

ZIMMEDIA21

**STRENGTHENING CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT
IN MARGINALISED RURAL AND URBAN
COMMUNITIES THROUGH INNOVATIVE
MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION
PLATFORMS IN ZIMBABWE**

FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT (MAY 2019–AUGUST 2022)



FOJO: MEDIA INSTITUTE
■ Linnæus University

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ZimMedia21

Strengthening citizen engagement in marginalised rural and urban communities through innovative media and communication platforms in Zimbabwe

Final Narrative Report (May 2019-August 2022)

Sida Contribution number 12789

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ACRONYMS

AIPPA	Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act
ATI	Access to information
BAZ	Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CPIJT	Centre for Public Interest Journalism Trust Zimbabwe
FBOs	Faith Based Organisation
FoE	Freedom of Expression
FNF	Friedrich Naumann Foundation
GMC	Gender & Media Connect
IDT	Information for Development Trust
MAZ	Media Alliance of Zimbabwe
MIP	Media Innovation Programme
MMPZ	Media Monitors
MC	Media Centre
MISA	Media Institute of Southern Africa
OSISA	Open Society Institute of Southern Africa
PAS	Public Affairs Section
POTRAZ	Post and Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe
PPC	Parliamentary Portfolio Committee
PYCDT	Platform for Youth and Community Development
TaLI	Tag a Life International
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
VMCZ	Voluntary Media Council of Zimbabwe
WHO	World Health Organisation
ZINEF	Zimbabwe National Editors' Forum
ZACRAS	Zimbabwe Association of Community Radio Stations
ZLHR	Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights
ZMC	Zimbabwe Media Commission
ZUJ	Zimbabwe Union of Journalists

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Fojo Media Institute (Fojo) and International Media Support (IMS) jointly implemented a three-year media development programme in Zimbabwe between May 2019 and August 2022. The overall objective of the programme was to enable informed citizens (women and men; girls and boys) to freely participate, interact and contribute to democratic governance and development. The specific objective of the project was to enable credible mainstream and alternative media and inform actions of marginalized communities in rural and urban areas promoting transparency, accountability and inclusion in close collaboration with civil society.

THE PROGRAMME SOUGHT TO ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING OUTCOMES:

OUTCOME 1	Information and communication gap narrowed in targeted marginalised rural and urban communities, with youth's and women's voices amplified and participation increased.
OUTCOME 2	Targeted media professionally and financially strengthened to provide high-quality public interest content with a balanced presence of women and men.
OUTCOME 3	Improved conditions to promote citizen and rights centred media policy and law reform, and protection of safe journalistic working conditions, supported and enhanced.

The overall impact of this report has been that the programme contributed to the enhancement of democratic governance by promoting access to information through increasing community-focused news and information dissemination and empowered marginalised communities to demand accountability from public bodies and related authorities. By creating and supporting alternative media platforms that increased the publication of diversified, non-partisan and inclusive media coverage and the capacitation of mainstream and alternative media to increase the quality and reach of their work also contributed to increasing access of information and participation of citizens in democratic processes. The population reached by the programme is estimated at 15 million, according to various monitoring and evaluation tools deployed by partners and evaluators. The programme's advocacy efforts for policy reform also contributed to enhancing free media and democratic governance in Zimbabwe. **More specific results were recorded under each outcome area summarised as follows:**

OUTCOME 1



The narrowing of information gap in targeted marginalised **communities**, associated with increased access to information, shared through the platforms that were created and or supported by the programme, stimulated citizen agency to hold duty bearers to account on **development and governance**.



Increased interaction between the citizens and duty bearers, promotion of the coverage of the community issues by mainstream media, **closing information gap among citizens**



The programme contributed to narrowing the information gap in marginalised communities.

98%

of the community members that participated in the end-line external evaluation survey said the programme had improved their access to information and news **on governance and local development**.



Target communities were able to use information to demand accountability **from duty bearers**.

OUTCOME 2



Strengthened capacity of media to service communities more effectively.



Training of journalists resulted in the increase of investigative stories from about two a month to two stories per week.



Increased prominence of fact-checking in Zimbabwe with 3 more initiatives or start-ups being set up while other media organisations have proposed to include fact-checking as a key component of their work by the time of compiling this report.



8 media start-ups that were supported by the programme expanded their content production capacity, expanded their reach to marginalised rural and peri-urban communities, strengthened their institutional capacity to operate independently and viably, improved the quality of their content and took steps to institutionalise gender in their work.



Increased number of women in content production and those recognised appointed into influential positions in the media.

OUTCOME 3



Improved media law
and policy environment



The licensing of more
players in the broadcasting
sector inclusive of community
radios (14 community radios,
6 private TV stations, and 19
campus radios licensed, for
the first time since the birth of
Zimbabwe in 1980.)



The recognition of
journalists as both essential
and for prioritisation for
vaccination

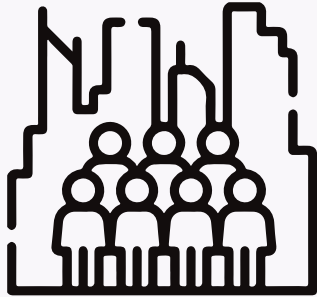


Lastly reduction
of media
violations

from
52
reported cases **2019**
to **15 in 2021.**



10 CBOs requested
for information from public bodies utilising the
new law FOIA and got **60% responsive rate**
compared to 30% in 2020.



THE OVERALL OBJECTIVE OF THE PROGRAMME WAS TO ENABLE INFORMED CITIZENS **(WOMEN AND MEN; GIRLS AND BOYS)** TO FREELY PARTICIPATE, INTERACT AND CONTRIBUTE TO DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT.

A major challenge was reduced access to rural communities and physical engagements due to Covid-19 restrictions on travel and gatherings. This reduced the programme's ability to bridge the rural-urban access to information gap as access to online content is not yet universal. Lessons learnt included the need to continue with flexibility and adaptability and investing in more resilient, hyperlocal presence for partners in case of emergencies such as the one presented by Covid-19 among other lessons and recommendations outlined later in the endline evaluation report (Annex V). Opportunities presented by this challenge included the increased uptake and usage of online media content, new ways of working, collaborations and partnerships that were necessitated by the constraints of the Pandemic. Crowd-sourced/citizen journalism content was amplified as a potential resource and an opportunity that could be scaled up in future programmes.



