Leveraging Empowerment Opportunities For Women, Youths And Vulnerable Groups Through Inclusive Service Delivery And Social Accountability Initiatives In Six Rural District Councils of Zimbabwe.

Issue Context and Background

Leveraging empowerment opportunities for women, youths and other vulnerable groups is increasing, becoming a major demand towards service delivery across the world. Participation has been at the core of pro-youth and women strategies in recent years. Either because it channels youth and women voices on topics relevant to them or because it improves the delivery of results of interventions and policies targeting them, engagement of young people has gained a high profile among international organizations, governments and NGOs such as the Civic Forum on Human Development (CFHD). With the increasing presence of young people in decision-making mechanisms, the question of "who participates" has also gained salience. Approaching young people's participation in rural areas is particularly challenging. As structural rural transformation unfolds, rural settings in developing countries are increasingly diversified and complex. Zimbabwe has a young demographic profile with 36% of the population between 15 and 34 years and a further 41% below 15 years. Since Independence, Zimbabwe has grappled with the four-fold challenges of poverty, inequality, unemployment and increasing under-employment, and the young population has not been spared. Nationally, unemployed youths constitute 77.1% of the over 90% unemployment people. Recognizing the potential of youth, the CFHD piloted the 3 plus 2 approach that that was aimed at promoting young women and girls to become more involved and more committed in local development processes. The aim of the project is to promote empowerment of young women and men for the pursuit of productive, inclusive and sustainable socio-economic growth opportunities in Zimbabwe.

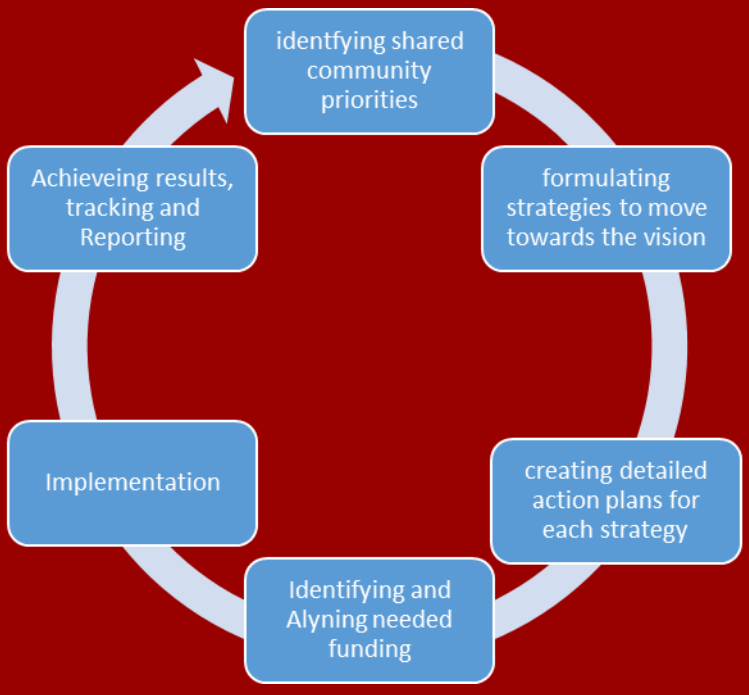
Introduction

The Civic Forum on Human Development (CFHD) has been implementing a three-year Social Accountability project in six rural districts of Mutoko, Mudzi, Hwedza, Hurungwe, Sanyati and Nyaminyami. The project has been key in promoting participatory local governance and decentralized planning approaches targeted at the supply (Local Authority, Government Departments and other service providers) and demand sides (Community Based Organisations, Civil Society Organisations and Citizens) in local governance in rural areas of Zimbabwe. Inclusive planning approaches such as community-based planning(CBP) and service delivery monitoring using tools such as participatory budgeting, local governance barometer, balanced score cards, public expenditure tracking system, service charter and the RDC strategic plan. The six RDCs have institutionalized the use of the Social Accountability tools (Local Governance Barometer, Public Expenditure

