhere and did not last long.

In the late 1990s, the government gave license to Joy TV, a privately owned television, to broadcast using the second free broadcasting transmitter but it only lasted for a short period. The Television used to produce current soaps such as Sun Set Beach which most people used to follow, and also provided the audience with debates over socio-political and economic issues. Joy TV became popular than ZBC TV, however it was later banned for failing to pay its license fees to Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe (BAZ), so currently Zimbabwe only have one state-controlled broadcasting television.

### **1.1.2 Era of Post 2000s**

The era of early 2000s drove many NGOs away because of political and economic instability in the country. According to Mboti (2016), this period is characterized with hyperinflation, political violence pertaining the land redistribution programme, and changes in foreign investment regulations limiting foreign ownership in industries. Most of film companies closed down just like other industries in Zimbabwe. Since 2000, a trend for most of the companies, like The Mighty Movies, has been to produce advertisements instead of films or movies. Considering that companies like The Mighty Movies is the only one considered to be the viable company with post production equipment in Zimbabwe, it demonstrates how film and television industry has derailed. The Zimbabwean television industry has been greatly affected since 2000. Riber (2001) noted that "Most productions being made in Zimbabwe today are either advertisements or short films". If this trend continues in the film industry, the country is likely to have face challenges to have content to sustain the film and television industry.

During the early 2000s, the government changed media regulations on ownership of media companies by foreign investors in Zimbabwe, limiting them to only 10% (MISA-Zimbabwe, 2006) which discouraged most investors to finance the television industry. In addition, the 75% local content policy clearly shun away potential investors. The creativity and freedom of expression was suppressed with regulatory laws, such as Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) legislated in 2001, Public Order and Security Act (POSA) in 2002, and The Censorship and Entertainments Control Act of 1996. According to Rwafa (2012), the government justified the endorsement of AIPPA as a legislation that protects Zimbabwe from foreign interference. This becomes more challenging for filmmakers to research or make a film on critical issues related to political affairs. The concept of a television is to alert, entertain and disseminate information. In some other countries, it is a platform where people are (i) free to air their views, (ii) share ideas on how to develop socially, economically and politically, and (iii) question the authorities on how they are governing resources for accountability and transparency. However, the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) constrains Zimbabwean filmmakers to make programmes that are of the public interest or important to the national agenda. According to Moyo (2010) and Chuma (2010), POSA protects the top government officials against criticism that is likely to be broadcasted in television. For instance, producing a film on the 'missing' 15 Billion which might expose some of the top government officials or broadcasting news on the arrest of the first lady in South Africa. These laws not only make the work of local filmmakers difficult but also for the foreign filmmakers as there are a lot of restrictions in creating the content that would make the audience sit on the edge of their seats. As a result, lot of Zimbabwean professional filmmakers work outside the country, such as Tinashe Chilwanda and Annie Nhira who used to act in Zimbabwe soaps.

Partnering with other countries who have advanced resources and funds is a little challenge as investors will have little control over their investments. The television industry has been deteriorating because of lack of foreign currency to import filming and broadcasting equipment and purchase new technological equipment. Film and television industry is based on technology, which is an evolving technology that requires a lot of leverage investment in order for it to be

sustainable. Industries like the film and television broadcasting entail a reliable and continuous financial sustenance for the development of the industry (Mudzaki, 2013). The history of film from sequence pictures of telling a story to moving pictures, followed by the introduction of sound to produce an audio-visual video (Pardo, 2014), clearly shows that the industry needs continuous strategies for its stability.

The advancement of the technology has improved the quality of the film through digitalization and internet and has made film a global industry. This platform has given birth to a stiff competition among nations who want to exhibit their own beliefs, culture, traditions, and politics and share their stories and imaginations. So far, there is internet and web-based technology which has proven to be the fastest means to distribute film and offers a convenient access of a variety of films from different continents. Africa has websites (such as Africamovies.com, tvnolly.com and ibakatv.com) and cable television (such as DSTV from South Africa), which has managed to establish itself in Africa. DSTV has various channels which showcase most of the films from South Africa, Nigeria and also accommodate other African countries too. Zimbabwean audiences heavily rely on DSTV channels for entertainment and this includes films that they watch. However, DSTV is likely to have a competitor as Kwese TV (owned by Econet media) which has already managed to sign up a major deal with the United States' National Basketball Association (NBA) in April 2016 as the official broadcaster in Sub-Saharan Africa (NBA, 2016).

