



Regional Best and Promising Practices Booklet

Strengthening Social Accountability Monitoring (SAM)
and Rights-based Public Resources Management (PRM)
in Health (SRHR) and Agriculture (Food Security)
within the SADC Region



 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

act:onaid

 **SAAIDS**
Knowledge for action: The power to make a difference!

PSAM
Public Service
Accountability
Monitor



Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Abbreviations and Acronyms	4
1. Introduction	6
1.1 Value for Documenting Best and Promising Practices	7
1.2 Approach to Documenting Best and Promising Practices	8
1.3 Best and Promising Documentation Methodology	9
2. The Best Practices and Promising Practices	11
2.1 Malawi: Empowering Communities in Social Accountability Monitoring (SAM) for SRHR Through Reflection Action Circles in Mchinji District.....	12
2.2 Tanzania: Women Smallholder Farmers Forums Impacting Progressive Policy Makers' Actions in Mbozi District.....	24
2.3 Zambia (Promising Practice): Social Accountability Monitoring Groups Contributing to Improved Agroecology and Food Security of Rural Communities in Chipata District.....	34
2.4 Zimbabwe: Empowering Adolescents and Young People in Social Accountability Monitoring (SAM) is Enhancing Dividends in SRH Service Provision in Binga.....	44
2.5 Regional (Promising Practice): Transformative Influence of SADC Policy Structures by Non- State Actors using Transnational Advocacy for Strengthened Implementation of Regional Commitments	56
3. Building Better Forward: Sustaining SRHR and Food Security Responses Through Social Accountability Monitoring	76

Acknowledgments

We extend our sincere appreciation to all the Government representatives, SADC Secretariat representatives, Members of Parliament and their representatives, smallholder farmers, media representatives and issue-based CSOs; for their input and support for this documentation to come to fruition. Their efforts and dedication to strengthening social accountability and oversight capacity for rights-based public resources management in health (SRHR) and agriculture (food security) in the SADC region; has yielded experiences and lessons that can be adopted, replicated or scaled-up by other stakeholders, through the presented Best and Promising Practices in this document.

Our gratitude extends to documenting support received from ActionAid Malawi, ActionAid Tanzania, MVIWATA, MIICO, ActionAid Tanzania, ESAFF Tanzania, ActionAid Zambia who collaborated with the SAfAIDS documentation teams.

The content of this report was drafted by Adolf Mavheneke, Takudzwa Shoko, Moses Chibamba and Sazilinah Mukumbe; with technical guidance from Rouzeh Eghtessadi and Chrispin Chomba. Reviews were done by Lloyd Dembure (SAfAIDS Regional), Julie Middleton (AAI, PSA Alliance Project Manager), Joe Mzinga (ESAFF), Racheal Gondo (Rhodes University) Wales Chigwenembe (Project Manager, ActionAid Malawi) and Samwely Mkwatwa (Project Manager, ActionAid Tanzania).

The documentation processes that informed the generation of this Booklet, were made possible through the generous support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AAI	ActionAid International
ADF	Agriculture Development Fund
AIP	Affordable Inputs Project
ABYM	Adolescent Boys and Young Men
AGYW	Adolescent Girls and Young Women
AYP	Adolescents and Young People
BP	Best Practice
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Project
CATs	Community Adolescent Treatment Supporters
CCSAP	Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan
CDFA	Chipata District Farmers Association
CONGOMA	National Assembly, Non-Governmental Organisations of Malawi
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
CSOs	Civil Society Organization
CSPR	Child Safeguarding Practice Review
CWF	Coalition of Women Farmers
DACO	District Agriculture Coordinator
DDMA	Department of Disaster Management Affairs
DSC	District Security Committee
EJN	Economic Justice Network
ESAFF	Eastern and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmers' Forum
FACO	Provincial Agriculture Coordinator
FANR	Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources
FCASA	Foreign Correspondents Association of Southern Africa
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FNSS	Food and Nutrition Strategy
FOCCISA	Fellowship of Christian Councils in Southern Africa
GRPS	Gross rating points
HCC	Health Centre Committee
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HSDSP	Human And Social Development and Special Programmes
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
KII	Key Informant Interviews
MobiSAfAIDS	SAM platform for SRHR
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoHCC	Ministry of Health and Child Care
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPs	Members of Parliament
MVIWATA	Mtandao wa Vikundi vya Wakulima Tanzania
NAIPS	National Aeronautical Information Processing System
NASFAM	National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
NPL	Nation Publications Limited
NSA	Non-State Actor
NSC	National SADC Committee
NZP+	Network of Zambian People Living with HIV/AIDS
PACO	Process, Automation, Control and Optimisation
PBO	Public Benefit Organisations
PFM	Public Financial Management

PLHIV	People Living with HIV
PP	Promising Practice
PRM	Public Resource Management
PSA	Partnership for Social Accountability
PSAM	Public Service Accountability Monitor
PSC	Parliamentary Select Committees
RAC	Reflection Action Circles
RAP	Regional Agricultural Policy
RDct	Rural District Council
RISDP	Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan
RWA	Rural Women Assembly
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SADC-PF	SADC Parliamentary Forum
SAM	Social Accountability Monitoring
SAM4SRHR	Social Accountability Monitoring for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SAfAIDS Model)
SAMG	Social Accountability Monitoring Groups
SAPSN	Southern African People's Solidarity Network
SAT	Southern Africa Trust
SATUCC	Southern Africa Trade Union Coordination Council
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SHDSP	Social and Human Development and Special Projects
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association
WF	Women Forums
WHO	World Health Organisation
WSHF	Women Smallholder Farmers
YDF	Youth Development Foundation
ZIMSOFF	Zimbabwe Smallholder Organic Farmers' Forum
ZINWA	Zimbabwe National Water Authority
ZNFPC	Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council

A large, bold, red number '1' followed by a red dot, positioned in the upper center of the page. The background is a solid blue color with a decorative vertical band on the left side featuring a repeating geometric pattern of triangles and diamonds in a lighter blue shade.

Introduction

This Booklet was compiled and designed by SAfAIDS; and produced by the PSA Alliance. It presents 3 Best Practices (BPs) in Malawi, Tanzania and Zimbabwe and 2 Promising Practice (PPs) in Zambia and at regional level; reflecting strengthened social accountability and oversight capacity for rights-based public resources management in health (SRHR) and agriculture (food security) sectors, under the Partnership for Social Accountability (PSA) Project. The following are the Best and Promising Practices that have been documented and forms the content of this BP and PP Booklet:

- Regional (Promising Practice): Transformative Influence of SADC Policy Structures by Non-State Actors using Transnational Advocacy for Strengthened Implementation of Regional Commitments;
- Malawi: Empowering Communities in Social Accountability Monitoring (SAM) for SRHR through Reflection Action Circles in Mchinji District;
- Tanzania: Women Smallholder Farmers Forums Impacting Progressive Policy-makers' Actions in Mbozi District;
- Zambia (Promising Practice): Social Accountability Monitoring Groups Contributing to Improved Agroecology and food security of Rural communities in Chipata District;
- Zimbabwe: Empowering Adolescents and Young People in Social Accountability Monitoring (SAM) is enhancing dividends in SRH service provision in Binga District

The PSA Alliance is comprised of non-State development organisations led by ActionAid International (AAI), and includes the Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM) of Rhodes University, Eastern and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmers' Forum (ESAFF) and SAfAIDS. SAfAIDS is the health (SRHR) lead, and ESAFF is the agriculture (food security) lead. The PSA Alliance, with support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (PSA) has implemented a regional programme on strengthening social accountability and oversight capacity for rights-based public resources management in health (SRHR) and agriculture (food security) since 2016. The First Phase was from 2016 to 2019 covering four SADC countries of Malawi, Tanzania, Mozambique and Zambia; and the Second Phase commenced in 2020 till mid-2023, and with a fifth country, Zimbabwe. The programme is currently in an extension Phase till December 2024.

1.1 Value of Documenting Best and Promising Practices

Documenting Best Practices (BPs) and Promising Practices (PPs) is an essential step in the cycle of development work, that involves programme or policy influencing interventions. Best practices inform new programme designs, policy decisions and investment priorities; by providing a series of working elements that collectively facilitate change and improved development outcomes. Best practices are valuable to refer to, for scale-up, replication and adaptation; within resource constrained environments; and efficient reference for 'what works'. Programmers, policy-makers, community cadres, funders and investors and other development actors, would

utilise BPs to inform their current and future efforts. Promising practices offer a similar guide to what 'promises' to be effective, sustainable and efficient; and provide a guide on learning for strengthening these elements for sustained intended change. This Booklet provides a resource for PSA Alliance members and other partners across the SADC region to learn from, and deliberate on 'what works' and and consider replicating, adapting or scaling-up, what presents as a 'picture of success', generated from the PSA programme.

1.2 Approach to Documenting Best and Promising Practices

Each documentation was conducted within the SAfAIDS Seven Elements for Best and Promising Documentation Methodology (adapted from a SADC HIV BP Framework). These are outlined below.

Effectiveness: A best practice must have clear objectives guided by identified community needs obtained through a baseline study and it must have evidence that it is achieving these objectives.

Cost-Effectiveness/Efficiency: The programme should have the capacity to produce desired results with minimum expenditure of energy, time and/or resources.

Relevance: the interventions should take note of the specific context in which they are operating, noting cultural, religious and other norms; as well as political systems and the socio-economic environment.

Ethical Soundness: A best and promising practice upholds social principles and professional conduct. An intervention is best and promising if it does not violate human rights, respects confidentiality as a principle, embraces the concept of informed consent and applies the 'do no harm' principle.

Replicability: The practice should have the ability to be copied or adapted in whole or part in a similar or different setting. It needs to discover interventions that set an example.

Innovativeness: A best and promising practice may demonstrate a unique and/or more cost-effective way of implementing a project or responding to an issue. This measures how different this project is from similar projects. What new methodology is the project applying and what makes it stand out from other projects.

Sustainability: is the project able to continue to be effective over the medium and long-term. The results should continue to be seen within the target communities, even after project closure.

A strategic approach to documenting best and promising practices, within the broader documentation and communication domain of organisational knowledge management systems, was adopted. This approach has also been adapted to documenting all developmental areas linked to HIV, including gender, livelihoods, maternal and child health, poverty reduction, water and sanitation, and related interventions. This is a SAfAIDS approach which was developed through extensive research and experience in documenting Best and Promising Practices in Southern Africa over the years. It has also been adapted to document developmental actions within mainstream HIV, gender, livelihoods, maternal and child health, poverty, water and sanitation and related interventions. It centres around a Participatory Documentation Process approach which maximises the inclusive participation, and/or representation of key stakeholders (i.e., partner organisations, project participants, adolescents and young people, men and women, among other stakeholders) throughout the six-step process indicated below:

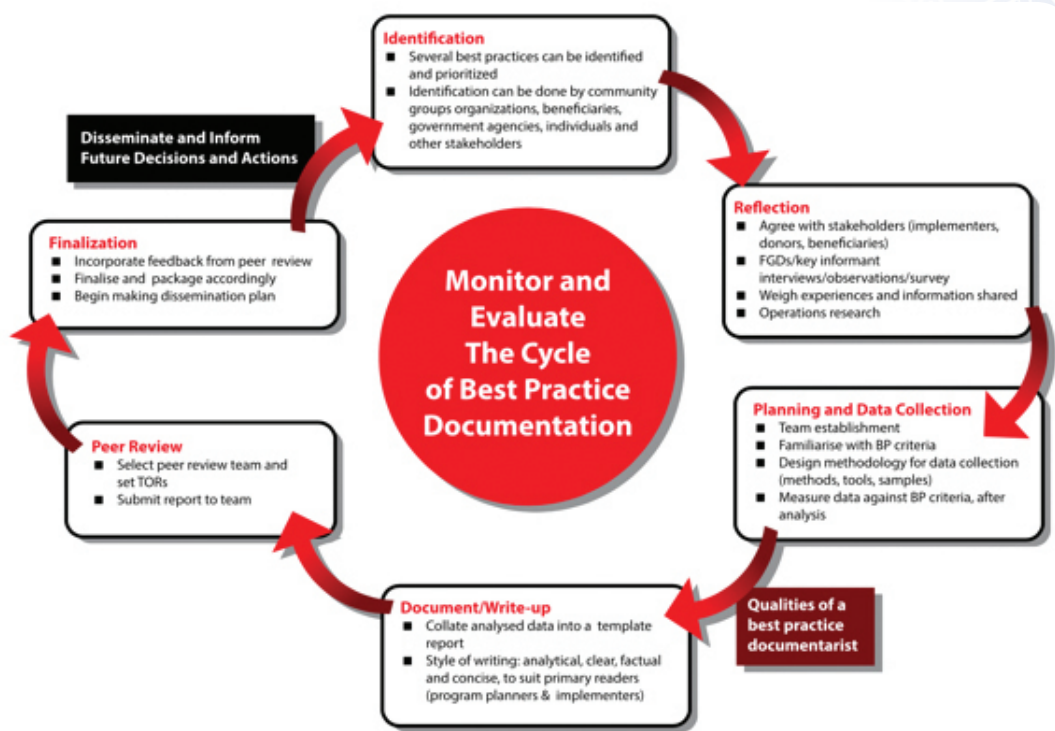


Fig 1: BP and PP Documentation Model

The approach involved three key steps:

- Capacity strengthening on best and promising practice documentation and communication skills was done for PSA Alliance members to avail a pool of documenters at national/community levels.
- Documentation of best and promising practices and their dissemination (as a tool of programme improvement as well as advocacy) amongst programmers, policy makers and other relevant community stakeholders. The documentation process was guided by a set of tools, including: selection criteria guide, data collection and data analysis tools, and a best practice and promising practice Scorecard.
- Mentoring and support to be done post publication of this Booklet for trained Alliance members to mainstream best practice documentation skills and knowledge into their organisational systems.

1.3 Best and Promising Documentation Methodology

The following were key steps undertaken to ensure that the documentation of the BP and PP was systematic and rigorous:

- Development of the Best Practice Documentation Protocol**
The Protocol included the conceptualisation of the whole documentation; its scope and objectives, the documentation methodology and the documentation work plan.
- Drafting of the Call for Expressions of Interest**
The Best Practice Expressions of Interest (Eoi) was drafted, aligned to the seven criteria/elements of best practice, and circulated to all PSA Consortium partners in the four programme countries (see Annex for the Call for Eoi).¹ The template captured all the seven BP criteria.
- Training of Country Teams and Consortium Members**
All the Country Teams for the consortium members in Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe went through a two-day virtual training on the Best and Promising Practice

1. Mozambique was already finalising the PSA programme close-out, therefore, the documentation could not proceed in Mozambique because of the complex nature of proceeding with the process in the face of the close-out.

Documentation. The training was meant to generate a pool of equipped representatives from ActionAid International and its national affiliates, and consortium members; PSAM, SAfAIDS and ESAFF and their implementing partners; who are knowledgeable, skilled and confident to spearhead and effectively support the documentation of best practices.

The drafted EoI were shared with countries and consortium members during the training, with countries invited to submit their expressions of interest for possible actions for best practice documentation. Submissions were invited from both health (SRHR) and agriculture (food security) thematic areas.

d) Selection of Practices to be Documented

After the country submissions, SAfAIDS reviewed the the submission against a set criteria, confirmed the submissions per country and the regional one which was agreed with the country teams and consortium members training.

e) Methodology Matrix and Tools Development

This was done at the same time as the selection. The global matrix outlined data collection methodologies, samples, sources of data and timing, and costing details for field work for each country Best Practice to be documented. Aligned to this, the data collection tools for the primary and secondary data collection methods i.e., checklist (for desk review), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Implementors' Guides were developed.

f) Pre-documentation/Fieldwork Preparation

The countries and organisations hosting the selected interventions for documentation were formally informed by SAfAIDS about the outcomes of their submitted EoI. This was after some extensive reviews across the seven criteria thematic areas. The global Methodology Matrix was subjected to consultation with each country with adjustments made to come up with country specific methodology matrices. These especially informed the fieldwork data collection processes.

g) Establishment of Documentation Teams

These were set up in each country, with a SAfAIDS representative in each team, as the documentalist experts; the respective ActionAid country office, a consortium member and implementing partners.

h) In-country Pre-documentation Induction Meetings

One-day induction meetings were held in each country. This is where the logistics of the fieldwork were discussed, methodology matrix and tools familiarised, data collation and report drafting format and timelines were agreed.

i) Documentation (Field-work Data Collection)

Data was collected through FGD, KII and Implementors Interview Guide as well as through audiovisuals and desk reviews. The documentation team met to reflect on each day's progress, and/or experiences at the end of each day in the field.

j) Data Analysis and BP and PP Report Collation

Data was analysed through thematic analysis and a scorecard with an overall score rating out of 100%. Analysis of the scores was used to determine whether the documented intervention truly qualified as a best practice or not. The scoring was done by all members of the documentation team.

k) BP and PP Reports Peer-review and Finalisation

Upon completion of the draft BP reports, a review process was done with each country. The purpose was to verify the collected data, address any emerging gaps, ensure validity of content and alignment to the programme objectives. Finalisation of the reports followed thereafter.

2.

The Best Practices and Promising Practices

2.1

Malawi:

Empowering Communities in Social Accountability Monitoring (SAM) for SRHR through Reflection Action Circles in Mchinji District



What are Reflection Action Circles in the Project?

The Reflection Action Circles (RACs) are social accountability monitoring (SAM) community groups established at the start of the Project. They comprise mainly of selected community members and stand as a monitoring tool for duty bearers to deliver according to their mandate in society. Under the PSA Alliance Project, there are six active RACs who cover the larger catchment of the Mchinji district in Malawi. Each RAC has between 12 and 15 members. The participants are the youths, citizen journalists and selected community members, who are mostly women.

2.1.1 Key Activities

The RACs have been involved with the PSA Project at different levels in Mchinji district. They have been instrumental in development and aid the functionality of the community's health systems:

Capacity Strengthening of RACS as SRHR Advocates

ActionAid Malawi has conducted training and mentorship for 108 RACs group members in Mchinji district since the PSA inception. These were trained through the Project in a range of project- thematic areas that include SRHR, Social Accountability Monitoring (SAM) and public resource management (PRM). The RACs have been instrumental within communities through support and guidance from ActionAid Malawi. Their advocacy efforts have strengthened relations with key stakeholders such as local chiefs and village heads who also command decision making and influence on some advocacy asks.

The trainings made use of gender-neutral language and this prepared the RACs on the appropriate terms to use during their meetings to strengthen gender sensitivity. Women chairpersons now lead 60% of the RACs. It has since been acknowledged that women are more proactive and have the inherent drive to identify and raise issues and follow-up with duty bearers on matters raised. However, despite the women's agency, patriarchy remains a significant challenge across communities with the majority of women failing to demonstrate their full confidence and potential. Notwithstanding, refresher trainings have been used to keep the women active on community concerns so that they keep on engaging the duty bearers on matters of interest to ensure effective service delivery to communities.

