



YOUTH SPEAK OUT ON PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT

Youth participation in most community development programmes is usually very disappointing. We sought to find out why young people do not participate in economic decision making processes let alone community development initiatives. This is what they had to say:

Nomathemba Ncube from Halale village in Matobo Ward 17:

I don't think that young people do not want to attend or participate in community initiatives. What happens is that when they are calling community members for community meetings, they clearly say that they want 'izakhamizi' meaning those with households. Most of the youths do not have households of their own as they live with their parents. It therefore becomes difficult for youths to attend as we tend to think that some of the issues are best discussed by our elders. At times when you attend those meetings you can't freely say out your views, there are always people who do not think young people are capable for saying valid things or bringing development in the area. So when we attend these meetings, of which many of us don't, we just sit there and listen to other people making decisions on our behalf.



Some of the youths at the Human Rights Day celebrations watching Victory Siyanoqoba Arts Group perform at Whitewater Secondary school.

Many young people are not employed and many of them depend on their relatives in South Africa. What we lack most are human rights training and skills training programmes that would encourage us to do something better with our lives instead of rushing to get married. However there are no programmes aimed at teaching young people about their rights and no programmes that focus on young people only.

Adelaide Ndebele from Dewe village Ward 17:

She echoed similar sentiments saying young people have since left community development initiatives to their elders because they don't feel included in such initiatives. "There should be programmes or activities aimed at empowering young people alone because once young people are combined with their elders, they lose their voice. There are hundreds of youths at Dewe village but usually when there are community meetings, you will only see one or two of them. I think young people are freer and work better with the people of their age, not with elders. Youth participation in community initiatives was going to be far much better if there were programmes, like these ones, targeting young people. It has always been difficult for young people to speak in meetings or make solid decisions where older people and senior community members are present. What we also lack in our communities is information or knowledge concerning our rights. Instead, most of the times we get to be taught on health related issues (ukuziphatha kahle). There are many young people in our village. We need to be trained separately from the elderly members of the community so that we can come up with and implement our own ideas.

Fibian Moyo, Shumbeshabe village in Matobo Ward 16:

Poor communication is one of the reasons why people, including young people, do not participate in community development. You will find that most areas especially in this Ward have no mobile phone network access. This makes it difficult for people to communicate and share information on important community meetings and initiatives. If we can find alternative ways of effectively increasing access to information, I am certain many people will participate in such projects.

MORE WOMEN TAKE UP LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Habakkuk Trust has trained five more Wards on local level advocacy in Matobo District, with four of the wards being led by female councillors.

Amongst the trained is Matobo's only female headman, heading Ward 17, 18, 24 and 25, Headman Nqindi, born Eunice Ncube which is a first in rural communities.

In an interview with Habakkuk Trust, Headman Nqindi said she faced resistance from men in the community who did not want to be led by a woman.

She also alleged that there were some officials in government departments in the District that looked down upon female leaders making it hard

for them to address pertinent community challenges.

Matobo Ward 17 Councillor Sikhulile Hlongwane echoed the same sentiments and said it was not easy for a woman to work in a male dominated society but has since adapted.

"It was not easy in the beginning; some men in the Ward would disrespect me. I used to cry in front of people but now I also stand my ground and convince them to listen to what I have to tell them."

Ward 25 Councillor Lucy Hlatshwayo said she overcame the socio-cultural expectations that regarded men as heads by exercising transparency and involving all community members in discussions.

"I lobbied men in my community making sure that I gain favour with everyone," she said.

"My advice to other women is that they should not do everything alone, they should work with other leaders and community members as well. It is also important for leaders to look for stakeholders to train their community because it is easier to lead people at the same level of knowledge as you."

Other Wards trained included Ward 12 led by Councillor Nomhle Mpofo, Councillor Ethel Nyamukuta and Ward 6 by Mr. Pious Mlilo. Some of the issues which came out of the five Wards include community benefit on local resources, distribution of resources, lack of access to clean water as well as lack of access to health care. These Wards were trained on conflict management, human rights, citizen participation, leadership, resource mapping and development.



Headwoman Nqindi (In Black top) following proceedings at a LLAP workshop



Ward 17 Councillor Sikhulile Hlongwane



Ward 25 Councillor Mrs Lucy Hlatshwayo



HUMAN RIGHTS DAY CELEBRATIONS A SUCCESS

Habakkuk Trust joined the rest of the world to celebrate human rights day on the 10th of December 2015, which were held under the theme: Our Rights, Our Freedoms – Always (this was also the theme for the UN 2015).

The main celebrations, held at Whitewater Secondary School in Matobo Ward 17 on the 11th of December 2015, were attended by over 450 people including Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission Commissioner Japhet Ndabeni Ncube, Matobo Rural District Council officials, local traditional leaders, Ward 16 and 17 Councillors as well as community members from Wards 16, 17 and 25.