Kwese TV, owned by Econet Wireless Zimbabwe under Econet Media, is a Zimbabwean satellite and broadcasting service which was launched in 2015 and has been expanding its satellites services to cut across Africa. The media company has made different treaties with other companies including My TV which has license to provide satellite services in Zimbabwe. The Econet media, announced their intentions of broadcasting Kwese TV, utilizing the license that My TV has, since My TV had failed to provide the services because of lack of funds. In 2017, the Econet Media announced the availability of decoders at Econet Shops in Zimbabwe. Soon after learning the development of the Econet on social media, BAZ contested the claim and confirmed that the license was given to Dr. Dish company for My TV Africa services. The authority then cancelled the license after Dr. Dish failed to provide the services and according to them Kwese TV has not been licensed to broadcast in Zimbabwe. The legal battle between BAZ and Econet Media is still an ongoing process.

In terms of television services, Zimbabwe is still in the similar position as was in the 1990s. The potential arrival of Kwese TV gave hope to most filmmakers that their productions will have a chance to be promoted and broadcasted just like the DSTV in South Africa which promotes South African productions. The failure of the Zimbabwean government to move ZBC TV from analogue to digital by 2015 clearly shows that the state does not have the funds or resources to do so. Yet, it is rejecting local companies like Econet Media with capital, experience and resources to develop the film and television industry essential for the growth of the broadcasting system.

The aim of this study is to provide a comprehensive overview of the Zimbabwean film and television industry, conduct detailed breakdown of challenges being faced by the struggling film and television industry, and investigate the ways of creating a sustainable film and television industry in Zimbabwe.

## **2. Methodology**

Secondary sources, such as books, journals, news articles, websites, focused on creating a sustainable film and television industry were reviewed. The information collected were used to understand the challenges that are hindering the growth and development of the Zimbabwean film and television industry. Based on these challenges, areas of improvement were investigated and recommendations were made to create sustainable film and television industry.

## **3. Findings and Discussion**

Film and television industry covers a variety of activities including script writing, film directing to global distribution and television broadcasting. Systematically, the film and television industry can be represented as a value chain (Figure 1). Every film begins as an idea or script (input or raw material), which is purchased and processed into filming by actors, film designers and technicians under film managers. The film (output or finished product) is then exhibited, marketed and distributed to television channels, cinemas and other retail shops from where the product reach to the audiences. In order to create a sustainable film industry, it is important to identify the challenges within the value chain and find solutions that will make the industry sustainable.

The film and television industry also involves insurance companies and promote fashion industry in its value chain. Industries like hospitality and transport industry are also affected positively as the filmmakers will need to travel to locales where they need to shoot their scenes. As a result, the creation of employment is not only limited to the film industry but also is extended to different industries. According to Joffe and Jacklin (2003), the Zimbabwean film and television industry is a prospective industry for employment, not only for those around or behind the cameras but it will also promote other industries like tourism and hospitality. It is evident that many sectors of the industries depend on film and television industry to promote or advertise the nation's products, services, culture, just to mention a few. Therefore, there is need to build a sustainable local film and television industry.