“The program factors in gender dynamics at community level. We encourage the RACs to make sure that it is 50:50 in terms of gender even though women have been underrating themselves”

Key Informant, Kapiri Ward Councilor, Mchinji district.

Capacity Strengthening of RACs as Community Investigative Journalists

Community investigative journalism is essential for social accountability monitoring by RAC members in their communities. A total of twelve (12) RACs, with two facilitators per RAC, were also trained by Nations Public Limited (NPL) to be citizen journalists. The trainees underwent drills in news writing, media and gender, media law, media ethics, photographic principles and freedom of expression. They were also taken through the NPL editorial policy and the Media Council of

Malawi's Code of Conduct. Each RAC comprises of trained journalists who guide the group members on different ways to conduct community and investigative journalism when covering health issues. Investigative journalism has been a tool to enhance Mchinji district as they continue to hold duty bearers to account on delivering quality and comprehensive health services.

After the training, the community investigative journalists are able to investigate issues and ask duty bearers relevant questions before submitting the stories for advocacy. The RACs make use of media platforms such as newspaper publications and radio live streams to raise their issues. This has allowed community members to be active participants in advocacy processes. The communities provide input during radio dialogues through phone calls, sharing their grievances on service delivery and their expectations from the duty bearers. The RACs, through NPL, publish their success stories, advocacy asks and follow-ups, in the newspapers. In addition to feedback meetings, this process also stands as assurance to the community that issues are being followed up and successes noted. Consequently, radio stations are now airing live planning and budgeting sessions in both Nsanje and Mchinji districts, Malawi.



RACs Supported to Conduct Community Advocacy and Social Audits

The RACs conduct feedback meetings with the Project implementors - ActionAid and local community members on the status of the different advocacy asks. The RACs also receive first-hand information from community members on the challenges the communities are facing. This allows for social accountability to take place as the RACs reach out to the relevant government ministries/departments. The RACs also submit reports to ActionAid who then provide guidance and feedback to the RACs on the appropriate channels to take to ensure effective implementation.

“The trained RACs were using community journalism to monitor public performance issues such as SRH service provision and through this process, issues of shortages of commodities, health service providers, access to MNCH waiting shelters and corruption in the delivery of services in Muchuji district. They were also monitoring the implementation of the district plans”

Wales Chigwenembe, Program Manager, COVID-19 Response Mechanism, ActionAid Malawi.

The RACs have been strong in ensuring effective implementation of project activities and issues raised. The groups, - with guidance from implementors such as ActionAid, NPL and Mudzi Wathu Radio Station - conducted consultative meetings with duty bearers and brought to attention the communities' advocacy asks. These have been influential in ensuring that local

issues on health are addressed and that officials from the Ministry of Health are aware of the challenges faced by the community. The involvement of the Rural District Council (RDC) has been an important aspect in the follow-up on advocacy asks from the community.

“The RACs are community members so they are the beneficiaries, therefore, the community has direct access to the RACs and give the RACs first-hand information on what is happening in the same community” -

Implementor, Executive Director of Nation Publications Limited

“The RACs are essential in responding to community challenges... They identify issues on their own, investigate more and report to the relevant duty bearers... They multitask to enhance the lives of young women who are also into farming but have to live through issues of sexual gender-based violence” -

Implementor, Senior Editor of Nation Publications Limited

2.1.2 Elements of Best Practice

Effectiveness

The documentation process revealed that the RACs have been very effective in meeting the desired and anticipated results as well as meeting the project objectives. Below are some of the results from the RACs activities demonstrating effectiveness.

Increased Advocacy Capacity of the RACs and Community Investigative Journalism.

ActionAid Malawi conducted SRHR, PRM, SAM and Advocacy training to over 100 RAC members. This was further strengthened by the training of the 12 community investigative journalists by NPL. This resulted in 75% increase in social accountability monitoring and advocacy among the targeted RACs from as low as 25% before the training. The trained RACs were able to apply the skills gained to advocate for improved public resource management for social service delivery. This resulted in increased confidence among the RACs to bring duty bearers to account in the delivery of their mandate.

“Since 2022, Reflection Action Circles now demand transparency and accountability from higher offices such as the National Economic Empowerment Fund Limited and the Office of the Ombudsman. In the past, RAC members lacked the capacity to call such senior government officers to account for their actions and inactions because they were not trained and lacked the platform to do so”

(Source: AA Malawi Media Outcome Harvest, 2023)



The RACs Have Stood as a Solution to Most Community Health Related Challenges

Since inception of the project in Mchinji district, the RACs have focused on the empowerment of the communities by utilising SAM, which has led to increased and continued access to SRH and HIV services. The groups have been the solution to most community health related challenges. Community members are now empowered on matters of SAM and understand the reporting channels that come with advocacy. The RACs constantly provide feedback to community members on advocacy issues raised and addressed. The community therefore, trusts the agency of the RACs and local authorities realise and appreciate that they are being held to account.

Increased Resource Allocation Towards Construction of a Youth Friendly Health Centre

In the 2023/24 district council budget, Mchinji allocated K40 million towards Mkanda Youth Friendly Health Centre following a series of media advocacy articles. The media has been publishing and airing advocacy news articles on the need to increase health and agricultural services uptake as well as vocational skills among youths through the provision of youth centres. At the moment, youths conduct their meetings under trees and during the rainy seasons, they do not meet due to lack of shelter.



RACs Advocacy Resulted in Securing of Land for Construction of Youth Friendly Centres

Young people who are members of the RACs are now sitting in the Chief's Council where they take part in decision making at that level. Another spin off is that the government responded positively to a call for the development of youth friendly centres raised by the RACs.

Continued Calls by RACS for Making Health Services Accessible to Pregnant Women

After participating in the PSA project activities, NPL joined other media houses and civil society organisations to call on the government to rebuild road infrastructure so that the gains Malawi has made in provision of health services to different groups of people, including youths, girls and women are not lost. Since May 2023, Nation Publication Limited, through its newspapers, continues to call on the government to repair road infrastructure that is making health services inaccessible to expectant women who are giving birth on the roads and riverbanks. The youths, girls and women are also unable to access sexual reproductive services in health facilities due to damaged road infrastructure. In recent years, some health facilities are increasingly becoming inaccessible due to road infrastructure that has been destroyed by heavy rains, floods and tropical cyclone induced flush floods.

PSA Project Through RAC Positively Contributed to Addressing Cyclone Fredy's Effect on SRHR

During Cyclone Fredy in 2023, NPL, through its newspapers, published a series of stories on the plight of Nsanje health facilities that had run out of medical supplies, but could not get them because roads and bridges were damaged by cyclone-induced floods. In April 2023, government and other development partners provided medical supplies to Nsanje District Council through boats, helicopters and other means of transport considering that the cyclone had damaged almost all road infrastructure, leading to the district's health facilities. The move follows several articles NPL published in March 2023 as well as calls from several civil society organisations advocacy for the same.

PSA Contributed to Food Security in Muchinji District

In March 2023, government opened Mikundi Admarc market following a plea due to hunger. Although government, through the Department of Disaster Management Affairs, was providing money to people to buy maize under the Social Cash Transfer Project; many people were unable to access cheaper maize because it was the lean season; hence, their plea for Admarc markets to be opened. This was as a result of an advocacy story published by NPL, reasoning with the government that although it was providing money to vulnerable groups of people in Mchinji and other districts in the country, it should consider opening Admarc depots since many vulnerable people were finding the maize to be unaffordable and need it to be cheaper.

“The RACs have addressed challenges from health, agriculture, lack of participation in decision making processes among the youth and mismanagement of funds for health commodities”

(Key Informant, Ward Councillor, Mchinji district, Malawi)

Relevance

Evaluation of the RACs as a best practice on the relevance criteria showed that the initiative is indeed relevant, particularly because it is addressing the most pressing needs of vulnerable adolescents and young people as well as food security amidst a crisis. The following are some of key relevant issues from RACS activities.

The RACs Activities are in Line With National Strategic Priorities and Policies

The RACs activities align with Malawi's vision, the Malawi Agenda 2063 (MW2063) titled *'An Inclusively Wealthy and Self-reliant Nation'*. The activities align with MW2063 Enablers 2 and 3 namely, *'Effective Governance Systems and Institutions'* and *'Enhanced Public Sector Performance'*, respectively. The RACs are also supported by the Constitution of Malawi – Chapter IV, Art. 29 (3) *“The State shall take measures to introduce reforms aimed at eradicating social injustices and inequalities’*. Art. 29 (4) *‘ The State has a responsibility to respect the right to development and to justify its policies in accordance with this responsibility’*. The RACs activities are also in line with the Malawi decentralization policy which aims to promote local governance and empower local authorities to make decisions and manage resources at the local level. This policy is intended to improve service delivery, promote community participation in decision-making, and enhance accountability and transparency in government operations.

The RACs also involve people living with HIV (PLHIV). This is in line with the Malawi National Strategic Plan for HIV and AIDS (2020-2025), which requires that PLHIV be part of decision-making processes on matters and policies affecting them. The RACs activities were also aligned to Malawi's Ministry of Health Priorities for Adolescents and Young People. They are relevant to the existing policies on food security, youth and gender equality priorities as well.

RACs Advocacy Activities Were Relevant to the Apportioning of Land For a Youth Friendly Centre

The youth in Mikundi Village were in dire need of a youth friendly centre. They acknowledged that the centre would provide a friendly environment where youths would access various health services, including access to condoms, antiretroviral treatment, vocational and other life skills. Following constant meetings led by PSA officials, Laisi RAC and the Mikundi Health Centre Management, land was apportioned for the construction of a youth friendly centre. This was a milestone for the RACs as the health centre takes care of the concerns by the youths who were supported by the RACs.

RACs' Proved to be Very Relevant in Addressing the Effects of Cyclone Freddy

The RACs were active in Mchinji since the occurrence of Cyclone Freddy.¹ Mobile clinics were established to provide services in hard-to-reach areas affected by the Cyclone. The RACs worked together with the Ministry of Health and other partners to reach out to communities for a wide range of responses and support interventions that included: ensuring the provision of ART for youths living with HIV in evacuation camps, through engagement with the Cyclone Freddy response teams and district health officials. Some local health centres used to close at 3pm. However, with the ever-growing need for medical services especially during and after the cyclone, the RACs successfully engaged officials to adjust the time upwards to 5pm. Through the Area Development Committee, the RACs further mobilised resources for the hospitals and clinics, including repairs to structures destroyed by the cyclone. Key informants confirmed the importance of the work done by RACs.



“The RACs have effectively engaged duty bearers on matters of drug thefts in pharmacies. For a long time, drugs from pharmacies were finding their way out of pharmacies and sold through illicit ways to the public. An alarm was raised through the RACs and following consultations with the Ministry of Health, the Area Development Committee and Rural Development Council, a three-lock-system was introduced which required the Nurse-In-Charge, a RAC member and Pharmacist to approve the opening of the Dispensary. It was through the RACs agency that the drug theft issue was addressed”

Community Key informants in Muchinji district.

RACs Have Been Relevant in Advocating for Government to Address Agricultural Challenges

RACS and NPL have joined NASFAM and ActionAid Malawi in calling the government to consider including manure and organic fertilisers under the Affordable Inputs Project (AIP). NPL has since been publishing advocacy stories to that effect. Since 2023, NPL continues to call on the government to diversify the AIP to include organic fertilisers which are more environmentally-friendly and cheaper compared to chemical fertilisers. Their cost-effectiveness is more likely to result in many farmers access them, thereby helping the country achieve food security at household and national levels apart from helping Malawi to conserve its environment. Being an agro-based country, Malawi can reduce poverty, its unemployment, disease burden and achieve the dreams and aspirations outlined in the Malawi Vision 2063, Africa Agenda 2063 and UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The NPL continues to promote environmental conservation technologies that help the country to reduce soil degradation and deforestation, which directly or indirectly impact on the attainment of food security, girls and women's rights and their ability to live healthy lives. NPL has also joined several other media houses and civil society organisations that promote bamboo to protect environment, girls and women empowerment and attainment of gender equality across the country.

Ethical Soundness

Since inception, the RACs have been governed by laws and rights that promote equity, inclusion, diversity and confidentiality. This includes alignment with the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi. The functionality of the RACs is therefore ethically sound: they respect and uphold human rights. Pursuing the rights of citizens to access quality, comprehensive and timely SRH services has been pivotal in their advocacy work. The involvement of women and girls is key and is in line with the national development process to enhance participation of women, men, girls and boys for sustainable and equitable development within communities.

The RACs' engagement in investigative journalism has entrenched the ethical soundness of their work because the journalism follows set protocols which emphasize respect of human rights, confidentiality and maintenance of human dignity within media spaces. The training which involved the use of appropriate language for reporting among RAC members was guided by applicable media laws.

RACs ensured that resources are distributed fairly, guided by the consideration of where there is greatest need. Meetings for the RACs were and are held in spaces where there are evident service issues that need to be immediately addressed. Through convening meetings in areas with service issues, immediate attention and resources have been channelled towards the provision of services and/or supplies where the need was identified.

Replicability

Replicability in this context is the ability for a practice or intervention to be adapted in part, or whole in a related, or different setting, and/or thus serve as an example. The RACs' approach, being low cost, but offering high impact, is one that can be replicated elsewhere with ease. The close involvement and engagement of the media and community journalists in the processes of SAM remains essential for strengthening social agency around advocacy asks. The journalists have assisted in the documentation of RAC activities and processes. The components of the RACs-media collaboration functionally complement each other:

For example, the RACs now reach out to the NPL if they want to publish a story. The NPL in return provides editorial services for public consumption. When the RACs want to air information on the radio, *Mudziwathu Radio Station* assists with guided conversations for listeners. The RACs were provided with a license to write stories as a tool for strengthening social accountability.

The potential for replicability is also a function of the extent to which inception, and/or initial interventions worked out and were appreciated. The RACs registered considerable successes in Mchinji since the occurrence of Cyclone Freddy. Mobile clinics were established to serve hard-to-reach areas that were affected by the cyclone. The mobile clinics managed to provide Anti-Retroviral medication for youths and individuals in camps during the natural disaster and in all this, the RACs were actively involved. Some local hospitals used to close at 3pm. However, with ever-growing need for medical services especially after the cyclone, the RACs advocated for the hospitals and clinics to close at 5pm. The RACs went on to lobby for the reconstruction of a hospital which was destroyed by the cyclone in Mchinji district.



Sustainability

The sustainability of a project, or project action(s) is a measure of the capability of such actions to continue to be effective over the medium and long-term. In fact, even after project closure, the results should continue to be seen and celebrated within the target or host communities. Sustainability can also be understood in terms of the extent to which the practice led to the realisation of better life outcomes, and/or improved health systems within the communities. Sustainability also becomes feasible when project work is in line with fulfilling national to global development goals.



A call for climate justice by Coalition of Women Farmers in Mchinji



A call for climate justice by Coalition of Women Farmers in Mchinji

The RACs' work is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and the focus on SAM fulfils targets and commitments under SDG 3 - *promoting good health and well-being*. The RACs also take into account widening economic and social inequalities (SDG 10), rapid urbanization in Mchinji district, the climate change crisis, the continuing burden of HIV and other infectious diseases and emerging challenges such as non-communicable diseases.

In their advocacy work, the RACs have focused on issues pertaining to the provision of comprehensive SRH services and family planning commodities in hospitals. This is in line with the Government of Malawi's national, global and international level obligations. This has strengthened the synergies to the extent the RACs work with, and within community structures and relevant stakeholders such as Ministries of Health, District Council, ADC, local CSOs, and youth networks. These are permanent working relationships that have been set and collaboration with the media cements that relationship. There is a strong sense of ownership, responsibility and accountability within the functions of the RACs and in terms of their relationships with different stakeholders.

“The RACs also work at national level through engagements with the newspapers. There has been widespread acceptability as many organisations are reaching out, and want to develop similar structures of the RACs. The community journalism aspect used by the RACs is essential in marketing the project and the work they do. The stakeholders are well aware of the work the RACs are doing due to community journalism”

(Implementor, Senior Editor of Nations Publications Limited)

The entry point for Sustainability of the RACs is demonstrated by the fact that membership is community driven and community-led. It is all a function of community members, leading their own social agency on SRH and HIV issues. They understand these issues well, and are prepared to hold duty bearers to account. The RACs have also shown their relevance through the nature of the work they deliver.

Uniqueness

Innovations were uniquely demonstrated in the way the project was implemented, including how different the project, or its implementation stood out from similar projects. Below are testimonies of innovation that were given during the best practice documentation.

“The way the RACs are structured is unique. The community shares information with the RACs and this gives them first-hand information on what is needed. The RACs then know the areas in the community that need to be addressed with more urgency”

(Implementor, Senior Editor of Nation Publications Limited).

“The RACs question the duty bearers when there is need for any clarification on any development happening in their area, or on any issue that is affecting the lives of people in the area”

(Key informant, Kapiri Ward, Mchinji North East Constituency).

“The project is unique in that it empowers people to voice out health and agricultural issues in their communities and encourage community participation in developmental activities”

(Key Informant, ZODIAK, Media, Mchinji)

“The RACs work as community-based NGOs in their catchment areas covering issues of health, agriculture and other sectors”

(Key informant, Councilor, Mchinji)

2.1.3 Challenges

Mobility of RAC members: The catchment area for some of the RACs is too big and the issue of long distances that have to be covered is of great concern. Some do not have bicycles to enable them to travel and attend scheduled meetings. Some have, therefore, missed important discussions done at these meetings and the opportunity to present their grievances during advocacy meetings.

Limited lack of visual evidence on documentation: In their line of duty, RACs come face-to-face with important evidence on SAM, especially on human rights infringements that occur in the community. Some of this evidence requires cameras or smart phones for the RACs to capture. The advent of the digital age has meant that smart phones have become a necessity in strengthening SAM interventions in terms of providing onsite and quick documentation of evidence and/or proceedings. The images are key in building supporting evidence for their cause as they engage communities and the duty bearers on set advocacy asks.

Limited comprehensive support from the community: Although RACs have been active in engaging community members on advocacy issues, the engagement itself remains a challenge. Some community members are secretive about the health issues they are facing, while some are afraid or unwilling to speak out to duty bearers. Thus, without the full support from community members, RACs find it difficult to raise advocacy issues with substantial evidence. Patriarchy remains endemic across Malawian communities to the extent that it silences the majority of women and compromises their engagement on developmental issues. Some women who are victims/survivors of intimate partner violence have remained silent and the RACs have not been able to assist them accordingly.

