

**2023**

**IDEAS ●  
FESTIVAL  
BULLETIN**

[www.zimcodd.org](http://www.zimcodd.org)

# About zimcodd

The Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZIMCodd) is a socio-economic justice coalition established in February 2000 to facilitate citizens' involvement in making public policy more pro-people and pro-poor. ZIMCodd views indebtedness, the unfair global trade regime and lack of democratic people-centred economic governance as root causes of the socio-economic crises in Zimbabwe and the world at large. Drawing from community-based livelihood experiences of its membership, ZIMCodd implements programmes aimed at delivering the following objectives:

- To raise the level of economic literacy among ZIMCodd members to ensure the participation of grassroots and marginalised communities in national governance processes.
- To facilitate research, lobbying and advocacy in order to influence and promote policy change.
- To formulate credible and sustainable economic and social policy alternatives.
- To develop a national coalition and facilitate the building of a vibrant movement for social and economic justice.

## Overview of the Ideas Festival Bulletin

This is a compendium of ideas generated by the participants who attended the ideas festival in Gokwe from the 19th to the 21st of July 2023. The Ideas Festival was the first of its kind to be hosted by the Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZIMCodd) and sets a precedent for others to follow. The ideas presented herein are organic, generated by the participants through various methods such as drama, role plays and poetry. These ideas are critical in informing progressive and responsive programming that captures the reality on the ground.



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# 1. Introduction

This bulletin is informed by the ideas generated from the festival held by ZIMCODD in Gokwe from the 19th to the 21st of July 2023. ([News article](#))

The ideas festival attracted 35 participants drawn from Goromonzi, Matobo, Kwekwe and Gokwe. The primary focus of the festival was to harvest organic ideas from the people on the ground who are experiencing the effects of climate change, excluded in governance processes, placed at the periphery of natural resource governance and believed that building a movement will enable them to progressively redress the socio-economic challenges being experienced in Zimbabwe.

## 2. Background

As part of ZIMCODD's broader programming and learning engagement capacity, the ideas festival was conducted in order to harvest ideas from youth and women from Gokwe, Goromonzi, Matobo and Kwekwe who sat to discuss prevailing issues and dynamics that are undermining women and youth empowerment. The discussions were done under the prism of the following themes: climate change, movement building, inclusion and natural resource governance.

The ideas festival happened at a time when women and youths are excluded from economic and social governance issues. Their voices continue to be neglected in the policy network and communities.

At the same time, they have become victims of the ruthless bane of climate change as well as weak and poor public finance management. A situation that has been further aggravated by unfair trade practices as majority of youth and women in the informal sector particularly smallholder farmers and artisanal small-scale miners are relegated to the periphery of the value chains. Smallholder farmers are the most affected, at one point cotton smallholder farmers were paid in grocery a situation that entrenches inequalities and undermines their livelihoods.<sup>1</sup> The same applies to tobacco smallholder farmers who continues to be paid meagres allowances despite the fact that the tobacco industry in Zimbabwe fluctuates between US\$ 800 to 900 million.

In addition, the exclusion of women and youth in economic governance has led to unsustainable mining activities in their communities as well as unresponsive budgeting process both at local and national level. This has hereby resulted in women and youth failing to benefit from resources within their communities. To this end, the ideas festival sought to build an informed movement of women and youth that adequately lobby and advocate for just climate change interventions, inclusion of women and youth in economic governance as well as sound natural resource governance.

1. <https://www.pressreader.com/zimbabwe/newsday-zimbabwe/20230218/281698323924866>

## **3. Objectives**

- To gather opinions and perceptions from women and youth regarding climate change, movement building, inclusion and sound natural resource governance.
- To create a platform for women and youth in various clusters of the society and economy to share their experiences.
- To exchange ideas in various forms such as dramas, games, role plays and poems on how empower women and youth.
- To create a vibrant and informed network of youths and women that seeks to promote social and economic justice in Zimbabwe.

