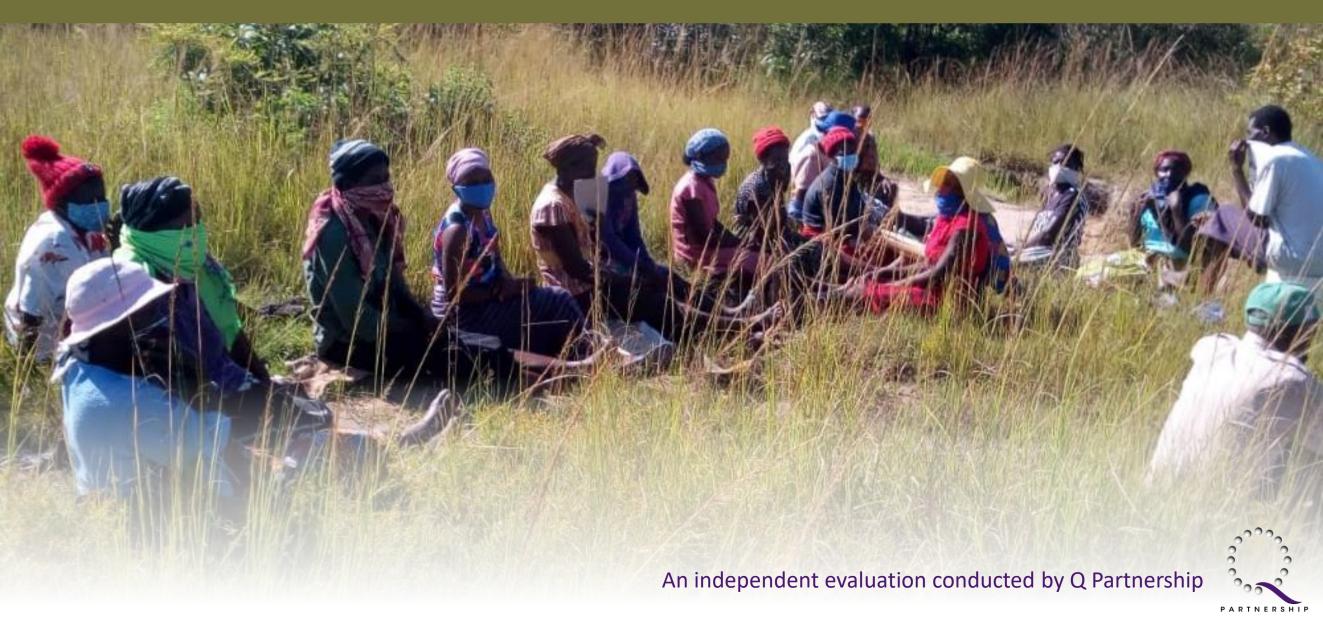






Tree of Life Zambuko End of Project Performance Evaluation



Executive Summary

Key Observations

Tree of Life (ToL) demonstrated strong capacity in supporting development players to increase the core resilience capacities of the communities they serve. This was ably demonstrated through the facilitation of PACS workshops and conflict management for beneficiary communities selected to benefit from various livelihoods resilience support interventions. As an add on intervention, PACS training provided much needed mental health and stress management therapy, both fundamental building blocks for a resilient mindset. After benefiting from ToL's distinct offering and learning how to deal with stress and trauma at individual, family and community level, communities were drawn towards a Community Vision and Community Action Plan (CAP) that provided trackable roadmaps to success. With the support of Community Cohesion Facilitators (CCFs) synonymous with ToL and trained in conflict management, several communities actively track progress on their CAPS implementation efforts. Community conflicts are pre-empted, rationalised and significantly reduced. Community cohesion was enhanced, with individuals drawn to participate and work together for the common good. There is a strong voice commending the work of the CCFS and appealing for continued support and capacity building. There is compelling evidence that key outputs which include Community Visions, CAPs, cohesiveness and conflict reduction have been successfully achieved.