2.1.4 Lessons Learnt

The RACs can effectively work as complementary and change agents for the Ministry of Health, and communities respectively. The RACs are calling service providers to account (i.e. including the Health Centre Management) especially when community service expectations are not met fully. This has strengthened and enabled the RACs to engage community members on the Health Service Charter, hence bringing awareness of the services provided at health centres.

When facilitated by RACs, SAM is more effective with the strong collaboration of media-investigative journalism which enhances advocacy work at community level. The RACs have learnt to make use of newspapers and radio stations as SAM tools to raise issues and follow up on them. This has kept duty bearers aware of their mandates and deliver as expected.

Women in communities, when united and in positions of power or influence have the courage and strength to hold duty bearers to account. Women are now chairpersons of the different RACs groups in the district and this has allowed more women to come out and speak against corruption and abuse of resources taking place at health centres, including the demand for the provision of family planning services and commodities.



Pic above: A Scorecard exercise in Mchinji

2.1.5 Conclusion and Way Forward

The RACs have indeed empowered the community on SAM in Mchinji district, Malawi and this stands as a good practice. Through the radio engagements more communities across Malawi have been calling out for the up-scaling of RAC initiatives as they have since understood their importance and the level of awareness they bring to community members. Results can be strengthened and challenges addressed by investing in the lessons learnt above, for example, increasing financial support to RACs to increase mobility from one community to another, as well as introduction of free smart phones for RAC members, which will allow them to document issues at hand with pictorial evidence.

2.2

Tanzania:

Women Smallholder Farmers Forums Impacting Progressive Policy-makers' Actions in Mbozi District



What are Women Smallholder Farmers Forums?

The Women Forums were created by the Women Smallholder Farmers as Social Accountability Monitoring community groups. They comprise of young and adult women in Mbozi district. They stand as a monitoring structure on duty bearers to deliver on agro-ecological needs according to their given mandate. Under the PSA Project, there are five Women Forums which are; Iyula, Idiwili, Zelezeta, Hasamba and Itaka. These forums cover the larger catchment of the mbozi District. Each women's forum has approximately twelve to fifteen members.

The core objective of the forums is to empower women's engagement in both governance and agro-ecological pursuits. They further seek to integrate women into matters related to cash crop production. The project's overarching goal encompasses ensuring government's responsiveness to women's concerns, particularly in matters of budget allocations. It advocates for the inclusion and active participation of women in budgetary processes and harmonizes the objectives outlined in the National Agricultural Strategic Plan.

2.2.1 Key Activities

Community Dialogues With Government Officials

The women forums have been holding quarterly dialogues with government officials, and to date, have contributed to the increase in responses from government officials on issues raised by women. This is because dialogues between the women forums and government officials have constantly been held and community groups have been making constant follow-ups on issues from community members with regards to agriculture.

Village Assemblies

The women forums conduct monthly village assemblies with agriculture extension officers, district council officers, community leaders and women in the community to interrogate challenges regarding agro-ecological practices including budget gaps and food security. These assemblies are meant to be engagement platforms between women small holder farmers and duty bearers. These are also accountability platforms that results in tangible actionable commitments from the duty bearers.

Women Forums are Food Security Champions

The Women Forum farmers have been instrumental in recruiting more smallholder farmers in the district and as such, there has been an increase in the number of women taking up farming as an economically viable activity. The increase and provision of motorcycles and support to the agricultural extension officers in the region has been a key driver for women becoming Food Security Champions, which is important to note. Women smallholder farmers in the region used to farm vegetables and maize only, to sell to the government. However, following research and further lessons from extension officers, the women began to produce coffee, which is a cash crop in Tanzania. This allowed women to sell their coffee produce and invest the money in their families and back into the business. Through the PSA project, women's awareness on the importance of farming cash crops has strengthened food security in the district as the women can still grow maize and save some of it for consumption at household level.



Feedback Meetings

The women smallholder farmer groups conduct feedback meetings twice a month with the project implementors; MIICO and local community members on the status of different advocacy asks. They also receive first-hand information from community members on the different challenges being faced. The flow of information, and/or feedback allows for SAM to take place as the women forums reach out to the Ministry of Agriculture with issues for attention. The Women Forums also submit reports to MIICO, who then provide guidance and feedback on the appropriate channels to take to ensure effective implementation.

Follow-up Activities to Duty Bearers

The women smallholder farmer groups write follow-up letters through MIICO to duty bearers to solicit feedback on advocacy asks after the community dialogues, village assemblies and feedback meetings.

Effectiveness captures an activity's overall success in producing its desired outcomes and reaching its overall goal. This section looks at the effectiveness of the best practice which is the agency of Women's Forums in influencing government's response to women smallholder farmers' issues. The attainment of the project objectives rests upon a multi-faceted approach. This includes the establishment of agro-ecological demonstration plots and the facilitation of stakeholder engagement through dialogues. A pivotal facet is the active engagement of women in village assemblies - a platform for addressing issues raised. The project places strong emphasis on community involvement, where women play an integral role across project planning, implementation, and monitoring processes within the framework of village assemblies. Gender dynamics are of paramount consideration, fostering an inclusive environment for both men and women to partake in developmental endeavours, notably within the agricultural domain. Key results include:

2.2.2 Elements of Best Practice

Effectiveness

Improved Women's Financial Management Skills

The women's forums significantly impacted the community: women's financial management skills were strengthened, thus putting them on the pathway to empowerment. Gender dynamics in community development decision-making have also shifted with more women taking up leadership roles and positions of authority. This has also positively affected household dynamics where women now handle household finances better and have become sole providers within families in Mbozi district. The forums are key platforms for collective action and advocacy. They have been influential to the extent that councillors, who are the principal decision makers in Mbozi District Council, have increased their support in addressing women smallholder farmers' concerns within the agriculture sector.

Increased Budget Allocation to the Agricultural Sector

There has been a budget increase to the agricultural sector from 2.5% to 13.7% for the 2021 and 2022 period respectively attributed to the women forum advocacy activities. This was made possible by continued feedback and dialogue meetings with government officials. The media played a pivotal role in this as they documented the commitments made by government officials and relevant duty bearers, particularly on the improved investments towards agricultural extension services.

Increased Participation of Women in Local Leadership Positions

Measurable success has been realised across several dimensions. Notable outcomes include escalated crop yields, improved working conditions for extension officers, heightened participation of women in local leadership positions and the cultivation of enhanced community accountability practices. The Project's alignment with national policy frameworks is evident through strategic collaborations with diverse stakeholders, encompassing media entities and local Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). The critical components of monitoring and evaluation are executed through instruments such as community scorecards. Reports generated through these mechanisms are subsequently shared with key stakeholders including partner organisations, donors, and government authorities.



Increase of Women Small Holder Farmers in Decision Making

The Project's impact is positive as it has emboldened the position of women in society by increasing their active involvement, effectively boosting budgetary allocations for the agricultural sector and engendered transformative shifts in leadership roles and communal attitudes. The formation of women's forums has been paramount as these serve as conduits

for harmonizing women's voices with other key stakeholders such as the media and the agricultural department. Approaches like SAM, budget analysis, and the establishment of agro-ecological demo plots are key. Equally pertinent is the community's role in accessing project services through planned training programs, dialogues and campaigns. The work has thus been effective because of the increase in awareness among women who are now involved in community development, particularly as smallholder farmers.



Pic Above: Women Forums in Mbozi host reflection action circle meetings with district councillors

“Before inception of the PSA Project, there was low participation of women during village and ward development meetings and low participation in the budgeting processes. Women were not aware of their rights, particularly women’s rights. They were not aware of the reporting channels for social accountability to take place, and the village leaders did not see the importance of women participating and being part of decision-making processes”

(Respondent at a FDG at Zelezeta Women’s Forum)

Increased Awareness by Women of Their Rights

The involvement of government officials in the Women Forum's engagements led to increased awareness by women of their rights, reporting channels and importance of being part of decision-making processes. The Agricultural department, through rigorous advocacy meetings has since strengthened its support to women smallholder farmers in Mbozi district, with more opportunities for funding for women-led farming projects and loans.

“The funds come from the President’s Office, regional administration and local government, which stipulates that direct funds from the government should not be less than 20% to the farmers. Before the project only 9% was dispatched from the government, due to lobbying and advocacy by the Women’s Forums, the budget was raised to 18%. The central government works with policy issues and sends money for the support of women smallholder farmers”

Key Informant, District Agricultural Officer, Ministry of Agriculture.

There are effective monitoring mechanisms which include regular reports from extension officers, site visits by council management teams, and rigorous oversight by political committees. This is buttressed by the collaboration which involves ActionAid, government agencies and MIICO.

“There is a system of monitoring on projects and issues raised by women. Extension officers in the villages submit timesheets and reports showing the activities of women forums. Council management teams visit projects at village level to monitor them. There is a committee at ward level by the district commissioner; they pay visits in the wards. They conduct meetings at district level, and compare the budgets disbursed and the achievements met. There is a District Security Committee that looks into the activities conducted and any infringements made”

Key Informant, District Agriculture Officer, Ministry of Agriculture.

Relevance

The women's forums hold great significant importance within the targeted community for a number of reasons. By involving women in managing household finances, they have contributed to enhancing financial management skills within households. Women's participation in leadership roles have been strengthened, allowing them to actively stand in for positions of authority. All this adheres to Tanzania's National Strategic Plan 2025.

The way in which the forums function spell alignment with community needs. At the inception of the PSA Project, community needs assessments were done and concerns with women's limited participation in decision making and other processes were highlighted. When the forums were set, it was a response to the findings of the needs assessment and this underscores the community's acceptance of the forums. The women's forums thus effectively address pressing challenges encountered by women, the community and the nation at large. They tackle food insecurity issues by implementing strategies that bolster agricultural productivity. The forums engage on climate change considerations, aligning with broader environmental imperatives. The forums are a catalyst for progress, particularly in terms of addressing and responding to gender imbalances in mainstream project work. All this is aligned to the project's core areas around ensuring transparency, accountability and financial stability for women. Women now claim ownership and women smallholder farmers expressed gratitude at how they were involved in preserving and storing their traditional maize seed, which gave them better yields against the low yielding imported hybrid seeds.

“The project is ours because it aligns with our daily activities and it helps to address our issues”

Female Participant, FGD, Itaka Women's Forum, Mbozi district.

“At first, we had no idea on how to demand for our rights but through this project we have learnt how to demand for our services and rights. We are certain that will continue with our project activities”

Female participant, FGD, Idiwili Women Forum, Mbozi district.

Ethical Soundness



Pic Above: FDGs with Iyula and Zelezeta Womens' Forums providing information on their advocacy work in Mbozi district

The forums make deliberate measures to ensure the inclusion and participation of vulnerable groups of women within their initiatives. This is underpinned by the Community Development Act 442, which mandates such inclusivity and ensures their participation in decision making processes. The Act ensures that these groups are actively involved in decision-making processes.

A range of policies govern and inform the forums, and this ensures confidentiality, informed consent and safety. The forums are aligned to the Rural Women Assembly (RWA) for further relevance and sustainability of advocacy work. The forums participate at land alliance meetings to enhance advocacy on land-related issues.

The Project undergoes rigorous auditing to maintain transparency. Internal audits, conducted by ActionAid on a quarterly basis, provide ongoing scrutiny. Additionally, external audits are performed annually, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of program and financial aspects. The involvement of various levels of auditing, both internal and external, underscores the project's commitment to transparency. The inclusion of vulnerable groups is upheld through the Community Development Act 442, ensuring that these groups are actively involved in decision-making processes. To ensure human rights are respected, the project aligns with its organizational gender policy, child safeguarding policy and youth policy. These policies lay the foundation for confidential, consent-driven and secure interactions.

Replicability

The way the women's forums have functioned in promoting and strengthening the women's agency in Mbozi district can be adapted in similar or even different settings. The forums have empowered women to be actively involved in the cash economy from the district, national to regional level. The women's agency has widened and diversified community engagement thus strengthening social capital and the linked benefits, which include self-reliance among the women's groups and the linked spread effects across communities.

The forums are an easy model at positively identifying society's own marginalised and vulnerable people and putting them on a platform where they are visible and can speak on matters of concern. It becomes easy for government officials and other duty bearers to engage with such a distinct group with a shared purpose. Through their agency, they have been heard, and government officials responded, by among other interventions, providing motorcycles to extension officers so that they can easily reach out to the women smallholder farmers. This was a response to the challenge of women travelling long distances to access information on agro-ecology.

The forums have created women champions of change and role models who are keen advocates and decision-makers. Notable success stories of women leading the participation and decision-making at various projects are now common in the district. The initiative can only be expanded to other districts in Tanzania lacking such, for its relevance to issues affecting women and communities is tangible.

“The forums have empowered women to engage in cash businesses and advocate for themselves. Unity among women has brought about positive changes, including the development of other women's groups in the community. It has also seen the increased investment towards extension officers as one of the key responses from the government officials”

Female Participant, FGD, Idiwili Women Forum, Mbozi district.

Sustainability

The women's forums, are strongly aligned to the SDGs; food security and gender. The forums' initiative is therefore sustainable under the following key considerations: The forums have since gained some independence; are now funding their own meetings and have earned the trust of the communities, including leadership. Women have improved their financial management skills, and this does not only contribute to economic empowerment, but enhances their financial freedom within households and the community at large. Financial sustainability is guaranteed among the forums because they have managed to get buy-in and support from government officials. In fact, the idea around women coming together in groups has strengthened their negotiating power and this has resulted in the groups getting more opportunities for getting loans to fund their farming activities. This has included funding diversification and partnerships with external, and/or private players like Solidadidai, which is providing coffee farming education among the smallholder farmers. To ensure long-term sustainability, the forums are part of the Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) to strengthen economic empowerment and financial independence for women¹ There are also continued land alliance meetings, which foster advocacy on land-related issues, and the forums have been some of the key stakeholders at such meetings.

“The process of continuity has started with the Rural Women Assembly (RWA). It is a SADC regional movement that has been registered and women smallholder farmer forums have been linked to the RWA. The RWA conducts advocacy actions within the region, and this will ensure continuity of the women forum agendas as they will be funded by the RWA”

Implementor Interview, MIICO, Mbeya district



Pic Above: An Excavator purchased by Ministry of Agriculture to be used to assist in construction of dams and roads for communities in Mbozi

Thus, continuity of the forums is further guaranteed through strategic partnerships with movements like the RWA and equitable distribution of services by adhering to policies that allocate resources to vulnerable groups. Transparency is a cornerstone of sustainability and the case of dual-level auditing practices (i.e. internal and external) done at project level provide integrity and financial accountability of the women forums.

The support from government especially the Ministry of Agriculture is another important element for sustainability for which the forums have benefited through direct support from extension workers, and the purchasing of a construction vehicle (i.e. excavator) to be used during the construction of dams for the women smallholder farmers in the district.

¹ VSLA is a practice which creates saving groups within communities. The groups are self-managed, and constitute between 15 and 25 people who meet regularly to save their money in a safe space, access small loans and obtain emergency insurance. Among other interventions VSLA provides financial literacy groups, they often meet to support each other in setting up small businesses, negotiate fair prices at the markets and advocate for gender equality in their communities.

2.2.3 Challenges

Notwithstanding, the agency from the women forums, women's participation remains low especially in village assembly meetings. The marginalisation of women largely in decision-making processes within agricultural activities and mainstream society has such residual effects that the women's forums will continue to fight for a long time. In fact, the establishment of the forums was informed by such marginalisation. The forums through strategic partnerships on enhancing SAM have led to strengthened community engagement, which is an area that women find space and time to express themselves fully and partake in decision making.

2.2.4 Lessons Learnt

- Collaboration with government officials spearheaded by women's groups is instrumental in achieving positive outcomes. This underscores the relevance of a gender factor to SAM and indeed PRM.
- The Women's Forums are a participatory and effective tool and approach to strengthened community engagement and self-reliance.
- A women's agency provides critical insights and solutions to challenges not only affected by women, but society at large. As the case in Mbodzi district confirms already, the limited participation of women in community development issues has been addressed and interventions have been put in place to curb cases of corruption with the sale of seed for smallholder farmers.
- All this is credited to the unity and shared purpose among the women constituting the Women Forums. This is invaluable for fostering inclusivity, community engagement and sustained positive impact.

2.2.5 Conclusion and Way Forward

The women's forums registered notable successes and provided key lessons in strengthening the role of women in SAM. Their relevance within the communities is evident given the concerns around women socio-economic empowerment, food security and agricultural productivity. By fostering and strengthening community engagement, women's active participation and SAM the forums have put themselves on the pathway to effectiveness, relevance and sustainability. The forums have spurred social agencies whose framework promotes ongoing collaborations among the women themselves and government officials. The fact that government has positively responded to the forums' issues confirms the extent to which the forums' work is aligned with national and regional development priorities. The Forums are women-centric, but with outcomes and impact that benefits families and the community at large.

This is a unique participatory and inclusive approach which is set for some positive ripple effects that cut across dimensions of ending inequalities and economic empowerment, gender equality, sustainable development and serves as an inspiring model for communities in Tanzania and elsewhere in the region.

The linkages with RWA and strategic partnerships/collaborations with the media, government and participation in VSLAs holds the promise for a better future for the forums. Collaborations of such a nature cushion against a wide range operational and programmatic challenges and provides room for scaling up. Nothing can be more relevant and effective than a practice and/or intervention that is directly linked to the survival of households as the forums are in their women only membership and representation.



2.3

Zambia

(Promising Practice): Social Accountability Monitoring Groups (SAMGs) Contributing to Improved Agroecology and Food Security of Rural Communities in Chipata District



What are Social Accountability Monitoring Groups?

The Social Accountability Monitoring Groups (SAMG) are at the centre of strengthening community well-being and governance across food security and health services provision. Their responsibilities, therefore, include formulating and leading advocacy messaging, raising awareness about modern agricultural practices and establishing crucial networks with stakeholders, advocating and lobbying for quality public service delivery across both the agriculture and health sectors through dialogue and interface meetings with duty bearers and smallholder farmers. The CDFA is responsible for running of the SAMGs in the district.

SAMGs comprise of a diverse set of stakeholders' representation. These include CSOs such as the Network of Zambian People Living with HIV (NZP+), Chipata District Farmers Association (CDFA), Youth Development Foundation (YDF), two ward councillors representing Kapata and Dilika wards, as well as two Ward Development Committee (WDC) chairpersons from the same wards. The group also includes the District Adolescent Focal Point person for Chipata, the district agriculture coordinator, two adolescent representatives (i.e. one male and one female), two Agriculture Camp officers, two facility in-charge personnel and the district AIDS coordinator.