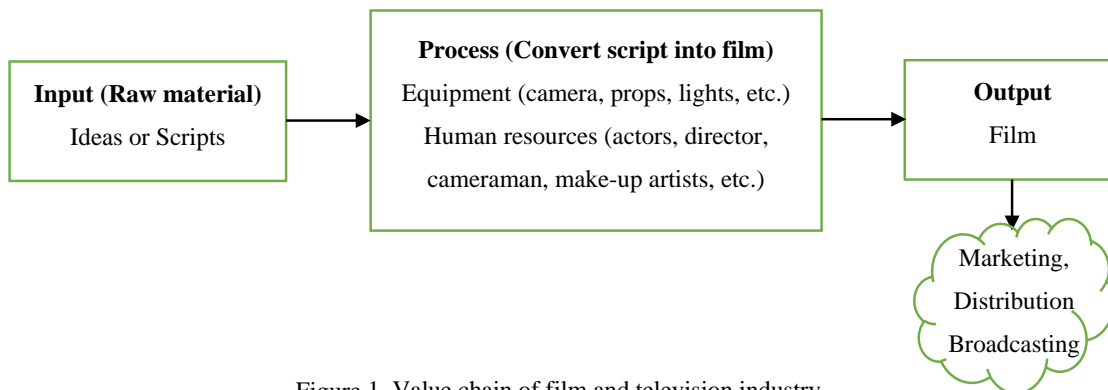


Figure 1. Value chain of film and television industry

### 3.1 Constraints Hindering the Development of Zimbabwean Film and Television Industry

There are lot of constraints that are hindering the development of Zimbabwean film and television industry, some of which include: (i) limited access to funds; (ii) piracy and corruption; (iii) fragmented local market, for instance Zimbabwe only have one national television; (iv) limited access to distribution and exhibition facilities; (v) outdated equipment, for instance ZBC is using analogue system which is very slow and expensive in setting transmitters per site for national coverage; (vi) failure to move from analogue system has opened up new challenges, for instance insufficient television channels to sale the film productions; (vii) banning of private broadcasting television, for instance recent denial of license to Kwese TV; (viii) insufficient research on audience preferences; (ix) regulatory laws which restrict the creativity of filmmakers in Zimbabwe; (x) lack of audience enthusiasm for local films; (xi) lack of skilled human resources such as actors, producers, production managers, directors and scriptwriters; in the industry; (xii) absence of film guild to represent filmmakers and make film policies; (xiii) fewer opportunities to co-produce with other developed countries; (xiv) limitation of 10% ownership regulated for foreign investors discourage potential funders as they have limited control in the broadcasting venture and very little to gain from their investment; and (xv) censorship regulations disallowing filmmakers to produce what interest the public, for instance politics in Zimbabwe (Rwafa, 2012).

### 3.2 Digitalization of Zimbabwean Film and Television Industry

Since 2015, the Zimbabwean government has been failing to move the television systems from analogue to digital citing the lack of funds as the main reason. Except from one initiative in 2016 when local filmmakers were called out for contents so that the digitalization program does not run out of content, the government of Zimbabwe have not done much to promote film and television industry. The state owned ZBC TV is running in deficit because it is still using old equipment and failing to buy new contents to broadcast, as a result most viewers in Zimbabwe opted for DSTV satellite service from South Africa. Television is the driving force for the growth of film and television industry as it enables the filmmakers to enhance their caliber, however the growth of film industry in Zimbabwe has been limited because the country has only one broadcaster which has somehow been limiting people from producing many films and television shows.

There is an urgent need for the Zimbabwean film and television industry to move from traditional means towards more acceptable modern means of sustaining the industry. The method of creating a constant film and television now centers

on the consumer preferences, however the audience preferences are unpredictable which makes it hard to anticipate the film's success or failure. Even the use of expensive equipment and well-established stars does not guarantee the success of drawing more audiences (de Vany 2004; Elberse and Eliashberg, 2003). With the availability of technology, online research and marketing will help the filmmakers to engage with their audiences and setup the standards in the production of films, which will eventually contribute positively and increase film sales (Gubbins, 2012).

The use of digital technologies provides several benefits to the filmmakers and producers, some of which are depicted in figure 2. The most important is the maintenance of high quality because the quality is maintained and does not get lost during the transmission process. The original quality of the product captured by the camera, both picture and sound, can be received by the consumer despite the distance from the transmitter's coverage area. There is a room for continual improvement of quality in broadcasting television for better sound and picture quality, for instance 3D contents, Ultra High Definitions (4K and 8K).

Digitalization of the film and television industry will open up a lot of opportunities for filmmakers in Zimbabwe. The introduction of digitalization will increase the opportunities to export Zimbabwean television productions. The number of channels in Zimbabwe will likely increase which will increase demand for local content and more people will be employed over a longer period of time. The digitalization will also enhance access and communication that will be facilitated by new platforms and viewing devices, particularly in niche markets and remote areas. In addition, new opportunities would emerge for Zimbabwean producers to "facilitate" international commercials, feature films and television series. In the past, Zimbabwean producers have tried to distribute their productions on international market with limited success.