Key Lessons

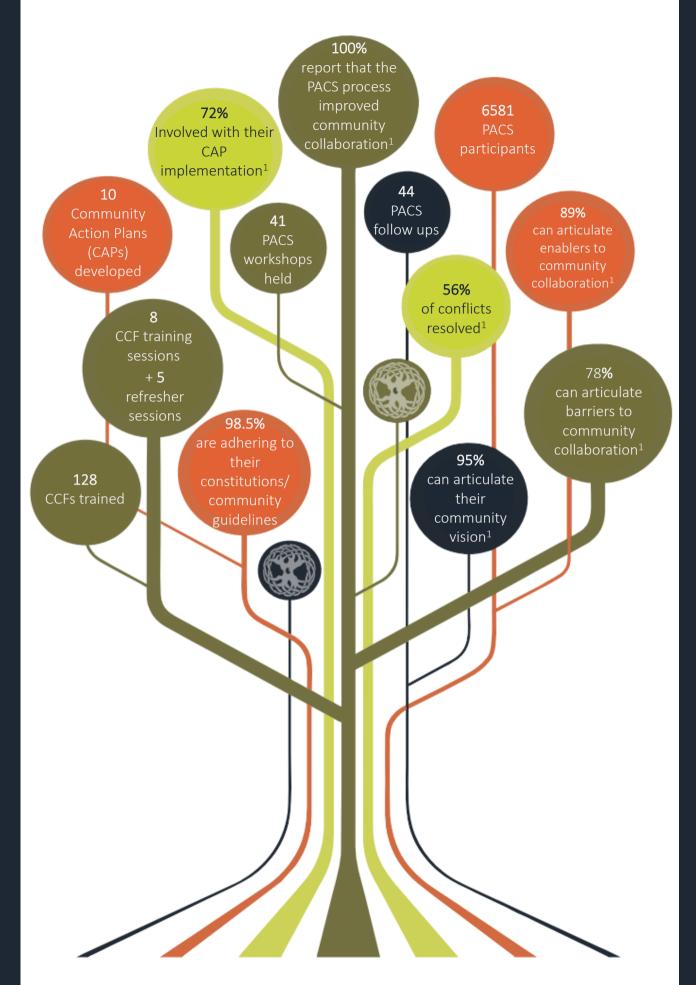
Teething problems manifesting in the form of administrative hiccups around beneficiary selection, partner orientations, program implementation and related details could be pre-empted through coordinated preparatory efforts. The sustainability of the outputs achieved will continue to demand support structures and resourcing for the CCFs, training of a critical mass of community members followed by continual rejuvenation of the concepts learnt, and perhaps ongoing ToL visibility within the communities trained.

If the momentum generated by ToL is maintained, and its gains are sustained, communities could begin to become truly resilient in the face of shocks and stressors, with internal capacity for: -

- Coping with stress and trauma at an individual, family and community level.
- Community collaboration.
- Adhering to their constitutions/operating guidelines.
- Being aware of and managing their own barriers and enablers.
- Constructing shared community visions.
- Designing relevant community action plans, and
- Actively reducing conflict as beneficiaries seek out mutual interests.

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Tree of Life Zambuko Key Indicators Snapshot

March 2020 - May 2022



Introduction & Context

Tree of Life (ToL) Trust Zimbabwe is a non-governmental organisation whose vision is to inspire a healed and resilient cohesive society. ToL offers mental health and psychosocial support services as well as social cohesion interventions to communities and other Civil Society Organisations. World Food Programme (WFP) invited ToL on board their USAID Resilience Challenge funded Zambuko Livelihoods Initiative Project, to provide a novel social cohesion component to enhance the results of community resilience building initiatives. The project was conducted by the Zambuko project partners SNV, MDTP and CIMMYT in 10 wards across the Mwenezi and Masvingo districts of Zimbabwe from 1st March 2020 to 31st May 2022.

Socio-Economic Background

Located in agro-ecological regions 4 and 5 in the low veld southern part of Zimbabwe with a tropical savannah climate, uncertain rainfall patterns, droughts and livestock diseases, a population of approximately 1.7 million¹ grapples with food security in Masvingo and Mwenezi.