## **4. Methodology**

An intense modular approach was adopted to facilitate an idea sharing atmosphere. Utilising their community experiences and expectations the participants drawn from Gokwe, Goromonzi, Kwekwe and Matobo successfully brought to light the challenges they are experiencing. Possible alternatives or ideas on how to ratify the same problems encountered by youths and women were shared. Role plays were also used to generate and portray ideas coupled with an interactive plenary that allowed participants to share and comment on the ideas proposed by the other group.

## **5. Emerging Ideas**

This section is informed by organic issues that were presented by the participants and the write ups they submitted. The write ups which were submitted informed the sections hereunder:

### **Climate Change**

The Climate change group made their presentations through the mixture of poetry and storytelling. Their focus was on the need for alternatives that empower communities through creating sustainable livelihoods to be designed and encouraged instead of illegalising activities that the poor partake in because of the financial limitations they have. They did this against the background of understanding that in recent years, ordinary citizens in the country have become victims of the ruthless bane of climate change which has seen more prolonged droughts, cyclones and heat waves.

*Challenges Caused by Climate Change in Gokwe, Goromonzi, Matobo and Kwekwe:*

- *Desertification*
- *Erratic rainfall patterns*
- *Natural Disasters such as Cyclones, Heatwaves*
- *Drought and Hunger*
- *Forced Migration*
- *Family Dysfunctional*
- *Decreasing water table*
- *Partisan allocation of irrigation gardens areas.*

### **Mitigation Efforts Proposed by the Group.**

- Planting more trees and flowers is an effective method to filter the toxic air surrounding us.
- Growing small grains such as sorghum and millet which are drought resistant.
- Apiculture, a beekeeping farming project that will also help in deterring people from cutting down trees.
- Use of "tsotso" stove, an innovative way of cooking that does not rely on the use of so much firewood.
- Community climate change education awareness campaigns.
- Community climate neighbourhood watch to deter deforestation.
- Recycling and reusing waste can deter plastic pollution which ultimately can help mitigate the effects of climate change.

### **Movement Building**

The group made their presentation through drama that looked at answering questions on how to build a movement to address community challenges and how to sustain it after accomplishing their goal. They also made their submissions based on the understanding that fear of political and violent repercussions keeps a lot of citizens out of any civic participation. Technology could be an effective alternative tool in amplifying advocacy issues and engaging with duty bearers.

### **How to build a movement.**

- The first step in building a movement is understanding the matter that needs to be addressed.
- The second step is to participate in problem solving and other areas that requires one's input.

- The third step is to influence others who might not have heard the message or have understood the effects of the matter that needs to be addressed.
- Movement building should have diversity within its drivers, these should include persons with disabilities, youth, and women.
- A movement should make use of the snowballing effect. The snowballing effect is a great technique to allow for a larger pool of citizens to benefit from the knowledge and information shared in any activity as it pushes the direct participants of the program to go out and teach others as well.
- An effective movement should be complimented by rigorous coalitions. The use of coalitions and partnerships between ZIMCODD and other civic society organisations can assist in efforts to build the movement for social and economic justice.
- The movement builders themselves should be vibrant and energetic so that they can attract more people in the social and economic justice struggle.
- Taking advantage of large gatherings is an effective method of sharing and spreading information to a larger audience and it is time effective as well.
- Language is an important part in communicating a message and should be simple, relevant, and understandable to the targeted participants. This is to encourage the use of indigenous languages, simple terms instead of using complex jargon and in creating any message with the target audience in mind. For example, a message targeted at youths should be different to one meant for senior citizens in how it is shared and packaged.