Community Based Planning Approach

The planning system in any country is a key element for resource allocation. Participatory development approaches have been very much a priority for Governments, local and international development agencies and funding agencies. Community based planning refers to the participatory process whereby local knowledge is packaged into an action plan. Rather than waiting on RDCs and other development urgencies to develop plans for the community, communities lead the initiative by prioritizing development interventions, settling disputes and conflicts, and eventually coming up with a comprehensive development plan. The CBP process can be aligned to other RDC and sector planning process such as RDC annual planning, public sector investments programming and strategic planning. Under the Social Accountability Project, the CFHD was able to support the development of 118 ward based plans in the 6 districts of Mutoko, Mudzi, Hwedza, Hurungwe, Nyaminyami and Sanyati. The CBP process was able to build the capabilities of communities to get organized in strong alliances and networks for collective action, ownership, control and managing own development process. Community have been able to benefit from downward accountability through their voices and choices which have fed into policy and resource allocation decision in a transparent manner. The

Figure 1: Processes in Community Based Planning



Introduction continued...

Tracking System and Participatory Budgeting) designed to enhance citizen participation in the local governance processes and these were institutionalized and adopted during the social service committee and full council meetings conducted in the project 6 districts. The Social Accountability project has built the capacities of both the demand and the supply sides to ensure positive dialogue and consensus building on priorities for women, youths and other marginalized groups. The process involved capacity building of local authorities, local government departments, Councillors, CBOs and CSOs to actively participate in monitoring of agreed priorities at ward and district levels, thereby creating accountability on the part of duty bearers and sustainability and resilience in the communities. The Social Accountability project ended in June 2019 and has managed to develop models of best practices on working with both the demand and supply side on the provision of service delivery and supply side on the provision of service delivery and good governance.

Stories of change and testimonies that emerged from the project

Case Study:1— The Adoption of Community Based Planning in Hwedza District

The former CEO Mr Kundeya of Hwedza district highlighted that prior to the Inclusive Service Delivery and Social Accountability Project there was polarization and conflicts in Hwedza district between the local authorities and community members. The CBP has created an opportunity for different socio-economic groups to collaborate, be engaged in dialogue and reach consensus on how to transform the lives of local community members. Traditional leaders have asserted that CBP has strengthened their involvement in fulfilling their development facilitation and governance role as well as their ability to work with a diverse range of CCBO, socio-economic groups within their groups on a non-partisan basis. Table 1 summarizes issues identified in the Whedza district;

Before Capacity Development	After CBP the genesis of consultative participation
Imposition of projects by Councillors	Project identification, prioritization and implementation is no longer ad hock basis.
Institutional rigidity and bureaucracy	Community members through forums are now aware of their rights and obligations.
Marginizalized of wards and socio-economic groups	2018/19 participatory budgeting process was consultative and had the participation of various socio-economic groups in comparison to previous budgets.
Competition for scarce resources.	All wards are now embarking on projects derived from collective participation.
Project formulation and prioritization was sole responsibility of Councillors. Lack of project ownership by the communities led to incomplete projects	Communities spearheading implementing projects in Clinic under construction in Chinheyi ward with communities providing labour. This sharpens the communities' skills and improves on technical knowhow.