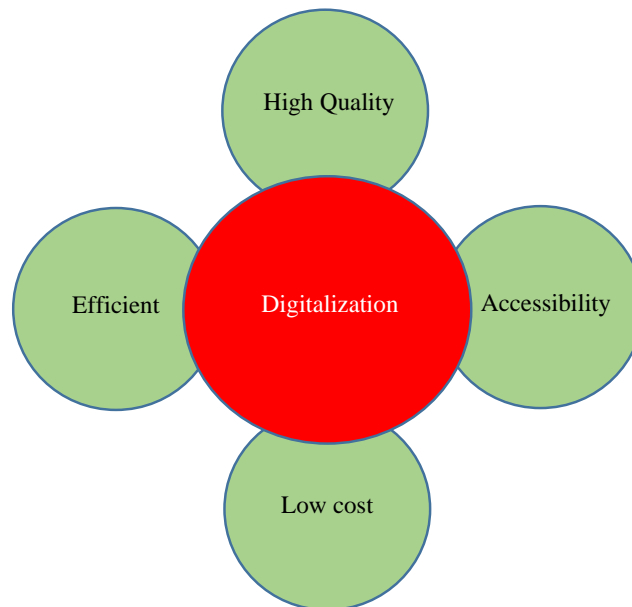


Figure 2. Benefits of digitalization

Since digital movies do not require the use for stock film, digitization of film and television industry will improve the efficiency of the production process and contribute to a significant reduction of cost, which will progressively eliminate the need for storage and inventory control (Casassus and Wei, 2009). The 21st century have opened up global marketing and Hollywood have successfully expanded its markets through the use of internet (Finney, 2015). The utilization of technology in film and television industry (like mobile tv, e-cinema) reduces distribution cost while maintaining image quality (Casassus and Wei, 2009), and the online distribution is efficient and gives better convenience for the viewers (Ulin, 2010). Film websites and online televisions also offer a wide range of genres for viewers to select.

In Zimbabwe, information is still being conveyed using electrical signals instead of using computers which transmits the content through digital transmissions. The advantage of digital technology is that more broadcasting television can use one single frequency unlike the analogue which can only accommodate one programme. This means that the cost of infrastructure will also be reduced as other television services will be able to use one digital transmitter on site. This will assist in the development of more television channels in Zimbabwe which will eventually result in increased employment, quality content, and competition among broadcaster to purchase the product at reasonable price, and a wider selection of programmes for audience to watch. There is an optimistic chance for the film and television industry to develop like other industries which have switched to digitalization and have embraced the new ways. The availability of multiple service providers such as Internet Protocol (IP), satellite, and over-the-top (OTT) services will provide consumers a choice to select and switch service provider (OECD, 2013). In addition, technology will enable consumers to access and view films at their own convenient time. This is vital in order to become globally competitive and share the nation's cultural identity.

Despite several benefits of digitalization, low returns and piracy issues are the big challenges associated with digitalization. Piracy has become rampant effect in today's society and there is a need for suitable measures to curb piracy. Government should form policies that can play a key role to help reduce digital piracy by supporting technological innovation, such as multimedia encoding and digital networking protocols, which will assist or enhance legal digitization activities. They should further strengthen the regulatory laws on the legal distribution of artistic and technological film works and ban illegal methods of distributing finished products by vendors or street marketers. It should be considered a serious offense to see a person selling a DVD or CD without license. Zimbabwe film industry should have authorized places where audiences can get the film rather than in the streets. This will benefit the filmmakers with increased turnover, which they can use again as capital to fund new projects.

### **3.3 Creating a Sustainable Film and Television Industry in Zimbabwe**

The challenges of film and television industry in Zimbabwe are not as complex as compared to other countries. Although the industry may seem to have difficulties transforming and developing itself to make the industry viable and sustainable, it is important to note that the Zimbabwean filmmakers are capable of creating a productive industry given that some legislative regulations regarding the limitation of foreign investment and freedom to the flow of information have been amended. Film is a medium which communicates information and ideology (Nelmes, 2003), however the Zimbabwean regulatory laws seem to protect the audiences from private broadcasting probably to avoid information that can incite the public. Most African governments have a control over their broadcasting mediums to prevent any civil dispute (Mamdani, 1996; Kijana, 2012), however Zimbabwe never had any civil war but for last two decades the country's economy has been shrinking which might trigger one.

Zimbabwe currently has no active co-production agreements with other African countries because the industry is running on outdated policies which limits foreigners to invest. There is a great need for the government, together with the filmmakers, to discuss on legislations and regulations that are feasible to create a sustainable film industry. Effective short and long-term financial measures should be put in place to support the Zimbabwean film and television industry. So far, the most imperative issue is lack of funds to run the operations of the industry. Besides small grants from the Culture Fund, there is very little organized fund available for filmmakers. Therefore, filmmakers should seek other alternatives to produce films, especially the younger generation of filmmakers who are flexible in adapting and understanding new technologies which are easy to use, less expensive, and requires small crew.

