

# COMMUNITY BASED PLANNING LEARNING INSIGHTS

## 1. BACKGROUND

The Civic Forum on Human Development (CFHD) in partnership with Lower Gure Development Association (LGDA), Centre for Community Development Solutions (CCDS), Association of Rural District Councils of Zimbabwe (ARDCZ) and Nyahunure Community Trust (NCT) are implementing a four-year project entitled “Strengthening Civil Society Capacity for Scaling-up Social Accountability in Rural Local Authorities of Zimbabwe”. The aim of the project is to enhance meaningful participation of civil society and community based organizations in the provision of inclusive and accountable service delivery in rural local authorities of Zimbabwe. The project supported the implementation of Community Based Planning in 203 wards of the targeted 8 districts of Goromonzi, Murewa, Chikomba (Mashonaland East), Mbire, Muzarabani, Gurewa (Mashonaland Central), Chegutu Rural and Makonde (Mashonaland West). The learning paper seeks to highlight the experiences and lessons of the project in using the Community Based Planning (CBP) approach to promote inclusive planning and equitable resource allocation.



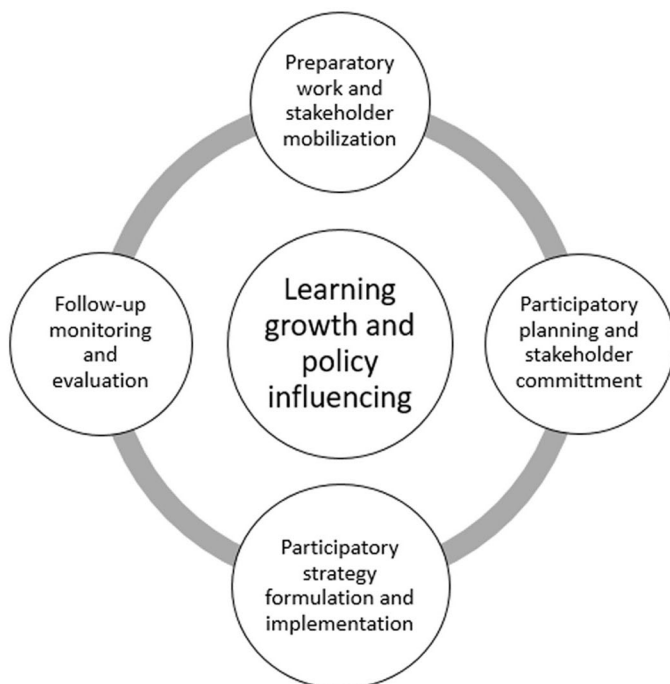
Funded by European Union

## 2. WHAT IS COMMUNITY BASED PLANNING

A comprehensive approach to planning that supports participation and planning of all key socio-economic groups and local level institutions at ward level to come up with community identified priorities. These groups then define how to implement the priorities with local and external resources to achieve outcomes desired by the community. It is a strength and opportunity based approach that creates a foundation for livelihood and resilience strengthening of vulnerable communities. The approach recognizes the risks, capacities, skills and resources of the local communities, builds on these to deliver solutions that strengthen community resilience and supports the community's own goals. It emanates from the perspective that poor and often marginalized people can and should be enabled to analyse their own reality in order to participate effectively in the planning and development process. The Scaling-up Social Accountability Project has been promoting a bottom-up approach in which communities are equipped with the skills and platforms to participate in the planning and decision making processes. The project has demonstrated inclusive and replicable approaches for the provision of gender sensitive service delivery in a manner that enhances ownership and improved livelihoods of rural communities.