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INTRODUCTION

This report outlines the progress on the programme ‘ZimMedia21 programme - Strengthening citizen engagement in marginalised rural and urban communities through innovative media and communication platforms in Zimbabwe’ for the period May 2019-August 2022. The results of the programme are largely drawn from the end-line external evaluation report that was commissioned in 2022 to harvest outcomes and to assess the extent to which the main outcome areas were achieved. The evaluation report which was commissioned by Fojo-IMS with input from the Embassy of Sweden in Zimbabwe is annexed to this report (See Annex V). Additionally, a hybrid of evaluation methods of tracking the reach of this programme was also used including digital content analytics on partners online platforms, partner activity reports, field monitoring reports, among other monitoring and evaluation tools.

This report outlines the progress made over the three-year period in terms of the implementation of activities, outcomes achieved, strategies employed, monitoring and evaluation of the programme, capacity development of local partners, challenges faced, lessons learnt and risk factors and the mitigation of those. Attached to the report is an indicator table, an updated risk matrix and a financial report.

The ZimMedia21 programme was implemented in partnership with 13 locally based implementing partners comprising of nine core and four additional activity partners joining the partnership during the period under review, as follows:

PARTNER PROGRAMMING FOCUS AND IMPLEMENTING AREA

PARTNER	PROGRAMMING FOCUS AND IMPLEMENTATION AREA
MISA Zim	Promotes media law reform and access to information across Zimbabwe and Southern Africa.
Zimbabwe Union of Journalists (ZUJ)	A representative body of journalists in Zimbabwe providing labour, welfare and member capacity enhancement support, member engagement and dialogue Implementation areas: Manicaland, Mashonaland East, Harare and Masvingo.
Voluntary Media Council of Zimbabwe (VMCZ)	A media self-regulatory body promoting professional and ethical media. The partner has a national footprint in the programme because of the media advocacy component of their programming
The Zimbabwe Association of Community Radio Initiatives (ZACRAS)	This is the umbrella body of community radio initiatives and project implementation areas include Manicaland, Mashonaland East, Harare and Masvingo.
Gender Media Connect (GMC)	This partner works to advance gender equality within the media sector and is currently implementing in Mashonaland East, Manicaland, Harare and Masvingo.
Media Centre & TellZim consortium	This consortium enables and supports citizen journalism platforms in marginalised communities inclusive of Mashonaland East, Harare, Manicaland and Masvingo in this project.
Bus Stop Tv	An online TV that produces news, skits and awareness-raising programmes using comedy and humour and is implementing in Mashonaland East, Harare, Masvingo and Manicaland as per the geographic project scope.

Magamba Network	This is an activist network, which uses creative forms of youth activism as well as alternative and social media to strengthen the democratic space in Zimbabwe. Magamba is a strategic partner to the programme. Strategic partners are key actors that bring competence and skills to a programme, typically through their expertise in certain outcome areas combined with in-depth knowledge and experience of the operational context. They are consulted during both the design and implementation phases of the programme, thus providing critical support to achieving the expected objectives, outcomes and outputs. In Zimbabwe, Magamba reaches the important youth audience segment that mainstream media are struggling to address. Under the ZimMedia21 programme, they are consulted on matters relating to content production, digital media and innovation as well as other matters of relevance in terms of their knowledge.
ZIMFACT	A fact-checking initiative that originally was set up and managed as a Fojo project but has since registered as a Trust during the period under review and is now operating independently.

Additional, activity partners

PARTNER	PROGRAMMING FOCUS AND IMPLEMENTATION AREA
Tag a Life International	A targeted partner focused on promoting equality between girls and women and boys and men and ending child marriages.
Centre for Public Interest Journalism Trust in Zimbabwe (CPIJT)	A new centre for independent, public-interest investigative journalism in Zimbabwe also trading as Newshawks
Content Creators Network Zimbabwe (CCN ZW)	A networking platform for Zimbabwean content creators which works to strengthen the alternative media industry, supporting content creators and promoting free expression & social justice
Community Radio Harare (CORAH)	A community radio initiative under ZACRAS

CONTEXT

- Zimbabwe's socio-political context continued to show signs of faltering during the final year of the ZimMedia21 programme
- The democratisation agenda continued to regress
- The economic situation remaining dire, this as evidenced by the high inflation, volatile currency and politically motivated violence.
- Corruption and climate change crisis kept millions in poverty with nearly 50% of the population living on less than a dollar a day.
- Service delivery including access to water, health and education remained poor.
- Increased vulnerability with marginalised groups as women and girls were most affected.
- Covid-19 disaster outbreak in 2020 worsened an already bad situation with a government and other players struggling to cope.

- According to Afrobarometer survey June 2021 noted that about two-thirds (67.4%) of the Zimbabwe population are unhappy with the country's direction.
- Peace and stability were equally threatened according to Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP) report (August 2022).
- Most human rights cases (51%) were perpetrated by the ruling Zanu PF party, followed by the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) at 28%
- Election watchdogs such as the Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) reported that the by-elections held in March 2022 and later were held without due reforms as demanded by CSOs and opposition political parties.
- The same by-elections witnessed violence with two opposition supporters killed, allegedly, by ruling party supporters.
- However the country registered some significant, incremental developments on media reform that include licensing of community radio stations as well as continuing dialogue on media co-regulation. Eight more community radio stations were licensed in September 2021 bringing the total number of licensed community radio stations to 14.
- Examples of progressive proposed amendments to the BSA include proposals to increase the threshold of foreign investment in the capital-intensive broadcasting sector from 20% to 40%, introduce predictability to the calls for licensing by compelling BAZ to call and grant licenses



PEACE AND STABILITY ARE
EQUALLY THREATENED AS
NOTED IN A **ZIMBABWE
PEACE PROJECT
(ZPP)** REPORT WHICH
DOCUMENTED

257


HUMAN RIGHTS
VIOLATIONS, WITH

3,321

VICTIMS IDENTIFIED **(2,334
MALES AND 987 FEMALES)**
IN THE PERIOD AUGUST
2022.

AT THE **ONSET OF COVID 19 IN ZIMBABWE IN 2020**, GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED MOST OF THE CONTENT RELATED TO THE PANDEMIC AND PROHIBITED ITS FREE PUBLICATION. **AS SUCH MOST OF THE CONTENT ESPECIALLY DATA ON INFECTION RATES, VACCINES, AND DEATH RATES** WERE ONLY SOURCED FROM AND RELEASED AT INTERVALS BY OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT SOURCES.





RESULTS PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

RESULTS PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter provides an assessment of the achievements of the most important results by the programme by the time we compiled this report. It is important to note that at the end of the programme implementation an end-line external evaluation was conducted whose findings, recommendations and lessons learnt are the basis for this report and analysis. This assessment is largely at the level of overall objective, specific objectives, outcomes and bridging outcomes. An activity implementation tracker is also part of the annexes which provides an assessment of

programme activity implementation.