### **How to sustain a movement.**

- An effective movement is sustained by passion, which is built through experience sharing and robust articulation of the effects of the matter at hand calibrated to generate resentment towards the situation.
- A movement can be sustained through internal resource mobilisation which will include the payment of subscriptions by members that affiliate to the organisation.
- Creating poverty cure projects (initiatives that reduce poverty) for example poultry farming is instrumental in building and sustaining a movement as people are moved by what they see rather than what they are told.
- Art and its various forms including drama can be innovative methods in educating, empowering and capacitating communities in any subject, this is compared to the traditional way of facilitating conversations in communities as this is more entertaining and encourages better engagement between the participants and facilitators.
- Social and Economic Justice Ambassadors/Activists should be active in local and national community leadership structures.
- Engagement with duty bearers can be through dialogue and does not always need to be confrontational as the latter can strain working relations with duty bearers which is detrimental for a movement in the long run.

### **Inclusion**

- The Inclusion group conducted a mock survey to measure the participation of women against that of men.

The survey was conducted on the first day of the Ideas Festival using questions, comments and add ins as the standard for participation. The results of the survey showed that males participated more than females in all these areas with a 100% of the questions being asked by males. The group also asked the thirty participants to draw their favourite leaders to expose societal behaviours and expectations as to the gender, age, and physical ability of the leader. Most of the leaders chosen were men, only one was a youth and there was no person with disability chosen. In its presentation the group answered the following questions: the questions on the effects of exclusion in communities, community-oriented ways to foster inclusion and informing programming on effective interventions that foster inclusion.

### **Background**

- Traditional beliefs characterised by ageist and patriarchal methods and practice of teaching are responsible for the exclusion of women, youth, and Persons with Disabilities (PWD's).
- Decision making platforms are not responding to the needs of traditionally marginalised groups which leaves many of them ignorant and unwilling to participate in these platforms.
- Young women, persons with disabilities and youth also suffer from the tokenism particularly in the political arena which stifles their voices to actual effective participation.

### **Impacts And Effects Of Exclusion.**

- There is less participation in government process and in the electoral process by these groups (women, youth and PWDs) which leads to voter apathy and the election of incompetent leaders.

- Exclusion of certain groups in society from partaking in community development and decision-making bodies can lead to the unequal distribution of resources and communities miss out on new and innovative ideas that could be introduced by a more diverse body in making decisions.
- Exclusion also leads to further vulnerability and marginalisation of women and youths at both community and ward level as they miss out on opportunities of self-growth.
- Women, PWD's and youths are violated of their rights of freedom of expression and association.

#### **Ways to Foster Inclusion:**

- Educating and capacitating duty bearers to be inclusion champions in the planning and execution of their projects.
- Utilising the creativity/art industry to tell stories of members of the groups previously marginalised such as that of persons with disabilities, women, and youths so these people can be used as reference and role models to inspire others in society.
- Enhancing the capacity of young people and women to develop sustainable livelihoods could be effective in alleviating these groups from marginalisation in key platforms as it boosts their confidence to contribute to decision making platforms.
- There is need to include males in conversations that advance the inclusion of females in all platforms of society, this is a more comprehensive approach that will go a long way in removing the psychological barriers that males have against the participation of women.

- There is need for the grooming of traditionally marginalised groups with regards to assuming and excelling in leadership positions.
- There is need to leverage social media platforms so they can be used as mediums to facilitate and share messages on inclusion.
- The Quota system should be decentralised to central government to be present in the election of councillors, ward committees and any other branches of government to increase the participation of persons with disabilities, women, and youth.
- The use of technology to identify gaps and amplify calls for the inclusion of traditionally marginalised groups in all spaces.
- Investing in the identification and grooming of leaders from these interest groups.

#### **Natural Resource Governance**

Utilising drama and role play, the group successfully unpacked the state of natural resources governance in the communities that the participants come from. The group demonstrated the importance of resource mapping in enhancing citizen oversight in the governance of natural resources. Citizens are viewed as the custodians of good natural resources governance and that their exclusion undermines community and national development as it open avenues for resource looting.

#### **Reflections on the State of Natural Resource Governance in Kwekwe, Gokwe, Goromonzi and Matobo**

Communities in Kwekwe, Gokwe, Goromonzi and Matobo are not benefiting from their resources.

