

IM Newsletter



INDIVIDUELL MÄNNISKOHJÄLP
SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT PARTNER

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Southern Africa Region Office



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Editorial

We Continue to Make Progress in Southern Africa

Welcome to IM Southern Africa's Newsletter, our first edition of our bi-annual newsletter for 2022, in which we share some of the stories coming in from our partners within the partner eco-system.

We are particularly delighted with the great progress of our work within the region, despite the stressful environment that, together with our partners, we found ourselves working in during the past half year. Just as the region geared itself up for a much better roller-coaster year, with some notable recovery possibilities from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the region suffered yet some of the unanticipated serious setbacks. These have aggravated the situation and further thrown the region into an even worse economic and social turmoil. These included the various cyclones as well as the onslaught and impact of the Russia-Ukraine war. The situation might have been worse, but the work of our partners, who have in many ways helped cushioning the burden on our rights holders and stemming the spiraling negative impact.

For instance, the Centre for Environmental Policy and Advocacy (CEPA) in Malawi, worked with survivors of the highly destructive Cyclone Ana storm, to channel some strategic humanitarian assistance to those in great need in its impact area of interventions in Nchalo, Chikwawa district. In Zambia, the Non-Governmental Gender Coordination's Council (NGOCC), worked tirelessly stepping up efforts to rescue girls on the verge of going into child marriage. The same applied in Malawi and Zimbabwe, with the Centre for Youth Empowerment and Civic Education (CYECE) and Rozaria Memorial Trust (RMT), respectively.

With a view to respond to the economic situation, in Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZIMCODD) continued gallantly empowering women with business entrepreneurship skills that enabled most of the rights holders escape poverty. In Eswatini, the Foundation for Socio-economic Justice (FSEJ), despite the on-going political situation and whilst safeguarding their own security, continued diligently safeguarding the civic space as their priority area of intervention.

Malawi Economic Justice (MEJN), in Malawi, displayed similar efforts and some remarkable progress was achieved around community empowerment towards utilization of public resources in the country. Within the education sector, the Civil Society Education Coalition (CSEC) in Malawi, and the Deaf Zimbabwe Trust (DZT) in Zimbabwe, strived to bring back to school learners who had dropped off due to various reasons, including those with disabilities.

These are just, but a few notable highlights of all the amazing interventions making the difference for rights holders in the region thus far, from social inclusion, economic inclusion, civil society strengthening, civic space engagement; as well as resilience and climate justice. We, nonetheless, remain resolute in hope, belief and faith that we will see more continued positive strides from all our partners, as we relentlessly strive to be better and stronger towards achieving a just and compassionate world without poverty and vulnerability.

Thank you all and enjoy this edition of your Newsletter.

Dalitso KUBALASA
Regional Director, IM Southern Africa



IM in a nutshell

WHY:

Our vision A just and compassionate world

WHAT:

Our mission We fight poverty and exclusion

HOW:

Our strategy Working towards full equality and strong democracy through social & economic inclusion and ensured civic space & a strong civil society

WHO:

Our workplace culture

A group of daring people who are passionate about what they do, who knows how to be relevant and put great trust in each other's abilities and knowledge.

Our feminist leadership

Is value driven, trust based, situational and exercised with a growth mindset.

Our guiding principles

Dialogue rather than documentation * We make decisions with consent, not necessarily with consensus * We go through to learn and readjust, not to monitor * One IM is prioritized over departments.

WE trust
WE dare
WE are relevant
WE are passionate



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Southern Africa Region



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Dalitso Kubalasa is the IM Regional Director for Southern Africa which includes eSwatini, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi. In this entry, we engage him for some insights about himself and the region.



1 What is IM?

IM is a Swedish development cooperation organisation working to achieve a world free from poverty and exclusion. It currently works around thematic areas of Social Inclusion, Economic Inclusion and Civil Society and Civic Space. Apart from working in Sweden, IM is in Central America, Middle

East, South Asia, Southern Africa, and Eastern Europe. The Southern Africa office is in Lilongwe, Malawi.

2 Who is Dalitso Kubalasa?

Dalitso is IM's Regional Director for Southern Africa. He is a trained and qualified economist, a development and public finance management expert, human rights advocate, and somebody with the unabated passion and soft spot for making the world a better place for everyone.

Dalitso always strongly believes in, and gets motivated by a sense of shared purpose and collective responsibility towards a common good; in that every undertaking in life is one's special assignment by God, to which he or she will account one day.

3 What Has IM Achieved in the Region?

IM has achieved quite a lot from the basics' operationalization of the IM vision and mission, to the programmatic growth-orientation both in breadth and in depth as well as the inculcated self-leadership and true spirit of partnership embodiment with all partners. The achievements have successfully panned the enabling, connecting and catalyzing of societal change; through the spurred partners' shared learning and envisioning of their programme interventions (both systemic and systematic) for policy influencing and positive impact to rights holders in the four countries' partner ecosystems.

These have all been especially and conveniently also linked to the regional (SADC) and continental (AU) as well as IM global levels' partner ecosystems. All these have transcended the key priority impact areas of social inclusion, economic inclusion, civil society strengthening and civic space and civic engagement in Southern Africa region.

There has also been some steady growth in the context of visualizing and putting ideas into practice, alongside the act of consistent shared learning both intra/inter organizations, in-country, as well as intra/inter-regional with other IM regional partners, all in the same quest for effective societal change. One unique growth aspect for the regional civil society strengthening has for instance been the strengthened capacity development linkages between Financial

Management and Programme Management portfolios, through the focused mentorship and support of partners' finance and non-finance (programme departmental) staff teams.

4 Your Last Words

The challenges are enormous out there. Not just within the Southern Africa region but the rest of the regions that IM works in and beyond. Let us therefore all join hands to fight poverty and exclusion within the region and the rest of the world. Such support gives us the opportunity and confidence to help more people around the world.

Together we will continue creating a world where humanity can grow, a world of justice and compassion.



Dalitso Kubalasa (fourth from left) with traditional leaders and members of youth network from Namabvi in Mangochi district under Centre for Youth Empowerment and Civic Education (CYECE)



Strategic Dialogue That Catalyzes Change!



Delegates from Malawi engaging Zambia Institute for Policy Analysis and Research during the learning visit



Delegates from Malawi appreciating one of the electricity generation flagship programs being implemented at Kafue Lower Gorge in Zambia

Cynthia Mughogho – IM Southern Africa

The 2019 to 2023 strategy has defined the role of IM Swedish Development Partner (IM) to be of a connector, enabler and catalyst for change. At IM, there is a belief that sustainable societal change is created by targeted rights holders and with key enabling partners and actors, catalyzing social impact on individual, organizational and institutional levels. IM also believes that it is through empowerment, mobilization and advocacy that change happens. The change process therefore happens when actors are collectively brought together into an ecosystem to create lasting solutions for the society.

Being mindful of (and emboldened by) these roles IM Southern Africa, from 14th to 17th October 2019, facilitated a learning visit of key development stakeholders from Malawi to Zambia. Members from the Malawi Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, the National Planning Commission (NPC), Council for Non-Governmental Organisations (CONGOMA) and Malawi Economic

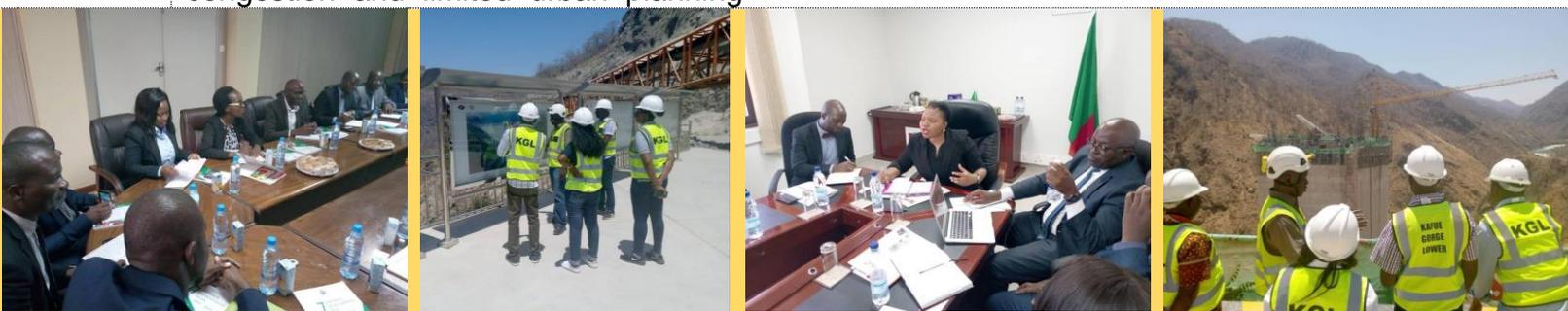
Justice Network (MEJN) visited Zambia to learn from Ministry of National Development Planning, Zambia Institute for Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR), Policy Monitoring and Research Centre (PMRC), and the Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR) members. The team explored how collaboration, partnerships and cooperation between civil society, national planning authorities, government, cooperating partners and private sector are best enhanced and sustained during the formulation and implementation of medium and long-term national development plans.

During the visit, dialogue especially ensued around the Sustainable Cities Programme (SCP), among others. The delegation from Malawi significantly appreciated that between 1994 and 2001, the SCP was implemented to address high levels of poverty and inequality experienced in the Lusaka city. It learnt that prior to the SCP, government's capacity to adequately deliver public services was impaired due to Zambia's shrinking economy. The city used to thus be characterized by several environmental challenges, traffic congestion and limited urban planning

capacities, just to mention a few. However, through the SCP, cities such as Kitwe and others were revamped. The delegation further explored how Malawi could particularly learn and adopt the model to expand its cities, as a way to address some of the eminent challenges experienced in Malawi, in the context of the Malawi 2063 agenda.

It is therefore exciting and energizing to see that the dialogue has begun bearing fruits, through the Malawi government's recent launch of the Secondary Cities Plan on Tuesday May 31, 2022. IM understands that the plan is to see eight new cities developed in all regions of the country, in line with the country's Malawi 2063 national vision. IM recognizes that the prospective cities are set to be built in Karonga, Nkhata Bay, Salima/Chipoka, Liwonde, Mangochi/Monkey Bay, Kasungu, Luchenza and Bangula.

IM remains duty-bound to connect, enable and catalyze dynamic collaborations and partnerships for effective and sustainable change in societies.





Nhanga Connects Zimbabwe and Zambia

Kumbu' Kuntiya – IM Southern Africa

In line with IM's role as a catalyst and connector, we are excited that Rozaria Memorial Trust (RMT) of Zimbabwe hosted the Non-Governmental Gender Organisations' Coordinating Council (NGOCC) from Zambia for a weeklong visit. The visit was aimed at facilitating the learning of RMT's Nhanga concept thereby allowing NGOCC to replicate it in its programming work. The visit was also aimed at sharing best practices for strengthened partnership among the two organisations. Nhanga is an innovation that RMT has been using in its programming work, as an intergenerational and feminist safe space for girls' empowerment.