The table below presents a snapshot of project reach overall in addition to detailed analysis later in the report:

GENDER DISAGGREGATED ESTIMATED REACH

PERIOD MAY 2019 TO AUGUST 2022

PARTNER	TOTAL FEMALE POPULATION REACHED	TOTAL MALE POPULATION REACHED	TOTAL ESTIMATED POPULATION REACHED
BUS STOP TV	1 545 600 (45.85%)	1 814 400 (54.15%)	3 360 000
MAGAMBA	640 494 (25%)	1 921 481 (75%)	2 561 975
MEDIA CENTRE	267 688 (44%)	340 695 (56%)	608 383
MISA ZIM	15%	85%	1, 800 273
GMC	1 1841 445, 9 (70 %)	789 191 (30 %)	2 630 637
ZACRAS	44 460 (35%)	82 800 (65%)	127 260
ZUJ	516 (45 %)	621 (55 %)	1180
VMCZ	4432 (51.02%)	4254 (48.98%)	8686
ZIMFACT	412 500 (55%)	337 500 (45%)	750 000
IDT	765 498 (40.6%)	1 119 966 (59.4%)	1 885 464
CPIJT			
CORAH	385 000 (77%)	115 00 (23%)	500 000
TALI	520 000 (52%)	480 000 (48%)	1 000 000
TOTAL			15 233 858

SOURCE; PARTNER M&E FUNCTIONS INCLUDING TOOLS SUCH AS GOOGLE ANALYTICS, ATTENDANCE REGISTERS, ACTIVITY REPORTS ETC.

ASSESSMENT OF ACHIEVEMENT OF BOTH THE OVERALL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:

OVERALL OBJECTIVE

‘Informed citizens (women and men, girls and boys) freely participating, interacting and contributing to democratic governance and development’.

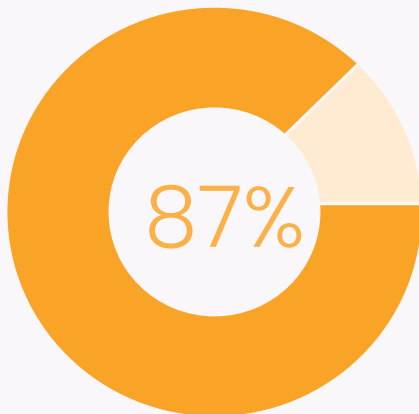
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Credible mainstream and alternative media enable and inform actions of marginalised communities in rural and urban areas, promoting transparency, accountability, and inclusion in close collaboration with civil society.

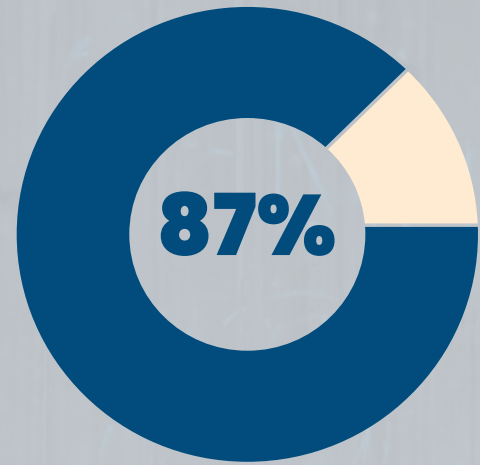
PERFORMANCE AGAINST OVERALL, SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES, AND OUTCOMES

The overall conclusions from the audience survey were that:

- **Significant proportions of consumers were not satisfied with media coverage**
- **Rural adults had the most diverse views about news**
- **The media sector in Zimbabwe was perceived to be highly politicised and polarised**
- **Despite government commitment to media reform practitioners report growing securitisation of the media and this undermines press freedom and diversity in reporting**
- **Media content is not sufficiently diverse to meet audience needs.**



OF THE EVALUATION SURVEY PARTICIPANTS **RANKED THE PROGRAMME 5 AND ABOVE** ON THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PROGRAMME PROMOTED TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ON GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES **ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 10**