The aforementioned communities are blessed with some of the resources that are at the apex of global demand. These include but not limited to lithium, gold, copper, chrome and coal. Despite having vast deposits of these resources, the communities have not benefited much. Marginalisation and exclusion remain the order of the day coupled with dilapidating infrastructure. Unsustainable mining practices have also worsened the situation as deforestation, desertification, land degradation and chemical deposits in the rivers act as an enzyme in facilitating the damaging effects of climate change.

### **Factors Facilitating the Abuse of Natural Resources.**

- Corruption
- Exclusion of local communities in community resource governance.
- Bribery
- Opaque mega-mining deals
- Resource backed loans.
- Weak oversight institutions
- Economies of affection
- State capture
- Government's unwillingness to optimally implement devolution.

### **Possible Interventions by Citizens.**

#### **Therefore, citizens can:**

- Utilise Social Accountability Monitoring (SAM) tools to monitor the use of public resources.
- Use social media to expose and track corruption in the natural resource governance sector.
- Leverage on Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETs) to foster accountability.
- Rely on value addition and community beneficiation to bring about community transformation and development.
- Carry out systematic audit and valuation of community resources to enhance transparency in natural resource governance.

- Advocate for optimum implementation of devolution legal frameworks to give autonomy to communities with respect to their resources.

## **6. Conclusion**

The Ideas Festival Bulletin presents a glimpse of the thoughts and perceptions of communities from Gokwe, Goromonzi, Matobo and Kwekwe with respect to climate change, inclusion, natural resource governance, and movement building. The perceptions and thoughts of the participants are critical in informing sound programming and interventions that are comprehensive in redressing the challenges being encountered in the aforementioned communities. It is critical to note that, the Ideas Festival Bulletin is not an end itself, but an effective springboard to generate the mushrooming of ideas, theories, concepts and perceptions that addresses climate change and public resource governance quandary the country finds itself in.





**A group picture of participants at the Ideas Festival. Credit: Muchanyara Midzi**

## **Annex 1: Participants' Expectations from the Ideas Festival**

Some of the participants expectations are captured below:

My expectation for this festival is to learn best practices of promoting social and economic justice advocacy by my peers from other regions of Zimbabwe. **Constantine Mpofu.**

I expect that the festival will inform, inspire, and offer both hope and guidance on various aspects of climate change and sustainable development. **Gracia Mashingaidze.**

My Expectation for the Ideas Festival is to learn from others and go home and start projects which will enable Matobo community to respond better to climate change. **Sakhile Ndebele.**

My expectation is to be empowered as youth to do projects such as piggery, poultry, reforestation among others to mitigate and adapt to climate change. **Janet Mketiwa.**

My expectation is to learn and have experience on how other communities manage and handle climate situations that we face in our communities and to also learn how I must be vibrant and get out of comfort zone. **Claudette Ndlovu**

For this festival I wish to learn and understand how to create a vibrant and informed network of youths and women. **Munyaradzi Mangwende.**

I expect the Festival to highlight the Effects and damage of climate change on the third world against a background of external investors contaminating the ozone layer hence putting our lives at risk and how best SEJAs can stabilise the situation. The festival should also help us to track progress on climate change mitigation efforts. **Tendai Masora**

My expectations are to hear and share ideas from different districts on the impacts of inclusion and public finance management. **Geraldine Sibanda**

My expectation for this festival is to meet colleagues from different areas and share different experiences on how they solve socioeconomic challenges in their respective areas. **Chelesani Mdlongwa.**

Looking forward to a successful, progressive, and fruitful meeting. I wish to learn how my colleagues are fostering issues to do with climate change, public resources management, and inclusion of women and youth in governance processes, and movement building all aiming at bringing about a strong social and economic justice movement. **Mike Makore.**

For the Ideas Festival training, as SEJAs we need to be catalysts, trainer of trainers and spearhead the change we want to see in our communities in various areas i.e. Climate change, Natural resource governance, movement building and inclusion. **Mary Nyadome.**