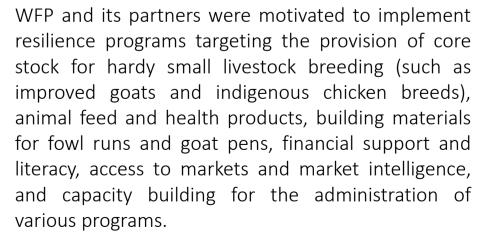
Masvingo province population figure of 1,485,090 (as at the 2012 Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency Census Report) projected by the natural annual increase growth rate of 2.2% to an approximate population of 1,767,502 as at year 2020.



Zambuko Resilience Challenge Livelihoods Initiatives Project



World Food Programme





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Introduction & Context

A. Previous Development Work

The development partners for the Zambuko Livelihoods Resilience program had provided resilience building support in Masvingo and Mwenezi districts in the past. Their various foci areas are illustrated in *annex 1*. Development work in the two districts has not been limited to the Zambuko Livelihoods Resilience program initiative partners. Several other civic society organisations and non-governmental organisations² such as CARE Zimbabwe, Action Contre la Faim, Cordaid Zimbabwe, Helen Keller International Zimbabwe, and many others, report on various levels of resilience, food security and livelihoods and other such support in wards across the districts.

B. A History of Unsustained Programmes

Despite receiving extensive support over several years, anecdotal evidence suggests that both Masvingo and Mwenezi districts have struggled to sustain gains achieved during the lifespan of such resilience building programs. Once community programs and asset coordination are handed over by a development player, each community experienced an erosion of such programs and assets. Contributory factors appeared to include a failure to collaborate on the preservation of such assets, and limited mutual contributions (resources, finances, and labour) to the sustenance of ongoing programs. Communities would typically degenerate into unresolved conflict, political or religious divisions, and individualism, while some local leaders would reportedly become unfair or corrupt. Consequently, many would withdraw their labour or resources while some would begin to vandalise or segregate shared assets for personal gain.

C. Political Overtones and the Election Cycle

Stakeholder interactions suggest that most of the communities under the districts in question are ringfenced politically. This suggests that securing multi-stakeholder buy-in and active support, management of routes to community entry, and sustained implementation access are considerably delicate and require adept management.

ToL Program entry and Zambuko partners' buy-in

Whilst USAID and WFP championed ToL's involvement, it may have taken a little while for other Zambuko project partners to completely appreciate ToL's relevance given the novelty of the project. Fortunately, after the first PACS workshops, it became clear that the mindset shifts ToL facilitated would likely enable asset creation programs to thrive whilst making project administration easier. It became apparent that each development partner was key to the success of the Zambuko resilience program.

i) Coordination

ToL consistently and deliberately engaged multi-tier stakeholders well ahead of community entry and continued to involve them in the planning staged of the PACS workshops.

District councils were instrumental in advising on the best routes to entry, co-owning the intervention and introducing ToL to its ward councillors.

The communities felt supported as they were called upon to furnish food supplies for the workshops, giving them an interim market for their produce.

Any fears or suspicions of political or other orientations or agendas were effectively quelched as ToL combed through the leadership structures with detailed briefs, regardless of political affiliations of the leaders addressed.

ii) Beneficiary Selection

Some teething problems were experienced regards the selection of beneficiaries for the consortium project. Whilst this was ironed out early in the project, it illustrated the need for a clear and consistent way to identify beneficiaries for the Zambuko project.

iii) Covid-19

The pandemic hampered the capacity of Zambuko partners and various stakeholders to effectively meet, mobilise beneficiaries, share insights real time and agree a coordinated approach.

iv) Ward Selection

Concerns were raised regards the exclusion of wards that are susceptible to significant civil protection cases. E.g., Ward 30 is reported to suffer mass destruction of houses during the rainy season. Its community is perceived to be in dire need of real time psychosocial support from accessible persons and could benefit significantly from trauma healing strategies.

v) Political Overtones

Most rural communities seem to be significantly ring fenced politically, which could pose a significant barrier to entry for any development partner. However, ToL was commended for its apolitical approach to community entry and inclusivity which contributed significantly to program success.