THE

87%

20%

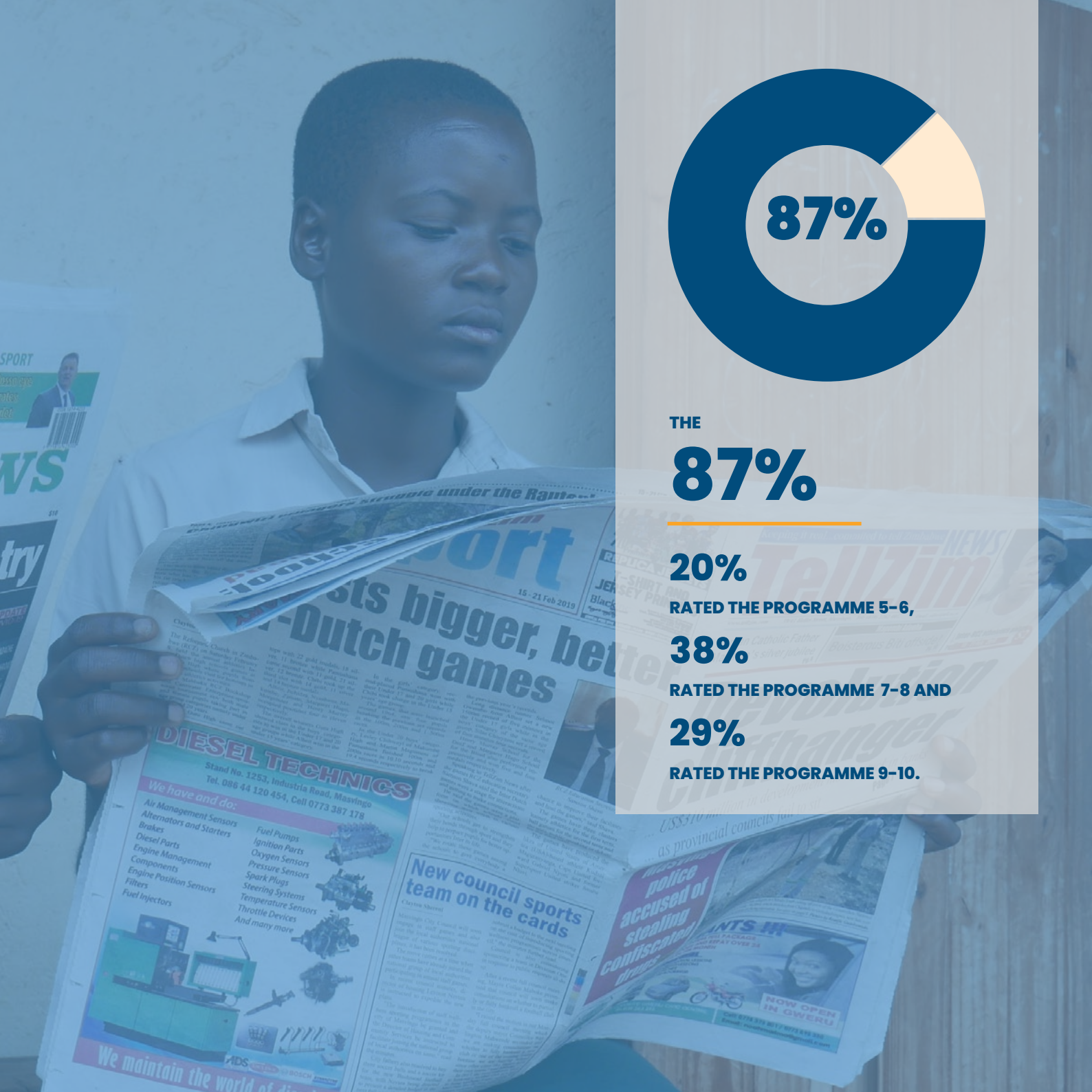
RATED THE PROGRAMME 5-6,

38%

RATED THE PROGRAMME 7-8 AND

29%

RATED THE PROGRAMME 9-10.



“WOMEN IN EPWORTH RAISED CONCERNS TO THE EPWORTH RESIDENTS DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION (RDA) (A LOCAL CBO) REGARDING ABUSES AND CORRUPT PRACTICES PERPETRATED AGAINST PREGNANT MOTHERS AT OVERSPILL CLINIC. THIS LED TO THE CBO APPROACHING CORAH AND TOGETHER THEY APPROACHED THE LOCAL COUNCILLOR WHO REFERRED THE MATTER TO THE CLINIC AND THE LOCAL BOARD. AFTERWARDS, CORAH PUBLISHED THE STORY WHICH ATTRACTED THE ATTENTION OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND CHILD CARE (MOHCC) WHICH DISMISSED THE CORRUPT STAFF AT THE CLINIC. NOW THE CORRUPT PRACTICES ARE NO LONGER AS BAD AS THEY WERE AS STAFF FEAR THAT THEY CAN BE EXPOSED”.

(IDI WITH CORAH)

These examples are a demonstration of how citizens were able to access programme supported useful and credible information and used it to freely engage and participate in the promotion of accountability and transparency as well as development in local communities which are key to the realisation of both the overall and specific objective of the programme.

Furthermore, the engagement between women from Seke area (Mashonaland East Province) and their councillors to address the shortage of schools in the area led to women taking the initiative to mould bricks for the construction of a local school using ward development funds that the local authority pledged to provide.



OUTCOME INDICATOR 1

THE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION GAP NARROWED IN TARGETED MARGINALISED RURAL AND URBAN COMMUNITIES, WITH YOUTHS' AND WOMEN'S VOICES AMPLIFIED AND PARTICIPATION INCREASED.



THIS IS ZACRAS PLATFORM CREATED BY COMMUNITY RADIO INITIATIVES FOR SHARING INFORMATION.

INCREASED REFLECTION AND EXPRESSION OF COMMUNITY VOICES AND PERSPECTIVES IN MAINSTREAM MEDIA.

The programme contributed to bridging the gap between mainstream media and communities through four primary activities:

- (a) **Press club discussions,**
- (b) **News gathering site visits to communities,**
- (c) **Training of professional journalists in community-focused reporting and crisis reporting, and**
- (d) **Establishment of social media platforms that brought together citizen journalists and professional journalists for purposes of sharing stories.**



Press club discussions in marginalised outlying areas **allowed community members and other relevant stakeholders to set the agenda for media coverage**, thereby ensuring the representation and participation of communities and stakeholders in deciding what is considered newsworthy. **See anecdote below.**

IN ONE PRESS CLUB DISCUSSION HELD IN MARONDERA (MASHONALAND EAST PROVINCE), STAKEHOLDERS PRESENT IDENTIFIED THE ISSUE OF A SERIAL RAPIST WHO HAD TERRORISED THE COMMUNITY AS TOPICAL AND PRIORITY TO THEM. THE MEDIA THEN GAVE THE ISSUE MEDIA COVERAGE. MAINSTREAM MEDIA, THE NEWSDAY AND ZIMBABWE BROADCASTING CORPORATION (ZBC) COVERED THE STORY. THE MEDIA COVERAGE CONTRIBUTED TO FACILITATING THE SUBSEQUENT ARREST AND PROSECUTION OF THE RAPIST.

Professional journalists changed their attitude towards community news from negative to positive which contributed to the increase in production of community-oriented stories. This presented them an opportunity to directly interact and interview

local people, meet local leaders, interact with key stakeholders, and observe situations first hand hence the change of attitude towards community reporting from negative to positive. See another anecdote below:

THE MIRROR, ONE OF THE MEDIA HOUSES THAT BENEFITTED FROM SITE VISITS, AT ANOTHER POINT ALSO REPORTED ON THE SPILLING OF TOKWE MUKOSI DAM FOLLOWING A FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION BETWEEN COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS DURING WHICH AFFECTED COMMUNITIES GAVE AN ACCOUNT OF HOW THE DAM-RELATED ISSUES AFFECTED THEIR DAILY LIVES.

One hundred and thirteen professional journalists were trained in community-focused and crisis reporting, resulting in the publication of 30

community-focused stories covering a variety of community development issues such as:

“I HAVE BEEN MAINLY WRITING ON ISSUES THAT AFFECT WOMEN AND I ALSO WROTE THE GACHEGACHE STORY WHERE WOMEN WALK 10KM TO BRING THEIR HUSBANDS FOOD AND THIS IS RISKY. RECENTLY A WOMAN WAS FOUND DEAD MAULED BY WILD ANIMALS ALONG THE WAY TO THE LAKESHORE AND THERE WAS ANOTHER WOMAN WHO WAS ATTACKED BY 2 LIONS. FORTUNATELY, SHE SURVIVED, AND SHE WAS RECENTLY DISCHARGED FROM THE HOSPITAL”,

JOURNALIST PARTICIPANT

“I ALSO WROTE AN ARTICLE ON WOMEN WHO WERE SELLING SEX FOR FISH. I WENT TO THE FISHING GAMES AS AN UNDERCOVER JOURNALIST AND WROTE THE STORY,”