The NGOCC delegation comprised of two NGOCC staff members and 7 girls. RMT Gamechangers participated in the exchange programme as one way of capacity strengthening of the Regional Young Women Network (RYWN), a network of girls from Southern Africa who are strong advocates of girls' rights and ending harmful practices especially child marriages. During the visit, among others, the girls had an opportunity to engage with duty bearers with a view to better understand Nhanga as a space for advocacy with policymakers on key challenges that hinder girls from realising their full potential.

As part of the interaction, members of RYWN developed a draft position paper on key concerns for girls in the SADC region including advocacy messages.

NGOCC shared how they are working towards eradicating harmful cultural practices in Zambia whilst members of RYWN from Zambia gave a presentation on the initiatives they are working on, specifically the aspect of male engagement to help promote positive masculinity, sanitary wear production and conducting health awareness campaigns.

At the conclusion of the exchange visit, both partners noted that the visit further allowed RMT and NGOCC to further strengthen their partnership as both are members of the IM Swedish Development Partners Regional Advocacy and Action Group (RAAG).





Zimbabwe



Zimbabwe, a landlocked country in Southern Africa has a population of 14.86 million according to World Bank (2020). The socio-economic conditions of the vast majority of Zimbabweans are dire as more and more of them are living under the poverty line. Presently there are shortages of essential goods, high levels of food insecurity, high inflation, endemic corruption and political instability.

In Zimbabwe, IM works with five partners, being:

Partner's Name	Name of Intervention	Area of Intervention
Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development	Development of a vibrant movement for social and economic justice.	Economic Inclusion
Rozaria Memorial Trust	Strengthening Regional Movement of Communities on Ending Child Marriage	Social Inclusion
Simukai Child Protection Programme	Equal access to education	Social Inclusion
Chengeto Zimbabwe Trust	Using Media as a Transformational force of change	Social Inclusion
Deaf Zimbabwe Trust	Becoming citizens: Access to quality education for children with disabilities through policy reform	Social Inclusion

From Poverty to Prosperity

By Priscilla Mafirakureva – Simukai

Simukai in partnership with IM Swedish Development Partner is operating an, 'Education for societal change' project which has been further expanded into economic empowerment in Mayo Ward 35 and Mutare Rural Ward 5 and 35 located in Makoni and Mutare districts respectively. This initiative came about after realising that many out of school youths and children were idle after they had dropped out of school due to various reasons like orphanhood, financial problems, teen pregnancies and child marriages just to mention, but a few.

Through the IM funded project, a total of 50 out of school youths aged between the ages of 15 to 24 years in Dora and Mayo testified that their lives had been transformed through the capacity building in entrepreneurship and further support with start-up capital for small businesses which started. These children were trained in various topics like business ideas, conflict management, record keeping, business life cycle, teamwork and marketing.

Before being selected into the project, the beneficiaries had no hope and believed that their dreams and future were shuttered as they did not manage to complete their education. One of the beneficiaries Robert said, *'I dropped out of school and I don't know what the future holds, it's my wish to find something to do which will occupy me and also give me money to take care of my family.'*

The introduction of the project in the districts, made out of school beneficiaries to realise their full potential, as they were empowered with different life skills such as building, sewing, poultry, catering, product making and hair dressing which was imparted to them by local established entrepreneurs.

Looking back, it shows that the 3 months training the children received, has paid up. To some, it has opened up avenues for employment whilst some, it boosted their confidence to start their own businesses. For instance, one of the beneficiaries from Dora, is now doing hair dressing work in neighboring South Africa. She attested that, *"I never knew I could produce money with my own hands, thanks to Simukai IM project that has made my life better. It is my wish that they continue helping other vulnerable children like me."* This is evidence that through these skills training, they have managed to grasp basic technical skills that have changed their lives for the better.

Additionally, another beneficiary had this to say, *"I could not read or write but after entrepreneurship training I knew that I could generate money through using my hands. Today I am able to sew clothes. I or my child won't wear torn clothes anymore."*

The product making team in Nyamusosa, Mayo, have been making and selling products like drinks, cobra, bar soaps and vaseline. This has made life easier for community members as they no longer have to walk long distances to acquire these basic items.

The catering team in Dora is now offering services to local people during local gatherings and at times, during project activities which has improved their lives for the better. One of the beneficiaries said, *"IM has lifted us up, our lives are better, we are now able to generate our own income and improve our way of life."*

From the testimonials from both Dora and Mayo, it is evidence that the project has elevated and changed the lives of out of school youths in a positive manner.

Capacitation for Increased Access to Education for Children With Disabilities

By Mirirai E. Nyabvure – Deaf Zimbabwe Trust

The history of disability is for the most part, one of exclusion, discrimination and stigmatization. Parents of children with disabilities, teachers, district officers, councilors and heads of schools regarded children with disabilities as objects of charity and passive recipients of welfare. This charity-based legacy affected the perception and treatment received by children



Stakeholders being capacitated to advocate for increased access to education for learners with disabilities

with disabilities. They viewed children with disabilities as victims of impairment and hence beneficiaries of charity, alms and services for which they should be thankful. Various rights of children with disabilities were violated as parents, guardians, teachers had no capacities for self-advocacy or confidence to demand for accountability from duty bearers.

With support from IM, Deaf Zimbabwe Trust (DZT) convened the Forum for Disability Education in Zimbabwe (FODEZ) district, a platform to capacitate parents, teachers, and community leaders to advocate for quality access to education for children

with disabilities. This group was capacitated on the rights-based approach to disability, promoting inclusion and confidence building to demand accountability from duty bearers. The information they got was then trickled down to other parents of children with disabilities, heads of schools, teachers from resource units and community leaders to embrace the culture of inclusion thereby increasing access to education for children with disabilities.

The lessons on the human rights approach to disability has led to a shift in focus from a child's limitations

arising from impairments, to the barriers within society that prevent the child from having access to basic social services, developing to the fullest potential and from enjoying her or his rights.

Currently, the parents of children with disabilities from Caledonia have engaged schools for them to be part of the School Development Committees to advocate for the educational needs of children with disabilities in school. Schools such as Tafara 5, Tinokwirira, Simudzai and Mabvuku Primary have already started making provisions for that. Additionally, the parents engaged the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and arranged for the provision assessment and placement of learners with disabilities at a neutral and accessible venue. Community leaders are now committed to ensuring that more disability inclusive schools are built in the area of Mabvuku-Tafara to increase access to education for learners with disabilities as a shortage of schools is a barrier to education for them.

Through the work of FODEZ District, all relevant stakeholders are working together to identify key barriers that are excluding

children and advocating at local level. Children with disabilities are being provided safe, just, accessible and enabling school environments. Caledonia community is developing inclusive positive attitudes and an understanding of children's rights. All these efforts will enable children with disabilities to fully enjoy rights on an equal basis with others, they will be empowered and will have better educational outcomes and independent living.

From Training to Action

By Hilda Mdeza – IM Southern Africa

When Zimcodd provided economic literacy training to Dalba Cooperative members from Dangarembizi in Ward 31, the group immediately went into action. The cooperative got engaged in poultry farming as a source of livelihood.

When we visited the group recently, it had 26 goats, 150 local chickens, 100 broilers, 32 turkeys and 15 guinea fowls. These were contributed by each one of the members.

The Cooperative comprises of 17 women, 9 youths and 13 men.





Citizen Participation Leads to Market Construction

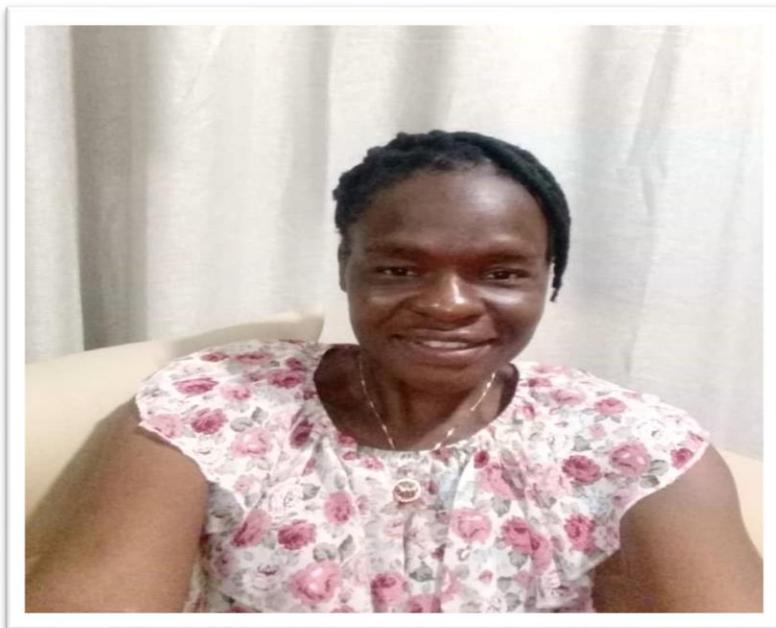
By Jabulani Chikomwe – VSET (ZIMCODD)

Mary Nyadome is a middle aged mother and wife, who begins her typical day at 5am each day as she joins other informal traders at Majuru Shopping Centre, Ward 16 in Goromonzi District to commence their trading day. The shopping centre is well known as a green market where alot of farm fresh produce is found. The shopping centre has inadequate market stalls. The only ablution facility has hitherto had no running water, with a lot of vendors and smallholder farmers trading their produce by the road side and verandas of nearby shops, exposing their wares to elements. Mary says, together with her colleagues have been subjected to a lot of harassment by municipal police and sometimes, their goods have been confiscated by Goromonzi Rural District Council officers.

Mary being the Vendors Initiative for Social and Economic Transformation (VISET) Goromonzi District Coordinator, managed to mobilise residents and informal traders to try and explore solutions to their problems they were encountering at their place of business. In a bid to address these challenges, Mary noted that the majority of the informal traders do not participate in the local level decision making processes

such as the budget consultative and formulation process. This even made some of them to be in the dark as to how they can lobby and who specifically, they would need to engage in order for the developments they would like to see in their Ward taking place.

Having been appraised of these challenges, VISET in response conducted a series of pre-budget training sessions in Ward 16 under the Citizen Driven Public Resource Management Programme for Sustainable Rural



Mary Nyadome, an informal trader and VISET Goromonzi District Coordinator

Livelihoods, which is a programme that seeks to ensure the participation of youths, women, informal traders and small holder farmers in development processes. This is done through sensitizing participants on the importance of participating in local and national budget consultations along with unpacking the entire budget cycle. The sessions brought together informal traders, traditional leadership, residents and Goromonzi Rural District Council (GRDC) officials. The budget consultations had full participation of target groups, and some of the key issues Mary and her colleagues raised during the budget consultations were allocation of funds to the informal sector for market infrastructure development, provision of running water for ablution facilities and refuse collection at the shopping centre and its environs.