2.3.1 Key Activities

At the time of documentation, the PSA project was supporting 5 RACs with 30 members also called Social Accountability Monitors. The SAMG participate in the Project at various levels and serve as the vital link between the community and duty-bearers. Their roles are at different levels and include the following:

Establishment/Strengthening of Civil Society Groupings at District Level (i.e. Youth/Adolescent Clubs; SAM Committees, etc.)

As a way of strengthening community participation in SAM for effective and quality service delivery in agriculture and health sectors in Chipata district, CDFA established and strengthened SAM groups in the 3 agricultural camps where the project is being implemented in Chipata district. The 3 agricultural camps are Kanyanja, Makangila and Feni camps. The process involved organising the smallholder farmers into small focus groups of 10 farmers which included women and youths. The SAM groups in these camps will and have been involved in demanding for quality health services and agricultural extension services and other critical issues that affect the rural communities including special needs of women smallholder farmers, like access to affordable inputs, climate change adaptation and mitigation and farmer participation and engagement. Some of the roles played by SAM groups include:

SAMGs utilise the Reflection Action Circle Approach to advocate for agroecology improvement as well as indigenous seed multiplication in line with the Ministry of Agriculture's comprehensive policy.

SAMGs Provide Mentorship Support to Other Small Holder Farmers

They play a crucial role in supporting and guiding aspiring farmers or individuals seeking to improve their farming practices. They transfer valuable knowledge on agricultural techniques, best practices and innovative approaches. Through hands-on trainings by the PSA project, they assist youth champions in developing essential farming skills and offer solutions to problems identified. They motivate and encourage other farmers, while also emphasizing sustainable practices and environmental awareness. They contribute significantly to the growth of skilled and knowledgeable farmers, fostering the development of sustainable agricultural practices.

SAMGs Advocate for Improved Extension

They conduct dialogues with the Ministry of Agriculture and small holder farmers to address barriers to accessing farmer input support and promotion of agro-ecology.

The farming SAMGs serve as strong supporters and promoters of farmers' interests and needs within the agricultural community and beyond. They actively champion the farmers' causes around accessing resources, gaining recognition and responding to any challenges. Focus is around advocating for an enabling environment where farmers can thrive and succeed in their endeavours. They also raise awareness on the importance of sustainable agriculture and the contributions of farmers to the wider farming community. They lobby for better policies, increased funding for agricultural development and improved services for farmers.

SAM Training Workshops for all Five Stakeholder Groups (including SAM, GRPS, Gender Budgeting, PRM, Advocacy and Issue Focused Training) at District Level

Capacity strengthening in SAM for agro-ecology is done using a cascade approach. ActionAid Zambia provide capacity strengthening to the Chipata District Farmers Association, which in turn provides training to the RACs. The RACs in turn provide training to community members as well as SAMGs.

The Groups are directly engaged by ActionAid through capacity strengthening and support in advocacy programs for agroecological practices through SAM of government implementation; policies, including budget monitoring and budget submissions on agricultural issues.

CDFA conducted a training on SAM and budgeting processes. Participants were SAM groups representatives from the 3 agricultural camps of Feni, Kanyanja and Makangila, CSOs which included CSPR, YDF, NZP+ and the media. The objective of the training was to build the capacity of the established SAM groups in SAM for enhanced social accountability in agriculture and health sectors. The information provided during the training helped the SAM groups to lobby and advocate for improvements in agricultural extension service delivery in Chipata District so as to improve on household food security.

During the meeting, participants observed that there is need to monitor the utilisation of the enhanced Community Development Fund (CDF) as there is very little to point at despite a large sum of funding released by the government. They bemoaned the gap on lack of information on women and youth empowerment and bursaries for skills training for the youths. However, participants acknowledged that the enhanced CDF is a game changer if managed well and transparently.



FGDs with farming communities on SAM in Madzimoyo Chiefdom (left), and Kayoza Village (right)

The notable success is anchored on the formulation, roles and responsibilities of the SAMG. This has entrenched SAM across Chipata District and has further led to the active empowerment of communities as they now fully understand their rights and/or entitlements. This is something which has allowed them to hold government officials to account on public service delivery. The live phone-in radio programs on issues raised by community members have led to quick responses to service concerns and increasing transparency and accountability in the process.

National Budget Analysis Dissemination Meeting

CDFA held a budget analysis dissemination meeting on agricultural and health sectors for the 2024 national budget. The 2024 budget is themed 'Unlocking Economic Potential'. With this theme, the government is demonstrating consistency and progression in terms of its focus of change drive for the people of Zambia, which is growing the economy. Agriculture serves as the highest priority sector in Zambia, not only for the promotion of food security in the country, but also for the critical raw materials it generates as inputs into the manufacturing and processing sector to support industrialisation. The objective of the meeting was to share the 2024 budget allocation on agriculture and health with farmers and key stakeholders and also appreciate the importance of farmers being involved in the budgeting processes. The concerns of the farmers, following the dissemination of the budget analysis, was that the budget did not have an adequate budget line for extension, research and development. Amidst, climate change, there is need for farmers to be trained in agroecology and be provided with climate resilient seed varieties so as to improve household food security. Access to agricultural information through extension services helps to reduce inefficiency in input use and also plays a significant role in the adoption of new technologies by smallholder farmers. The budgetary allocation towards farm blocks development, irrigation and extension provision was the right move as this is going to help increase productivity, thereby contributing to national food security. The livestock sector was not forgotten as funds for Animal disease control and animal identification were allocated.

2.3.2 Elements of Promising Practice

Effectiveness

The mobilisation of farming communities by SAMG for social accountability oversight in agroecology has been highly beneficial for oversight and community well-being. The work of the SAMG in Chipata, effectively strengthened the capacity of farmers. The active participation of farmers was encouraged, with diligent budget monitoring and submission of agriculture-related proposals. Both female and male members participate equally in the functions of the SAMG with women taking on leadership roles. Community members have been engaged, using a Human Rights Based Approach, in activity planning. This has since entrenched a sense of ownership among the Chipata community across the targeted areas. The SAMG facilitated on proper time management and coordination of project activities, thus allowing project activities to seamlessly fit into family routines.

“We provide regular feedback on the services we receive through this project, informing the implementers of our current status and whether the presented issues have been addressed or not. For instance, when we reported the problem of receiving rotten seeds, it helped us communicate this with the government. After PACO and DACO intervened and resolved the matter, we returned to CDFA, the project implementers, to share our feedback. This feedback loop is a recurring process, allowing us to ensure effective communication and improvement in service delivery”

FGD respondent, Kayowazi Village.

Through engagement with service providers, the SAMG advocated for improved resources, such as increased availability of malaria medicines during outbreaks. Knowledge gained from the Project was shared within the community, benefiting all members. Effective advocacy efforts, including engaging with the Ministry of Agriculture, ensured timely responses and feedback from implementers.

“The strategies to achieve the project’s goal involve detailed implementation plans, with a focus on working alongside already established structures like agricultural camp extension officers. Those structures serve as an effective means to reach the defined target groups in specific geographic and demographic catchments. Beneficiaries are identified through existing community structures and undergo capacity-building trainings. Access to project services is facilitated through the involvement of extension officers for agriculture support”

FGD respondent, Kayowazi Village.

“The project has been eye-opening for us as farmers. We were not fully aware that the government’s funds come from us through taxes like VAT on the goods we purchase. Before, we had no say in the seeds we received; they were simply given to us without any choice. However, the Project facilitated an interface meeting and dialogue with DACO and PACO, resulting in positive changes. Now, some farmers can receive some seeds of their choice, giving us a sense of empowerment and ownership over the resources provided to us”

FGD respondent, Kayowazi Village.

Advocacy Activities of SAMGs Resulted in the Building of a House for the Extension Officer

Farmers at Feni Agricultural Camp had been complaining of a lack of access to agriculture extension service delivery because the extension officer lived far away from Feni Camp due to lack of accommodation there. The SAM group at Feni Camp organised some farmers and mobilised some building materials which include blocks, building sand and crushed stones, so that a house for the camp officer could be constructed. What remains now is for the Ministry of Agriculture, which was latter engaged, to allocate some funds from CDF funds, for building materials to complete the construction of the house, to which they have been very receptive. Housing the camp officer will enable farmers to have more training and knowledge imparted in them more frequently. This will lead to increased production and productivity thus improving household food security.

Relevance

The SAMG aligns with government national priorities on security as outlined in the 8th *National Development Plan (2022 – 2026)*, *Ministry Agriculture Strategic Plan (2022 – 2026)*, *Ministry of Agriculture Extension Plan (2022- 2026)*, *National Agriculture Policy (2021)* and the *Comprehensive Agricultural Support Program* which focuses on sustainable agricultural development and food security in line with the *2030 SDG Agenda*. The Strategic Plan focuses on various thematic areas, including enhancing productivity, promoting climate-resilient agriculture, ensuring equitable access to resources and strengthening agricultural value chains. Significant importance is placed on empowering smallholder farmers, especially women and youth, to foster inclusive and sustainable agricultural practices. By integrating climate-smart approaches, the plan aims to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The SAMG have been embraced wholeheartedly by communities as they are at the centre of addressing the challenges the communities are facing. The trust stems from the focus on the people's needs and priorities. Notably, the SAMG has instilled confidence amongst community members in holding duty bearers to account and this fosters a sense of responsibility and unity across the community. As a result, corruption cases have been reduced and the community's knowledge on transparency and accountability has significantly increased. However, there are challenges related to political expedience and interference in public resource management. Some politicians have not been acting on issues raised by communities, thus putting a dent on community-driven initiatives.

Ethical Soundness

The farmers' mobilisation is done under a rights-based approach, which ensures inclusivity and participation of all including the wider community. The use of community scorecards and report cards emphasises disability inclusion and other issues affecting minority groups. Persons with disabilities participate at interface meetings. In a bid to strengthen implementation and the transparency and accountability around it, the project audit reports are shared with government. Internal and external audits are done on a quarterly basis. The government further collaborates with commercial banks to administer loans and ensure adequate recoveries on disbursed funds.

Replicability

Replicability refers to the ability of a practice or intervention to be adapted and applied in different settings as an example. The farmers' mobilisation which was led by SAMG is a case in point. It reflects locally relevant engagement which is something that can be easily be adopted in part or in full in similar settings elsewhere. The mobilisation of farmers included traditional leaders from project inception. This makes it replicable in communities with similar structures as these leaders serve as permanent entry points for project implementation. Engagement with traditional leaders ensures greater impact when contrasted with contexts where such structures do not exist. The project's activities and processes are well-documented through reports, case studies, videos, and pictures. Some of the accomplishments include the construction of Madzimoyo Mother's Shelter, staff houses at the health facility and a house for the agricultural extension officer at Feni.

Sustainability

The sustainability of a project is measured by its ability to remain effective over the medium and long term, even after project closure, with continued positive results celebrated within target communities. The current Project is well aligned with national, regional and global development

targets. Nationally, it adheres to development plans, the constitution, the decentralisation policy, the national agricultural strategy and national health strategy. Regionally, it aligns with statutory instruments like the Malabo Declaration and other relevant SADC instruments on agriculture, food security and nutrition. From its inception, the project brought together various partners, including like-minded CSOs, the media and government officials, fostering synergies between community members and government officials. The media plays an essential role in project marketing through coverage and airing of project activities on TV and radio.

The presence of a community-led and driven structure like SAMG is a clear guarantee for the long-term participation and ownership of SAM issues triggered by the PSA Alliance Project. The direct involvement of such a structure, inclusive as it is in its representation has created a critical mass of citizens who are fully knowledgeable about their rights and entitlements. All this strengthens transparency and accountability in PRM. The functions of the SAMG are already aligned with the *7th National Development Plan (7NDP)*, and plans are underway to update them to suit the current *8th National Development Plan (8NDP)* under the government.

The mobilisation of farming communities has led to a profound sense of ownership, empowerment and accountability, resulting in tangible improvements in oversight within agricultural interventions. The community is now better equipped to face challenges and advocate for their needs, thus securing a sustainable and prosperous future for all involved.

Moreover, the functions of the SAMG are well aligned with the government's decentralisation policy, which seeks to ensure that subnational government entities and citizens work together in pursuit of the national development agenda. The presence of the SAMG has ensured improved community participation in project activities with beneficiaries structured within a cooperative framework and thus paying membership subscriptions. Issues around budget accountability monitoring on agricultural allocation, disbursement and farmer extension services have been effectively addressed as a result.

They started up a step, with the construction of a house for an extension official, lobbied the Ministry of Agriculture for funds to complete the house using CDF funds.



2.3.3 Challenges

Limited Awareness and Education: Despite the commitment from the SAMG in engaging communities, there is still a huge number of the farming community that still lack awareness and understanding of SAM and its importance in promoting sustainable agriculture and food security. Illiteracy and limited access to education further compound this challenge, making it difficult for some community members to fully engage in SAM processes.

Access to Information: In some remote regions, farmers do not have easy access to information about their rights, entitlements, government programs and agricultural best practices. This hinders their ability to actively participate in SAM oversight and make informed decisions about their farming practices.

Resource Constraints: Small-scale farmers often face financial limitations, which hinders their ability to actively and meaningfully participate in SAM activities. Limited access to resources like funds, technology and inputs impede their efforts to adopt sustainable farming practices and fully engage in advocacy initiatives.

Power Dynamics and Fear of Reprisals: Some farmers are hesitant to hold those in power accountable due to power imbalances and fear of reprisals. Speaking out against issues, or challenging government authorities is perceived to come with adverse consequences. This discourages some farmers from active participation in SAM efforts.

Political Interference: Agricultural policies and programs are usually influenced by political interests, leading to some resources being diverted from their original intended purpose. Such political interference has often resulted in disillusionment and apathy among SAMG and farmers regarding SAM efforts, as they may perceive their advocacy efforts as ineffective in influencing policy decisions.

Climate Change and Environmental Issues: Climate variability and environmental degradation are significantly impacting agriculture and food security. Addressing these complex challenges require coordinated efforts among various stakeholders, which may pose challenges for the project in achieving its goals.

2.3.4 Lessons Learnt

Importance of Social Accountability Monitoring: SAM is significant in empowering communities to hold duty bearers accountable for public service delivery. By actively engaging in SAM processes, communities can advocate for their needs and drive positive change in governance and service provision.

Engagement With Community-Led Structures: Working with community-led and driven structures like the SAMG is effective in facilitating better reach and engagement with defined target groups in specific geographic and demographic catchments.

Community Ownership and Participation: The Project's success was enhanced by fostering a sense of community ownership and participation. This was well served by the activities of the SAMG. When communities actively participate in project activities, they feel a greater sense of responsibility and commitment to its success, contributing to sustainability.

Transparency and Accountability: Emphasizing transparency and accountability in project implementation is key in building and maintaining trust among community members. Direct community feedback such as through live phone-in radio programs entrenches the trust and ultimately transparency and accountability on public service delivery.

Importance of Gender Equality: The project's commitment to gender equality and inclusivity allowed both male and female community members to participate equally. Empowering women and youth in agriculture plays a crucial role in fostering sustainable farming practices and promoting food security.

Effective Advocacy and Awareness: Advocacy efforts by the farming SAMG showcased the power of community-driven initiatives in demanding better services and holding duty bearers accountable. Creating awareness and disseminating information helped to mobilise communities and gain support for the Project's objectives.

Alignment with National Development Plans: Aligning the project's objectives with national development plans, such as the *Zambia Agriculture Strategic Plan and Agenda 2030*, ensured relevance and enhanced the Project's potential for scalability and replicability.

2.3.5 Conclusion and Way Forward

The practice on mobilising farming communities for social accountability oversight in agriculture for sustainable food security demonstrated the effectiveness and relevance of SAMG in empowering communities, fostering transparency and promoting sustainable agricultural practices. Through the implementation of social accountability mechanisms, community members actively engaged duty bearers accountable for public service delivery, leading to positive impacts on governance and service provision. The Project's emphasis on gender equality, community ownership and innovative approaches, further contributed to its success in addressing the challenges faced by small-scale farmers. In a bid to build upon the practice's successes and address the identified challenges experienced, the following actions are recommended for the way forward:

- **Community Empowerment and Capacity Building:** Continued empowerment of the SAMG and community members through capacity-building initiatives on SAM, sustainable agriculture practices, and advocacy skills will further enhance their ability to engage effectively in holding duty bearers accountable and advocating for their needs.
- **Strengthening Existing Structures and Mechanisms:** Strengthen the SAMG, including youth-friendly spaces and agriculture camp extension officers will facilitate better reach and engagement with the target communities.
- **Enhanced Awareness and Education:** Supporting the SAMG to conduct awareness campaigns will address limited awareness and education among farming communities. This includes educating community members about SAM, their rights and available government programs and agricultural best practices.
- **Resource Mobilisation:** Working towards addressing resource constraints faced by small-scale farmers. Exploring opportunities for resource mobilisation, such as accessing funds, technology and inputs to support sustainable farming practices and active participation in social accountability activities.
- **Stakeholder Collaboration:** Strengthening collaboration with stakeholders, including government officials, civil society organizations and the media. This will promote transparency, accountability, and effective communication, ensuring the project's impact is far-reaching.

- **Policy Advocacy:** Engaging in policy advocacy efforts to address political interference and ensure that agricultural policies and programs are driven by the community's needs and interests. Advocating for greater political commitment to support sustainable agriculture and social accountability initiatives.
- **Documentation and Learning:** Continuing through documentation and data collection to track progress, identify challenges and measuring project outcomes. Using this information for learning and continuous improvement, implementing lessons learnt in future project activities.
- **Scaling and Replication:** Exploring opportunities to scale up and replicate the project in other communities and districts within the province. Sharing best and promising practices and insights with other stakeholders will encourage similar initiatives that promote SAM within agricultural practices.



2.4

Zimbabwe:

Empowering Adolescents and Young People in Social Accountability Monitoring (SAM) is Enhancing Dividends in SRH Service Provision in Binga District



Who are Adolescents and Young People (AYP) in the Project?

Adolescents and Young People (AYP) constitute the core participants in the SRH/HIV interventions in the PSA Alliance project. They are in the group aged 10 to 24 years. They initially got involved with the project either through referrals by their local councillors, village health workers, direct interface with Basilwizi Trust at community project sensitisation meetings and more recently, through the community cascade efforts by fellow AYP. Overtime, AYP have come to be the most active players in driving the young people's agency in promoting access to, and oversight on SRH services and for the realisation of the project and other community development outcomes.

2.4.1 Key Activities

The following are the key activities undertaken involving AYP in the SRH/HIV interventions in the PSA Alliance project. The AYP are involved at different levels and offer responsibilities in driving the project work in the two Binga wards of Sianzyundu and Simatelele.