ToL Program entry and Zambuko partners' buy-in

vi) Enhanced Government Structure Involvement

The Rural District Council observed a need for heightened involvement on their part to maintain program momentum through continuous monitoring and support. A wholesome baseline community leadership engagement effort was further recommended, to ensure inclusion of all tiers of local leadership (councilors, village headmen, sabukus, secretaries, chiefs, etc). For instance, the influential subset of community religious leadership had unintentionally been excluded, as well as some Agritex officers. It would have been helpful to carry them along on the initiative.

vii) Limited Funding

Several interview respondents cited a need for continued support and capacity building to consolidate CCF expertise as they progress to maturity in their new roles. The limitation in program funding and perhaps scope, where selection was limited to 150 beneficiaries per ward, implies that perhaps the beneficiary per ward were significantly less than a critical mass of at least two thirds of each ward's population. This could mean that a critical mass to sustain the gains of the training is yet to be achieved.

viii) Limited Coverage

Program funding limitations in term reduced the scope of coverage of the PACS workshops. Several requests were noted, motivating for a renewed funding pot to cover remaining wards in both districts. In addition to the training, more financial support for established community assets were noted in some wards. While community contributions are ongoing, fears are that material progress may take a significant amount of time to realise in some instances.



ix) Minimal CCF Support

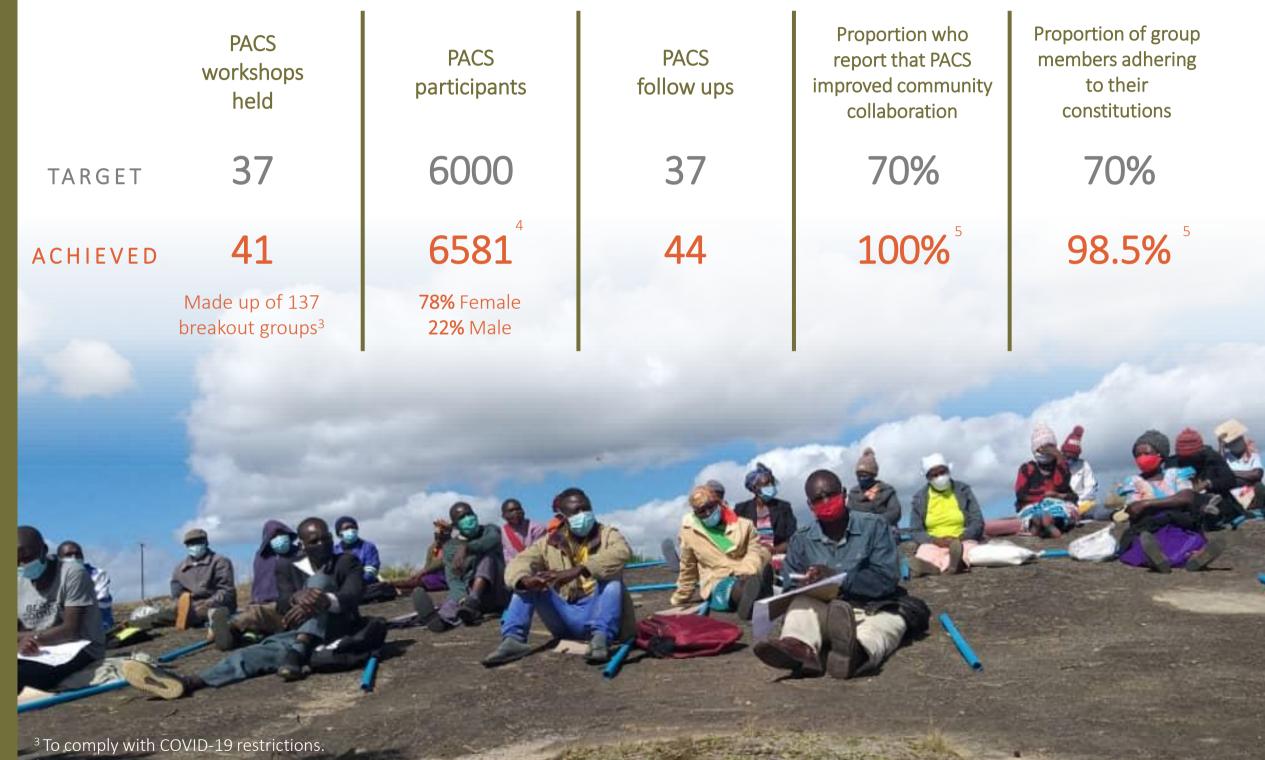
The selection of individuals nominated for CCF training was considered mostly appropriate. At times, cluster (VSL) or market facilitators were also nominated for the role of ToL CCF facilitator. This has had some success; however, some facilitators have become overwhelmed with the dual portfolios. Capacity may need to be accessed on a case-by-case basis, with a CCF profiling framework to support appropriate nominations.