Following the local budget consultations and the submissions by informal traders and residents, the GRDC in its 2022 budget, allocated funds for the construction of market stalls at Majuru

shopping centre which is a project now nearing completion. They have also begun construction of new ablution facilities at the site. Mary who has been operating from Majuru shopping centre for the past 12 years appreciated the capacity building initiatives provided by VISET and how this has helped them air out their views and concerns leading to positive developments in their target community. Mary said over the years, informal traders and GRDC had never been brought together on any platform at the same time, including budget consultative processes. *“We are forever grateful for the budget seminars by VISET as they have equipped us with knowledge on how to participate in local and national development processes like budget making. As women we have now realised that when we do not participate, men will prioritise development of things they value such as beerhalls!”* Mary said as female informal traders they were looking forward to participating in greater numbers this year given that COVID-19 restrictions on gatherings have been relaxed.



Mary Extends Benefits of Climate Change Adaptation Training

By Eve Nyemba - ZIMCODD

The Social and Economic Justice Ambassadors (SEJAs) in Checheche, Chipinge participated in the Environment and Natural Resource Management, Climate Change and Resilience Building Training of Trainers (TOT) provided by ZIMCODD in partnership with the Leadership for Environment & Development-Southern and Eastern Africa (LEAD-SEA) in 2021. ZIMCODD Staff and SEJAs then cascaded the training to communities in Chipinge, Matopo, Goromonzi, Gokwe South and Binga. Women, youth small holder farmers and informal traders were trained on adaptation strategies and social protection mechanisms that can be employed to safeguard livelihoods and minimize the effects of climate change.

After attending the training, Mary Kafeso the ZIMCODD SEJA in Chipinge began training women in early 2022 on crop diversification in the face of climate change. She capacitated the women on how to grow small grains, traditional grains varieties and nutritious foods to avert hunger since Zimbabwe has in the last 10 years experienced 3 dry seasons, with the 2021/2022 rainy season being no exception, hence the increase in food insecurity. Women were also trained to demand Gender Responsive Public Service Delivery as is evidenced the Checheche campaign for clean, potable and safe water.



Checheche women being trained on small grains varieties as part of crop diversification training



A nutrition day held with women and youth small holder farmers

\$10 Hatches into a Poultry Business

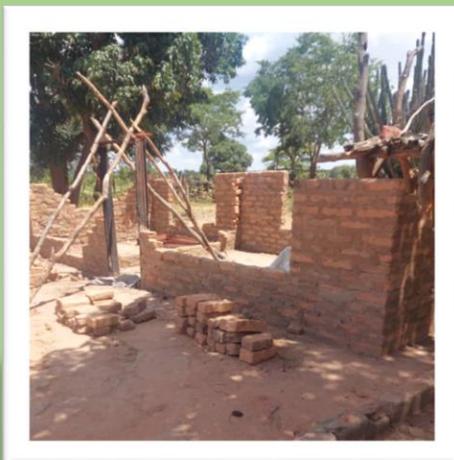
By Eve Nyemba – ZIMCODD

After attending a ZIMCODD meeting under the Citizen Driven Public Resource Management where effects of climate change, COVID-19 and Corruption (CCC), were discussed, as well as the need for alternatives aimed at adaptation and resilience building, 30 women and youths decided to start a project to generate income and improve nutrition dubbed, *Kupedza hurombo* (ending poverty). As usual the first barrier was, *hatina mari yeStart* (We don't have capital to start an income generating project).

ZIMCODD traditionally gives lunch and transport reimbursements (\$10 in total) to participants at its meetings with rights holders.

During one such a meeting, some participants resolved that after getting their allowances, they would convert that to seed money for starting their project of poultry farming. Together they raised \$300. Immediately, they went on to purchase 440 chicks at \$50 per batch and feeds for the chickens.

The grouping looks forward to grow their poultry business and end challenges of youth unemployment, poverty, malnutrition and domestic violence. They hope that this project will sustain them in between harvest periods and eliminate seasonal hunger and poverty especially in 2022, where Zimbabwe is facing a failed cropping season and drought.





Goromonzi Residents Demand Effective Public Service Delivery

By Eve Nyemba - ZIMCODD

The residents of Goromonzi received training on TOT community Trainings on Budgeting at Local Levels since the inception of the CDPRM project in 2020. As result of ZIMCODD's intervention, 8 residents participated in the local budget consultation meetings. 6 of the 8 participants were women. One of the women, Mary Nyadombe, a resident and a member of Simukai Residents Trust in Goromonzi made a contribution in the local budgeting consultative meeting by the Council in 2020. She highlighted the need for the construction of speed humps to avert accidents that had become common in Goromonzi. Although, there has been no action from the council in that regard to date, the participation of women in local budgeting processes has begun in earnest. Women are not only attending the consultations but are also speaking and contributing to the budgeting processes. Notwithstanding this, another problem that is bedevilling informal traders in Goromonzi is the lack of ablution facilities at Majuru business centre. The informal traders self-organised under the leadership of Mary Nyadombe after receiving training on social accountability monitoring in the TOT Community Trainings on Budgeting at Local Levels in April 2021 and wrote a petition to parliament. The lack of ablution facilities is a health hazard to informal traders and small holder farmers, the majority who are women and youths and more than 1000 residents that access the business centre daily. Goromonzi a political hotspot and many residents have been reluctant to speak out for

fear of political persecution. The writing of the petition shows a change in the behaviour of residents who had become accustomed to a non-responsive council. The petition was written on 29 April 2021 circulated for residents to append their signatures. They decided to take their issue to parliament to ensure that they are heard. The petition is attached herewith.

The petition was submitted to Parliament by Goromonzi residents demanding the construction of ablution facilities and clean portable water in Goromonzi. Goromonzi Rural District Council did not respond to the petition. On the 23rd of June 2021, the residents wrote another reminder this time directing their grievances to the Chief executive officer Mr Madhovi of Goromonzi Rural District Council and the local ward councillor Mr Charles Majuru who is currently the finance Chairperson of GRDC. The construction of Public toilets is now in progress as a result of the engagement with solution holder beginning in Ward 4 Chinamhora popularly known as Domboshava showgrounds in Goromonzi West. It was among one of the major service centres which did not have public toilets facilities in Goromonzi. The CDPRM project has therefore, managed to build capacities of women, youth farmers and informal traders in rural areas to demand a sustainable rural livelihood and gender sensitive public service delivery from duty bearers.

Climate Adaptation Through Radio

By Nobert Ncube - ZIMCODD



Rhoda Ndiweni, is a 56 year old widow who relies on gardening in Gokwe South District Ward 15 in Zimbabwe. She had new horizons unfolding in her farming practice after she implemented agroecological practices, as trained through radio by Women and Land in Zimbabwe. *“The radio programme on climate change and agroecology empowered us as rural women farmers”*, she says. For 5 years, Rhoda had been doing her gardening using commercial inputs such as inorganic fertilisers and pesticides for her vegetable gardening. A turn-around happened in her life as she affirms that, *“Gardening has been costly as each 50kg bag of compound C or S fertilizer had risen to US\$40 by February 2022, and I was purchasing 2 bags a month.”*

Furthermore, Mrs Ndiweni goes on to say that the scarcity of these fertilisers have contributed to the shift to the use of grain fertilisers like Compound D and Ammonium Nitrate fertilisers, which are not suitable for vegetables.

Mrs Ndiweni also notes that due to the use of grain inorganic fertilisers in vegetables, she had noted decline in market value of her vegetables in January and February 2022.

“I received complaints from my customers at Gokwe market that my chormoulier vegetables were sour and not tasting well, hence rejection of my vegetables in the market. Fortune knocked at my door on the 23rd and 24th of March, when I was listening to Midlands FM radio at 9am. Women and Land in Zimbabwe, I believe, had directed this program to me as they left no stone unturned in addressing my challenge. Just when I was almost quitting gardening, the interactive radio discussions fostered the idea that it is not advisable for rural women farmers to use inorganic fertilisers in vegetables as they compromise the taste of vegetables and also cause diseases to people”. Rhoda Ndiweni goes on to appreciate participants who were calling and sending messages through the radio. She says that she was motivated by Women and Land in Zimbabwe’s bold stance in challenging capitalistic nature of farming whereby big multinationals are aggressively putting forward the agenda of the use of commercial inputs such as fertilisers. This stance was said to be benefitting the companies at the expense of smallholder farmers.

“I realised that we, as smallholder farmers, we are being extracted our gains through taking our hard earned

cash back to these big companies. The radio programme taught us that it is possible to farm nice crops at low or no costs through agroecology. Agroecology is a climate change adaptation measure and it includes using organic manure, mulching, dry fallen leaves. All these inputs can be accessed for free in homes, dip-tanks and bushes, instead of spending hefty moneys in purchasing inorganic fertilisers”.

Mrs Ndiweni, after the radio programme, she attested that she was not ashamed to start afresh her gardening through the use of proper farming methods. She removed all her vegetable crops as she

thought, “It is better to re-start and do the right thing than to proceed with the wrong farming method. Already I am using cattle manure I picked from the dip-tank after the community cattle had finished dipping”. Her vision is to fully embrace agroecology and to expand her market through supply of tasty vegetables. By 12 April, she had already germinated vegetable seedlings using organic methods. “I want to become an example and point of reference in this ward”, she says. She believes that from May going forward, she will hit back the market and supply tasty vegetables which do not cause diseases and are produced at a very minimal costs.

The Brilliant Mutare Tailor

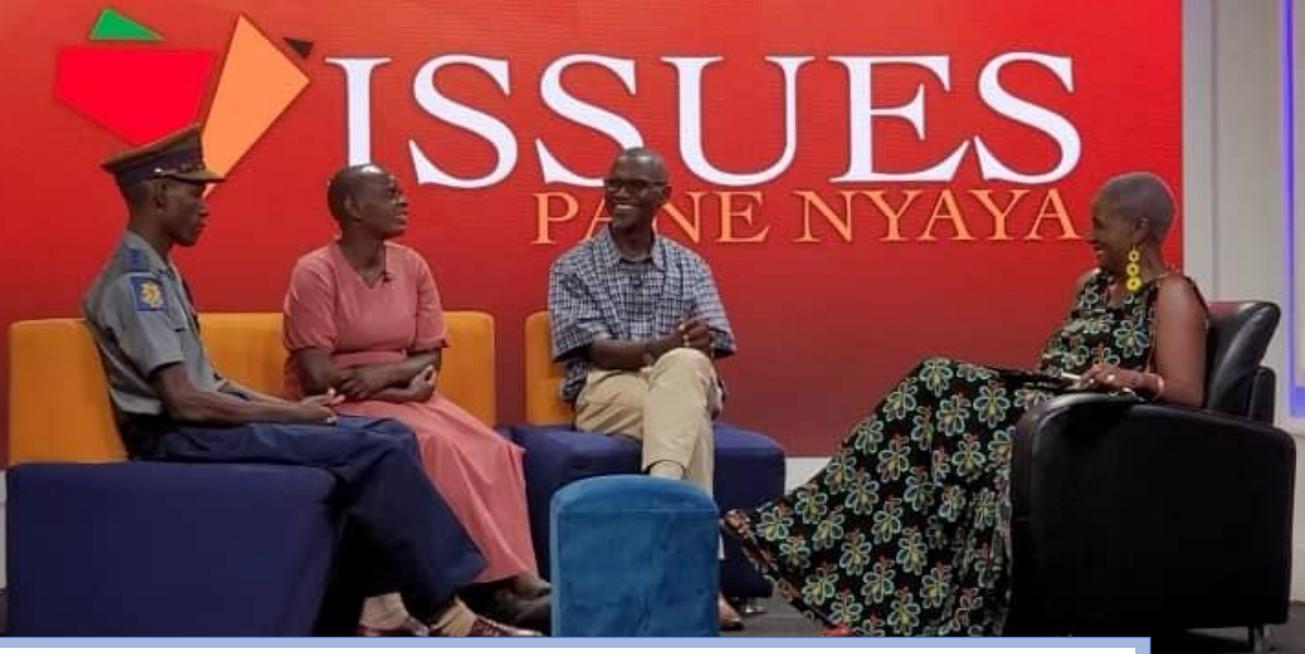
By Hilda Mdeza – IM Southern Africa

Brilliant Makumba is from Mutare in Zimbabwe and she is 22 years old. She dropped out of school in 2019 because her mother could not afford to pay for her school fees.