JOURNALIST PARTICIPANT

THE PROGRAMME ALSO INITIATED A CAMPAIGN THROUGH FACEBOOK PAGE PETITIONING GOVERNMENT TO STOP DENDAIRY (A DAIRY COMPANY) FROM TEMPORARILY EVICTING THE CHILONGA VILLAGERS. PART OF THE CAMPAIGN COMPRISED HASHTAGS SUCH AS “#SAVECHILONGA” AND “#BOYCOTDENDAIRY” WHICH WERE WIDELY COMMUNICATED VIA SOCIAL MEDIA. FOLLOWING WIDESPREAD MEDIA ATTENTION ON THE ISSUE, GOVERNMENT, THROUGH VICE PRESIDENT CONSTANTINO CHIWENGA TEMPORARILY STOPPED THE EVICTIONS. SIMILARLY, WIDESPREAD SOCIAL MEDIA COVERAGE BY CITIZEN JOURNALISTS OF THREATS OF EVICTIONS OF CHISUMBANJE (MANICALAND PROVINCE) VILLAGERS BY GREEN FUELS (A LOCAL COMPANY THAT PRODUCES ETHANOL) AND SUBSEQUENT REPUBLICATION OF THE STORY IN MAINSTREAM MEDIA, THE PLANNED EVICTIONS WERE WIDELY CRITICISED, RESULTING IN A COURT ORDER TO STOP THEM.



“WE HAVE MORE MALE CITIZEN JOURNALISTS (150) THAN FEMALE CITIZEN JOURNALISTS (100) BECAUSE SOME TRAINED FEMALE CITIZEN JOURNALISTS WERE NO LONGER ACTIVE BECAUSE THEIR HUSBANDS MAY NOT ALLOW THEM TO PRACTISE AS CITIZEN JOURNALISTS”.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION IN MASVINGO
URBAN

Citizen journalists are critical actors in bridging the information gap in marginalised communities at local and national level. The end-line evaluation confirmed that citizen journalists play a key role in promoting production of community-focused media stories, amplifying community voices in mainstream media coverage, especially if strong collaboration is created with professional journalists.

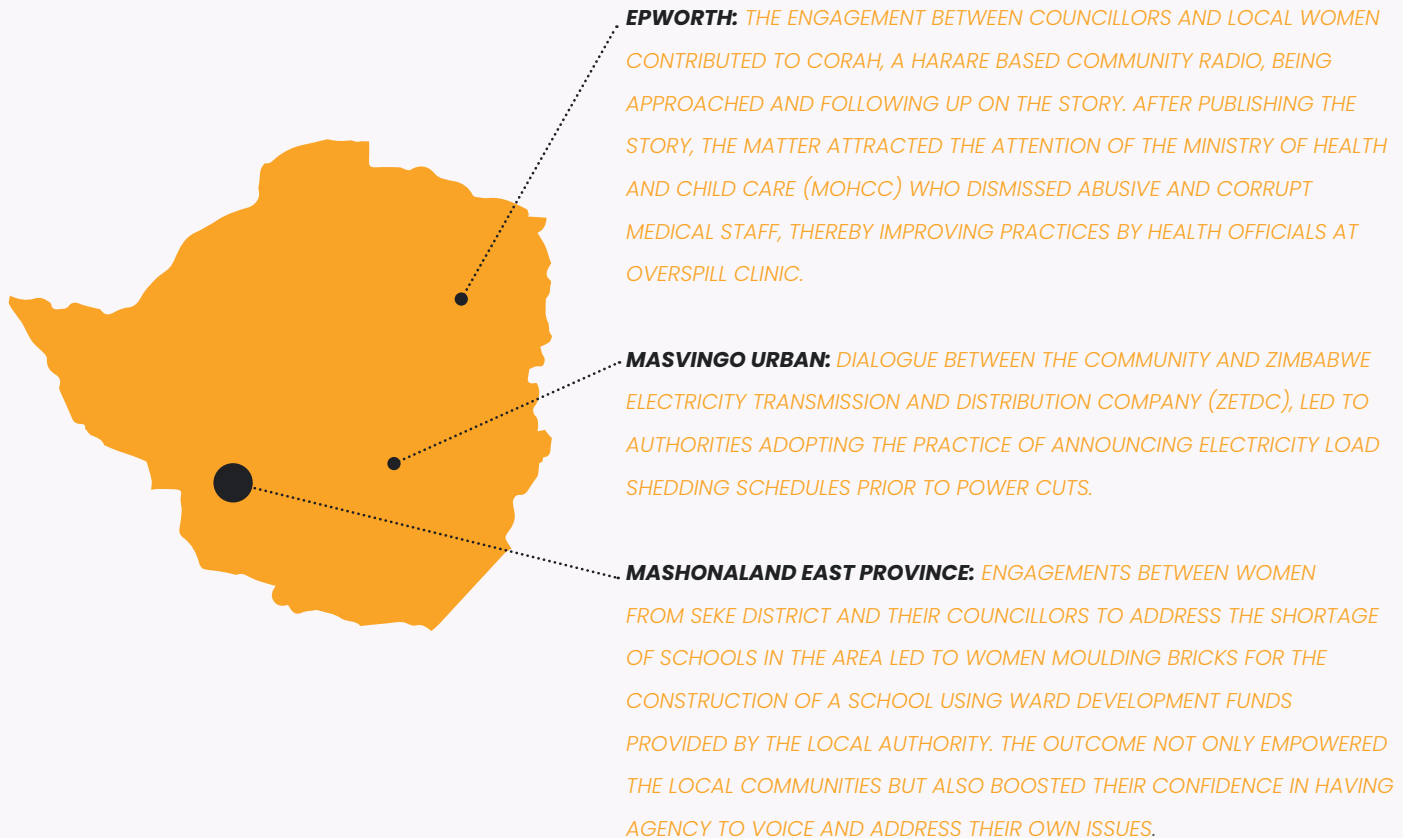
CITIZENS (INCLUDING WOMEN AND YOUTH) AND DUTY BEARERS INCREASINGLY PARTICIPATE AND INTERACT ON COMMUNITY MEDIA PLATFORMS (INCLUDING NEW TECH SOLUTIONS), ENABLING DIALOGUE.

Platforms for dialogue created by the programme enabled communities to interact with duty bearers on development and demand accountability.