Advantages of the 3 plus 2 Approach

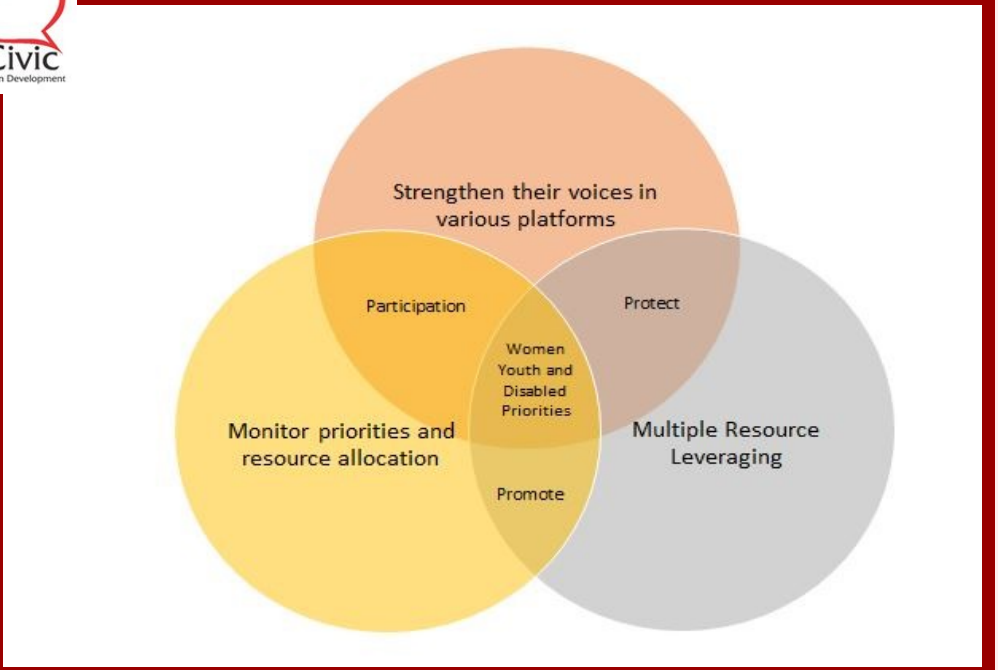
⇒ Provides a holistic framework for giving a voice to marginalised communities and groups to identify services that they want to be addressed within their communities

⇒ Enables a rapid identification of needs and services for a specific group e.g women/youths/disabled.

⇒ Empowers the planning authorities to develop strategic plans or long term vision that are inclusive and human centred

⇒ Open avenues for dialogue between the supply and demand side

⇒ Enables fair and equity distribution of resources



Model for women and youths empowerment

The identification of women and youths priorities that were identified at community level enabled marginalized groups to have an influence on decisions that affect them, influence resource allocation and protect the space they (marginalized groups) have gained during the identification of their priorities.

Case Studies: The 3 Plus 2 Approach

The 3 plus 2 approach was adopted by all the 6 districts in the identification of priorities for implementation. The approach has resulted in the prioritization of inclusive gender sensitive services. For instance in Mudzi District women of Shinga ward, through the assistance of the Ministry of Women Affairs, Small and Medium Enterprises and the Environment Africa identified the need for income generation projects which resulted in the construction of a bio-gas digester. Environment Africa who were also part of Mudzi District Action Team capacitated the local community on the use of the bio-gas digester technology. Areas in Shinga ward that have benefited from the project include, Kanyandure homestead, Tawenga village, Tsakare village, Kapfunde homestead, Zvauya village and Chisvo village. Currently the project is now 100% complete and fully functional.

Digester Construction at Kanyandure Homestead in Mudzi District – Shinga Ward

Model for women and youths empowerment

Case Study 1: Hwedza District

The 3plus2 priorities were presented and adopted during the full council meeting conducted, the prioritise were incorporated into 2018 and 2019 district rolling plans. In Makwarimba ward 7 in Hwedza District the community identified the need to construct a clinic. As of 31 December 2018, the construction of the clinic is now at slab level. The RDC has been providing technical expertise towards the construction of the toilet whilst the local community have been providing labour with each village rotating on wand bricks towards the construction of the toilet. In Ruzane ward, the council have started renovating the clinics, in Watershed west; the council has started renovating the existing farm house to be a clinic .

Digester Construction at Kanyandure Homestead in Mudzi District – Shinga Ward

Study 2: Hurungwe District

In Hurungwe, the communities took the security role for the materials that were used in the construction of the Chiroti Clinic which was constructed in partnership with Zambezi River Authority. The clinic was completed in December 2018 and the community is still providing the security role. On the right is a quotation from the village head:

"We ensured that all delivered materials for the construction of the clinic were not vandalized or misused because it's our role to ensure the management of public institutions. Now that the clinic is opened we are all benefiting as a community....."

Village Head Gwenzi for Chiroti Ward

Case Study 3: Nyamyami District

The 3 plus 2 approach has enabled the local authority to implement services which are community focused rather than imposing services without consultation. For instance in Kasvisva ward 8, the Nyaminyami RDC partnered with UMCOR and USAID and constructed a dip tank after the community members had been prioritized.