It is a paradox that the Zimbabwean film and television industry doesn't have skilled professionals, yet Zimbabwean professionals (such as Davison Mudzingwa) are developing and contributing to the sustainability of film industries in other African countries. This reflects to a need for conducting short courses and internships for those who have potential to deliver quality services, which can be delivered by existing film schools or organisations. The government and other private investors should at least try to support and invest in some of the productions being made by filmmakers like Njagu Joe. It is important to create a strong foundation through empowering filmmakers with skills so as to enable the industry to be globally competitive and economically stable. Those with passion and entrepreneurial skills should identify the market and make new allies which connects them globally for the sustainability of the film industry.

#### **3.1.1 Role of Academic Institutions in Sustainability**

There are few academic institutes in Zimbabwe that produce film graduates. For instance, Midlands State University offers a Bachelor's degree in film and theatre, and Zimbabwe Film School offers a diploma and a certificate in film. The Zimbabwean School of film (ZIFSS) started in 1997, however only a few graduates have contributed to the Zimbabwean film industry. Most film practitioners claim that they have not brought any significant change into the film industry. Even though 50 university students and 70 ZIFSS students graduate every year, the Zimbabwean film industry is not that viable for one to really depend on it or to get a full time employment. Despite the fact that most of the filmmakers do not have employment opportunities in the industry, these institutes have been increasing their intakes every semester. These institutions can play a significant role in building a sustainable industry. In order to develop the industry, the graduates from these institutions can take an initiative to train others and work together with industry practitioners to create good quality contents to be broadcasted on television.

There is a great need for senior and experienced filmmakers to integrate with film graduates who have been trained in a variety of specialist skills (such as editing, graphic designing and other innovations) to develop the film and television industry. Most of these graduates are young and can easily adapt to dynamic nature of technology and audience preferences. The industry should utilize the knowledge and skills that filmmakers, like Rumbi Katedza, have in writing interesting scripts and producing quality films. If Zimbabwean young professional graduating from institutes abroad, for example film graduates from African Film Drama Art (AFDA) in South Africa, return back then there is a much hope that the film industry in Zimbabwe will be a viable industry in near future. These young graduates have slowly infiltrated into South African television industry with an exceptional and distinctive value of transforming novels into films which most people fail to do. They utilize their knowledge, creativeness and youthful prime to form a new wave of network of skilled filmmakers, which helps in igniting the television industry to an unexpected growth. Together with the old filmmakers and the government, they have built a well-established film and television industry, hence the South African film and television industry today has about 21 656 employees (NFVF, 2017). Likewise, the integration of fresh graduates and film practitioners will enable the Zimbabwean industry to be sustainable through the exchange of information and new ideas.

Some film companies even groom and partner with potential artist. If the production becomes successful, the company or the director benefits and establishes themselves too. Such an on-going relationship between film production companies and successful talented artists enable a film company to make more production projects with familiar, reliable performers, and strengthen its capability to establish the cooperate brand of films produced by the company (Olsberg, 2012). The company also have to ensure that there is a stable revenue stream. One of the measures that can be set in place is to take advantage of freelance labour and specialized personnel who are experienced in entrepreneurial leadership. It is vital for the film company to have a strong management team which can be employed for short term basis just to strategize and thrive to improve the film and television industry operations. This also reduces cost of employing full time management team and produces effective results in producing quality films in a short period of time.

### 3.1.2 Role of Finances in Sustainability

Film and television is one of the creative industries which is growing fast and is a key contributor to GDP of most countries. Co-productions with international filmmakers tend to build strong relationship, hence film companies with various international pacts have competitive advantage in international markets. Usually, such international alliances are made to gain unique skills and financial resources (Morawetz et al., 2007). Networking will assist the Zimbabwean film industry to build corporate alliances, market the local products, and bring in foreign currency which will contribute to the economy of the country.