Ninety-one percent of the end line evaluation survey participants from the four sampled districts confirmed that, the information they received through the various platforms helped them to be more informed about, and to engage in local development processes to a greater extent. 94% of all women, and 93% of young people aged between 18 and 25 stated that they had made use of the information acquired through the platforms to meaningfully engage in local development processes.



Community members in targeted areas were able to make use of various online and offline platforms created and or supported by this programme to interact and engage with duty bearers to seek solutions to developmental and governance issues. This can be attributed to increased awareness that communities had acquired resulting from the programme on: ATI; the right to demand accountability and transparency on governance issues; the right to engage local leaders; and the right to participate in democratic governance and developmental processes (such as utilities, infrastructure, health, employment, GBV, education).



RESULTS FROM INTERVENTIONS TARGETED AT WOMEN AND YOUTH

The programme significantly increased the participation of women and young people in and through the media. Young and female citizen journalists and digital storytellers played a crucial role in increasing awareness among community members about right to access to information. Equally, important was developing and understanding that right to access to information is a key right and condition to be able to demand accountability and transparency on governance issues. This contributed to increased citizen participation in democratic governance and developmental processes.

The work of young citizen journalists in Ward 28 of Chipinge, Manicaland Province, contributed to the reduction of cases of child marriages. They collaborated with a youth-focused CBO, Platform for Youth and Community Development (PYCD), in carrying out an awareness campaign against child marriages in Ward 28. The traditional leaders arrested those perpetrating child marriages, leading to a reduction in such instances as a result.



INCREASED REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN'S VOICES AND GENDER ISSUES IN THE MEDIA (ALTERNATIVE AND MAINSTREAM)

815


CITIZEN JOURNALISTS
AND DIGITAL STORYTELLERS
TRAINED BY THE PROGRAMME

52% 

48% 



**YOUNG
WOMEN CITIZEN
JOURNALISTS TENDED TO
DISCONTINUE REPORTING
DUE TO MARRIAGES.**



**TARGETED MEDIA (INCLUDING CITIZEN
MEDIA PLATFORMS) PROFESSIONALLY AND
FINANCIALLY STRENGTHENED TO PROVIDE
HIGH-QUALITY PUBLIC INTEREST CONTENT
WITH A BALANCED PRESENCE OF WOMEN
AND MEN**

**INNOVATIVE MEDIA CONTENT PRODUCED,
WITH A FOCUS ON FACT-CHECKED
INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM OF HIGH
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND A BALANCED
PRESENCE OF WOMEN AND MEN REFLECTING
THE COMPOSITION OF SOCIETY.**



Below are some IJ Stories by journalists trained through the programme

1. Elite manipulation of lists of Covid-19 beneficiaries (<https://www.thestandard.co.zw/2020/10/11/first-ladys-business-partners-listed-on-multi-million-covid-19-fund-for-the-poor/>)
2. Trends analysis of Covid-19 infections, comparing women and men as well as boys and girls (<https://www.thestandard.co.zw/2020/12/06/covid-19-is-affecting-more-men-than-women-in-zimbabwe/>.)
3. Abuse of tender procedures at the Harare municipality (<https://www.theindependent.co.zw/2020/10/30/city-council-in-us1bn-tender-storm/>)
4. Environmental degradation as foreign firms defy a government ban on riverbed gold mining with the connivance of local elites (<https://www.thestandard.co.zw/2020/12/27/vp-brother-name-dropped-as-foreign-firms-defy-govt-ban-on-river-bank-mining/>)
5. Vulnerabilities suffered at Covid-19 checkpoints (<https://www.theindependent.co.zw/2021/02/19/checkpoints-and-supermarkets-severely-exposed-to-covid-19/>)
6. How government ministries broke the law by promulgating statutory instruments through the backdoor (<https://www.theindependent.co.zw/2021/02/12/statutory-instruments-spawn-legal-crisis/>).

The increase in the publication and interest in investigative journalism led to the publication of 70 investigative journalism stories at the end of the programme implementation by participating journalists. Investigative journalists generated stories that attracted the attention of relevant regional bodies involved. For example, the publication of a story on the manipulation of tendering procedures at Harare City Council (HCC) led to an investigation of operations of the Harare Municipality by Special Anti-Corruption Unit (SAACU). This led to the revision and assessment of the HCC systems and procedures with the aim of curbing corruption.

BRIDGING INDICATOR 2.2: TARGETED NEW

MEDIA, INCLUDING YOUNG MEDIA START-UPS, ADVANCE IN PRODUCING QUALITY DIGITAL MEDIA CONTENT, MAINSTREAMING MARGINALISED VOICES.

The programme contributed to eight start-ups (iHarare, Masvingo Mirror, AB Communications, TellZim, Community Radio Harare, 263 Chat, Zim Morning Post, and Identities) expanding their content production capacity, reach to marginalised rural and peri-urban communities, strengthened institutional capacity to operate independently and viably, improved the quality of their content and took steps to institutionalise gender in their work.

“Shameless Police”-programme that exposed issues of youth drug abuse and related corruption by the police. As a result, 114 drug dealers were arrested in Harare and Chitungwiza. At the time of the evaluation the police operation had been scaled up to cover the whole nation.

A CITIZEN APPRECIATING MEDIA WORKS BY BUS STOP TV

FOUR NEW OPEN COUNCILS WERE SET UP DURING THE PROGRAMME PERIOD: OPEN COUNCIL MARONDERA, MUTARE, MASVINGO AND KARIBA. THESE PROVIDED AN ALTERNATIVE SOURCE OF INFORMATION AND A PLATFORM TO ALLOW CITIZENS TO FOLLOW AND INPUT INTO LOCAL AND NATIONAL DIALOGUES ON DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES.



Dexter Jika Burutu

22 m • 👤



One day we will look back and talk about how **Bustop TV** whi will be a huge media power house did so much on educating our nation on their rights, current affairs and thngs happening in our country. **DearLuckie Aaroni** torai sando dzenyu guys murikubata basa 🙌👊👊👊👊👊👊

Paden Network, another start-up supported, published the



"THE SHAMELESS POLICE EPISODE AMPLIFIED THE COMMUNITIES' CRIES FOR POLICE TO ACT GIVEN MANY REPORTS HAD BEEN MADE OF SOME RAMPANT DRUG ABUSE AND POLICE INVOLVEMENT BUT WITHOUT ACTION TAKEN. THE FACT THAT AFTER THE DRAMA SERIES AND NUMEROUS PUBLIC COMMENTS MADE ON THE DRUG DEALERS' ISSUE, POLICE ACTED, AND IN OUR VIEW, THE ACTION BY POLICE TO ARREST DRUG DEALERS CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO THE SERIES",
QUOTE FROM MAGAMBA NETWORK)

TARGETED MEDIA DEVELOP AND ADOPT IMPROVED MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES, FINANCIAL MODELS AND APPROACHES TO PRODUCING HIGH-QUALITY CONTENT AND BETTER PLAY THEIR WATCHDOG ROLE IN SOCIETY.