Dip Tank in Kasvisva ward 8 constructed by Nyaminyami RDC in partnership with UMRCO

Model for women and youths empowerment

Women, youths and disabled priorities identified at community level enabled the marginalized groups to Participate effectively on decisions that affect them, Promote initiatives or programs coming out from the marginalized groups and Protecting the space they (marginalized groups) have gained during the identification of their priorities.

Case Study 4: Hwedza District

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Digester Construction at Kanyandure Homestead in Mudzi District – Shinga Ward

Integrated Approach on Service Delivery

The project supported an integrated approach on service delivery that resulted in the development of a model for multiple resources leveraging for women and youth interventions for effective implementation of identified priorities. This was done through the capacitation of CBOs and CSOs to effectively network with each other to engage in strategic partnerships with other institutions through social network analysis which enabled mapping out of existing and new relationships for effective lobbying of duty bearers, service providers and private sector institutions on a wide range of strategic local economic development issues. The model enabled the identification of resources that were used in the implementation of 3plus2 priorities. The priorities that have implemented by the project are illustrated in the table below:

District	Priority	Sources of Funds
Mutoko	50 boreholes were drilled and 467 were repaired	Mutoko RDC and DDF
	roads were rehabilitated in ward 21, 17, 16 and 15	DDF
	2 ECD classroom blocks were constructed in ward 10,	Council and community members
	A clinic was constructed in ward 27 and 4 clinics were rehabilitated. Waiting mother shelter was constructed in ward 2 and 7.	Mutoko RDC
	Horticultural products in ward 7	IOM
Mudzi	Construction of Biogas digesters in Ward 4,	Environment Africa and Community members
	A science laboratory was constructed in ward 18	Plan Internation and local community
	Weir dams were constructed in ward 1 and 2.	ZRBF programme
	construction of mothers' shelter in ward 4, 7 and 6	Mudzi RDC
Hwedza	construction of classroom blocks in Ward 5, 2, 4, 7 and 13 and rehabilitation of school blocks in all wards	Hwedza RDC
	30 boreholes were drilled and 250 were rehabilitated	DDF, UNICEF and Hwedza RDC
	Construction of a Clinic in Ward 3, 5, 6 and 10.	Hwedza RDC and Community Members
	3 toilet blocks were constructed at flea market center in ward 15	Hwedza RDC
Hurungwe	Road rehabilitation in Ward 9, 11, 13 and 17 and bridge construction in Ward 4 and 11.	DDF in partnership with Hurungwe RDC
	Establishment of flea market in Ward 6	Hurungwe RDC
	Irrigation facility in Ward 10 to support women Income Generating Projects.	Farm Community Trust
Nyaminyami	Construction of Weir dam, clinic and dip-tank in ward 6.	Nyaminyami RDC and United Methodist Relief Committee(UMRCO)
	the construction of 100 Upgradeable Blair VIP (uBVIP) toilets for 100 households in Ward 9	Save the Children
	access carpentry, beekeeping, poultry and welding projects in Ward 2	Carbon Green Africa
	Road rehabilitation	ZRBF
Sanyati	clinic construction in Ward 1 and 4	Sanyati RDC
	borehole drilling in Ward 1,4 and 9	Vuramanzi
	irrigation schemes were revitalized and are now functional in ward 9	Sanyati RDC in partnership with Vuramanzi

Integrated Approach on Service Delivery

For more information Contact the CFHD Secretariat
15 Atkinson, Drive
Hillside, Harare
Zimbabwe
Email: admin@civicforum.co.zw
Tel: +263772354473

Association of Rural District Councils of Zimbabwe
Local Government House
86 Selous House
Telephone: @263 0242 725433
Email: ceo@ardcz.co.zw
Website: www.ardcz.org

Centre for Community Development Solutions
15 Atkinson, Drive
Hillside, Harare
Zimbabwe
Telephone: +263 86 44052695
Website: www.ccdsol.org

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