Tree of Life Zambuko Indicators

PACS: Psychosocial Awareness and Coping Skills



⁴ 187 participants attended two workshops.

⁵ Field work interviews.

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Tree of Life Zambuko Indicators



CAPS: Community Action Plans



Community Collaboration

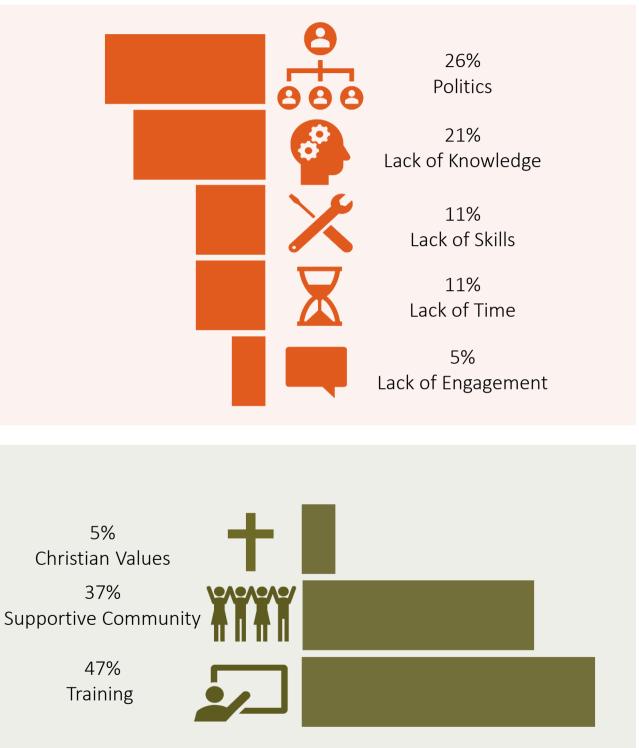
As part of the PACS workshops, participants were asked to list barriers and enablers to community collaboration and social cohesion, the responses to which are illustrated below.

Barriers

Cooperation Droughts Leadership Corruption Bad Roads Donor Dependency Intolerance Accountability Conflicts Lack of Markets Inequality Misuse of Resources Sabotage Lack of Clean Water Gossip Nepotism Youth Moving Away Not Embracing Development

Enablers

Hard Working People Natural Resources Natural Resources Savings Groups Agencies Local Government Close to Town Knowledge and Educated People Supportive Agritex Willing to Learn Working Together Development Committees Livestock Gardens Young People Schools Democratic Clear Constitution Accountability During the evaluation interviews, 74%⁴ of participants could explicitly articulate barriers and 89%⁴ of participants could articulate the enablers to community collaboration, the responses to which are consolidated below.



Barriers & Enablers To Community Development



Malice

In the past, some individuals within the communities would sabotage communal resources when they did not directly benefit from assets distributed. However, after becoming aware that community assets in fact benefit the entire community, individuals contributed freely towards the replacement and maintenance of their assets.



Leadership & Management

Following the ToL interventions, beneficiaries confirmed that they now had a collective ability to speak up and hold leaders to account. Leaders were also observed to have become transparent and fair, demonstrating an awareness of their accountability. Several leaders stated that they now work closely with CCFs and mutually support each other.



Climate & Infrastructure

Droughts were identified as the second largest barrier to community cohesion during the PACS workshops. Following this were bad roads and a lack of clean water. Although ToL's intervention did not aim to address these barriers directly, there has been a reported increase in community members working together to fix roads, for example.