At the time of the evaluation, half of the media houses that participated in the Media Innovation Programme (MIP) had completed the development and testing of innovations in management strategies, business and financial models, strategic plans, media content monitoring and improvement.

Tell Zim: reported improved knowledge of their audiences, which they said had helped them to produce content that meets the interest of their audience, which increased social media following, more than doubling on Twitter and Facebook followers by the end of 2021.

"WE NOW FULLY UNDERSTAND OUR ONLINE AUDIENCES, WHERE MOST OF (THEM) ARE, WHAT TYPE OF CONTENT THEY INTERACT WITH MOST OF THE TIME. ...TELLZIM HAS GAINED FOLLOWERS AND SUBSCRIBERS. NOW WE ARE SCHEDULING POSTS FOR WEEKENDS WHICH IS HELPFUL BECAUSE MOST OF OUR STAFF WON'T COME TO WORK AND VERY FEW WOULD HAVE ACCESS TO THE INTERNET. THEREFORE, SCHEDULING POSTS ALLOWS TELLZIM TO DISSEMINATE INFORMATION TO ITS AUDIENCES EVEN DURING WEEKENDS, SOMETHING WHICH WE WERE NOT ABLE TO DO BEFORE. WE ARE ALSO NOW GENERATING CONTENT INFORMED BY THE AUDIENCE STRATEGY AND WE HAVE REVAMPED OUR WEBSITE SUCH THAT WE CAN SHARE STORIES DIRECTLY FROM THE WEBSITE."

(PASSMORE KUZIPA, EDITOR OF TELLZIM)

One of the media organisations, iHarare, adopted new management strategies which helped them to identify new audiences and improved revenue streams.

"THE MANAGEMENT TRAINING, WE RECEIVED FROM THE PROGRAMME ... HAS BEEN A GAME CHANGER. BEFORE ... WE WERE EXPERIENCING VIABILITY CHALLENGES AND CONTEMPLATING CLOSURE OF OUR OPERATIONS SHOULD THE SITUATION NOT IMPROVE. BUT AFTER THE SUPPORT WE RECEIVED, WE EMPLOYED THE LESSONS FROM THE TRAINING ... NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR MONETISATION HAVE EMERGED ... THE MOVE HAS HELPED US TO EXPAND OUR REVENUE CENTRES WHICH SAW OUR REVENUE GROWING BY OVER 100%. WE ARE EXCITED ABOUT WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS."

RAPHAEL SHAMBARE, CEO

One additional media house (AB Communications) reviewed their editorial thrusts from revenue to content driven editorial strategies.

"PREVIOUSLY WE JUST LOOKED AT OURSELVES AS A MEDIA HOUSE THAT OFFERS A PRODUCT, NOW WE VIEW OURSELVES AS PROBLEM SOLVERS TO BOTH OUR AUDIENCE AND MARKET ALIKE. IN SUMMARY, THESE KEY LEARNINGS HAVE MADE US AWARE OF ALL THE VARIOUS IMPACTS OUR PROGRAMMING HAS IN THE LIFE OF A LISTENER OR VIEWER AND AS SUCH WE ARE NOW MORE SENSITIVE TO THE AUDIENCE IN OUR PROGRAMMING CHOICES. WE ALSO HAVE REFOCUSSED OUR ATTENTION FROM REVENUE GENERATION TO CONTENT CREATION, AS IT HAS BEEN PROVED THAT REVENUE FOLLOWS CONTENT."

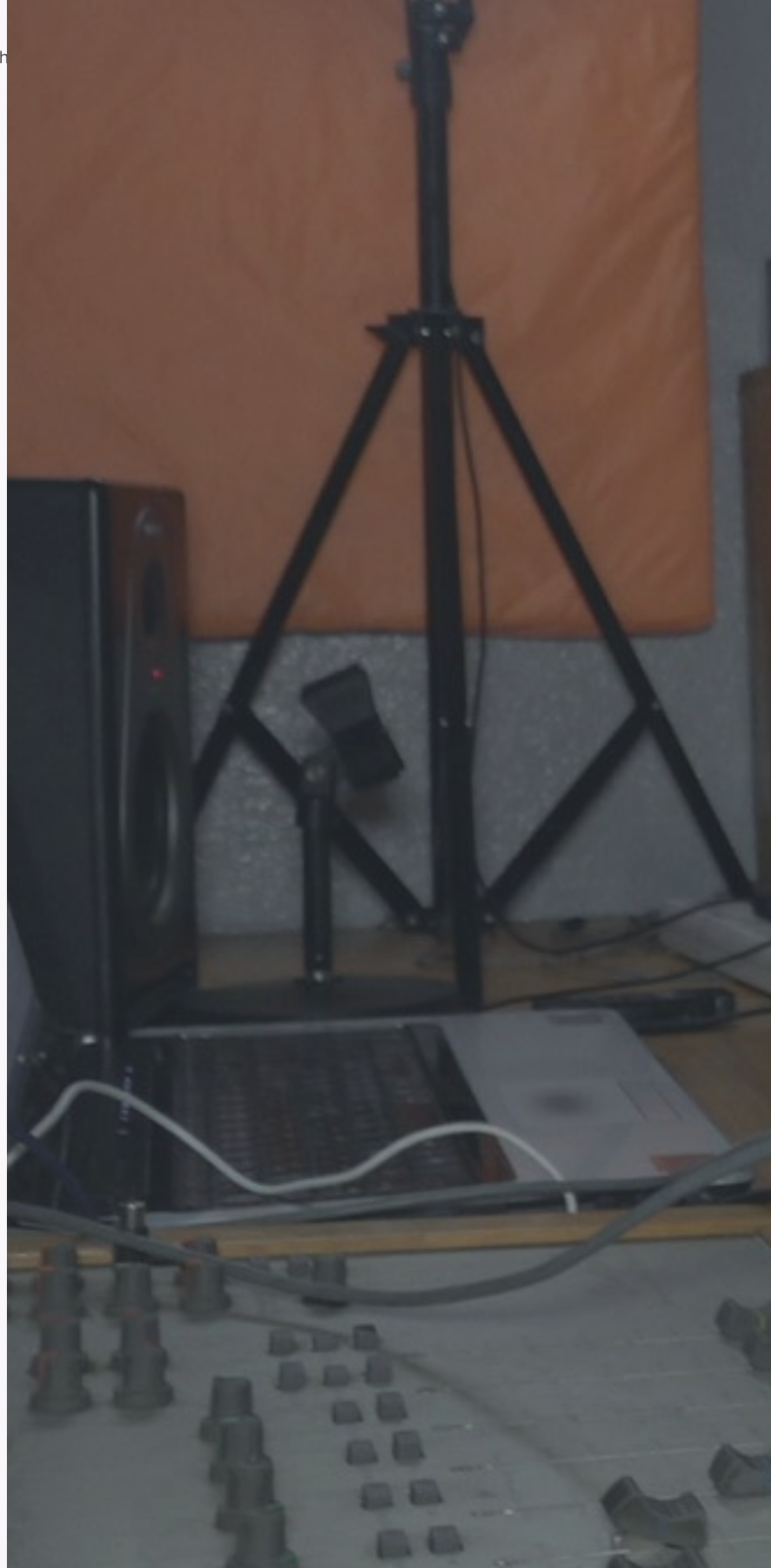
BENSON MBEWE, CEO OF AB COMMUNICATIONS.