Another mechanism that potential investors can use is slate funding. For instance, the investor can invest in a company to produce different films instead of funding different producers with different crews which requires more money. This mechanism of slate funding might reduce the risk of funding unsuccessful productions and save money. Hence, it provides an advantage to investors who are interested in commercial films for larger profits and film companies with a capacity of producing successful commercial films (Olsberg, 2012). Funding can also be arranged between filmmakers and broadcasters. In most countries, broadcasters purchase films from filmmakers after the production. However, broadcasters can partner with film producers or invest so that both parties win. The broadcaster won't purchase the finished production at a higher cost but will invest and gain profit, and the film maker will share the expenses of the production. The collaboration between broadcaster and filmmaker results in multiple productions,



distribution of productions to reliable domestic markets, and establishing a long term relationship which promote exchange of ideas, skills and strategies to cement the development of the industry.

### 3.1.3 Role of Advertisement in Sustainability

Another mechanism for the film and television industry to sustain is through advertising. Broadcasters should device a way of attracting companies from other industries to advertise their products / services so as gain more incentive by offering their broadcasting services. The filmmakers have to make partnerships with other industries and advertise products / services through product placement and embedded branding. In product placement, performers use the props or costume of a certain brand or designer which is sponsoring the film or show. The sponsoring brand or designer will also benefit through the advertisement of their costume or props. Embedded branding shows the services and values of a certain brand, for instance the film *Castaway* (2000) is based on the dedication of Fed-Ex employee who delivers his package despite being stranded on a deserted island.

### 3.1.4 International Initiatives

The government can learn lessons from international initiatives, for instance, the Zimbabwean government can learn from and implement some of the initiatives from South African Film Industry Economic Baseline Study of 2013 that was prepared by the National Film and Video Foundation of South Africa, an agency of the Department of Arts and Culture. The Zimbabwean film and television industry, in collaboration with local filmmakers, can utilize some of the initiatives proposed in that study, which are briefly discussed in table 1.

Table 1. Initiatives proposed for Zimbabwean film and television industry

S No.	Initiatives	Remarks
1	Training and workshops	Especially in scriptwriting as it is the foundation of film, and in editing to improve graphic designing and special effects. Training and workshops should be followed by in-depth audits to insure the quality.
2	Review of regulations	Government must review some regulations pertaining shareholding of international investors in the film industry, and shall provide a reasonable limit for the investors to gain a certain right of control to their investment.
3	Establishment of independent film and television board	In addition to state controlled board, Zimbabwe needs an independent board that will draft or amend the film policy, which will open up new distribution and exhibition channels for international showcasing Zimbabwean films and television in the international platforms.  The board will also provide information on the processes of film production value chain enabling greater networking and co-operation between different players in the value chain.
4	Developing film database	There is a need for the development of central database system on the best locale available for shooting, which will enable local and international filmmakers and producers to select desired locations relevant to their production.
5	Flow of information	Local film producers should be equipped with the information on potential markets in Africa and the world.  A website should be developed with all the details on Zimbabwean film and television industry, which will provide contact details, funding sources, technical aspects, progress and updates of upcoming national and international events to public.

6	Inclusion in budget	The government should allocate budget for the film industry, which can be used as a capital to develop new and experienced disadvantaged filmmakers. This will generate employment, develop skills and talent.
7	Hosting film festivals	Zimbabwe is blessed with plentiful of beautiful locales, and hence hosting international film festivals will attract international filmmakers and generate revenue through tourism. Such film exhibitions provide a platform to showcase local film products. Films leave positive impressions and leaves a long lasting connection with the audience about nation's culture, landscapes and society.
8	Mobile cinemas	There is a need to have more mobile cinemas in rural areas in order to reach to the rural community and spread the skills and information.
9	Open market and International collaboration	Government shall spearhead partnership with international filmmakers to attract successful filmmakers from around the world. There is a need to create and develop international relations with popular television broadcasters, film distributors and exhibitors. Open market allows new investors to open new television channels or satellites that benefit the development of the industry, with the first priority given to potential local companies.

#### **4. Conclusion and Recommendations**

This article provides a comprehensive overview of a Zimbabwean film and television industry and a detailed breakdown of challenges and opportunities associated with the creation of sustainable film industry in Zimbabwe. The paper discusses ways to develop and create a sustainable film industry so that it can actively participate in the Zimbabwean economy as it has the potential to create employment. Although there are many problems to be addressed in the film and television industry, filmmakers should try to improvise the use of technology, handle film crew, and collaborate with international counterparts to run the project successfully. Film and television, as media and a form of communication, have a great impact on other forms of communication like advertising, hence its success has positive influence on all other industries. For instance, a television advert showing popular actor using a mobile phone or showing off the latest unique advanced features of the phone may prompt viewers to purchase the phone. Another example is the film making a song or singer popular, a very good example is 'My heart will go on' from Celion Dion in the movie Titanic.