During the PACS workshops, all ten Wards (100%) identified a lack of cooperation, collaboration or unity as a barrier, in addition to reports of sabotage, judgement and gossip. Whereas 37% of participants in the evaluation interviews reported having a supportive community as an enabler, indicating that social cohesion has increased following ToL's intervention.



Masvingo District Council applauded CCF impact in the reduction of conflict, enhancing of cohesion and acting as intermediaries that reduce the burden of the authorities.

Government officials in Mwenezi submitted that their CCFs still require significant Tol and government support to achieve meaningful impact across the breadth of Mwenezi district.



Donor Dependency

In the PACS workshops, donor dependency and a lack of accountability were stated as key barriers. However, during the evaluation interviews, only 5% stated issues of engagement. Training was identified as a key enabler, suggesting that accountability and motivation to contribute towards community development have increased, though some feel that they lack the resources to participate.



Community Vision

All ten wards developed a community vision agreeable to all local stakeholders, regardless of their personal interests or alternative affiliations. It was observed that initially wards struggled but eventually they all managed to define feasible and attainable community vision. This has been lauded as a unifying concept that coerces community convergence to a common cause and shared interests.

One community vision was consolidated per ward during the PACS workshops. Being self-sufficient, self-sustainable or self-reliant was the at the core of the Community Vision for 9 of the 10 wards. During the evaluation interviews, 95% of respondents were aware of their community vision, and it was noted that there was a large degree of enthusiasm when discussing this.

Ward	Community Vision					
Mwenezi 6"A self-reliant community which does not live on food handouts from donors."						
Mwenezi 10"To become a self-reliant community that does not depend on donor support"						
Masvingo 12"A well-developed and self-sufficient community with people leading their lives with less challenges, working together and solving challenges together with little external interference".						
Masvingo 13"To see a community that is self-sustaining rather than depending on donor support".						
Masvingo 15	"A community that is united, resilient and self-reliant"					
Masvingo 16 "To be a community that work together, focus on processes empower youths to engage in the process of community development".						
Masvingo 17	"To become a developed community through hard, collaboration for self-sustenance ".					
Masvingo 18"To become a united community that work together to be self- reliant and work towards eradicating hunger and poverty"						
Masvingo 19"To become a community that is self-reliant and working togetherwith the aim of eradicating hunger and poverty.						
Masvingo 25	"To become a self-reliant community that put all its collective efforts towards fighting poverty and hunger through collaboration.					

95%

were aware of their Community Vision. ¹⁰

Yes, we have a community vision. Our vision is to develop our ward and improve livelihoods for everyone.

Our vision is to see development in this community ...; we want more people to... have their own resources through the gardens and savings clubs.

¹⁰ Field work interviews.

Community Action Plans

Ward members across the ranks confirmed mutual participation in the design of community action plans, including those who had not attended the PACS training. The community action plans were lauded for being inclusive, incorporating the contributions of sabukus (village heads), the youth, the disabled, the women, even widowed and elderly women who may at times have been marginalised or excluded. The CAPS developed within each ward had specific objectives, shown in table 5.6.



75.5%

of ongoing community activities are aligned to the CAPS and demonstrate continuity.¹²

These combined efforts, monthly reviews of CAPS implementation and collaboration on resources and contribution have resulted in untrained members of the community being brought on board to actively support and track CAPS outcomes. Communities reported that they have been unified and enlightened, inspired to own their community projects as opposed to relegating ownership to donors who are only with the communities for short periods.

¹¹ Field work interviews.¹² ToL CAPS tracking reports.