(i) Capacity Strengthening of AYP as SRHR Youth Champions

At the time of documentation, 10 youth champions, (6 females and 4 males) had been trained across Sianzyundu and Simatelele wards. They are thus known as Social Accountability Monitoring for Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SAM4SRHR) Youth Champions. Their role is spread around the dissemination of SRHR information to fellow AYP through youth networks across the wards. This includes raising awareness on SRH services available at the local health centres and checking suggestion boxes for any SRH service issues and then engaging local clinics through Health Centre Committees (HCC).

(ii) Community Dialogues With Strategic Decision Makers

SAM4SRHR Youth Champions host community dialogues and participate at interface meetings on SAM and PRM issues related to SRHR within communities and health centres. SAM4SRHR Youth Champions play significant roles in identifying gaps in SRH service provision. Where there are gaps, the youth champions take up the issues with the HCC. The committees in return submit the issues to the health centres for redress, or take them to the district level for attention where necessary. SAM4SRHR Youth Champions through their advocacy are now members to the HCC. Their representation in the HCC has reaped some benefits: They have been further trained on PRM as part of the HCCs. At Sianzyundu Clinic they were involved in engaging the HCC and the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA) to repair the water pipeline from Zambezi and restore water supply to the local clinic and community at large.

At ward level, the ward leadership in Sianzyundu appointed two young people to development committees. One of the youth champions was appointed to the Secondary School Development Committee, while the other was incorporated into the Disaster Risk Reduction and Preparedness Committee. In Simatelele ward, two young men who are members of the youth network joined a nursing voluntary project. This voluntary project is facilitated by the Ministry of Health and Child Care (MoHCC), and equips young people with skills and knowledge on nursing in the hope that they take up nursing as a profession and assist in providing services to their communities. Through their representation in the different development committees AYP have enjoyed the space and time to participate at district and national budget consultations and showcase their SRH work before select Parliamentary Portfolio Committees.

(iii) Community Debriefing Meetings

The youth champions conduct debriefing meetings with the local implementing partner, Basilwizi Trust. They share information gathered during their community outreach activities. In return, Basilwizi Trust provides guidance and mentoring to the youth champions with additional support coming from the MoHCC and the Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council (ZNFPC).

(iv) Established Youth Networks

Each trained mentee has established a youth network of 25 fellow AYP. These constitute a group of AYP who actively engage other young people across the wards regards SRHR issues. They are also visible at community meetings/dialogues and form the critical mass behind the AYP agency on matters of interest within the targeted wards.

Best Documentation in Pictures (Binga, Zimbabwe)



Above, some AYP (left) and Young Mothers (right) during some FGDs at Sianzyundu Clinic



Above, SAfAIDS Regional Senior Project Officer-Policy & Advocacy, Adolf Mavheneke (left) interviewing Chief Siachilaba, and (right), Basilwizi Trust staff engaged in a FGD with Village Health Workers at Simatelele Primary School

2.4.2 Elements of Best Practice

Effectiveness

The following results provide evidence that the adolescents and young people engagement in SAM is paying dividends in relation to the project objectives

Training of the SAM4SRHR Youth Champions Strengthened SRHR Youth Agency

Prior to their engagements with the community, the ten SAM4SRHR Youth Champions received relevant trainings from the project. This included peer education, SAM, PRM, MobiSAfAIDS and SRHR among others. The trainings assisted in modelling SAM4SRHR Youth Champions

who are technically confident, knowledgeable and prepared to deliver on their expectations. The trainings provided an important base for the youth champions' agency on the defined project thematic areas especially their engagement with fellow young people through youth networks. The youth champions and youth networks were therefore at liberty to participate in other community development processes including membership to HCC, school development committees and participation at district and national budget consultations and proceeding to solicit for feedback on issues they would have presented for redress.

Establishment of a Youth-Friendly Corner at Sianzyundu Clinic

The engagement of AYP in community advocacy spaces has translated into the establishment of the youth-friendly corner at Sianzyundu Clinic in Binga district. The youth corner was established at the request of AYP and are receiving SRHR information that range from family planning, safe abortion, condoms, STIs, teenage pregnancies and cervical to prostate cancer. Young people man the youth friendly corner every Monday from 13:00hrs to 14:00hrs. Basilwizi Trust acquainted the young people with SRHR knowledge and services that are available. The youth-friendly corner has become a convergence space where young people acquire and share knowledge on sexual reproductive health services. For the AYP this is a free space where they access SRH information and services without fear, judgement, and/or discrimination. The establishment of the corner has resulted in more young people below the age of 24 years visiting the clinic.



Pic Above: Sianzyundu clinic (left), and some images from inside the SRH youth-friendly corner at the clinic

Improved Access to SRH Services Especially for Adolescent Girls and Young Women

There is clear evidence that the engagement of AYP has led to improved access to SRH services especially for adolescent girls and young women. The practice therefore has been effective as the youth champions' agency has been instrumental in shifting knowledge, perceptions and practices around accessing SRH services and improving the relations between AYP and health service providers (clinics).

“Before the intervention, young people could not walk into the health facility and enquire about contraceptives, for example. This situation has completely changed as the youth now freely visit the health facility, enquire about SRHR services and have cordial relationships with the service providers”

Key Informant, Binga District AIDS Coordinator.

AYP Social Accountability Monitoring (SAM) Advocacy Actions Facilitated Water Re-connection at Sianzyundu Clinic

The clinic had no running water for a period of thirteen months. The water pipeline which supplies water to the clinic and surrounding communities broke down. Patients were being asked to bring water to the clinic as a requirement, before receiving any attention. The SAM4SRHR Youth Champions, together with youth networks, had a meeting with the HCC in May 2022 over the issue. A number of SRH services issues were discussed at the meeting including the unavailability of running water at the clinic. The SAM4SRHR Youth Champions and youth network members engaged the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA) and other developmental CSOs over the water situation at the clinic. On 4th September 2022, the water pipeline was repaired and water was restored at the health facility.

Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Providing the Building Blocks for Strengthened AYP Participation

The selection of fellow AYP to be SAM4SRHR Youth Champions was very crucial as a strategy in delivering SRH information. This was the starting point for the provision and ensuring of the delivery of youth-friendly SRH services. Information delivered by a peer is easily acceptable and provides a trusted environment which is free of stigma and discrimination. The youth champions are the first point of call for SRHR information for fellow AYP before they reach out to the clinic. The involvement; engagement and support from the community, especially the traditional leadership, provided a cushion for the work of the youth champions. The youth champions established some community collaborations through the youth networks and other young people friendly stakeholders and mechanisms like the Sista2Sista programme and the Community Adolescent Treatment Supporters (CATs). The youth champions continuously explored their agency in non-judgmental engagements with fellow young people and the community at large during community dialogues and interface meetings. This yielded some positive results, and resulted in the setting up of a youth-friendly corner and suggestion box at Sianzyundu Clinic. All these are mechanisms that have allowed AYP to freely share SRH information and services that concern them as young people.

Relevance

The project's focus on working with and for young people to strengthen especially their agency around the provision of youth-friendly SRH services is consistent with national level provisions on issues affecting AYP. Thus, relevance is captured at different levels which include consistency with the national level legal and policy frameworks as well as with the realities and needs of the local community across the two Project wards.

Relevance to the National Level Legal and Policy Frameworks

Ensuring access to SRH services for AYP is finely captured in the national objectives of the constitution of Zimbabwe. Section 20 of the national objectives mandates that the State, at every level, takes measures among others to ensure that the youth have *'access to appropriate education and training, and are protected from harmful cultural practices, exploitation and all forms of abuse'*¹. *Section 29 on Health Services further mandates the State to take 'all practical measures to ensure the provision of basic, accessible and adequate health services throughout Zimbabwe'*².

These are established constitutional provisions guaranteeing access to health care for citizens including AYP. This is further pronounced under Section 76 of the *Constitution of Zimbabwe*, which specifies that every citizen and permanent resident of Zimbabwe has the *'right to access*

1 Section 20, Constitution of Zimbabwe, Amendment No. 20. 2013.

2 Section 29, Constitution of Zimbabwe, Amendment No. 20. 2013

basic health-care services, which include reproductive and health-care services²³. From the generic provisions set in the Constitution of Zimbabwe, there are corresponding specific instruments regarding SRH services for AYP. The *National Adolescents and Youth Sexual Reproductive Health Strategy II [ASRH Strategy II (2016-2020)]* focuses on the age groups of 10-24 year olds and advocates for provision of health services for adolescents in a youth-friendly context, with the services expected to be accessible, available, affordable, appropriate and safe. This is again complemented by the *2016 National Guidelines on Provision of Clinical Sexual and Reproductive Health Services*. The Guidelines are clear in terms of providing, and defining a pathway on how youth-friendly services should be delivered.

These strategic documents provide the key intervention strategies and a minimum SRH service package that is considered to be youth-friendly, at the same time ensuring uniformity in the provision at national level. The guidelines are a tool for ensuring quality services and have been used to assess adolescent friendly health services and identify gaps to improve the provision and utilisation of adolescent and youth-friendly health services.

The Government of Zimbabwe through the Ministry of Health and Child Care (MoHCC), has made further efforts to improve SRH education and services for young people by supporting SRH programming, articulating ethical and evidence-based policy options and providing norms, standards, and promoting their implementation and monitoring. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommended the development and implementation of national quality standards and monitoring systems. The Government of Zimbabwe thus commissioned, through the MoHCC and the National Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health Coordination Forum, the process of developing national guidelines on the provision of youth friendly clinical SRH services. This was in line with the WHO (2015) Global standards for quality health care services for adolescents.

Relevance to Local Level SRH Issues

Relevance is a proxy for the significance of the project in terms of addressing the needs of the target communities. The work the SAM4SRHR Youth Champions and fellow AYP are doing in promoting access to SRH services confirms the needs of AYP and the community at large. The confirmation is also an acknowledgement of the SRH challenges the community used to face before the project, and continues to experience. Before the project, there were evident constraints regards accessing SRH services and commodities. Binga being a largely culturally conservative society, was to a larger extent difficult to discuss SRH issues with before the project interventions, but the project engaged traditional and cultural leaders. Leaders are now transformational in addressing any cultural beliefs and practices that might hinder access to SRH services.

At community level, the first entry point for the relevance of the project was a baseline study which was conducted before project implementation. This captured and informed the needs of the community and the specific target groups. Communities including traditional leaders such as chiefs and village heads were sensitised on the project during inception meetings. At the meetings everyone was afforded the opportunity to express their needs. During the implementation, community members are actively involved with traditional leaders taking the lead in identifying and confirming venues for community activities. AYP and the communities are involved in project monitoring and evaluation through participation in the community scorecard and the district level questionnaire processes.

3 Section 76, Constitution of Zimbabwe, Amendment No. 20. 2013

“We contribute a lot to the project activities. The majority of the solutions to challenges faced come from us. We engage and correct each other when mistakes occur. We would have blocked the participation of AYP if the project was not in line with our beliefs and culture”

Male Respondent, Health Centre Committee FGD, Sianzyundu Clinic.

Community members have also been participating at community interface meetings and dialogues that are convened by the SAM4SRHR Youth Champions focusing on issues around access to SRH services and other public resource management concerns for the benefit of the communities. These are processes that have not only entrenched community buy-in, but reinforced the confidence community members have on the project with regards to how it is addressing the most pressing SRH needs of AYP and how the different project stakeholders have come to identify with it; appreciate and support it.

“When Basilwizi was struggling to get a Memorandum of Understanding from the authorities we gave them the authority to implement as chiefs. We use our stamps whenever they are needed in their fundraising documents”

Key Informant, Chief Siachilaba.

Core project work is therefore centred around delivering the national level policy and constitutional provisions to address a range of local SRH issues common across the two wards. These include: teenage pregnancies, child marriages, school drop outs, HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and overall ignorance on SRH issues. The two wards are located along the Zambezi River where because of an active fish trading economy, the listed SRH challenges are common.

“Fish traders come here from different corners of the country. These traders, mostly female, negotiate for free accommodation in exchange for sex, hence putting adolescent boys and young men at high risk of contracting STIs and HIV. The adolescent boys and young men then go on to engage in sex, which is usually unprotected with local adolescent girls and young women. We discovered this through contact tracing which is done when one is being treated for STIs and before the project, SRH services were mainly accessed by married people. It was deemed prostitution to access contraceptives when one was single”.

Key Informant, Nurse-In-Charge, Simatelele Clinic.

Ethical Soundness

Project implementation promoted equity, diversity and respected confidentiality, responsibility and informed consent and other do-no-harm principles, to an extent that made it ethically sound. Respondents confirmed that the project approach was non-discriminatory with all target AYP getting the opportunity to participate. Efforts like the setting up of a youth-friendly corner at Sianzyundu and a suggestion box are measures to forestall confidentiality and meaningful engagement with AYP when they visit the clinics for SRH services. The youth-friendly corner intervention provides confidentiality to the young people accessing SRH services. They allow for the provision of all necessary services to the patients together with the HCC, thereby fulfilling citizens' right to health care. The HCC are the service-link between the community and the clinic and if there are any service concerns, the HCC is always available to attend to them in a non-judgemental and inclusive manner.

Traditional/community leaders partake in community sensitisations on the project, and they have ensured that SRH issues are discussed at the Village and Ward Development Committee meetings. The inclusion of the community leaders signifies respect for community leadership as they are the custodians of community values. According to the Sianzyundu ward councillor, the Health Centre Committee at the clinic has plans to construct a bigger youth-friendly structure, separate from the clinic premises, to ensure a more open and friendlier space than the current set-up.

“When we call for the meetings, we do not discriminate against anyone. Everyone is involved. The project is really helping; the vulnerable used to isolate themselves, but now they socialize with others”.

Key Informant, Chief Saba

Respondents confirmed that community members were happy with the project implementers' (i.e. Basilwizi Trust) work with the community. Basilwizi Trust plan, implement and evaluate together with the community, including AYP. The good relationship between the community members and the project implementors ensured people's trust in the project's engagement with AYP. The good reputation has reached a point where community members submit feedback to Basilwizi Trust on some project related developments in the community through phone calls.

“The project is ours. It is reliable because it is teaching us HIV prevention, family planning and prevention of unwanted pregnancies and all this saves our lives. Young people are already engaged in sexual activities, as such the project is relevant as it is teaching young people sexual and reproductive health and rights issues.”

Young Mother, FGD at Sianzyundu Clinic.

Replicability

Replicability in this context is the ability for a practice or intervention to be adapted in part, or whole in a related, or different setting, and/or thus serve as an example or a practice or intervention to be adapted in part, or whole, in a related or different setting. The inclusion

of traditional leaders right from inception of the project makes it replicable in communities with similar structures. Traditional leaders and their structures are permanent entry points for project implementation; once their buy-in is won, project objectives will be realised with more significant impact as opposed to contexts where such engagement and structures do not exist.

The SAM4SRHR model of demand generation and promoting access to SRH services is such a defining approach, which can be adapted, and/or adopted elsewhere. It serves as a good and unique pathway to AYP accessing SRH services and other developmental needs especially in resource constrained settings like Binga district, Zimbabwe.

This is an efficient, self-regulating working model which places AYP at the centre (i.e. the youth champions) reaching out to fellow young people (i.e. youth networks), generating demand for SRH services and other health care services. It is an open-ended, low-cost, high impact approach that does not only facilitate the youth agency on issues that affect them, but equally safeguards their presence, influence, relevance and identity on developmental matters.

The youth agency has further resulted in the establishment of youth-friendly corners for the delivery of linked services within spaces that guarantee confidentiality and trust. Though the youth-friendly corner model is no longer recommended according to the Ministry of Health and Child Care recommendations, with preference being given to 'youth-friendly spaces', it remains key and very much suitable and adaptable in the absence of 'youth-friendly spaces' and in resource constrained settings.

In both Sianzyundu and Simatelele wards, Basilwizi Trust works with Social Accountability Monitoring for Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SAM4SRHR) Youth Champions to disseminate SRHR information to adolescents and young people. Ten youth champions (6 females and 4 males) were trained and they work with 25 youth network members in each ward. The youth champions even reach out to young people in hard-to-reach areas where health centre staff are unable to conduct outreaches due to lack of resources which include transport challenges, and inaccessible road networks. The youth champions host dialogues on social accountability monitoring and public resource management issues related to SRHR within their communities and health centres. The work of the youth champions in the community raises awareness among young people on SRH services available at the local health centres. They also assist in identifying gaps in service provision. Where there are gaps, the youth champions take up the issues with the Health Centre Committees. The committees in return submit the issues to the health centres for redress or take them to the district level for attention where necessary. The youth champions conduct debriefing meetings with Basilwizi Trust where they share information gathered during their community outreach. In return, Basilwizi Trust provides guidance and mentoring to the youth champions with additional support from the MoHCC health worker(s) responsible for youths.

Sustainability

The sustainability of a project, or project action(s) is a measure of the capability of such actions to continue to be effective over the medium and long-term. The results should continue to be seen and celebrated within the target or host communities, even after project closure. Sustainability, by its very nature, can be understood at different levels reflecting the realisation of better, and/or improved SRH outcomes for AYP.

The SAM4SRHR Model noted earlier on and the evident AYP agency through the youth champions and youth networks is well set to benefit the AYP themselves and the wider community for a very long time. The model has promoted not only a practical sense of self-driven social voluntarism among AYP, but commitment and responsibility to serve their communities. This is

a social asset which has mid to long term impact for the AYP and the community. The AYP have trusted themselves in terms of focus and how they are involved, to that extent, and that has positive implications in terms of the continuity of project work and benefits. The SAM4SRHR model has notably generated a pool of AYP in Binga who are resilient; they are competent, confident, knowledgeable and can cope with the dynamics and demands for ensuring access to SRH services in future.

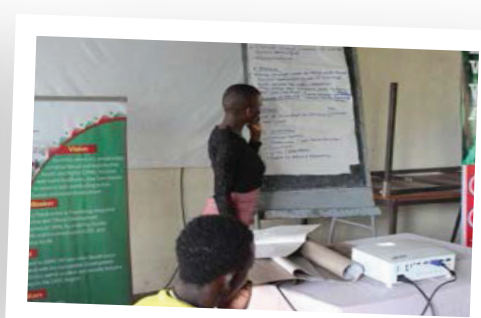
“We trust the project; it is reliable because when we raise our concerns they are taken into consideration. For example, we asked for a suggestion box, and it was provided. We submitted a request for some IEC materials and bicycles for youth champion, and these were all delivered. We conduct meetings with our age mates. Those who attend project activities cascade down the information starting from family level”

Female respondent, FGD with AYP, Simatelele Primary School.