If the suggested initiatives are embarked on, the industry is poised to grow significantly over the next decade. The fact that the government is advocating for digitalization shows that there is a green light for the future of the industry and this could lead to employment creation resulting in the economic growth. Even though the government institutions and other commissions like BAZ have a crucial role to play, it is in the hands of film practitioners to take the most decisive impact for this revolution. It is, therefore, essential for the authorities together with Zimbabwean filmmakers to have constant conference to pave a way forward to ensure that the legislative laws allow potential media companies to privately set up televisions broadcasting satellites and find ways to accommodate foreign investors. Having foreign investors will promote exchange of information and skills, and open new markets for the television programs such as films from our own locally produced productions. This will position the industry into a global radar, and fundamental to this is the creation of international exposure and recognition, which will maintain a well-developed film and television industry in Zimbabwe.

It is suggested that the filmmakers should come up and run a pilot project together which will unfold the relevance of film industry in Zimbabwean economy and its positive impact to other industries and its contribution to the nation. This pilot project mandate will have to convince, attract and unearthing the value of the industry to the investors and the positive impact that the industry have in the growth of the economy and in creating employment, especially for the youths. This can be arranged in the form of a documentary showing other successful film and television industries or feature film instead of using research articles. For easier comprehension, this can be listed as the following:

- (i) The establishment, development and long term plans for the film and television industry.
- (ii) The estimated budget to be spent on the production and post-production works.
- (iii) Estimated employees to be directly and indirectly employed, and the benefits to be enjoyed by other industries.
- (iv) The turnover of the film and other benefits of the production to the nation and the investors.

## References

- Casassus, F., and Wei, J., Development of a value increasing model for movie industry, *Southwest Decision Sciences Institute (SWDSI) Conference Proceedings*, Oklahoma, 2009.
- Chuma, W., Reforming the media in Zimbabwe: Critical reflections, In Moyo, D., and Chuma, W., (eds.), *Media Policy in a Changing Southern Africa: Critical Reflections on Media Reforms in the Global Age*, UNISA Press, Pretoria, pp. 90-109, 2010.
- De Vany, A., *Hollywood Economics: How Extreme Uncertainty Shapes the Film Industry*, Routledge, London and New York, 2004.
- Elberse, A., and Eliashberg, J., Demand and supply dynamics for sequentially released products in international markets: The case of motion pictures, *Marketing Science*, vol. 22, no. 9, pp. 329-354, 2003.
- Finney, A., *The International Film Business; A Market Guide Beyond Hollywood*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Routledge, New York, NY, 2015.
- Gubbins, M., Digital revolution: The active audience, 2012, Available: [https://www.cineregio.org/dyn/files/pdf\\_download\\_items/7-file/Digital%20Revolution\\_active%20audience\\_executive%20summary\\_oct2012.pdf](https://www.cineregio.org/dyn/files/pdf_download_items/7-file/Digital%20Revolution_active%20audience_executive%20summary_oct2012.pdf), August 12, 2017.
- Hungwe, K. N., Narrative and ideology: 50 years of film-making in Zimbabwe, *Media, Culture and Society*, vol. 27, no. 1, pp. 83-99, 2001.
- Joffe, A., and Jacklin, N., Promoting the culture sector through job creation and small enterprise development in SADC countries: The film and television industry, International Labour Office, Geneva, 2003.
- Kijana, E., A general assessment of the independent ethnic radio broadcasting stations in Kenya, *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, vol. 3, no. 8, special issue, 2012.
- Mamdani, M., *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, Fountain Publishers, Cape Town, 1996.
- Mboti, N., The Zimbabwean film industry, *African Communication Research*, vol. 7, no. 3, pp. 145-172, 2016.
- MISA – Zimbabwe, Submission and position paper on broadcasting in Zimbabwe, Media Institute of Southern Africa, 2006, Available: <http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/research/ZIM%20Broadcasting%20Draft.pdf>, August 12, 2017.
- Morawetz, N., Hardy, J., Haslam, C., and Randle, K., Finance, policy and industrial dynamics: The rise of co-productions in the film industry, *Industry and Innovation*, vol. 14, no 4, pp. 421-443, 2007.
- Moyo, L., The dearth of public debate: Policy, polarities and positional reporting in Zimbabwe's news media. In Moyo, D., and Chuma, W. (eds.) *Media Policy in a Changing Southern Africa: Critical Reflections on Media Reforms in the Global Age*, UNISA Press, Pretoria, pp. 110-132, 2010.
- Mudzaki, F. K., Digitization prospects in developing countries: Case of Zimbabwe national archives, *Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) Annual General Conference*, Richmond, Virginia, USA, 2013.
- NBA, NBA and econet media announce groundbreaking partnership for coverage in Africa, NBA Communications, NBA Media Ventures, 2016. Available: <http://pr.nba.com/nba-econet-media-partnership-africa/>, August 17, 2017.
- Nelmes, J., *An Introduction to Film Studies*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Psychology Press, Routledge, London, pp. 39, 2003.
- NFVF, Economic impact of South African film industry, National Film and Video Foundation, 2017. Available: [http://nfvf.co.za/home/22/files/2017%20files/NFVF%20Economic%20Impact%20Study%20Report\\_14\\_06\\_2017.pdf](http://nfvf.co.za/home/22/files/2017%20files/NFVF%20Economic%20Impact%20Study%20Report_14_06_2017.pdf), August 17, 2017.
- OECD, Competition issues in television and broadcasting, Competition Policy Roundtables DAF/COMP/GF (2013)13, 2013. Available: <http://www.oecd.org/daf/competition/TV-and-broadcasting2013.pdf>, August 17, 2017.
- Olsberg, Building sustainable film businesses: The challenges for industry and government, SPI, June 2012. Available: <http://www.filminstitutet.se/globalassets/2.-fa-kunskap-om-film/analys-och-statistik/publications/other-publications/building-sustainable-film-businesses---the-challenges-for-industry.pdf>, August 17, 2017.
- Pardo, A., Digital Hollywood: How internet and social media are changing the movie business, In Friedrichsen, M., and Mühl-Benninghaus, W. (eds.), *Handbook of Social Media Management: Value Chain and Business Models in Changing Media Markets*, Springer, New York, NY, pp. 329-348, 2014.