Through IM supported vocational skills project by Simukai, Brilliant received training in tailoring. At the end of the training, she received a start-up pack that included a sewing machine. Brilliant is now using her sewing machine to generate income for her entire household. Within four months that Brilliant started her tailoring business, she has already managed to make profits that she is able to pay school fees for her brother.

When her savings are adequate enough, Brilliant says is planning to enroll at a Technical College to hone her tailoring and design skills, get a certificate and scale up her tailoring business.





When Children Fall Through the Cracks

By Rejoice Nharaunda-Makawa - Chengeto Zimbabwe Trust

Renowned for its amazing balancing rocks, Epworth is a dormitory town, located 12km on the South Eastern peripheries of Harare. With a population density of 123, 250 as at 2020, Epworth is the 6th in population size in the country, after Harare, Bulawayo, Chitungwiza, Mutare and Gweru. Planned housing is very limited in the town with many of the houses being temporary makeshifts, just pole and dagga or farm bricks and mortar. Most of the accommodation is occupier-erected, with no traceable or recorded addresses. Development has never quite reached this location and hence it has remained largely an informal settlement area where marginalization is the order of the day. Characteristic of localities of this nature, Epworth is renowned for everything negative including exceedingly high rates of crimes ranging from rape to murders and alcohol and substance misuse. As is classic of such settlements, women and girls bear the brunt of the social problems experienced in this area. In fact, Issues Pane Nyaya (IPN), found itself on the wrong side of the law, when in 2017, just before the assisted transition of government, the show hosted and interviewed minor girls who were engaged in transactional sexual activities for sustenance. This unearthing of child sexual exploitation on national radio, was initially refuted by the authorities and deemed 'a media fabrication with the intention of bringing the country into disrepute'. The broadcast however caught the nation's attention, resulting in an outcry that forced government to

swing into action and to take more than 200 girls into care. The then Minister of Social Services was also resultantly relieved from office. Government reaction to child sexual exploitation has since maintained and to date more than 3000 girls have been removed from the streets and either rehabilitated back into family life or taken into government care.

It is on this backdrop that a woman only known as Magogo (Miracle's biological mother), probably overwhelmed by poverty, and the responsibility of a baby, saw no way out, then to dump her baby and walk away, never to return. Rumbidzai Zhazha recounts that Miracle's biological mother

had rented a room from her barely two months before she dumped the child.

“I was always concerned about her lack of care for the baby. She would allow the child to crawl outside and eat food scrapped from dirty dishes. Another time I caught her leaving the child to play near a fire. When I asked her why she was being so negligent, she told me that the child was a burden, and she wished her dead. I was mortified and could not understand how after carrying a child for nine months any woman could be so carefree. But I let it pass”, said Rumbidzai.

According to Rumbidzai and to the entire neighbourhood, Magogo, almost gagged the child, wrapped her up in cloths and left her for dead in the passage to the toilets in the middle of the night. Rumbidzai recounts how she heard muffled sounds from her sleep and went out to investigate only to find the suffocating child.

“I heard a muffled sound that sounded like a baby coming from somewhere. When I left my room to investigate, I realized it was coming from the ball of cloths on the floor in the passage. On further inspection, I discovered that it was the little baby girl. I was alarmed and cried out loud, whilst calling the entire compound to come and witness the sight. Everyone was dumbfounded. We discussed it and agreed that I should take the baby to the Police. I quickly strapped the child to my back and dashed to the local Police Post”, recalls Rumbidzai.

On arrival at the Police Station, Rumbidzai was referred to the hospital where the child was diagnosed as malnourished. The hospital was not able to do much but encouraged her to feed the baby well and nourish her back to health. Rumbidzai took the baby back to the Police Station thereafter.

Child Protection Laws in Zimbabwe prescribe that in such instances, the Department of Social Services should take over the care of the child and place them into a place of safety. This was not the case with little Miracle.

The police told me that they had opened a docket to find Magogo. I had no other details on her or where she could be



found. The police sent me to Social Services, but they said they were not able to help. I went back to the police, and they said they would get in touch with me once they had found any information on Magogo, but meanwhile I must go back home and look after the baby. I asked how I was expected to look after the child with no resources, but they had no answer. I took my baby home and I have looked after her since”, narrated Rumbidzai.

Rumbidzai was openly told that there were no resources available for the child to be placed in care. The police, the hospital and social services all sent her home. Left with no choice, Rumbidzai complied, and Miracle has remained under her care since then.

Rumbidzai narrated to IssuesPaneNyaya how she initially repeatedly tried to get input and assistance from both the Police and Social Services to no avail. At the time of interviewing her, Miracle had been denied a school place in



the formal education system because she did not have any birth records and could therefore not be issued with a birth certificate. Rumbidzai further narrated the struggles of meeting daily needs for her household, comprising of herself, her 15-year-old son and Miracle. Rumbidzai also has a daughter who is 23 years who is married and living nearby with her husband.

“My tenants have been struggling since the onset of COVID-19. Sometimes they cannot afford to pay rent and all they can give me is US\$2 per month. I have five units and am therefore sometimes only getting \$10 per month which comes in dribs and drabs, but we make do with this little. My priority is always ensuring that the child’s needs are met. Miracle particularly loves meat and so where possible, I try as much as I can to buy her meat. My latest struggle was getting her into school as the government school would not accept her without a birth certificate. A private learning facility has accepted her, but that is costly as I pay US\$5 per month for her”.

Rumbidzai explained that because she does not have an education, she supplements her income by selling vegetables, but even then, what she gets is not enough to sustain the two children and herself. The Issues Pane Nyaya team took time to explain available options to Rumbidzai, such as handing over the child to social services now that the case was out in the open. SOS Children’s Home who run institutions nationally were part of the panel and took time to explain alternatives to Rumbidzai.

Although she survives in near squalor, Rumbidzai evidenced that she genuinely loves the child and refused to give her up. Rumbidzai was adamant that she would never give up the child without a fight. Although she was made to understand that if the biological family were to be found they might claim the child back, Rumbidzai would not hear of it.

“That woman dumped the child and left her for dead. Why would she come back and claim a dead child? If she comes, I will tell her to go the cemetery and dig the child out of the grave. I have looked after this baby since she was 9 months old. She is now nearly 4 years old. I believe this is my Miracle baby from God and she is going nowhere. She is mine now. I cannot imagine her being anywhere else even though life is difficult.

The interview revealed that there is mother-daughter bond between the two. Rumbidzai is the only mother that the little girl has known since she was left by Magogo. Upon enquiring what her three priorities were for the child, Rumbidzai stated the following.

“I am desperate for my daughter to have a birth certificate because soon she will need to start big school. She is an intelligent child who deserves a fair chance in life. I also need food and clothing for her as well as school fees. But I will never beg. I will continue to work. We have made it this far and we will survive”.

The broadcast of Rumbidzai’s story on Issues Pane Nyaya drew a lot of attention from across the nation. A drop off point was established for well-wisher material donations. A mobile transfer line was set up for Rumbidzai to directly receive monetary transfers through her mobile wallet.

Consultations were made with the relevant government departments concerning this case and full investigation has been launched through Social Services on why this case fell through the cracks.

Following the broadcast on Issues Pane Nyaya, the following change has transpired:

1. The Department of Social Services was forced to investigate the case and is now actively involved – Rumbidzai received her first assistance for the care of the child a week after the story was published.
2. The Department of Social Services has commenced the documentation process and Miracle will soon have a birth certificate.
3. The Police have since reopened the case and intensified the search for the child’s biological mother.
4. IPN facilitated, through its legal desk, the formalization of the care arrangement between Rumbidzai and the child. Rumbidzai is now in the process of being registered as a foster carer.
5. IPN facilitated additional input in terms of monthly food packs, school fees and school uniforms for the child from one the leading care institutions in the country.
6. The support from our audiences was overwhelming with clothes, food and financial assistance rolling in from

across the nation. According to Rumbidzai she has enough non-perishable for the rest of the year and into next year.

7. IPN facilitated psycho-social support to help her with dealing with the possibility of a biological family coming into the fray and the possible consequences.

8. Miracle is also receiving psychosocial input.

9. The conversation opened the nation into exploring the levels of child neglect in the country and an initial survey has revealed that there are roughly 1.6million children in the country who have lost the care of their parents.

Issues Pane Nyaya will continue to monitor and track progress on this case to ensure accountability and follow through from the various stakeholders. Issues Pane Nyaya has realized that there are advocacy issues around child neglect cases falling by the wayside. There is need to raise awareness on the need for landlords to have basic tenancy agreements that at least capture the details of tenants including recording identity numbers etc. Awareness raising on foster parenting and how one can register in Zimbabwe is also necessary.

Disability Does Not Mean Inability

By Nathaniel N. Makedenge - Simukai

Beauty is a 14-year-old disabled girl who lives in Dora with her aunt and her 3 children. She has never set foot in school as her father relocated to Mozambique and her mother abandoned her when she was young. She says she was not born disabled but her problems started in the early stages of development leaving her with a physical disability on her left hand and left leg and that is when her mother abandoned her leaving her to stay with the aunt. Living at their 2 bedroomed house, she says life has never been easy, her aunt who survives on piece jobs also struggles to provide food and worse still to take her children and niece to school.

Things were to take a turn for change when the project in partnership with Ministry of Youth identified youths who had dropped out of school or never attended school but had a keen interest in engaging in vocational skills training. Due to limited funds, the trainings would be done in their villages and facilitated by local people with knowledge on those issues. Brenda signed up for the catering course and for the next 12 weeks, Beauty would travel 13km 3 days a week to do theory and practical lessons. Although she had never gone to school and could not write notes as others, she had this to say “I had to listen carefully and, on my way, home I would recite what we had learnt so that I do not forget”.