## 3. COMMUNITY BASED PLANNING CYCLE

The CBP process was centred around the following 5 key steps:



#### 4. ADVANTAGES OF THE COMMUNITY BASED PLANNING PROCESS

- Links short and long-term multi-sectoral interventions to tackle the underlying causes of food insecurity and shocks. The approach enabled the rapid inclusion and empowerment of all key socio-economic groups from the village to the ward level leading to production of locally owned and driven Community Action Plans (CAPs).
- Prioritizes key actions needed to reduce poverty, disaster risk and builds resilience against socio-economic and health shocks. For example, repairing damaged irrigation schemes, building flood protection dikes, raising grounds for feeder roads and homesteads and stabilizing steep degraded landscapes with terracing.
- Empowers women and marginalized groups by including them in discussing, selecting, implementing and benefitting from programmes that reduce their environmental, social and economic hardships within a community.
- Enables the building and maintenance of quality assets. CBP sets the construction specifications and community maintenance protocols at the highest possible standards.
- Places communities in the driver's seat of planning while contributing to their own resilience building efforts and development.
- Strengthens community ownership of development programmes which enables communities to monitor and sustain their projects.
- Ensures value for money as activities accepted by the communities are maintained and often replicated.

#### 5. LIVED EXPERIENCES OF CBP PROCESS FROM ONE OF THE LEARNING DISTRICTS

##### Story of Change by Cosmas Choruma- Volunteer Builder

"I joined the programme after being invited by the councillor to join the community based planning process where it was unanimously agreed that a clinic was a priority in Makwarimba Ward. So we organised ourselves as 6 volunteer builders who had understood the trainings brought by CFHD and we pledged to build the structure for free as long as the community was prepared to come in with all the resources needed to start the building project. We now have 16 volunteer builders who are putting in the work, committing themselves every Monday and offering their services for free. CFHD has given us the insight to work as a team and to make sure that we organise ourselves and work together as a community for our own development. As long as the goal is development, it is now very easy to mobilise community members towards putting resources together. CBP brought by CFHD helped to ensure that all community members take ownership of decisions made at community planning meetings."



*Women cooking and men participating in the construction of Chinei Clinic in Hwedza District which was a women priority in the Makwarimba Ward 5 Community Based Ward Plan.*

## 6. HOW DOES CBP CONTRIBUTE TO THE SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY RESILIENCE BUILDING APPROACH

CBP is central to the Social Accountability Project resilience building approach. It strengthens the design, planning and implementation of long-term, community-led resilience-building initiatives developed in partnership and aligned to national and local development priorities. The approach places people and partners at the centre of planning using analyses, consultations, multiple resource leveraging and consensus building on actions required. The CBP provided avenues for initiation of the project's 3-staged model of community-led resilience building from Participatory Vulnerability Analysis (PVA) to Resilience Action Planning (RAPP) to Capacity Enhancement, Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation (CEMEAL) which is detailed in the figure .



## 7. EMERGING RESULTS OF THE CBP PROCESS

Some of the identified community priorities that were jointly identified by the communities across the 8 districts during the process includes the following:

1. Infrastructure development- All the 203 wards prioritized the development of infrastructure such as footbridges, boreholes and roads.
2. Health – Mainly identified by women across the targeted 8 districts and these included the mother's shelters, health posts and clinics.
3. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)- The provision of WASH facilities and services was identified in most urban ward centres across the 8 districts. These include the provision of user-friendly water points and establishment of hygienic public toilets.
4. Livelihoods, Agriculture and Local Development- These were mainly identified by the youths whose prioritization was based on issues that generate income and create employment opportunities such as nutritional gardens, irrigation facilities, clip tanks, vocational training centres and buffer zones to prevent human-wildlife conflicts.
5. Education – Was an area of concern across all the districts. It was highlighted that most children are being forced to walk long distances to access education and/or were learning in poor facilities. Jointly agreed priorities included the construction of primary schools, secondary schools and vocational training centres.
6. Energy – Most rural wards are still yet to be electrified and it was agreed that there is need to work towards the electrification of service centres such as schools and clinics. It was agreed that there is need to explore the provision of energy from sources such as solar and bio-digesters.



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