- Riber, J., An overview of the audio-visual scene in Zimbabwe, 2001, Available: <http://www.mfditanzania.com/images/pdf/misc/audiovisual-overview.pdf>, August 12, 2017.
- Rwafa, U., Language censorship in selected Zimbabwean films in Shona and English, PhD Thesis, University of South Africa (UNISA), 2012.
- Ulin, J., *The Business of Media Distribution: Monetizing Film, TV, and Video Content in an Online World*, Focal Press, Burlington, MA, 2010.

## **Biography**

**Fortunate Tatenda Mauyakufa** is a young researcher and also a filmmaker, who attained her honours degree from Midlands State University in Zimbabwe. While studying in Zimbabwe, she took the initiative on rising an awareness to different communities about children in probation institutes. She further directed and produced a documentary on Blue Hills, which is one of the largest probation institutes in Zimbabwe. In 2011, she worked as a temporary teacher before eventually enrolled for her honours degree. She was an assistant facilitator of theatre and arts for the new curriculum, which the ministry of Primary and Secondary schools had introduced, under Pfumvudza Media Company. Currently, she is a regular contributor at Women Arts Festival and a member of Zimbabwean theatre. Her aim is to acquire more knowledge on film production and be involved in the global media industry. During her leisure time she watches documentaries, play tennis and go to church. She aims to pursue doctoral degree and use film as a global medium that disseminate educative information.

**Anup Pradhan** is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Quality and Operations Management under Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment at the University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, South Africa. He is NRF (National Research Foundation) rated researcher in South Africa. He is registered engineer with the Nepal Engineering Council. He earned his B.Sc. in Agricultural Engineering from Bangladesh Agricultural University (Bangladesh), M.E. in Agricultural Engineering and Systems from Asian Institute of Technology (Thailand) and PhD in Biological and Agricultural Engineering from University of Idaho (USA). He has held posts at Alternative Energy Promotion Centre, Nepal and Institute of Engineering, Nepal. His research interests include life cycle assessment, renewable energy, sustainability, farm mechanization and operations management. He has published in peer-reviewed journals and conference papers. He is member of ASABE, Gamma Sigma Delta, and Golden Key International Honor Society.