

Project Management Update from Zimbabwe¹



By Peter Banda

Project Management Zimbabwe
Harare, Zimbabwe

PROJECT NEWS FROM ZIMBABWE

ZIMBABWE Government delivers new \$153m Airport Terminal Project

Zimbabwe has officially opened the new international terminal at the Robert Gabriel Mugabe (RGM) International Airport in Harare, after nearly five years of construction work, the \$153 million expansion project was commissioned by the head of state, President Emerson Mnangagwa, on 14 July 2023, in the presence of other Government officials, aviation stakeholders, and various media partners.

Zimbabwe is gearing up for increased air transport activity with the expansion of the main international airport hub, as the new project is expected significantly increase the hub's handling capacity, highlighting the nation's commitment to boosting tourism. Robert Gabriel Mugabe International is one of Southern Africa's main gateways, connecting regional hubs like Johannesburg OR Tambo (JNB) and Lusaka Kenneth Kaunda (LUN). Aviation is critical in supporting tourism and international investments; hence, the state has invested in developing its central hub.

The new international terminal will handle at least 6.5 million passengers per year, an outstanding increase from the 2.5 million handling capacity of the previous terminal. The

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terminal was constructed by China Jiangsu Construction Group Corporation, who handed it over to the Airports Company of Zimbabwe (ACZ).

The project commenced in 2018 and was scheduled to be completed in 2021. However, due to pandemic-induced restrictions, construction work was suspended, and the entire project was delayed by two years. Work will also be done to refurbish the existing terminals to meet international standards. RGM airport has been upgraded now with both international arrival and departure sections serving as one all-inclusive terminal. The departure wing takes up a larger space in the terminal, while the remaining space is occupied by the arrival and passenger processing area. ACZ CEO Tawanda Gusha told reporters at the commissioning ceremony, "It's effectively one big terminal building. We're going to link the new wings with the existing terminal to allow for increased traffic for both departures and arrivals. Passengers will be using the entire terminal building once the refurbishment of the infrastructure is complete."

The two terminals include new facilities, like self-check-in kiosks, Flight Information Display Systems (FIDS), prayer rooms, smoking areas, restaurants, duty-free shops, and a quarantine center. Some fast-food outlets have also set up shop at the airport to offer passengers more meal options.

Additionally, ten boarding gates have been added to bring the number up to 16, while jet bridges have been increased from three to seven. Zimbabwe already has some of the world's most popular tourist attractions, like Hwange National Park, Lake Kariba, and Victoria Falls, so passengers flying into the capital will land at an upgraded facility before traveling to their respective destinations.

With one of Africa's longest runways, Harare is geographically positioned to serve several airports in the SADC region conveniently. Although the country suffers from countless infrastructural challenges, expanding the terminals greatly benefits airlines operating at the airport. Meanwhile RGM airport continues to welcome new airlines. In March 2023, Zambia Airways resumed flights to Harare after 27 years as it re-entered the regional market. In April 2023, Eswatini Air launched flights to Harare, its third regional destination, after commencing operations a month earlier. Zimbabwe hopes to continue adding routes to its network with the terminal expansion.

See photos of new airport on next page.



The above is based on announcements by the Zimbabwe national government and news reports in Zimbabwe media.

About the Author



Peter Banda

Harare, Zimbabwe



Peter Banda is an agile Portfolio Manager with Change Management, Marketing & Project Management Skills, and an accomplished entrepreneur with broad stakeholder management experience. He is a founder member of Zimbabwe's largest Association of Project Managers with a membership of over 4000, Project Management Zimbabwe (PMZ). He has worked in both the private & public sectors during the last 20 years in Zimbabwe, Botswana & South Africa. Peter is a born & passionate teacher, mentor & trainer with skills ranging from Personal Development Planning to Project Management. Peter has presented & published over 30 papers at high profile international conferences & leading newspapers & publications respectively during the last 10 years.

Peter is currently Secretary- General & CEO of PROJECT MANAGEMENT ZIMBABWE (PMZ). Responsibilities cover strategic navigation of PMZ towards the vision covering board advisory and stakeholder management. He was previously a Higher Education Examiner, Facilitator, Lecturer, Curriculum Developer and Assessor for both local and International Diploma and Degree courses for the Zimbabwe Ministry of Higher & Tertiary Education. Peter holds a Bachelors (Hon.) degree and MSc qualification, and is currently studying for a PhD & other certifications. A God-fearing father of 2 lovely daughters & 1 son, Peter likes reading & researching current affairs, coaching others to realise their dreams, and watching soccer & cricket.

Peter Banda can be contacted at PMZ National Secretariat Office info@pmiz.org.zw

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