The event also featured soccer matches between Ward 16 and Ward 17's finest teams and the winning team (Ward 16) then played with former Highlanders football stars. The lineup also had entertainment by Victory Siyanoqoba Arts group, an Amabhiza arts group from Ward 16, a praise poet as well as music.



The event was aimed at bringing together community members and making them aware of the importance of upholding and promoting human rights and freedoms enshrined in the Constitution of Zimbabwe. Habakkuk Trust believes that total community transformation and sustainable development can only occur if people know their rights and exercise their responsibilities as citizens of Zimbabwe.

Branded t-shirts, newsletters and copies of the Constitution were distributed to encourage community members to know their rights and freedoms and what they can possibly do when their rights are violated.

Habakkuk Trust has nine Community Advocacy Action Teams in Matobo District which are advocating for human rights related issues in their Wards with the view of improving the welfare and livelihoods of the people.



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Editor's Note Hello everyone



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Welcome to yet another edition of the Voice of Matobo newsletter where we bring to you news and updates on what has been happening in your beloved Matobo District. We hope that this newsletter finds you well and you will enjoy reading. Thank you for your continued love and support. Should you have any contributions and comments on how we can improve this publication, please feel free to contact us on:

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HEADMEN LAMENTS THE LACK OF RESPECT AND RECOGNITION BY COUNCILLORS

Headmen laments the lack of respect and recognition by Councillors Traditional leaders in Matobo District are complaining that they are not respected and recognised by the Councillors in their areas, which is one of the conflict drivers in their community.

Speaking at a Habakkuk Trust organised leadership training workshop for all Matobo District Headmen at Sikhethimpilo Conference Centre in Maphisa, one of the headmen said one of the drivers of conflict in the district was the fact that the roles and responsibilities of Councillors and traditional leaders were not clearly defined.

"Traditionally, we know that when there is something happening in my area, I have to be informed," he said. "But these days Councillors tend to conduct meetings without consulting us. It's not like we want to interfere with their meetings but at least we should know what happens in our community."

Headmen at the meeting said there was no team work between the two parties and hence stifling development in the district. They have requested for a joint capacity building training with Councillors to clarify their roles and responsibilities as a way of avoiding conflicts between the two parties.

"There is no team work between the chiefs, headmen, Councillors and village heads thereby making it difficult to create sustainable development in communities. There is need for all of us to be trained together to clarify some issues so that we can work towards a common goal of creating development."

Matobo District Assistant Administrator Mrs Leona Zhou said the reason why there were clashes between the traditional

and elected leaders was because of lack of knowledge on the roles and responsibilities of each party.

She said: "There are laws and policies

we can use to understand our roles as leaders. There is the Traditional Leaders Act and there is the Rural District Councils Act.

We should all know these statutory instruments in order to understand our duties as leaders. Some of these misunderstandings have to do with individual characters."

The leadership development programme was organised by Habakkuk Trust to capacitate traditional leaders on human rights, leadership, conflict management and development related issues. A similar workshop was also held with all Matobo Councillors.



Some of the headmen at the workshop interacting during break.

COMMUNITIES URGED TO REPORT HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

The Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC) has urged community members to report human rights violations that happen in their communities.

Speaking at a human rights day celebration at Whitewater Secondary School in Matobo District, Commissioner Japhet N. Ncube said the commission has not received any complaints from the Western region of the country.



Commissioner Japhet Ncube giving a key note address.

"ZHRC handles complaints to do with human rights violations," he said. "It is surprising that we have not received any complaints from the Western Region of the country since the commission started."

Commissioner Ncube urged communities know their rights and come forward with their human rights related issues. In its programming in Matobo District, Habakkuk Trust has observed that community members are not aware of human rights, the Constitution and what they should do once their rights or freedoms have been violated. It has also been observed that community members violate each other's rights and at times collaborate in covering human rights violations.

COMMUNITIES URGED TO EMPOWER PEOPLE LIVING WITH DISABILITIES

Rural communities have been urged to involve people living with disabilities in decision making and development processes.

People living with disabilities constitute about 10 per cent of Zimbabwe's population but in many rural areas it has been observed that they are viewed as charity cases and usually sidelined in decision making, development and economic processes.

Speaking at a Habakkuk Trust organised two-day Local Level Advocacy Programme (LLAP), held at Silozwi Primary School in Matobo Ward 16, Mr. Vernon Ntasi who is living with a disability said people living with disabilities are not recognised in the community and their input in decision making and development processes is not usually incorporated.



Mr. Vernon Ntasi receiving a Certificate of Excellence from Councillor Ethel Nyamukuta.