The cascading of SRH information by youth champions and other members of the youth networks makes the model, as indicated above, low cost, with a high possibility of self-regulation and self-sustenance. The cost efficiency/effectiveness of the approach positions it for continuity well after the project grant has expired. This is an important element for financial sustainability as the realisation of positive SRH outcomes is largely dependent on the ability and availability of the AYP to self-organise and engage authorities for improved availability of SRH services.

Sustainability of the work by AYP is also guaranteed by the extent to which the overall project work is consistent with the national level policy framework and guidelines on SRH services for AYP. Though the actual implementation may require some external financial resources, the fact that these are deliverables set within existing policy guidelines keeps the work of AYP not only relevant, but resilient within local level contexts. In that regard, in 2016 through the Ministry of Health and Child Care, the Government of Zimbabwe commissioned a National Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health Coordination Forum for the development of National Guidelines on Provision of Clinical Sexual and Reproductive Health Services. The Guidelines provide and define a pathway on how youth friendly services should be delivered. These do ensure uniformity in the provision of linked services from national to local levels.

The inclusion of AYP in HCC and other community development committees is a guarantee that AYP issues which include access and availability of SRH services and commodities will remain on the development agenda. Their participation in these platforms has been strengthened by the various project-related trainings that they have received which include PRM, SAM, peer education and MobiSAfAIDS among others. Thus, there are AYP who are technically ready to deliver anytime and know how to engage public authorities on matters of interest.



Pic Above: Some SAM4SRHR Youth Champions facilitating some inputs during project activities in Binga District

2.4.3 Challenges

Mobility of Young People: The attrition rates for AYP is high because of the limited livelihoods opportunities for AYP in Binga. A number of them including some SAM4SRHR Youth Champions, and those belonging to youth networks continuously move from rural to urban areas in search of better livelihoods and career prospects. The likelihood of negatively impacting on AYP engagement on SRH issues remains high.

A Polarised Operating Environment: This is the case during election periods, with cases of politically motivated violence reported around the Simatelele ward. The risk of polarisation is evident even during non-election times. Admittedly, violence of any nature is not consistent with the realisation of positive SRH outcomes among AYP. Politically motivated violence intersects with sexual gender-based violence within and across families.

Distance Travelled to Access SRH Services: In Sianzyundu and Simatelele wards, the majority of communities travel long distances, sometimes up to 30km to get to the nearest clinic. The same applies for youth champions and youth network members who have to brace for such distances when conducting SRH demand generation activities. Though the project provided some bicycles to youth champions, the distances they have to cover in their community engagement and advocacy work as well as accessing services at the local clinics are too long.

Under Equipment of Youth Friendly Corners: Though a youth friendly corner was established at Sianzyundu clinic and plans are underway to set up one at Simatelele clinic, these corners remain ill-equipped. There is need for adequate chairs and relevant IEC materials. During documentation, the refurbishment and opening of the corner at Simatelele was outstanding. Feedback from the nurse-in-charge at the clinic was that the space to be designated for a youth-friendly corner was 'not even friendly' as it was too close to the clinic.

Biased Participation of Adolescent Girls and Young Women: Through observations, it is clear that the Project has a bias towards adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) in comparison to adolescent boys and young men (ABYM). At both Simatelele and Sianzyundu clinics, there were none to a few ABYM at the best documentation meetings respectively. At Simatelele, there was evidence of a gender dynamic where men and boys spend most of their time at fishing camps along the Zambezi River. The nurse-in-charge at Sianzyundu made a similar remark, confirming that men in the community only participate in meetings where they have taking up decision making roles, hence, men are the majority in Health Centre Committees. Whilst this positive discrimination was some in place at the conceptualisation stage of the project to strengthen the agency of AGYW, it now runs the risk of leaving out men and boys in mainstream SRH interventions.

Budget Constraints: Key informants and the implementers confirmed evident budget constraints when the project scale or scope is placed against the funding that was made available over the years. The issue of repeated delays in budget disbursements to the implementing partner

is also linked to the funding constraints. In some cases, the disbursement delays resulted in youth champions cutting back on their agency in the communities as they found it difficult to proceed without, for example, internet data and some refreshments for their meetings at the youth-friendly corner.

2.4.4 Lessons Learnt

The mentorship and cascading approach (i.e. as presented under the SAM4SRHR Model) to engagement of AYP on SRH issues is key in reaching out to more young people. Evidence from the two wards in Binga confirms that this has unravelled some myths and misconceptions that AYP and the community at large used to have on accessing SRH services and/or commodities.

The integration of the SRH/health and food security component is an unavoidable requirement in curbing the high attrition rates of AYP. It is also essential in ensuring and maintaining the intersection and relevance of food security and health. Communities that are not food and nutrition poor are better prepared to engage on SRH issues as they are quick to understand the trade-off between the two and how food security complements SRHR issues and the reverse is true.

2.4.5 Conclusion and Way Forward

The action is ready for scaling in other settings in as much as it has evident indicators for sustainability. Results can be strengthened and challenges addressed by investing around the lessons learnt above. For example, the integration of the food security component with the SRHR project is key in reinforcing community members' buy-in to the project. This should also include the mainstreaming of life skills to support AGYW and ABYM economically so that they become financially secure and independent.



2.5

Regional

(Promising Practice): Transformative Influence of SADC Policy Structures by Non-State Actors Using Transnational Advocacy for Strengthened Implementation of Regional Commitments



Background

Since inception, the PSA Alliance project has engaged different stakeholders including the SADC Secretariat and SADC PF at regional level and beyond as part of the project implementation framework. That focus became more pronounced during the second phase of the project for which the collaboration with SADC institutions, especially the SADC Secretariat and SADC Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF) came under the spotlight in a bid to strengthen tracking, and/or oversight on Member States implementation of regional instruments under the project's two components of agriculture/food security, and SRHR/HIV.

The SADC-PF was particularly critical in provision of targeted space for advocacy for direct engagement with the forum covering 15 parliaments and over 4500 parliamentarians for advancing accountability and gender-responsiveness in public resource management, mainly within HIV/SRH contexts for AYP and agricultural services for smallholder farmers.

The regional collaborations were done at the Alliance level, while individual Alliance partners engaged with the SADC structures at national level on key project thematic focus. The engagement thus leveraged on national and transnational advocacy efforts from the different Alliance partners and implementing partners. This contributed to increased understanding and appreciation of the relevant regional commitments that Member States have committed to fulfil on HIV/SRH and agriculture, as well as increased need among Alliance members and SADC PF to hold to account the respective Member States in the domestication and implementation of regional commitments.

Brief About Transnational Advocacy

Transnational advocacy is a self-organised, self-conscious and self-driven action pursued by individuals or groups of non-State organisations (i.e. actors) across State boundaries aimed at influencing decision making and change within political, economic and social systems and institutions for the wider public interest. These Non-State Actors (NSAs) who include civil society organisations, non-governmental organisations and some private players have come to be influential in national, regional and global governance¹.

Whilst States have remained dominant in the global governance system, NSAs have over time become significant contributors to the global agenda; setting rules, implementing complementary interventions and monitoring, including tracking of especially the implementation of international, regional and national obligations. There has been an 'information revolution'², led by NSAs, and therein exists their influence which has contributed to regional integration and development. NSAs' access to information and its distribution to target and relevant stakeholders has been a game changer in global governance and development.

At regional level, the SADC Declaration and Treaty (i.e. SADC Treaty) under Article 23 recognises and acknowledges the role of NSAs (i.e. NGOs) in pursuit of the objectives of the Treaty, and the processes of regional integration. Under the same Article, SADC made an express commitment to 'cooperate with and support the initiatives of non-governmental organisations contributing to the objectives of the Treaty...in order to 'foster closer relations among communities'¹⁰ The

1 The Draft SADC NSAAccreditation Guidelines defines NSAs as: including not-for profit, non-governmental institutions, covering a wide range of formal and informal organizations from development NGOs and think tanks to trade unions, foundations, faith-based organizations, disabled persons organizations, community-based organizations, media (independent and non-profit), and business associations.

2 Mariana de Freitas Montebugnoli (nd). Changing World and the Growing Importance of the Transnational Advocacy Network on Global Governance, 6228ae78-1118-469e-ba56-a7fae26fce66.pdf (isanet.org)

Treaty therefore confirms the existence of NSAs, and the regionality, or transnational nature of their functions. This transnational context has been a key practice and feature of the advocacy work by the PSA Project in strengthening and providing oversight over the implementation of relevant regional commitments.

“Our transnational advocacy within the PSA project is about influencing how the regional frameworks influence the implementation at national level, but also how national level PRM influences the regional frameworks. It’s also about strengthening the capacity of NSAs and civil society organisations and other oversight bodies to track the implementation of the regional commitments on and SRHR”

Julie Middleton, PSA Project Manager.

2.5.1 Key Activities

Below are some of the key activities undertaken by the PSA Alliance in engaging SADC by NSAs using transnational advocacy for strengthened implementation of regional commitments on health (HIV/SRH) and agriculture (food security):

- i. Capacity strengthening of members of parliament in Public Resource Management
- ii. Technical support towards the development of the SADC Model on Public Financial Management
- iii. Convening three (3) regional dialogues for 14 CSOs and SADC around the RISDP
- iv. Submission of the communique recommendations to the SADC Secretariat
- v. Oral submissions ‘*Expanding support for agroecology in Southern Africa*,’ and ‘*The SADC RISDP (2020-2030) and the Regional SRHR Agenda*’ at the SADC-PF Standing Committees Public Hearings
- vi. Generation of transnational advocacy evidence for enhanced engagement and sharing between the NSAs and SADC on Agriculture and Health regional policy commitment implementation
 - α. **Position Papers**
 - ‘*Transformed Agricultural Sector that Practices Sustainable Management of the Environment and its Natural Resources*’ generated by ESAF and shared with SADC at the RSDP 2020 dialogue.
 - ‘*Mainstreaming Young People’s (YP) Voice & Participation: A Social Accountability Agenda Towards Realization of SADC Commitments on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)*’ developed and shared by SAfAIDS

- *'Twenty Years Past the Abuja Declaration: Rethinking Sustainable Health & HIV Financing Towards Attainment of the SADC RISDP (2020-2030)'* developed and shared by SAFAIDS and contributed in setting and sustaining the regional agenda on meeting regional SRHR commitments.

b. Regional Policy Briefs

- *Southern Africa on the Brink of Famine?* (September 2020).
- *The SADC SRHR Strategy (2019-2030): A Missing Link in the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) Implementation Matrix'* (February 2023).
- *SADC RISDP 2020 – 2030 How will Small-scale Farmers Benefit in the Region?* (February 2022).
- Four-part policy brief series based on the SRHR findings from PSA Alliance Regional Monitoring Tools *'Young People's Participation: Closing the Gap in Pre-Budget Consultations and SRH Services Planning and Provision;'* *'Importance of Informed Community Participation in Public Resource Management: Perspectives from the PSA Project in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe;'* *'The Youth-Friendly Health Facility Model and Access to SRH Services for Adolescents and Young People: Reflections from the PSA Project in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe;'* *'Availability of SRH Commodities and Services for Adolescents and Young People (AYP): Insights from the PSA Project in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe.'*
'Strengthening Access to Youth Friendly Sexual and Reproductive Health Services in Resource Constrained Settings: Experiences and Lessons from Binga, Zimbabwe'.

vii. Participation at the Regional Budget Summit

viii. Working closely with GIZ on the 'Strengthening SADC National Linkages' project

ix. Actively participating in the regional monitoring of the implementation of the *SADC SRHR Strategy and scorecard 2019-2030* by SADC Member States

The transnational advocacy was therefore set around the project work components, which are agriculture (food security) and health (SRHR/HIV), with two distinct regional advocacy strategy pillars as illustrated in fig 1. The matrix clearly identified the following at regional level: The problems in the context of public resource management (PRM), advocacy goals, the target audience and messages to be delivered and the key interventions. It is interesting to note that everything which was done across the PSA Alliance was structured to address the problems and PRM issues noted in the matrix. The PSA transnational advocacy was guided by the regional advocacy strategy highlighted in Table 2:

Table 2: PSA Regional Advocacy Strategy

	Food security	SRHR/HIV
Problems	<p>Regional agricultural policies do not promote public services (esp. input and extension) which would best support SHFs (i.e. agroecology and community-based seed systems)</p> <p>Industrial agricultural practices promoted by regional policies have not sufficiently improved food security in the region</p> <p>PRM issues...</p> <p>Lack of prioritisation of SHFs needs in the development of national and regional policies</p> <p>Lack of regional and national oversight of the implementation of regional policies</p> <p>Little (or no) national investment in developing/supporting agroecological practices</p>	<p>SADC regional strategies related to HIV/SRHR services for adolescents and young people are not fully implemented at national / sub-national levels; resulting in poor access to services.</p> <p>PRM issues...</p> <p>Inadequate monitoring of line ministries involved in SRH service delivery by parliamentary committees</p>
Goals	<p>SHFs/CS are provided platforms for engagement of policymakers and oversight bodies at regional and national levels</p> <p>Regional and national oversight bodies regularly assess implementation and impact of regional policies</p> <p>Implementation of regional policies in favour of SHFs and agroecological approaches</p>	<p>Allocation and disbursement of sufficient budget by national governments for SRH services for adolescents and youth, even amid COVID-19 crisis.</p> <p>Regional and national oversight bodies regularly monitor implementation of SRH services</p>
Targets & messages	<p>SADC Secretariat- Provides platforms for SHFs' engagement on regional policies; Monitors national implementation of regional policies with a focus on Malabo goals, through IASRs; Operationalisation of RISDP (2020-2030) - i.e. rural development and extension strategies; laws guaranteeing right to food and support for agroecology and open pollinated varieties (OPV)/local seed; SADC ADF.</p> <p>SADC-PF- regularly reviews implementation and impact of regional policies; encourages national investments in the right to food and agroecological approaches.</p> <p>National Parliaments (SADC-PF Members)- Align national plans to regional policies; Increase investments in right to food and agroecological approaches.</p> <p>National Ministries- Support domestic and regional policies/Projects; Involve SHFs in planning and monitoring through SNCs and the SADC Secretariat.</p>	<p>SADC Secretariat– Provides technical support and mentoring to SADC Member States to implement/monitor the Regional SRHR Strategy (2019-2030), establishes regional youth advisory committee; Prioritises SRHR in RISDP 2020-2030 implementation matrix rollout; SADC-PF – Brings social accountability on the agenda to raise the discourse at the regional level and national parliaments. Support SADC Model Law on Public Finance Management.</p> <p>National Parliaments – Deepen oversight and monitoring role of line ministries involved in SRH services delivery through parliamentary committees.</p> <p>National Ministries – Increase allocation to SRHR services, even amid COVID-19; adopt fiscal discipline measures to reduce variances between budget allocation and actual expenditure; incorporate platforms for adolescents within national health planning.</p>
Interventions	<p>Support SADC-PF Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Natural Resources (FANR) Standing Committee reviews of national impact of regional policies.</p> <p>Participation in SADC Secretariat strategic meetings and official events. Convening multi stakeholder national (physical/online) regional advocacy events.</p> <p>Joining the production of regional reports and policy briefs on monitoring of regional policies.</p> <p>Promoting and using the Agroecology Financing Analysis Tool (AFAT)</p> <p>Building coalitions among like-minded SHFs, regional civil society platforms, international organisations, donors and inter-governmental bodies (i.e., FAO, WFP)</p>	<p>Build capacity of SADC-PF Standing Committees on Social Accountability Monitoring; support/facilitate reviews of national implementation and impact of regional policies; generate position papers.</p> <p>Integrate agricultural components in all project work constituencies.</p> <p>Convene multi-stakeholder national (physical/online)/ host joint regional advocacy events (offline/online)</p> <p>Develop and share analysis of regional reports; and policy briefs on project findings. Support SADC implementation and monitoring of regional policies (including RISDP implementation plan, SADC SRHR Strategy and Scorecard and ESA Commitment) - regional and national level.</p> <p>Track the Member States reporting against the SADC SRHR Strategy Scorecard indicators</p> <p>Track Member States implementation of, and reporting against the RISDP implementation matrix.</p> <p>Ensure young people/adolescents involvement in SADC consultations/ regional civil society platforms.</p>

2.5.2 Elements of Best Practice

Effectiveness

The advocacy at regional and national level was founded on a rights-based approach to Social Accountability Monitoring (SAM), which sought first to strengthen the agency of citizens by building and strengthening their awareness and then mobilising them to claim and exercise their rights. It further recognised the importance of strengthening the capacity of State institutions to promote, protect and fulfil these rights within democratic and good governance contexts. The ultimate focus was on promoting collaboration between duty-bearers and rights holders to address systemic social accountability challenges in the management of public resources. Transformational capacity strengthening and learning were the preferred tactic in addition to strategic SAM, expansion of allies and opportunities to stimulate and deepen the desired change from regional to national level and vis-versa. Below are the key engagement activities and key results between the NSA and SADC through the transnational advocacy:

Technical Support Towards the Development of the SADC Model on Public Financial Management

The PSA Alliance through PSAM representation provided technical support towards the development of the SADC Model on Public Financial Management while AAI and SAfAIDS, participated in the technical working group (TWG) meetings and consultations towards the development of Model Law. The Model Law was formally approved and adopted by the SADC-PF 51st Plenary Assembly on 14th June 20223 and has become the world's first Model Law on Public Financial Management.

“PSA has been inviting the SADC Secretariat to be part of the regional dialogues on regional policy implementation especially the RISDP but this has been prior to the formalisation and approval of the NSA engagement. We have shared what we have been doing and similarly the PSA Alliance has brought together CSOs to also share their work and advocacy plans; The PSA Alliance has been focusing on capacity strengthening and SADC PF on accountability and financial management which SADC Secretariat had not been focusing on and this has been very useful”

Dennis Rweyemamu; Senior Project Officer-Policy and Strategy Development; Directorate of Policy, Planning and Resource Mobilization-SADC.

The SADC PF Collaborations With the PSA Alliance in Advocating for the Domestication of the SADC Model Law on Public Financial Management Resulted in the Review and Development of National Public Financial Management Legislations

Following engagements through the PSA Alliance, national governments took action to improve their consultation, monitoring, implementation and reporting of selected SADC regional commitments. The governments of Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe embarked on revising their PFM legislations following the adoption of the Model Law on Public Financial Management (PFM) in July 2022, to which the PSA Alliance members significantly contributed.

³ The Plenary Assembly is the highest decision making and deliberative body of the SADC-PF. Among its functions, the Plenary Assembly is a platform for deliberation and consideration of matters of regional interest, and deliberates, considers and approves reports and motions from the Statutory Standing Committees.