WOMEN MEDIA WORKERS EMPOWERED, AND TARGETED MEDIA HOUSES ENGAGED TO MAKE SECTOR MORE GENDER INCLUSIVE, GENDER BALANCED, GENDER SENSITIVE AND SAFE.

Empowerment of media workers imply the various skills, knowledge, capacities and opportunities for growth that are availed to them through programme intervention. The evaluation identified an increase in the number of media women that were promoted into influential positions in media houses. For example, The Mirror appointed Elizabeth Mashiri to Deputy General Manager, Fungai Munyoro to Bureau Chief for Chipinge Times in Manicaland and Ellen Mlambo as Editor of Two Nations and Chipinge Times.

"ALTHOUGH THE PROMOTIONS OF MEDIA WOMEN PROMOTED TO INFLUENTIAL POSITIONS CANNOT BE ENTIRELY ATTRIBUTED TO THIS PROGRAMME, GIVEN THIS HAS BEEN PART OF THE WORK OF GMC, FURTHER STRENGTHENING OF OUR WORK BY THIS PROGRAMME IN A WAY CONTRIBUTED TO THESE DEVELOPMENTS WE ARE SEEING IN MEDIA HOUSES",
GMC OFFICIAL

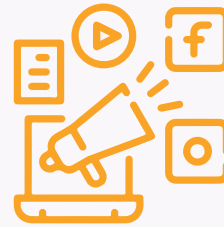
As a result of the programme support some media houses reviewed their existing gender policies to make them gender sensitive, some developed new gender policies, while others reviewed their editorial policies.



A photograph of a woman with dark, curly hair, wearing a white shirt, speaking into a microphone. A man with short hair, wearing a yellow shirt, is seated next to her, looking towards her. The setting appears to be a radio studio or a recording booth, with various pieces of equipment visible in the background.

**CITIZENS AND MEDIA ARE MORE INFORMED
AND MOBILISED ON MEDIA POLICY AND LAW
REFORM AGENDA AND MEDIA POLICY ADDRESS
DEVELOPMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES.**

The programme promoted awareness on the Right to ATI among citizens through widespread coverage of the new FoIA through the launch of My Freedom of Information Campaign (MFoI) and executed by Tag-a-Life (TALI), one of the implementing partners. Of the 33¹ trained Ambassador Journalists, 22 produced at least two stories or media activities each, using platforms such as public- and private print, electronic media and social media platforms. 23 podcasts were translated into eight local languages and broadcast across two public radio stations were estimated to have reached over 4.5 million listeners. Altogether, the 247 online and offline media activities² are estimated to have reached 10 million people across the 10 provinces of the country which is about 67% of the total Zimbabwe population.



247

ONLINE AND OFFLINE MEDIA

ACTIVITIES ARE ESTIMATED
TO HAVE REACHED

10 MILLION

PEOPLE ACROSS THE

**10 PROVINCES OF
THE COUNTRY**

1 23 female and 10 male

2 E.g., distribution of IEC materials, podcasts, skits, radio programmes, stories etc





Phillip Pasirayi @PhillipPasirayi · 17h

...

I exchanged notes with some leaders from the media sector in Harare today. The issues discussed include the contentious issue of media co-regulation. The idea is great but it needs further interrogation to see how compatible it is to our legal/policy and institutional framework



Earnest Mudzengi

COMMISSIONER PHILIP PASIRAYI GIVING A REMARK AFTER AN ENGAGEMENT MEETING

IMPROVED CONDITIONS AND CAPACITY OF JOURNALISTS AND MEDIA WORKERS FOR HANDLING SAFETY RISKS AND CHALLENGES

According to MISA's violations monitoring records, cases of media freedom violations decreased from 52 in 2020 to 15 in 2021. This improvement is partly associated with alerts and statements issued by MISA-Zimbabwe condemning the acts as well as

engagements with the Zimbabwe Republic Police leadership. The programme handled 12 cases involving the safety and security of journalists through the Defence Fund.

“I WAS ARRESTED AND DETAINED THREE TIMES WHILE PERFORMING MY DUTIES... IN ALL THE THREE INCIDENTS, MISA-ZIMBABWE PROVIDED LAWYERS TO REPRESENT ME IN COURTS. I WAS ACQUITTED ON ONE OF THE THREE CASES WHILE THE OTHER TWO ARE PENDING ALTHOUGH I HAVE RECENTLY RECEIVED A LETTER THAT THE STATE WANTS TO WITHDRAW CHARGES ON THE OTHER CASE”,
INTERVIEW WITH AMH JOURNALIST

During COVID-19, ZUJ, ZINEF and MISA successfully approached the High Court, resulting in an order compelling police and other security agents not to arrest, detain or in any way interfere with the work of journalists. This contributed to improved recognition of journalists and media workers as providing essential services during lockdown periods and allowed journalists to perform their professional roles without restrictions.





MISA'S VIOLATIONS
MONITORING RECORDS,
CASES OF MEDIA FREEDOM
VIOLATIONS DECREASED FROM

52 IN 2020
TO

15 IN 2021.



GENDER

Gender equality was a central cross-cutting theme in the ZimMedia21 programme, spanning project design & implementation as well as being key in the capacity building of programme partners. In the reporting period, this effort reflected in some remarkable results in terms of gender focus and equality. For instance out of 1000 professional and citizen journalist trained over 50% of them were women. During the review period about 8 women occupied key influential positions in the media.



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