"There is a need to incorporate people living with disabilities in economic and development processes because they are often left out in most activities," Ntasi said.

He said people with disabilities should be integrated into the mainstream society, be given a chance to input on decision making processes and speak on their plight and come up with solutions in order for sustainable development to be realised.

There were two people with disabilities at the workshop where one of the advocacy issues identified was the involvement of people living with disabilities in community developmental initiatives.

Ntasi received a Certificate of Excellence for his sterling performance at the workshop.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS



PART 4

ENFORCEMENT OF FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

85 ENFORCEMENT OF FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

- Any of the following persons, namely—
 - any person acting in their own interests;
 - any person acting on behalf of another person who cannot act for themselves;
 - any person acting as a member, or in the interests, of a group or class of persons;
 - any person acting in the public interest;
 - any association acting in the interests of its members;

is entitled to approach a court, alleging that a fundamental right or freedom enshrined in this Chapter has been, is being or is likely to be infringed, and the court may grant appropriate relief, including a declaration of rights and an award of compensation.

- The fact that a person has contravened a law does not debar them from approaching a court for relief under subsection (1).
- The rules of every court must provide for the procedure to be followed in cases where relief is sought under subsection (1), and those rules must ensure that—
 - the right to approach the court under subsection (1) is fully facilitated;
 - formalities relating to the proceedings, including their commencement, are kept to a minimum;
 - the court, while observing the rules of natural justice, is not unreasonably restricted by procedural technicalities; and
 - a person with particular expertise may, with the leave of the court, appear as a friend of the court.
- The absence of rules referred to in subsection (3) does not limit the right to commence proceedings under subsection (1) and to have the case heard and determined by a court.

CONCERN OVER COMMUNITY BENEFIT ON NATURAL RESOURCES



Headwoman Naindi (Black top), with other participants at the Ward 16 LLAP workshop at Nathisa Processing Centre.

Matobo villagers living in an area endowed with tourist attractions have claimed that the famous Matobo National Park, balancing rocks, and caves that are internationally recognised and part of their heritage have not benefitted them in any way as they continue facing economic difficulties as well as lack of access to clean water.

Rural communities including Matobo Ward 16, 17 and 25 alleged that they have not been benefitting from what is rightfully theirs.

Speaking at a Habakkuk Trust organised Local Level Advocacy Programme (LLAP) training workshop at Silozwi Primary School in Matobo Ward 16, participants expressed concerns that they have natural resources but have seen little if any benefit to their Ward.

Participants said they have about five caves with ancient paintings done by the San community which they could benefit from but tourists are allowed to view them free of charge because there are no set mechanisms to ensure that visitors pay something for viewing the sites.



You never stop learning: Participants at the workshop in Ward 16.

One participant, Mr. Mbiko Ncube said, "There is a lot of money generated in our Ward, at the National Park but it doesn't come back to us as a community. Decisions are made about our resources but we are not part of the decision making processes."

In Ward 25, participants who attended LLAP training in Phakama said their area has wild animals which they can benefit from but they do not know whether these animals are theirs or belong to a farm close to their villages. In Ward 17, participants claimed they do not benefit from the Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) yet they have wildlife, sand and grass which could be used sustainably. It also emerged at the workshops that most members of the community do not know much about the management of the resources in their areas and how they should benefit from the said resources.

Matobo Ward 16 Councillor Ethel Nyamukuta highlighted that all caves are managed by the National Museums and Monuments which oversees tourist attractions.

"All caves belong to the National Museums and Monuments, including those in villagers' homesteads," she said. "As councillors we only know the number of caves that are there, the Museums authority does not let us know about the revenue they generate from the caves."

Nyamukuta said the proceeds generated from other natural resources under CAMPFIRE are accounted for but the caves are not part of the programme.

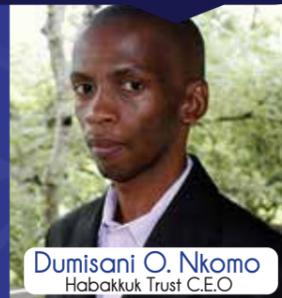
It was agreed that the community in Ward 16 will advocate for access to information and clarity on policies regarding the management of historical monuments and natural resources in their Wards.

From The C.E.O's Desk

Greetings to you valued readers and may I wish you God's abundant favour and grace as we enter into the festive season. It is God's grace that has brought us this far in the face of grueling challenges such as unemployment, indebtedness and a non-performing economy.

In this edition we continue to bring out the voices of communities in Matobo District especially areas such as Sigangatsha, Silozwe, Phakama, Nathisa and Sontala where Habakkuk Trust rolled out its local level programme. Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Mayibuye



Dumisani O. Nkomo
Habakkuk Trust C.E.O.