After receiving materials to start their business, the catering team have been conducting business cooking at functions organized by Simukai and selling refreshments at busy growth point centers. This has generated some income enough for them to purchase aprons and hats as well as some personal cash some form of payment. She had this to say when she received some of her payments from the business. “I was very glad to be able to purchase a dress for my own, it’s the first time I have bought myself clothes using my money”.

Beauty’s confidence has also increased as a result of the interventions being carried out by the project. During the first days of interaction with others, she would be always reserved and showing signs of shyness while speaking in a very low voice when talked to. However, this has all changed as she is ever smiling and can now be engaged in a proper conversation with. During one of the Psycho Social Support games done with the youths, Beauty managed to excel in some of the challenges and this also changed the perceptions of others than disability does not mean inability.



Zambia



Zambia is a large, landlocked, resource-rich country with sparsely populated land in the center of Southern Africa. It shares its border with eight countries (Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe) that serve as an expanded market for its goods. Zambia is experiencing a large demographic shift and is one of the world's youngest countries by median age. Its population, much of it urban, is estimated at about 17.9 million and is growing rapidly at 2.8% per year, partly because of high fertility, resulting in the population doubling close to every 25 years.

In Zambia, IM works with two partners, being:

Partner's Name	Name of Intervention	Area of Intervention
Non-Governmental Gender Organization's Coordination Council (NGOCC)	Harnessing the power of partnerships in community led action and Regional networking for positive change in ending child marriage	Social Inclusion
Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR)	Accelerating citizens efforts towards pro-poor national development planning	Civic Space



Village Parliament Begins To Bear Fruits

“We will finally have a District Hospital of our own”

By Michael Mwale - CSPR

“We have seen government begin to address some of the key resolutions from the Village Parliament of 2020,” narrates Sam Chola a local community-based organisation leader. He is the District Coordinator for the Anti Voter Apathy Project in Nchelenge District and has been a member of Civil Society for Poverty Reduction since 2010.

CSPR has been implementing a Project titled ‘*Accelerating Citizen Engagement in National Development Planning*’ with support from IM Swedish. Under the Project, an initiative called the Village Parliament was established in 2019. The platform brings together, district heads of Departments mainly from Health, Education, health, Town Council, Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries and Community Development and Social Welfare to dialogue on service delivery with community members and Ward Development Committees (WDCs).

In its inaugural year, the platform was officiated by the District Commissioner, Mr. Kalonga who endorsed the platform and indicated that government will participate in all the subsequent years. In 2021, the Member of Parliament, Honourable Anthony Malama also attended the Village Parliament and committed to ensuring that the resolutions will reach the floor of National Assembly for deliberations.

In both 2020 and 2021, the major demands from communities during the deliberations was on the need to rehabilitate the road infrastructure. The communities also complained of high boarding fees and the lack of a District Hospital in Nchelenge regardless of a land having been identified but has remained undeveloped for over 5 years since 2014.

In 2022, progress has been made in the construction of the District Hospital by the

Government as can be seen from the attached photos. The CSPR Team had an opportunity to visit the construction site and were told that the Hospital will be complete in 18 months. This will be the first time that Nchelenge will have a District Hospital. It will enhance access to quality and comprehensive health services to over 147,000 residents.

Furthermore, the District has identified over 400 pupils from Nchelenge Boarding School whose boarding fees are going to be paid by the Council through the Constituency Development Fund in the year 2022. This will enhance access to secondary education for the pupils who could not previously afford the cost of boarding school even after government removed tuition fees in 2022.

'We are happy that the Village Parliament has enabled communities to amplify their

voices on issues that matter to them' emphasizes Chola. He goes on to acknowledge that whereas, government had all these plans to improve access to education and health, the awareness of communities of these commitments made them to start monitoring how accountable government was being on their annual targets.

'As a result, the government and the Member of Parliament have had to ensure that they release funds for the projects earmarked in the district plans and this will definitely improve the social status of the people of Nchelenge who won't have to travel hundreds of kilometers to access a hospital facility or drop out of school because they cannot afford' an excited Sam informs the CSPR Monitoring Team as they conclude the Interview.

From Awareness to Action: Chibaya Community Constructs School

By Kumbu' Kuntiya – IM Southern Africa

The Non-Governmental Gender Organization's Coordination Council (NGOCC), has been working with community members of Chibaya Chiefdom. Having been trained them to know their rights and value of education, the community members embarked on a community school construction project as their children were not starting school until age 10 because of the long distance to the next school. Although the school is not yet complete, the community has ensured education of 113 learners (63 girls and 50 boys) who were on verge of not getting any education at all. This is possible through a community volunteer who is handling Grade 1 to 5 through morning and afternoon sessions.



Spotlight on Elizabeth Chama



Elizabeth as one of the discussants during SRHR radio programmes at Tuta radio



Discussing issues of ending child marriages at Yageni radio

By Emelia Mweemba - NGOCC

“Getting pregnant at a young age did not stop me from lifting myself up and looking at life differently,” says Elizabeth Chama, 26, of Mansa, Luapula Province.

Ms. Chama, who is currently the Mansa Young Women’s Network Chairperson says her aim is to sensitise young women and girls on the dangers of teenage pregnancies, child marriage and the importance of education.

“I was born in Munushi Village in Chief Kazembe’s area of Luapula Province but I am currently in Mansa Township”. As a young girl, I used to play girls soccer, netball and participated in modelling activities. In 2008, when I was 15 years old, Zambart organised 10 groups to compete for the Miss Zambart title and I came out number one. I was very happy

to win the competition and was crowned Miss Zambart” Ms. Chama says.

“I was given K500, a Chitenge and a T-Shirt and this motivated me to continue



Elizabeth sensitising YWN members in Nsonga Chiefdom



Elizabeth sensitising YWN on the dangers of teenage pregnancies

with modelling which I do even now. I completed my grade 12 but did not do very well in some subjects. I could not rewrite the subjects because both my parents had died.”

Losing both parents when she needed them most did not stop Ms. Chama from working hard and achieving her dreams.

“When my parents died, I was left with my aunt who took care of me until I was 24 years and was able to look after myself. At 25 years, I got pregnant and had a baby boy. I had no option but to take care of my baby as a single mother. It was very difficult for me but I had to manage. I, in most cases I even failed to pay rentals, buy food, pay school fees for my child and I have even failed to take myself back to school to rewrite the subjects that I failed,” says Ms. Chama.

She decided to join Bwafwano Multipurpose, a member organisation for the Non-governmental Gender Organisations’ Coordinating Council (NGOCC) as a member.

Bwafwano Multipurpose deals with issues of child abuse, teenage pregnancies, climate change and ending child marriages.

“Being a single mother and an active youth, I thought joining a Community-Based Organisation would help me find some resources to support my family. As a young woman, I have continued to assist the organisation in sensitising young people in project areas on various issues affecting them”. Bwafwano actively involved me in activity implementation especially where sensitisation of young women and girls is concerned. What made Bwafwano to involve me was their desire to work with both old and young people that would help sensitise young people in the communities on various issues,” Ms. Chama says.

According to the Bwafwano Multipurpose Chairperson Ms Sophia Mukate said, Ms. Chama’s energy and assertiveness is what made the organisation involve her in most of the activities.

“In 2019, when NGOCC formed a Young Women’s Network (YWN) in Mansa District I was chosen as a Treasurer but I am currently the Chairperson of the network. What motivated me to join the YWN was because of what I went through as a young woman. I decided to join the network because I wanted to help my fellow youth make right decisions and also sensitise them on the dangers of teenage pregnancies, Gender-Based Violence and the need for them to go to school to learn. In addition, when I saw the work NGOCC was doing and they wanted to form the YWN in Mansa

District, I was interested to join the group so that I could continue sensitising my fellow youth on issues that affect them,” Ms. Chama says.

“As a Chairperson for the YWN, I have benefitted from the various trainings that NGOCC has conducted for YWN members. These include: teenage pregnancies, ending child marriages, child abuse, child rights, entrepreneurship training, conservation farming, making re-usable sanitary pads as well as village banking”.

Ms. Chama says the various trainings she has participated in have built her capacity adding that she is now able to train and sensitise other young women and girls on issues that affect them such as GBV, assertiveness, importance of education, the dangers of child marriages and making re-usable sanitary towels.

“The various trainings organised by NGOCC that I have participated in have made me confident as I am able to participate in live radio programmes on various radio stations sensitising young people on various issues.

I am also a member of the Twesheko Village Banking group in Mansa. I have seen the many benefits of joining a Village Banking group. These benefits include increased income for the family and I am able to get loans that help improve my business. The Village Banking Initiative has empowered me economically as I am able to get loans from the group at a small interest. I have used the money to grow my business (selling rice, shoes and clothes). This has

also increased my household income and improved the well-being of my family,” she says.

Ms. Chama has vowed to work tirelessly with the new YWN in Nsonga to address the issue of child marriages, teenage pregnancies and alcohol and drug abuse (smoking) through continued sensitisation meetings at community level and also through live radio programme.

“In May 2021, I sensitised the young women and girls in Nsonga Chiefdom, a chiefdom under the IM-Swedish project. During my field work, I have observed so many things such as some bad traditional practices. Some traditional practices that need changing include; child marriages, alcohol abuse, smoking that is very harmful to their health, and child labour which is in form of giving the responsibility of looking after the children to a young child,” Ms. Chama says.

“I have also observed high GBV cases. Men have a tendency of buttering their wives for a trivial issues and in-laws marginalising the husband to their child by not allowing him to talk about the wife and even taking the wife to settle elsewhere away from the parents making it difficult for the man to raise income.”

Ms. Chama thanked NGOCC through the support of IM-Swedish for building her capacity and she requested that apart from implementing activities in NGOCC operational areas only, other non-project areas should also be targeted for important such sensitisation programmes.



Nchelenge Village Parliament Procures School Desks

By Michael Mwale - CSPR

“My children used to sit on the floor during lessons in a classroom, and some of their friends use initiative by confronting their parents and guardians to provide them with chairs to use in the classroom.”

This trend recurred over time as the government was not forthcoming to help pupils with the desks at Katuna Primary school. The school is located some 4 kilometres from Nchelenge district central business centre, Northeast of the district and about a kilometer from Nchelenge Chienge road. The school is headed by a female head teacher, Mrs Idah Kasongo. The school has three classrooms, despite having grades from 1 up to 7. According to the Head

Teacher, the school has a total of 614 pupils. At inception, the school had only 6 desks for the pupils to use as most of the pupils used to sit on the floor. Writing whilst seated on the floor, was a very big challenge during learning sessions. This did not settle well with Mrs Kasongo, the Head Teacher and members of communities around Katuna primary school.