PSA Project Necessitated the SADC Impetus and Momentum to Formalise the SADC Non-State Actor (NSA) Engagement Mechanism

Cognisant of the fact that SADC by its own Treaty had commenced the process of developing the Non- State Actor (NSA) engagement mechanism, the PSA Project, through the regional dialogues created a platform for SADC to share the draft content of NSA engagement mechanism where NSA inputted. The engagement mechanism has since been formalised and approved by Council in 2022. The NSA accreditation guidelines have been drafted and were scheduled to be approved by the council during the March 2024 SADC summit.

The SADC PF Engagement with the PSA Alliance has Facilitated Establishment of Effective National Level NSA and SADC Engagement Structures at National Level

In Malawi, the PSA Project played a significant role in working with SADC PF to establish the SADC National Committee and in the subsequent years - 2022 and 2023 - advocated the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to update the member list of the SADC National Committee. This was in order to make the committee more engaging. The current composition of the Malawi NSA includes respective Ministries, the Speaker of the National Assembly, Non-Governmental Organisations of Malawi (CONGOMA); MISA Malawi as well as the Congress of Trade Unions. In Tanzania, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs agreed to establish a SADC National Committee and the Vice Chair of the Parliamentary Committee of Defence, Security and Foreign Affairs in 2024.

The SADC PF Engagement With the PSA Alliance Project has Opened up for Good Linkages and Created Robust Relationships Between PSA Alliance Partners, CSOs and Various Players with Parliaments

In Zambia, SAfAIDS and the PSA partners, together with adolescents and young people, participate in the annual budget development processes from facility, ward level to parliamentary presentation. On an annual basis, SAfAIDS and the young people engage the parliamentary budget and estimate committee and make presentations on the budget trends towards SRH services for adolescents and young people. In 2021, SAfAIDS Zambia was a key witness before the parliamentary committee on health and social services on the review of the 8th National Development Plan for inclusion of SRHR and CSE on behalf of other CSOs. SAfAIDS has further worked closely with UNESCO and other CSOs to support the establishment of the first ever Member of Parliament Caucus on SRHR and Life skills and Health Education. In Zimbabwe the PSA project has enabled the inclusion on adolescents and young people in the district health committees of health.

Regional Non-State Actors Dialogues Resulted in Key Recommendations for the Implementation of the Regional Commitment on Health and Agriculture

In June 2021, the PSA Alliance co-hosted a virtual regional dialogue for NSAs with six other regional organisations under the theme: *'Building Back Better - Ensuring Social Accountability in Southern Africa's Development.'* The Regional dialogue focused on the implementation of the RISDP (2020-30) and was attended by delegates from 13 SADC Member States and representatives of NSA and other like-minded organisations outside the Alliance who included Southern Africa Trust, Economic Justice Network (EJN), Fellowship of Christian Councils in Southern Africa (FOCCISA), Southern African People's Solidarity Network (SAPSN), Southern Africa Trade Union Coordination Council (SATUCC).

The dialogue generated a communique with recommendations to Member States to develop and implement a robust regional agricultural development and advisory extension strategy, strengthening or establishment of joint national agricultural sector reviews and the need for all-inclusive food and nutrition councils at sub-national levels. Another key recommendation was a call to SADC Member States to expand the transparency and sharing of public resources management-related information in order to enhance the participation of citizens in social accountability monitoring of HIV/SRH public services.

A second virtual NSAs regional dialogue was conducted in September 2022 and was themed around: *'The SADC RISDP and Social Accountability in Public Resource Management'*. Participants came from 12 SADC countries, including civil society organisations (CSOs), smallholder farmers' associations, trade unions, youth organisations, people's movements, women's groups, faith-based organisations and media outlets. There was also representation from the SADC Secretariat, SADC-PF, SADC Business Council, SADC National Committees and SADC national contact points. The dialogue generated a communique with a special recommendation that: 'The RISDP was to be updated to include the SADC SRHR Strategy (2019-2030), as it provides the regional policy and programming framework to improve the SRHR of all people living in SADC Region and contribute towards Member States meeting SDG and related commitments. SAfAIDS, on behalf of the PSA followed this Communique recommendation with a policy brief entitled: *'The SADC SRHR Strategy (2019-2030): A Missing Link in the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) Implementation Matrix.'*

The collaboration, solidarity and support exhibited at the two dialogues is a key consideration of how the PSA Alliance regional engagement found buy-in at the regional level. The dialogues themselves became mobilising moments for reflections and deeper understanding of critical regional development matters. The fact that the SADC-PF and SADC Secretariat featured at an NSA convened platform confirms how the two regional bodies have been woven into the solidarity around the PSA Alliance Project work.



Pic Above: PSA Alliance members, other NSA and SADC Secretariat at the SADC engagement meeting at SADC HQ in Gaborone, Botswana

The PSA Project has Positively Contributed to the Review and Regional Monitoring of the Implementation of the SADC SRHR Strategy and Scorecard 2019-2030 by SADC Member States

Through SAfAIDS, the PSA project has contributed to engagement of SADC to monitor the implementation of the SADC SRHR Strategy and scorecard 2019-2030 by SADC Member States. SAfAIDS is a member of the Regional SRHR Advocacy Group together with other CSOs and UN agencies (UNFPA, UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO), which have played a significant role in working with SADC and Member States to review scorecard indicators to make them reportable by Member States. SAfAIDS has also participated in several monitoring engagements on the Scorecard and the Strategy. The 2021/2022 SADC SRHR Scorecard was firstly validated by Member States on 27th July 2023 and final validation was concluded on 3rd August 2023 and SAfAIDS actively participated.

Subsequent plans of the regional SRHR Advocacy Group are underway to further engage SADC to popularise the SADC SRHR Scorecard and highlight progress made, barriers, challenges, priorities and strategies on SRHR in the SADC region to senior officials and ministers of health and those responsible for HIV/AIDS of the 16 Member States of SADC.

Submission of the Communique Recommendations to the SADC Secretariat Following the Second Regional NSAs Dialogue in September 2022

The PSA Alliance were invited for a physical meeting with Secretariat on 28th November 2022. The PSA Alliance got an opportunity to present on the Communique, and the overall work on the Alliance. This was an important opportunity to keep the project work on the regional level agenda and confirmed the SADC Secretariat's acknowledgement of the PSA Alliance's work and its influence on the regional development agenda.

Submissions at the SADC-PF Standing Committees Public Hearings at the invitation of the SADC-PF, the PSA Alliance made oral submissions at the SADC-PF convened inaugural Standing Committees Public Hearings on the 25th and 26th of November 2022. The hearings were hosted under the theme: '*Consolidating Democracy by Bringing Parliament to the People.*' ESAFF and SAfAIDS represented the Alliance and presented on: '*Expanding support for agroecology in Southern Africa,*' and '*The SADC RISDP (2020-2030) and the Regional SRHR Agenda*' before the FANR and HSDSP Standing Committees respectively.

The SADC PF Joint session meetings for Standing Committees which were held between SADC PF member MPs, partners, CSOs and various stakeholders through the support of the PSA Alliance was an eye opener to various participants. Elucidation of model laws and exposure to the normative frameworks and regional commitments such as the Malabo commitment, Abuja Declaration and Maputo Protocol enabled members to identify the gaps and they felt compelled to align in them through their respective national parliaments in attaining set targets. On the quest to align with regional agreements, environment and climate change, Zambia is in the process of enacting a law on climate change. Lessons learnt from these joint sessions as well as best practises were shared.

Development of Regional Position Papers

ESAFF presented a position paper to the SADC Secretariat during the preparations for the development of the RISDP 2020-2030 Implementation Framework in December 2020. This was under Strategic Objective Two on: *A Transformed Agricultural Sector that Practices Sustainable Management of the Environment and its Natural Resources.* Recommendations made included: The need to revisit the SADC Dar es Salaam Declaration of 2004 on Agriculture and Food Security; have a SADC Agriculture Extension Service Strategy; review the SADC Plant Breeder Rights (PBR) of 2015 and recognise neglected indigenous nutritious seeds; develop a SADC Rural Development Strategy in line with the new RISDP, RAIP and NAIPS; Operationalise the Agriculture Development Fund (ADF) approved in August 2017; and enactment of policies and laws that guarantee the right to food and to operationalise the SADC Food and Nutrition Security Strategy (2015-2025).

SAfAIDS also produced position papers that included one entitled: '*Mainstreaming Young People's (YP) Voice & Participation: A Social Accountability Agenda Towards Realization of SADC Commitments on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)*', and another: '*Twenty Years Past the Abuja Declaration: Rethinking Sustainable Health & HIV Financing Towards Attainment of the SADC RISDP (2020-2030).*' These were all shared with different like-minded stakeholders at regional level, and contributed in setting and sustaining the regional agenda on meeting the regional SRHR and agriculture commitments.

Development of Regional Policy Briefs

In order to sustain the sharing of project experiences and entrench regional learning, a range of position papers were developed. These were also meant to engage in the policy making spaces on key areas of interest and prompted actions in addressing issues raised based on the policy recommendations. Below is a summary of some of the policy briefs developed during the second phase of the PSA Alliance project:



- *Southern Africa on the Brink of Famine?* (September 2020). This was focused on the impact of climate change, governance and COVID-19 on food security in Southern Africa. It was launched during a virtual press briefing hosted by the Foreign Correspondents Association of Southern Africa (FCASA). Associated Press went on to write an article based on the policy brief, and it was cited/published in more than 232 publications cross the world.³

- *The SADC SRHR Strategy (2019- 2030): A Missing Link in the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) Implementation Matrix'* (February 2023). This was an outcome of the Communique produced at the second NSA Regional Dialogue hosted in September 2022.

It was shared with the SADC Secretariat and the PSA Alliance presented on its recommendation on the need to update the RISDP so that it includes the SADC SRHR Strategy.

- *SADC RISDP 2020 – 2030 How will Small-scale Farmers Benefit in the Region?* (February 2022). This interrogated the RISDP around whether, or not the plan would be able to ensure prosperity and alleviate poverty and hunger in Southern Africa. It was shared at the second Regional NSA Dialogue and among its recommendations had one calling on SADC Member States to: Entrench a public social accountability and transparency culture and ensure that all the planning, implementation and monitoring must involve, at all levels, NSAs, including smallholder farmers, civil society organisations, media and the private sector, among others.
- *'Young People's Participation: Closing the Gap in Pre-Budget Consultations and SRH Services Planning and Provision;'* *'Importance of Informed Community Participation in Public Resource Management: Perspectives from the PSA Project in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe'*, *'The Youth-Friendly Health Facility Model and Access to SRH Services for Adolescents and Young People: Reflections from the PSA Project in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe'*, *'Availability of SRH Commodities and Services for Adolescents and Young People (AYP): Insights from the PSA Project in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe.'* This was a four- part policy brief series based on the SRHR findings from PSA Alliance Regional Monitoring Tools used to monitor public service delivery for the 2021 to 2022 period. These tools which include the community scorecard, district and national level questionnaire, feature some indicators on regional SRHR commitments, which the project countries have committed to fulfil.



- *Strengthening Access to Youth Friendly Sexual and Reproductive Health Services in Resource Constrained Settings: Experiences and Lessons from Binga, Zimbabwe.* This was drawn from a rapid assessment conducted in Binga. The assessment sought to have a comprehensive, contextual and evidence-based understanding of the current situation with regards to availability, functionality and accessibility of youth-friendly SRH spaces and services.
- Participation at the Regional Budget Summit

In August 2020, the PSA Alliance supported and participated at the 16th Annual Southern Africa Civil Society Forum themed: *Catalysing Civil Society for Just Transitions & Sustainable Renewal in SADC under COVID-19*. During the Summit, the PSA Alliance hosted two webinars on the food crisis in Southern Africa and on domestic financing to create more resilient healthcare systems in the region. The approach struck a fine balance between collaboration (and not confrontation) and keeping project work beyond State interests' capture, whilst staying resolute on addressing injustice/unfairness where it manifested. For example, there was/is evident shared rapport between the SADC-PF and the PSA Alliance Project to the extent that each of them participated and gave support at each other's spaces to strengthen the regional advocacy agendas as defined by the regional advocacy strategies across the two project pillars of HIV/SRHR (health) and agriculture (food security). The following event captures the nature of the relationship between the SADC-PF and the PSA Alliance Project and how the latter strengthened the implementation of regional commitments across HIV/SRHR and agriculture (food security).

The PSA Alliance, which included ActionAid International and partners SAfAIDS, ActionAid Zimbabwe, the Eastern and Southern Africa Small-Scale Farmers Forum (ESAFF) and Zimbabwe Smallholder Organic Farmers' Forum (ZIMSOFF) hosted a virtual dialogue on Social Accountability and Oversight in the Agriculture and Health Sectors in Zimbabwe. In attendance were SADC-PF, select members of parliament from thematic committees on health, lands and agriculture, fisheries and natural resources, civil society organisations, agricultural technical extension officers and young people representatives. Discussions centred on understanding social accountability and the implications of social accountability challenges/gaps in service delivery for the realisation of SADC commitments with special focus on food security and SRHR services for smallholder farmers, adolescents and young people respectively. Participants at the dialogue also discussed the role of the Parliament of Zimbabwe in addressing social accountability gaps in the implementation of regional agreements as well as the extent of Zimbabwe's compliance to the regional agriculture/food security and SRHR commitments. This was an important dialogue which, among other things, looked at how the institution of parliament should be involved in engagement with citizens especially during national budget consultations and other engagements within health and agriculture. There were concerns around how smallholder farmers and young people were missing on the agriculture and SRHR consultations. The dialogue generated a call for parliamentarians to collaborate with civil society organisations on matters of interest.

Relevance

The PSA Alliance's transnational advocacy was well received by the SADC Secretariat and SADC-PF. This is in terms of how the engagements and the rationale for engagement have been consistent with the SADC region's development agenda and trajectory especially as captured under the RISDP Implementation Plan. All the elements covered in the two regional advocacy strategy pillars confirm the gaps and areas needing attention from national to regional level.

PSA Alliance Engagement of SADC by Non-State Actors Through Transnational Advocacy is Well Aligned to the SADC Mechanism for Engagement with Non- State Actors in Line With Treaty Provisions

The Engagement of SADC by Non-State Actors using transnational advocacy is enshrined in Article 5 (2b), 16A and Articles 23 of the SADC Treaty. The same recognition is evident in the revised Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (2015 – 2020). Some SADC Protocols and Summit Communiqués also emphasise the need for a more profound and effective engagement mechanism. Key protocols which also provide for engagement with non-State actors include the Protocol on Trade in the SADC Region (1996), SADC Protocol on Mining (1997) and SADC Employment and Labour Protocol (2014). Furthermore, SADC Council Decisions from the August 2004 Grand Baie Council Meeting in Mauritius, the September 2009 Kinshasa meeting in the DRC and the August 2011 Council Meeting in Luanda, Angola, underscores the need for more formalised and institutionalised engagement between SADC and NSAs.

Relevance to Filling the Oversight Skill Gaps of Members of Parliament



Pic Above: MPs and the National Assembly staff after PRM training

The PSA project is premised on capacity strengthening of 5 targeted groups particularly strengthening capacity of relevant parliamentary committees and their staff in social accountability monitoring and oversight resulting in improved awareness and advocacy for parliamentary budget offices for PRM oversight.

The PSA project, through Rhodes University, has engaged, capacitated and equipped over 13 MPs and National Assembly staff from the project implementing countries with SAM skills for PRM using the PSAM approach

between 2019 - 2023. The implementing countries have mirrored this approach and localised the PSAM curriculum which they have used to engage MPs and parliamentary office staff in PRM at country level. In Zambia, SAfAIDS conducted training in PRM for 14 MPs and 4 national assembly members of staff using the localised curriculum.

As envisioned in the PSA project Theory of Change, the trainings have resulted in relevant parliamentary committees, particularly those responsible for scrutiny of health, food security and budgeting and resource allocation to be more responsive, accountable and able to exercise systemic oversight of public resources and take corrective action if necessary. Evidently, the trained MPs in countries like Zambia and Tanzania have advocated for increased budget allocation to SRH and agriculture respectively. This has led to budgetary and funding allocations that support citizens' priorities particularly adolescents and young people and small holder farmers.

PSA Alliance Engagement of SADC by Non-State Actors Through Transnational Advocacy is Aligned to Realisation of Regional Frameworks on SRH and Agriculture.

By design, the project is geared towards improved accountability and gender-responsiveness in public resource management, particularly in the areas of HIV/SRH services for adolescents and youth and agricultural services for smallholder farmers and contributes to the realisation of selected SADC regional commitments across five countries (Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe). Therefore, it is well aligned and relevant to various regional commitments on Agriculture-food security) and Health (SRHR).

Some of the regional commitments the transnational advocacy focused on under the PSA Alliance Project are captured in the table below:

Sector	Regional Commitments
Agriculture (food security)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SADC Regional Agricultural Policy (RAP)- 2014 ● Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods (2014) ● Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (2020-2030) ● SADC Food and Nutrition Strategy (FNSS)- 2015-2025 ● SADC Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (CCSAP)-2015-2030 ● The Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Project (CAADP)
HIV/SRHR (health)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SADC Integrated HIV, SRH, TB and Malaria Strategy and Business Plan (2016-20) ● The Maseru Declaration on the Fight Against HIV/AIDS in the SADC Region (2003) ● SADC SRHR Strategy and Scorecard (2019-2030) ● Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (2020-2030) ● SADC Regional Strategy and Framework of Action for Addressing GBV (2018- 2030) ● Eastern and Southern Africa Ministerial Commitment on Sexuality Education and SRH Services for Adolescents and Young People (2021- 2030)

Transnational Advocacy Resulting in Increased Budget Allocation to Health and Agriculture



Pic Above: ESAFF engagement with SNC at district level in Tanzania

Significant increase was evident in the appreciation of regional laws and policies to which countries have endeavoured to domesticate and align their country level plans. This is particularly seen in the adoption of the Malabo and Abuja Declaration on Health which have resulted in significant increases in budget allocations for agriculture and health sectors in most countries, especially Mozambique, Tanzania, Malawi Zambia and Zimbabwe.

In 2020, SAfAIDS generated evidence of low budget allocation towards SRH through a trend analysis and presented before the Parliamentary Committee of Health and the Budgeting and Estimates Committee.

Subsequently the national budget allocation to SRH was increased from 0.01% in the budget allocation of 2019 to 2.4% for the year 2020. In Tanzania, through advocacy efforts of ESSAF, the national budget allocation to health was increased as follows: 2020/21 being 0.3% and increased to 3% in 2021/22 to 4% 2022/23 and 6.8% in the year 2023/24. The increased budgetary allocation in agriculture promoted the inclusion of animal improved fertilisers and seed disbursement, including animal husbandry as well as increased training of extension workers. Budgetary increases also facilitated purchase of agricultural equipment.