In response to this, CSPR convened a Village Parliament in Nchelenge District of Luapula Province. The meeting was conducted on July 28th, 2020, at Nchelenge district Municipal Council Chamber and in attendance, were the Council Secretary, Council Chairman, District Agricultural Coordinator, (DACO), the District Education Board Secretary (DEBS), Civic leaders, market leaders, religious, and Traditional leaders. During the session, under education sector report presentation, participants expressed concern that most schools in the district did not have desks and that most pupils sat on the floor, a thing which they said does not inspire or motivate children in schools in the district. They stated that children found it difficult to learn in such an environment especially the young ones who are in the process of learning how to write. In response to this, the District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) informed the house that government has decentralised the procurement and making of the school desks in the country, therefore, they were in the process of formulating a strategy of making local desks in the district. He said the district had good number of frames of

the desks, however, DEBS was quick to state that what was needed was to look for resources to procure timber as frames were already available.

It was therefore resolved in the village parliament that district education board should come up with a strategy of making desks for children in schools, and that in the next meeting (Village Parliament) participants wanted to hear progress on the same.

The DEBS started distribution of the desk frames to schools that were ready to work on the new desks for the pupils. Other schools engaged were those that offer woodwork subjects so that they can use carpentry tools to work on the desks. One school that responded positively was Katuna primary school headed by Mrs. Idah Kasongo. Upon receiving desk frames, the head teacher engaged the community through the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) by informing them the need to make desks for the children at the school and community welcomed the idea. They resolved to use some amount from the school grant to buy timber and community members identified a local carpenter to work on the desks for the school at a very low cost.

The Head Teacher informed community members that it was possible to make desks if there was cooperation and commitments from community members and school management.

The Desk-Replacement Initiative began in January 2021 and by the time a spot monitoring visit was made by the CSPR Programmes Management Team in June 2021, the school had repaired and replaced 19 new desks which pupils had begun using. The CSPR team visited the DEBS and the school to monitor progress as per resolution during the 2020 Village Parliament. Katuna primary school was so far a success story that the DEBS is proud of under the leadership of the Headteacher Mrs. Idah Kasongo.

The DEBS informed the CSPR team that the Village Parliament resolutions have

begun producing fruits going by what was happening at Katuna Primary school. He said that going by what is happening at that school more schools will be encouraged to replicate the initiative. He said government might not manage to provide desks to all schools in the country hence the need for innovations such as this.

Madam Idah Kasongo informed CSPR that her aim is to ensure all the classrooms were provided with desks. She said some more timber was already procured to enable the continuous making of desks. From only six (6) six desks that the school owned, twenty-five (25) desks are now available on which some of the pupils can write and read comfortably.





By

Safe Spaces for Young Women . . .

NGOCC to Replicate the Nhangas

Fridah Nkonde-Mubanga - NGOCC

Over the years, both the Non-governmental Gender Organisations' Coordinating Council (NGOCC) and Rozaria Memorial Trust (RMT) have helped develop a girls' movement – the Young Women's Network (YWN) advancing advocacy work on ending child marriage and promoting access to Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) services and information through the IM Swedish Development Partner consortium of organisations called the Regional Advocacy and Action Group (RAAG).

The RAAG with support from IM Swedish Development facilitated the exchange learning for NGOCC to specifically learn on the Nhangas Model being promoted by RMT.

In an effort to ensure representation of girls and young women in decision and policy making processes to advance gender equality, the RAAG, established the Regional Young Women's Network (RYWN) while the members of the RAAG

established National, Districts and Community-based Young Women Networks (YWN) within their respective countries. The YWN members spearhead advocacy work and engage in regional forums to influence policies and lobby for safe spaces for girls in an effort to end harmful practices.

RMT and NGOCC in collaboration with other partners build the young women



NGOCC team participated in a Community-based Nhangas Session in Chitate Village, Murewa Zimbabwe

members in both leadership and assertiveness skills for them to be able to hold those in power accountable and champion ending child marriages, harmful traditional and other practices that impact the girl child negatively.

The exchange learning was planned by both NGOCC and RMT. NGOCC members travelled to Zimbabwe to learn more on the Nhangas model, a safe space for girls. NGOCC is interested in replicating and adapting the framework on the Nhangas Model being promoted by RMT.

The Nhangas is used in programming as a methodology that work as a safe space model for girls' empowerment and advocacy. NGOCC would like the young women in Zambia to learn more on the Nhangas model for them to learn various skills in counselling and advocacy. The Nhangas Model will also help NGOCC mobilise girls and ensure their voices are amplified and respected.

NGOCC team at RMT in Murewa Community – at the community center

The Objectives of the Exchange Learning Visit were to facilitate for the learning of the Nhangas Concept by NGOCC for possible adaptation and replication in Zambia, share information and best practices between NGOCC and RMT, and form a collective regional movement of girls and young women at regional and continental campaign to end child marriages and other harmful practices, among others.

Rozaria Memorial Trust Board Chairperson Pascas Dekas in his welcome remarks hoped that the Nhangas Exchange Learning Visit could be



Young women Nhangas session in the Nhangas House



The Nhangas session with Chief Magwende (in blue shirt) of Murewa village

successful. Mr. Dekas emphasized on the need to protect young girls and women.

“There is need for all of us to amplify the rights and welfare of girls and young women. We need to protect our girls and young women in society,” said Mr. Dekas.

And Young Women Network National Chairperson Margret Muluku thanked RMT for hosting NGOCC.

“I don't even know what to say because we are so excited to be here. We can't wait to learn from you. The Zambian team is eager to learn from RMT,” said Ms. Muluku.

eSwatini (Swaziland)



The Kingdom of eSwatini and formerly called Swaziland is a landlocked country in Southern Africa. It is bordered by Mozambique to its northeast and South Africa to its north, west, and south. At no more than 200 kilometres (120 mi) north to south and 130 kilometres (81 mi) east to west, Eswatini is one of the smallest countries in Africa.

The government is an absolute monarchy, the last of its kind in Africa, and has been ruled by King Mswati III since 1986. The king rules by decree over his subjects, most of whom live in the countryside and follow traditional ways of life.

In eSwatini, IM works with one partner, being:

Partner's Name	Name of Intervention	Area of Intervention
Foundation for Social Economic Justice	Shrinking civil society space in Eswatini	Civic Space

“I CANNOT GIVE UP UNTIL THE PEOPLE ARE
FREE AND LEAD A BETTER LIFE.”

-MADZABUDZABU KUNENE

Hope Amidst Unrest

By Thabo Masuku - FSEJ

Bongani Madzabudzabu Kunene is the founding member and the current interim chairperson of the Swaziland Massacre and Survivors Association (SWAVISA), an organisation that has been recently launched with support from FSEJ.

SWAVISA was formed to organise all victims and survivors of on-going police brutality and political unrest in Eswatini and their families. Its aim is to establish local branches for the victims to easily access trauma counselling facilities, to assist victims with programs that will empower them economically and among other things, empower survivors to continue to participate in human rights advocacy programs.

Mr Kunene and his organization received support from FSEJ through the IM Sweden project. He benefitted from the partnership with FSEJ as he was able to launch the organisation, craft a sustainable programme. FSEJ was able to assist him with the data for the deceased, injured and incarcerated, which will further assist



him and the organisation as they continue to mobilize all the victims and survivors into one organisation.

Kunene has addressed in different human rights platforms, including local online independent media house (Swaziland News) and international media platform like (Newsroom Africa) in South Africa, he has also made a short video and an article with amnesty international, taking about how the unrest and being an amputee has affected him. His articulation on issues portray great leadership skills. He was the main speaker of the 2021 Human Rights Day which was coincide with SWAVISA was launched as organised by the FSEJ and attended by various partners and

he displayed bewildering confidence. He is one of the people FSEJ identified and started supporting whilst he was still in hospital.

Bongani has also made profound submission representing the victims of the unrest in the Multi-stakeholder forum (MSF) which is body for Pro-democracy movement including political parties, civil right organisations, church leaders, students and other strategic multi-stakeholders. Bongani is also leading a campaign that will raise funds to purchase prosthetic legs for the amputees. He has in collaboration with other organisation and hosted a 'black charismas' which was a charismas lunch for survivors of the families of the deceased.

It is important to highlight some of the achievements made by (SWAVISA) the organisation has successfully held a group counselling session for the survivors and the families of the deceased, it has also partnered with other strategic organisations that will be key in assisting victims with medical bills, bail money, on-going psychosocial support and other essential things, participated in the drafting of the Terms of references for the proposed organisation

In his current position, Bongani s faced with a mammoth task to ensure that he further builds his capacity and the capacity of the organisation to ensure that it realises its core mandate, goals and objectives and further assist all the victims of the unrest.



Group photo of victims and representatives from different organisations



Malawi



Located in Southern Africa, Malawi is landlocked, sharing its borders with Mozambique, Zambia and Tanzania. The country has an estimated population of 18.6 million (2019), which is expected to double by 2038.

According to the World Bank, Malawi remains one of the poorest countries in the world despite making significant economic and structural reforms to sustain economic growth. The economy is heavily dependent on agriculture, employing nearly 80% of the population, and it is vulnerable to external shocks, particularly climatic shocks.

In Malawi, IM works with four partners, being:

Partner's Name	Name of Intervention	Area of Intervention
Centre for Environmental policy and Advocacy (CYECE)	Sustainable Artisanal Mining Applied for Livelihoods Advancement	Economic Inclusion
Civil Society Education Coalition (CSEC)	Improving Education Quality for Girls and Learners Living with Disabilities	Social Inclusion
Women Legal Resource Centre (WORLEC)	Support to strategic plan implementation and Sustaining regional gains in ending child marriage	Economic Inclusion and Social Inclusion
Malawi Economic Justice Network (MEJN)	Enhancing Social Accountability for Better MGDS III Results	Civic Space

Girls Camp Inspires Dropouts to Return to School



By Duncan Chirwa - CSEC

High dropout rate continues to affect education outcomes and jeopardizes efforts to achieve universal primary education. The main causes of dropouts were poverty, family responsibilities, sickness, pregnancy, poor sanitary facilities especially for girls, lack of support, lack of interest by the learner, early marriages, long distance between home and school, lack of fees, truancy, employment and unavailability of adequate qualified teachers. According to the Education Sector Performance Report (ESPR 2021) in 2021, the average dropout rate was at 4.4%, with girls having a slightly higher rate of 4.6% and for boys it was at 4.2%. The report further said, the disruption of learning due to the COVID 19 pandemic and prolonged teacher strike was some of the reasons for increase in drop out.

Kanongola was one of the zones that registered high dropout rate in Salima district during the 2020/2021 academic year as learners lost hope of ever returning back to school and engaged in socio-economic activities. Chimwemwe Alikanjero and Esmey Kalamba are among the many girls and boys that dropped out and gave up on school. Chimwemwe Alikanjero was an 18-year-old girl who dropped out in standard 8 while Esmey Kalamba was a 14-year-old girl who dropped out in standard 4. They were both enrolled at Tswala Primary School. They dropped out because they saw no possibility of schools reopening its doors to learners. Says Esmey Kalamba “we were completely convinced that with covid-19 it was the end of everything and we just needed to figure out what we want to do with our lives. Stories were rife in all the villages here that the COVID-19 pandemic was not going away anytime soon”. Chimwemwe, the older of the two, adds “the only option we had was to get married as there was nothing else to do here apart from marriage and farming”. When schools reopened after the nationwide lockdown was lifted and teachers returned to the classroom, Chimwemwe and Esmey had already given up and never even thought of going back to school as they were busy helping their parents with household chores including farming. Mother Group members from Tsawala School visited them several times encouraging them to return to school but they had put their foot down.