PSA Alliance Playing a Critical Role in Establishing National Level NSA Engagement Platforms with SADC PF



Pic Above: ESAFF engagement with SADC PF and NCP in URT

In Zambia, a NSA engagement platform with SADC PF was established and is housed at the national parliament within the PBO desk and it is called 'PSA Social Accountability Monitoring Information Desk'. In Tanzania, ESAFF national engagement with Ministry of Foreign Affairs resulted in the establishment of the United Republic of Tanzania (URT) NSAs Platform on SADC (Steering Committee in 2022 and Platform in 2023).

The engagement between ESAFF and the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs resulted in a collective agreement to interrogate actualisation of the SADC Agriculture Development Fund (ADF). In Malawi, a

technical working group of all partners of the parliament has been established to give input towards key issues of the budget and other critical national discussions like advocating for increase in budgetary allocation towards agriculture.

Significant Contribution to the Development of the SADC Model Law On Gender- Based Violence

SAfAIDS has strengthened regional engagements with the SADC-PF on regional SRHR commitments. SAfAIDS played a significant role in the development of the SADC on GBV; through being part of the TWG to the development of that Model Law right from inception until finalisation. SAfAIDS provided technical input on all discussions about the Model Law, including the review of the draft document. SAfAIDS also routinely participated in the TWG update scheduled calls, to the development of the Model Law as convened by SADC-PF and participated at the GBV Model Law validation meetings. SAfAIDS furthermore participated in the stakeholder consultations on the draft Model Law and facilitated its dissemination processes.

PSA Alliance Supported the National Engagement and Capacity Strengthening Workshop for Members of Parliament to Promote the Domestication of the SADC Model Law on Gender-Based Violence in Malawi



Pic Above: The SAfAIDS team with Malawi Minister of Gender, MPs, government representatives, representatives of SADC Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF), Plan International representatives and AYP representatives at a capacity strengthening workshop for Members of Parliament

The Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare in collaboration with the Parliament of Malawi, SADC Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF), Plan International, and SAfAIDS organized a two-day national engagement and capacity building workshop for members of parliament in Malawi. The workshop, held at Sunbird Livingstonia Hotel in Salima on 22nd and 23rd June 2023, aimed to promote the adoption of the SADC Model Law on Gender-Based Violence within the country. It targeted parliamentarians who play a crucial role in aligning national legislation with regional and international obligations. The workshop served as a follow-up to the official launch of the GBV Model Law by the Minister of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare during the 67th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. The primary objective was to increase awareness and understanding of the importance of the SADC Model Law in advancing gender equality and protecting women's rights. The workshop also focused on capacity building for legislative action and generating political will for the domestication of the Model Law through the development of an action plan with specific steps and timelines. The meeting concluded with the generation of a Communique and adoption of an action plan for further follow up on the identified priority areas towards domestication of the SADC Model Law on Gender based Violence.

Regional Dialogues Played a Significant Role of Holding Member States to Account on Their Commitments Towards Food Security and SRH

The transnational engagements by the PSA Alliance happened within the context of holding Member States to account on the regional SRH/health and food security commitments that they have agreed on. The buy-in from the SADC Secretariat for example was self-evident given that the PSA Alliance was not only complementing the work of the Secretariat, but that of Member States as well in pursuing the set development agenda. The engagements with the different Statutory Standing Committees of the SADC-PF kept the Forum and parliamentarians buoyant and alive to development themes and issues as implemented under the PSA Alliance Project. The engagements further widened the scope on understanding the functions of parliament, especially around governance and PRM.

The remarks below confirm how the engagements provided relevant spaces for the visibility of the functions of parliaments in public financial management.

“Parliaments are critical institutions in ensuring economic and fiscal governance in our countries. There are still numerous challenges regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of public spending and the quality- of- service delivery through public resources. One of the main challenges facing the SADC region when it comes to public financial management is how to retain the advantages of a strong executive, which is required to ensure fiscal discipline and political stability, while at the same time providing institutional checks and balances that guarantee effective accountability”.

Professor Nana Poku, Vice Chancellor and Principal of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa delivering the key note address at the SADC-PF convened Webinar on Public Financial Management and the Role of the Institutions of Parliament, August 2021.

“NSA and civil society are representatives of the voices of marginalised communities. Not all communities’ members are able to speak to existing regional commitments, because of technical incapacities, thus the CSOs play a critical role in engaging SADC and Member States on holding them to account in the implementation of the regional commitments”,

Monametsi Sokwe; SAF-CNGO, – formerly SADC CNGO.

“NSA are very important key stakeholders in the SADC regional integration agenda. NSA are closer to the people and community and the need to engage the NSA is embedded and stated within the SADC Treaty Provisions (Article 5 (2), 16A and 23)”.

Dennis Rweyemamu, Senior Project Officer- Policy and Strategy Development; Directorate of Policy, Planning and Resource Mobilization-SADC.

Ethical Soundness

The Transnational Advocacy Applies the Right Based Approach

The PSA Alliance’s work including the advocacy engagements at regional and national level is done within a human rights-based approach. It is the same context that informed the various capacity/strengthening interventions with different stakeholders from the subnational to the national and regional levels. The thrust on SAM within PRM is a key human rights consideration

whose interest is around ensuring improved accountability and gender-responsiveness in PRM and in this case, it is in the areas of HIV/SRH services for adolescents and youth and agricultural services for smallholder farmers. At the core, transnational advocacy is understanding that the fulfilment of the regional commitments should ultimately translate into progressive realisation of citizens' rights to food security and SRHR and that vulnerable citizens should have access to SRH services and be free of disease, hunger, poverty and poor nutrition. Holding States to account on national and regional commitments is a guaranteed provision in the national constitutions of SADC Member States

The NSA Engagement With SADC Followed Ethical Standards

The transnational advocacy at national and regional level followed the rules and tenets for respect of protocol and procedures when engaging the SADC-PF and Secretariat, respect for confidentiality, trust and confidence in the two regional institutions. The advocacy work ranged from the subnational, national to regional with each strata providing some experience and learning to benefit the next layer and the converse is true. At each level, the idea was to bring to attention the discourse on SAM and PRM to the attention of all, resulting in transparency and accountability around the set regional commitments across the Project countries.

The PSA Alliance Members Adhered to an Ethical Framework for all Advocacy Activities

As an Alliance lead, AAI ensured that all Alliance members had a common understanding of the expected ethical standards in all transnational advocacy activities.

“We have SHEA guidelines and reporting processes which AAI has and has shared with the Alliance members and beneficiaries to prevent and report abuse of power. We are transparent as much as possible, as such all the project documents are available on the website. We also have at senior management level, the quarterly steering committee meeting which looks at governance issues. At local and national level, we conduct participatory reviews which are done by AAI as well as PSA partners on an annual level basis”.

Julie Middleton, PSA Project Manager

The subnational ethical soundness is for example demonstrated by the case in Zambia where the Public Accounts Committee questioned the Ministry of Health on improper procurement of defective medication, resulting in the dismissals of the then Permanent Secretary and the Minister. The new Minister, Honourable Jonas Chanda, who was then appointed as the replacement, is a PSAM course Alumni. This is a demonstration of how some regional capacity strengthening embraced within the transnational advocacy efforts realised some positive national level benefits. The new Minister who came in after Mr Chanda started by setting up an agency to handle procurement and the storage of medicines for the benefit of the ministry and the wider citizens in Zambia.

Replicability

As highlighted in the previous sections, the advocacy strategies of NSA engaging SADC at regional level was applied at national and community level. The advocacy strategy adopted evidence-based SAM advocacy and rights-based advocacy. In addition, the advocacy strategies applied by the PSA project were also adapted by individual Alliance members. For instance, the PSAM curriculum developed by Rhodes University was localised and adapted by Alliance members in Zambia, Malawi and Tanzania and is being used to capacitate relevant parliamentary committees in PRM. Further, through documentation and sharing of best practices, replication of models and best and promising practices was enhanced in the project.

For instance, the MobiSAfAIDS application; a mobile tool for generating evidence for advocacy engagement of young people with duty bearers and policy makers such as MPs, was developed by Rhodes University and SAfAIDS and has been integrated into the PSA Project and is yielding results.

By virtue of their functions Parliamentary Select Committees exist in any parliamentary democracy and are critical in driving the legislative, representative, oversight and budgetary agenda and functions. They analyse proposed laws and government policies, investigate matters of public interest, ensure due processes and hold government to account.¹⁵ One of the most significant elements for replication brought by this regional level engagement is the power of focused and informed dialoguing. The framework represented by the five target groups at national level and the one represented by the regional advocacy strategies across the two project components of health and agriculture is how it centred on active dialogues for change.

The foregoing defined the entry and exit points for the transnational engagements, all within non-confrontational, respectful, but resilient and evidence-based dialogues. It took the format of interface or feedback meetings at community level, national stakeholder meetings at national level and the pronounced NSA dialogues at regional level and other stakeholder PSA Alliance engagement meetings. Dialogues are therefore easy to do interventions within any community and defines ethical issues of conduct in any democracy as long as they remain focused, informed and non-confrontational.

Sustainability

The future of transnational advocacy is secured within the SADC region across different development thematic areas. This is confirmed by the recognition that the SADC Treaty gave to the role of NSAs in regional integration, developed and formalised the development of the NSA actor engagement mechanism. The advanced efforts at the development of the SADC NSA Accreditation Guidelines is among the final steps to guaranteeing NSAs formalised engagements with the SADC Secretariat and Member States. This places advocacy in a very good space in influencing set regional agendas, agriculture (food security) and HIV/SRHR (health) included.

The possibility and ability of the transnational advocacy set by the PSA Alliance to effectively continue beyond the project funding in the medium to long term is real. This is clear across multiple dimensions. The presence of relevant and acceptable regional advocacy strategies across health and agriculture takes away the identity that this is the creation of the Alliance, but these are shared regional issues around PRM. What comes with that is the acceptance and willingness to carry on with the engagements because PRM is a governance issue and as such is relevant within the region and elsewhere.

The SADC-PF and SADC Secretariat have acknowledged and accepted the work that the Alliance has been doing. The acceptance is within the provisions set in the SADC Treaty on working with NSAs. When the SADC Secretariat made a presentation at the Regional NSAs Dialogue in 2021 on how NSAs can be involved in the implementation of the RISDP, there was assured guarantee for the sustainability of the transnational advocacy by NSAs for which the PSA Alliance was effective on.

The SADC Secretariat acknowledged that the roles for NSAs cut across some of these: business, advocacy, research and knowledge generation, capacity building, monitoring and oversight and communication and awareness creation. In addition, NSAs were further advised to engage and work closely with different State actors for meaningful contributions and implementation of the RISDP agenda.

The current transnational advocacy through working with the five target groups of select parliamentary committees, relevant government departments, issue-based civil society organisations (CSOs), smallholder farmer organisations and the media identified stakeholders that will stay beyond the lifespan of the current project. Personnel may change within parliamentary committees or government departments, but the mandate of each of these remains for posterity. Issue-based CSOs and smallholder farmers are citizens of any country and they will forever stay on with issues that they would want government to assist on in terms of service delivery within transparency and accountability mechanisms.

The media is a permanent institution of any society and the role it played in the current Alliance work set some precedence for the communities that will stay on in terms of strengthening PRM and SAM.

“The future is bright because SADC has an NSAs engagement mechanism. They are now developing the Accreditation Guidelines for NSAs. The role of NSAs has been engaged and accepted more”

Dennis Rweyemamu, Senior Project Officer- Policy and Strategy Development; Directorate of Policy, Planning and Resource Mobilization - SADC

It is clear that the mechanisms for the relevance of the transnational advocacy post the PSA Alliance project life span were set, especially by the co-convening of Regional NSAs Dialogue with other partners external to the Alliance. Thus, the seeds for what needs to change were sown. They are already takers from the national to regional level who are ready to carry on with the engagement, not only focusing on what needs to change, but how the change should be brought about and with whom.

2.5.3 Challenges

- Limited access to information provided by SADC while acknowledging that SADC has been making some efforts to have information on their website. Accessing some of the SADC information is currently based on NSA personal association with SADC staff, rather than through open source and this has a bearing on SADC transparency
- Limited understanding among NSA of SADC processes coupled with a lack of clear mechanism or pathways to engaging SADC at both national and regional level
- Weak coordination mechanisms among the NSAs in engaging SADC at both regional and national level. Each NSA currently approaches SADC singularly and not as a collective voice
- Lack of a formalised engagement platform between NSA and SADC
- Lack of capacity among the NSA to engage in the SADC processes

- Concerns around the feasibility and effectiveness of advocacy limited to virtual spaces, given the fact that Member States do not have a significant willingness to engage through virtual platforms.
- Limited resources for NSAs to engage SADC effectively
- Change of personnel, especially elected personnel in the SADC-PF structure

2.5.4 Lessons Learnt

Working within networks of like-minded CSOs/NSAs is key for strengthened national to regional level advocacy. This is something the Alliance worked and leveraged on with success. Overtime, it has attracted the attention of non-PSA Alliance NSAs who were keen on identifying with the purpose of the Alliance. The diversity and competencies from the different NSAs are invaluable for effectiveness, relevance, innovation, replicability and sustainability of project actions. The Regional NSA Dialogues are platforms for high-level advocacy on matters of interest to the extent their focus is on matters relevant to regional development issues that Member States have subscribed to. Thus, it is easy to get the participation, and/or audience of regional bodies like the SADC Secretariat and SADC-PF when the dialogues are complementing the implementation of development issues that the regional bodies have a mandate on their implementation.

Increased collaboration with parliamentarians and all players at national and regional level on health and agriculture is key for peer learning and adopting best practices for domestication. The Model Law on PFM which was developed through the project became a convenient opportunity and its linkage with the project was considered essential in enhancing parliamentary capacity. The directors and budget officers in SADC PF committees were coming to present on different aspects and sharing their national level experiences. They also even became members of the technical working group with the public financial model laws due to these collaborations.



3.

Building Better Forward: Sustaining SRHR and Food Security Responses Through Social Accountability Monitoring

The documented best and promising practices have demonstrated clear innovative strategies of addressing the most pressing regional and national challenges in SADC; Food security and SRHR needs of the vulnerable, women, adolescents and young people. All the practices documented either as promising or best have a common notch of contributing to the SADC regional integration agenda of ending hunger and promoting SRH for vulnerable populations.

At a regional level the PSA project has been an enabler for NSA to access and engage with the SADC structures that have traditionally been difficult for many. On one hand, the project has complimented the role of SADC in engaging NSA as per their Treaty of establishment while on the other, the project has complemented the efforts and filled the coordination vacuum of the regional CSO mechanism of SAF- CNGO. This role has been executed at a right time when the SADC has formalised the NSA Engagement Mechanism to be operationalised through the NSA Accreditation Guidelines which were scheduled to be operationalised at the SADC summit in March 2024. Therefore, the transformative influence of SADC policy structures by NSAs using Transnational Advocacy for Strengthened Implementation of Regional Commitments is highly likely to be sustained. Evidently the transnational advocacy has contributed to development of some of the regional laws such as the SADC Model Law on GBV and SADC Model Law of Public Finance Management. Further the NSA engagement with SADC has enabled the implementation of the regional commitments at national level as evident in Zambia, Malawi and Zimbabwe where the Model Law on Public Finance Management is under way, while in Malawi, the country has embarked on the process of implementing the SADC model law which will have a positive bearing on the SRH outcomes, particularly AGYW.

What should be pursued by the Alliances is therefore the finalisation of the SADC NSA Accreditation Guidelines. The Alliance through its networks should ensure this during the course of the 18-month extension period of the PSA Alliance Project. The presence and implementation of the guidelines will facilitate formal engagement mechanisms between Member States and NSAs. Once NSAs get accredited it will be easier to advance the regional PRM issues as defined under the regional advocacy strategies for the PSA Project within agriculture and health. It will be a win for SAM having started and conspicuous as subnational level interventions with regional relevance and significance.

Going forward, the transformative transnational advocacy should span to cover other relevant thematic areas related to food security and SRH such as climate change and poverty to the region's development, especially within the context of RISDP. This is a quick win agenda because the SADC Secretariat and SADC-PF are already occupied with those issues and are forever looking for partnerships to complement and drive the region's development agenda. At the same time, the integration of the food security and health components should be pursued as a priority entry point to attract the participation of AYP who are always keen on engaging on interventions with a tangible livelihoods perspective. This will further address the concerns around the attrition of AYP who are leaving project work in search of 'greener pastures' elsewhere.

At a national level, the PSA Alliance has indeed registered significant milestones in empowering communities through engagement in a range of SAM approaches and interventions. This is confirmed through effective and innovative RAC initiatives in Malawi which has resulted, among other things in increased budget allocation towards SRH in Muchinji district, construction of SRH Youth Friendly Centres and a two-fold increase in AYP accessing SRH service. The RACs

have further been pivotal in influencing government through the Department of Disaster Management Affairs to effectively respond to emergencies bordering food security, particularly during cyclone Fredy. This demonstrates the flexibility of the approach within RAC to be adjusted to suit different settings.

The Media has been a critical partner in these practices and the lesson learnt across all countries the role the media plays should not be limited to just coverage of, and/or stories on project interventions, but project work should leverage on the media as a key ally in agenda setting and advocacy. This is an entry point for strengthening visibility and the SAM narrative beyond published stories.

In Tanzania, Women's Forums have provided key lessons on addressing women's socio-economic empowerment. The fact that women are actively presiding and leading the social agency on issues that affect them as women is an interesting dimension whose acknowledgement and visibility has since gone regional.

The same applies in Zambia where SAMGs are a community-led and driven social accountability mechanism whose relevance and positioning for community ownership and sustainability is unquestionable in ensuring food security for communities. This has made the engagement of government on service delivery issues more relevant to the community's context and dynamics. The SAMG concept and model is very promising and if areas of weakness are addressed, it can be an important ingredient in the project across all the countries for effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of actions. Its multi-stakeholder representation at community level draws everyone to retain focus on strengthening accountability and transparency in service delivery.

The case for engagement of AYP on SRH issues in Zimbabwe is an instrumental response to concerns around the limited participation of AYP on mainstream service concerns and the latter taking responsibility on decisions that they make as young people.

The foregoing SAM efforts at the subnational and national levels can only become complete with the huge space the PSA Alliance has contributed to through transnational advocacy, which has involved the Alliance partners and other key-stakeholders. The agenda on SAM and good PRM is now a regional matter of concern and consideration and this is something the SADC Secretariat is keen on working with all NSAs through a formalised engagement mechanism.







SAfAIDS Regional Office:
17 Beveridge Road, Avondale, Harare, Zimbabwe.
+263 242 336193/4, +263 242 307878
infor@saf aids.net, www.saf aids.net

 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

act:onaid