However, their perspective changed when they met their friends who went to Salima for a Girls’ Camp organized by

CSEC under the IM SDP funded project. The girls shared their experiences with Esmey and Chimwemwe who were so surprised to hear that a much better and interesting world still existed. After hearing the adventurous tales of their friends, Esmey and Chimwemwe went to meet the head teacher and asked if they could still come back to school even though they had been absent for close to two terms. The head teacher was kind enough and encouraged them to return back to school. Beaming with a smile, the head teacher shares his joy of seeing the two girls report for classes. "It is very

encouraging and heart-warming seeing these two girls back in class. We had lost hope of ever seeing them in class and we were afraid that they would end up getting married like many others that we lose every year". He continued, "we remain thankful to CSEC for the continued engagement with the girls; it really does magic in inspiring them to stay in school and these two girls have demonstrated exactly that. Keep on exposing these girls to the world out there so that they get inspired and value their education".



Mobilising for Action as Lamesi Returns to School

By Kumbu' Kuntiya – IM Southern Africa

Lamesi Richard is in Standard 7 at Mtinza Primary School within the Kanongola zone, in Traditional Authority Mwanza, Salima district where our partner Civil Society Education Coalition- CSEC is implementing an IM funded project, *"Enhancing Quality Education And Retention Of Girls And Learners With Disabilities."*

When Covid19 pandemic emerged, Lamesi was made to drop out of school as her parents could no longer afford supplying her with relevant school items like notebooks and pens as well as food at home. Lamesi was instead made to go and look for piece jobs to support the family economically. She did this during an entire year when she was out of school.

When a Mothers' Group within the Mtinza area heard of this during the Bring Back to School Campaign that CSEC was running in the area, the group led by its Chairperson, Margaret Nthala, decided to visit Lamesi alongside her parents with a view to encourage Lamesi to return to school.

Lamesi is now back in school and enjoying her time with her friends though she regrets the one year she was home. She admires her teacher, Madame Golden and she wants to be a teacher herself.



From Child Marriage to Agent of Change

By Isaac Salimu - CYECE

CYECE engages young people through Youth Clubs, Youth Networks, Youth Corners and Outreach visits, to enhance awareness of their SRHR. This is purposely done in order for them to challenge child marriages and other related harmful practices as well as demand quality SRHR services from the various health service delivery points.

Such efforts coupled with an enabling community environment for girls SRHR and education created by capacitated community child protection structures and moral duty bearers have both enabled girls like Bellita to be empowered and value education and either prevent being forced into child marriages or make withdrawal of children from illegal marriages possible.

Bellita Jickson from Mtumbula Village of Traditional Authority Namabvi in the lakeshore district of Mangochi did much of her education up to the final year of primary school without a problem. Things changed when at 17 years while in Standard 8 in the year 2020 at Mwanjati Primary School, she started a relationship with a young man who later got her pregnant before sitting for the

Primary School Leaving Certificate (PSLCE) examinations.

Bellita narrates how poverty pushed her into a relationship with a young fisherman whom she had met while selling firewood along the lakeshore where fishermen used to process and sell fish. To scatter the innocent brain of the vulnerable girl, the man offered to take care of her and support her with scholastic materials.

"I needed money for my school necessities, buy myself clothes to wear when going to school and food for my family," she explained while lamenting how her mother and father separated when she was still very young leaving her mother to raise Bellita and her siblings on her own.

Her mother was very disappointed with her and her brother chased her away to the man responsible for her pregnancy. For almost four months, she lived with her partner. Contrary to her expectations, she never enjoyed 'marriage' life as her husband changed from the once caring man to an abusive man, spending nights out seeing

other women. She feared for her life and knew then that she needed to seek help.

She was full of regrets until one day her mother, accompanied by members of the Mother Support Group, took her back to her



parent's house. They encouraged her to go back to school and she agreed to their advice to write her final exams even while pregnant but, unfortunately when the results were out, she failed.

With a strong wish to become a medical doctor one day, and with encouragement of the Mother Support Group members and her school's Head Teacher Mr. Amon Lex, Bellita went back to school after the baby was born.

Despite some hiccups following her re-admission into school as she faced stigma from her friends, she soldiered on for she knew exactly what she wanted to achieve in life; *'I am not a shy type; I don't care what people say even if I returned to school barely three months after giving birth. I even sit down with my friends at school and Mgoza Girls club and tell them the impact of early pregnancies,'* Bellita expresses her

happiness without regrets to be back in school.

As a member of Mgoza Girls Youth Club, Bellita has also been engaging other adolescent girls on harmful impacts of teen pregnancy and child marriage. She encourages some who dropped out of school to return to class and taking any opportunity to encourage fellow school girls to focus on their education; "Giving birth isn't easy, sometimes I see other girls following men and I call them to advise them because I know the consequences.'

Asked on how she intends to remain in school and not follow her old path, Bellita said she has learnt a bitter lesson from her past experience. She says she has become aware of her Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights such that she consulted a Youth Friendly Health Service Provider at Lungwena Health Centre during a Youth Corner she attended on the various contraceptive methods she could choose from to protect herself from unwanted pregnancy.

For many other girls like Bellita CYECE's 5-year IM-funded RISA Project aims at ensuring that girls in the district complete their education and lead healthy and empowered lives through engaging them on their SRHR to challenge child marriages and other related harmful practices as well as demand quality SRHR services, enabling girls to be empowered through education and economic empowerment, advocating for an enabling community and safe school environment as well as legal instruments and policies that protect girls from being forced into child marriages.

Solar Lamps Powering Girl's Education



By Isaac Salimu -
CYECE

Listening to teachers of Chilumba Primary School share how solar lamps have become an effective tool to improve girls' education at the school, one is compelled to appreciate the significance of using

safe, renewable, and environmentally friendly lighting for improving educational opportunities, health, savings, welfare, safety and the environment.

Many learners of Chilumba Primary School living in this rural Mangochi district's area of Traditional Authority Nankumba do not have electricity and study at night using kerosene lanterns and open-flame candles. Apart from the on-going high fuel costs for these lanterns depleting scarce family resources, the smoke from these light sources is unsafe and hazardous to their health as well as its flames become a fire hazard that have resulted in the unfortunate loss of life and property.

Centre for Youth Empowerment and Civic Education (CYECE) under the IM-funded *Rise Up, Speak Out and Act Against Child Marriage (RISA)*

project is helping to promote girls education by, among others, providing safe, renewable, solar-powered lights to eight target schools in the district. The learners now boast of being able to read and study safely at night - with no risk to their health and lives whilst enhancing their security at night.



Six out of the eight targeted schools arranged a girls' boarding initiative during a period nearing the standard (grade) 8 learners' sitting for the Primary School Leaving Certificate of Education (PSLCE). Several teachers in those schools took collective responsibility to help the girl-students to achieve their academic excellence through increased night learning and study time using the solar-powered lights. Chilumba Primary School is one of the four schools that had an impressive girls' performance at the end of the academic calendar as expressed by Mr. Fletcher Jilani, the Deputy Head Teacher of Chilumba Primary School: *"This academic calendar, all the 8 girls that sat for the examinations passed at this school compared to only 4 recorded in the previous academic calendar. We attribute this success to have been contributed by extended studying time with the solar lamps."*

Without an education, girls have fewer opportunities in their future and like any other person, the girls need an environment where they can be safe to fully reach their potential.

"My life is no longer what it was earlier," says Elinat who was selected from the rural Chilumba Primary School to further her education at Mangochi Secondary School. *"I have tasted excellence for the first time in my life,"* she continues. Through in-school Girls' Empowerment Clubs, the girls are sensitized on how solar energy reduces climate changing carbon emissions and this knowledge has informed their efforts against this and other climate smart

malpractices like use of kerosene lamps, wantonly cutting down of trees and use of chemical fertilizers in their communities for the purposes of gradually reducing emitted carbon dioxide fumes, prevent indoor air pollution that affects people's health and other environmental and climate hazards.



Nsanje District Council Elects First Ever Female Chairperson

By Chimwemwe Songelani - MEJN

Malawi Economic Justice Network (MEJN) realises the significance of gendered approach in social and economic matters with a view to ensure that gender component is mainstreamed in all the interventions it undertakes. Much as gender issues tend to be cross-cutting, MEJN through various platforms in the this project, MEJN instils with its key stakeholders the relevance of gendered approach strategy when it comes to development matters and leadership.

Through its interventions, MEJN has been emphasizing on inclusiveness in developmental affairs, and for the first time in Nsanje, this initiative triggered the council to nominate a female chairperson Ms. Rose Makiyi, which bears an indication of virtuous progress in terms of inclusiveness and gender equity.

Rose Makiyi is Ward Councillor of Kaluluma area and hails from Village Headman Mulalama T/A Mlolo, Nsanje District. She was born on 26th December, 1983 and became the first female Councillor in Nsanje to hold Council chairperson position. According to Makiyi, ever since the establishment of Nsanje Council, there has not been any recording of electing a female Councilor on leadership position. Issues of gender specifically women involvement in decision making and leadership position was really a challenging call. For example, *“it was customary that Nsanje Council had been electing male counterparts in leadership positions for instance the council chairperson”* she says.

In her words Makiyi explained, *“This project has been unique in its approach as it adopted a holistic approach to the barriers to leadership faced by women and other minority groups. From empowering participants through skill building, to developing recommendations and working with developmental structures, as well as examining structural obstacles, there was a conscious effort to work at all levels to ensure efforts were made to address underrepresentation of women in legislative bodies. The uptake and reception following the interventions of the project have provided a momentum to support continuity in trying to achieve gender equity and representation in the course of enhancing social accountability in public service delivery at all level”*

Women and many marginalized communities continue to be excluded from developmental undertakings. This project has been important to provide tangible supports for women entering development cycles while also working with the, institutions and systems that impact women's participation. Continuing with the interviews, Makiyi expressed her gratefulness to MEJN for mainstreaming gender related issues which have been an eye opener to male counterparts to elect her as the first female council chairperson ever since. She encouraged women who are aspiring on leadership positions to be determine and realize that its possible for women to be leaders in developmental affairs.



Enhanced Knowledge on Malawi Vision 2063 – A Case Study of Makanjira Communities, Salima District

By Chimwemwe Songelani - MEJN

It is generally believed that one doesn't stand a chance in developmental affairs without acquiring knowledge of development agendas, hence the saying "Knowledge is power to efficiently drive development itinerary".

Taking that into consideration, with funding from IM Swedish Development Partner under a social accountability project, MEJN conducted a community rally at Senior Chief Makanjira, in Salima district. The initiative intended to sensitise the communities and local governance structures on the Malawi Vision 2063 (Mw2063) and Medium Term Implementation Plan (MIP-1) development strategy.

Before the intervention, most of the communities and local governance structures who are also key stakeholders in achieving Malawi's development goals

were noted to be blank about the new development strategy Mw2063 and MIP-1.

According to Esther Soko, who is also Finance Chairperson the Salima District Council and Ward Councillor of the area, "Most of us were literally ignorant of Mw2063 development strategies and its priorities. It has been news to us to fully understand the Malawi's development agenda. However, we are grateful to MEJN and IM Swedish Development Partner for taking this development strategy to communities". She added that the step that should be taken by MEJN is to orient rights-holders on MIP-1.

Raphael Kambwiri, one of the participants said, "Prior to the intervention, I was unable to understanding this Mw2063 strategy and MIP-1. Things are now different because

I am now able to understand the whole concept of the new development strategy and its indicators; and will be effectively and efficiently participate in development affairs to achieve our development goals.”

Due to the fact that MEJN’s undertakings also focus on budget advocacy, the intervention further sought to sensitise communities on the implementation of the national budget in tandem with the vision of transforming the country into a self-reliant and upper middle-income by 2063. The trend has moreover necessitated communities to have knowledge on budget ceilings allocated in Salima district and raised awareness on developments to be undertaken in their area.

Commenting on the matter, Juma M’bwana, who is also Senior Group Makanjira explains, *“We were not aware that in 2022/23 financial year, Constituency Development Fund has been increased from Mk40 million to Mk100 million. But this awareness campaign is really an eye opener to the communities on issues to do with budget and MIP-1”*.



Senior Chief Makanjira, speaking during a community rally in Salima District

Adding to the notion, Senior Chief Makanjira stated that, *“Traditional leaders, as key stakeholders in developmental matters, we were not familiar with Malawi’s development strategy (Mw2063) and the scope of our responsibility in achieving the development blueprint. But through this intervention, we’re able to understand the MIP-1 and budget ceilings of 2022/23 financial year that will drive us to achieve the long-term plan Malawi has embarked on”*. He further urged communities to work in one accord to achieve the development strategy as it is a machinery to drive Malawi’s economy; and pleaded with duty-bearers to be transparent and accountable in public resources management apportioned to transform livelihood of the vulnerable.

In conclusion, Christopher Mpeketula, MEJN’s Programmes Manager specified that the Malawi vision 2063 and its Medium Term Implementation Plan (MIP-1) is attainable if the community members or rights-holders are aware of the indicators that are driving the vision and how to achieve the long-term plan through political will and coordination among key stakeholders in developmental cycles.



Esther Soko, Council Financial Chairperson highlighting district's budgets to the communities



IM Partner Using Theatre as an Advocacy Tool

By Kumbu' Kuntiya – IM Southern Africa

Earlier on this year, most parts of southern Malawi were hit by a severe tropical storm, Cyclone Ana. The storm triggered heavy rains that caused flooding and landslides in its path and also scores of casualties. Among those affected, were members of Nchalo Salt Mining Cooperative who work with our partner, Centre for Environmental Policy and Advocacy (CEPA). In response, IM channeled humanitarian assistance to the group which has meanwhile made some lasting impact on the group.

Learning from what they went through, members of the Nchalo Corporative have come up with a theatre for development initiative aimed at challenging their fellow community members around disaster risk management and encourage them to take action.

According to Hillary Bandawe, Programme Officer with CEPA, the initiative has broadened its scope. "The group is using drama performances as one way of sending out critical messages on prevention of floods, encouraging community members to plant trees in flood prone areas, encouraging them to adopt better techniques of building houses in flood areas as well as usage of local materials for such houses", says Hillary.

The group has meanwhile engaged with fellow community members at the chief's compound and it is becoming quite popular within the area and surrounding villages. They have also become a regular visiting group at the local market as well as schools with a view to reach out to the young ones wish such messages.



Nchalo Corporative members in action doing a drama

Hillary Bandawe further said, "The group has been closely working with the Village Civil Protection Committee in order to access early warning from floods as well as engaging the community on how together, they can protect themselves from future floods."

Apart from drama, the Nchalo group has also instituted a Choir which conveys the same awareness messages through songs and poetry.

From these performances, CEPA in collaboration with the national broadcaster, the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation, have recorded 5 episodes for a radio programme which has already started being aired.

Commenting on the impact of the initiative, Hillary says that, "With just a few months under implementation, the initiative has become quite popular among community members as it has shown to be easy to understand." As the rain season approaches, the Nchalo theatre initiative has challenged most people who may be able to respond to and take action about the climate change related issues affecting the area as raised during the performances.

Life After Cyclone Ana

By Kumbu' Kuntiya – IM Southern Africa

“When the floods came and destroyed my garden and house, I had thought that was the end of my life but IM through CEPA, restored my hope,” said Evelesi Jailosi of Nchalo in Chikwawa when we recently visited her home.

Evelesi is a widow of 79 years and a mother of three children having lost seven. She is a member of Nchalo Salt Mining Cooperative which is supported through our partner Centre for Environmental Policy and Advocacy (CEPA) through an economic inclusion project - *Sustainable Artisanal Mining Applied for Livelihoods Advancement (SAMALA)*.

Evelesi, almost shedding a tear further said “When Cyclone Anna hit our area earlier this year, I was left homeless and devastated. My house was razed down due to the heavy rains and flood water that circled my house for days. My recently planted maize crop was also washed away. To make matters worse, an entire production of salt our group had produced was also affected after it got soaked in flood water.”

“We took shelter in a church until when IM through CEPA came to our rescue with humanitarian assistance in form of money and household items” Evelesi indicated almost in disbelief. Six months after the devastating cyclone, Evelesi is now back to her feet. With the financial assistance, Evelesi has commenced rebuilding her life. “I bought two bags of maize for



myself and a grandchild I stay with. I also used the same money to buy scholarly materials and clothes for my grandchild,” said Evelesi, whilst attempting a smile.

Asked what she plans to do next, Evelesi said, “I plan to continue working with my fellow members of the cooperative to further improve our life economically. I am very appreciative of the support that IM provided to me personally through CEPA. I will always remember this gesture.”



Evelesi Jailosi and her daughter

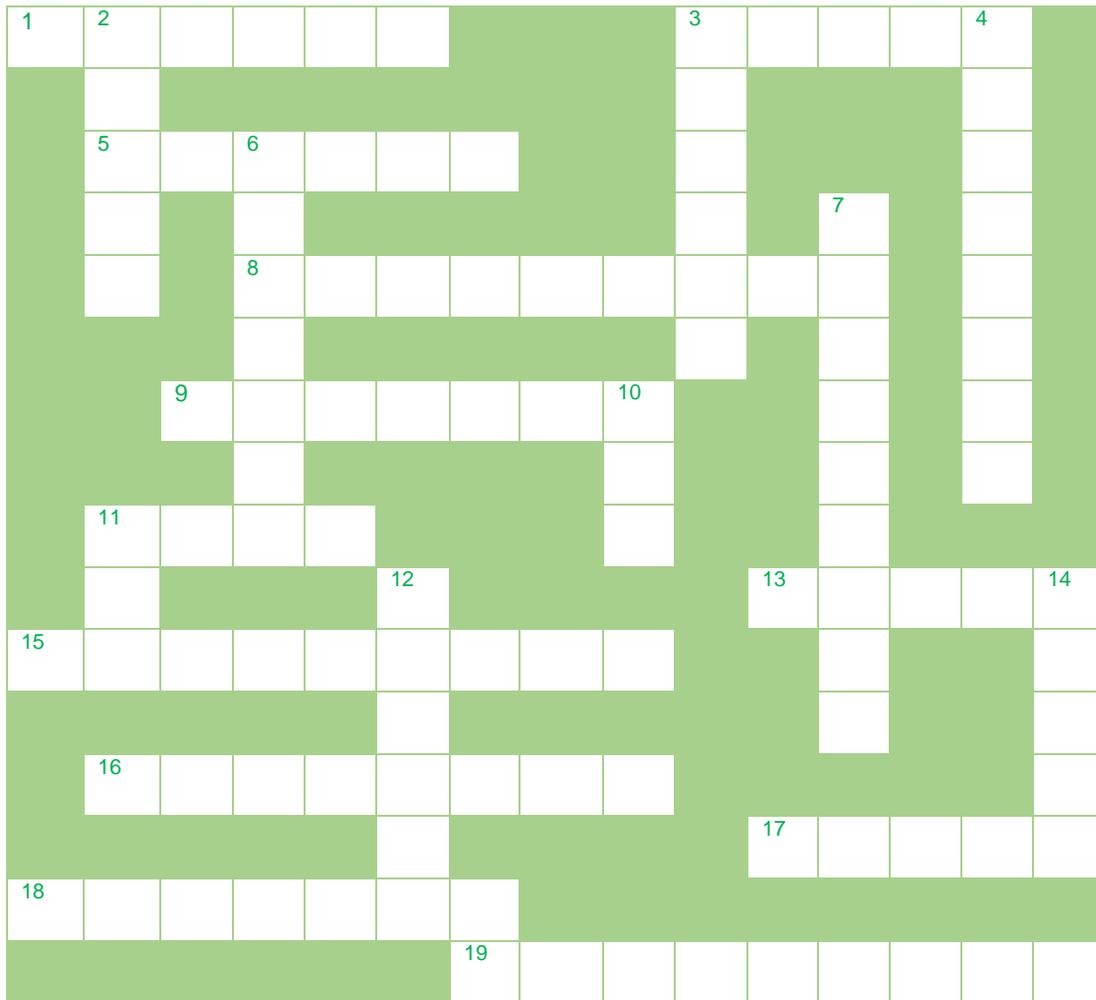


Evelesi Jailosi coming out from her new house



House for Evelesi Jailosi once stood here

IM Crossword – Test Your Brain



Across	Down
<p>1. IM Head Office</p> <p>3. Foundation for Social Economic Justice words around civic what?</p> <p>5. Capital City of Zambia</p> <p>8. Economic empowerment starts at what level</p> <p>9. Civil Society for ----- Reduction</p> <p>11. To send</p> <p>13. FSEJ, MEJN and ZIMCODD works in what space?</p> <p>15. Common issue between CYECE and NGOCC</p> <p>16. Country with highest number of IM partners</p> <p>17. No to seat</p> <p>18. A Zimbabwe memorial trust</p> <p>19. To change</p>	<p>2. IM advances a compassionate what?</p> <p>3. A construction initiative by Chibaya community members</p> <p>4. Home for FSEJ</p> <p>6. Civil Society Education Coalition works with what?</p> <p>7. What one sector does Deaf Zimbabwe Trust work in?</p> <p>10. Young Women Network</p> <p>11. An association of teachers and parents</p> <p>12. M as in MEJN</p> <p>14. Young one</p>



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