Table 5.6: Community Action Plans by Ward

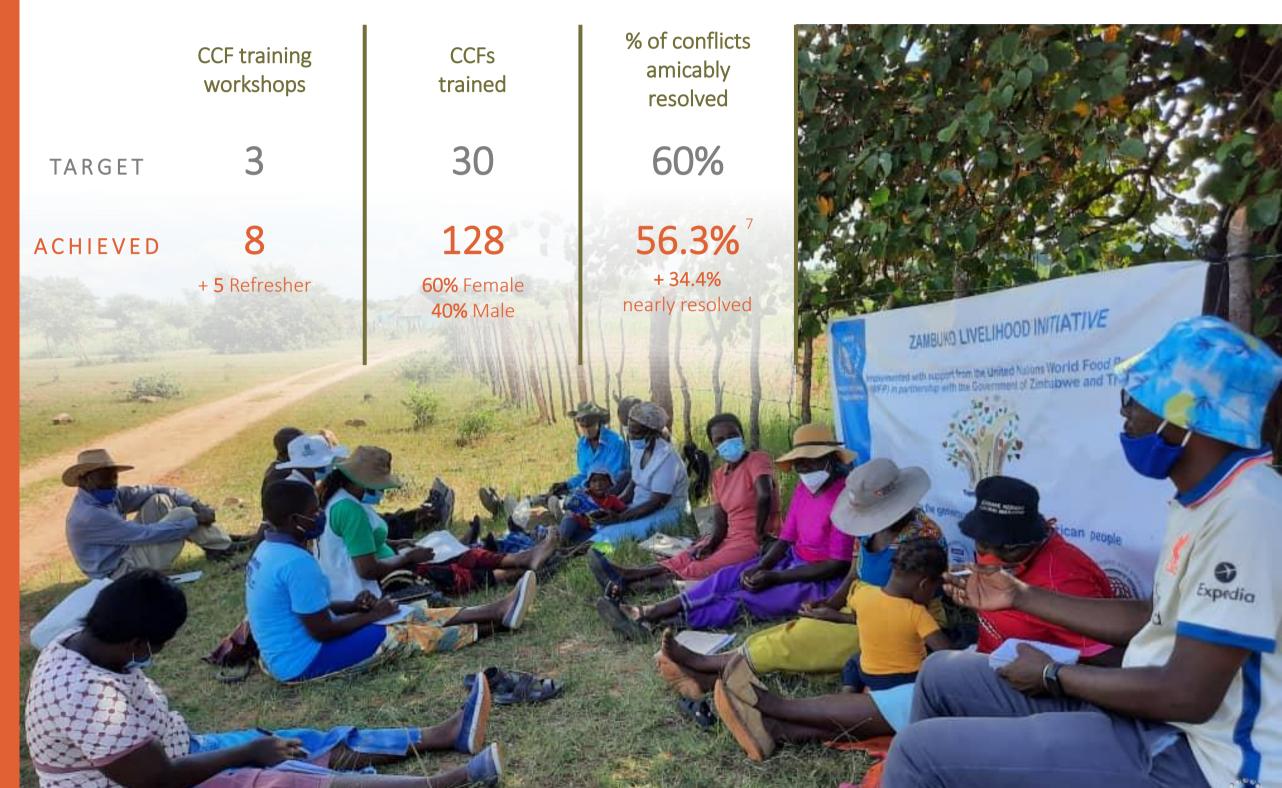
Ward	САР	Ward	САР
Mwenezi 6	 Dam construction Garden Boreholes Make use of available resources Sharing information Livestock Road Maintenance 	Masvingo 16	 Road maintenance Work on the bridge Market Boreholes Garden Irrigation Livestock Gully reclamations Dam construction
Mwenezi 10	 Improving roads Dams Boreholes Water Harvesting Garden 	Masvingo 17	 Notification to leaders Training on projects Boreholes Irrigation Clinic Repair Dip tank Livestock Bee keeping Savings group Road maintenance Dams
Masvingo 12	 Dams Garden Road construction Boreholes Livestock Savings group 	Masvingo 18	 Dams Road maintenance Livestock Clinic Boreholes Irrigation Market Savings group Dip tank Bridge maintenance
Masvingo 13	 Boreholes Road maintenance Dam Irrigation Clinic Garden Savings group 	Masvingo 19	 Road maintenance Irrigation Livestock Garden Boreholes Savings group Dam construction
Masvingo 15	 Dams Road maintenance Boreholes Livestock Secondary School Garden Irrigation Savings Group 	Masvingo 25	 Road maintenance Irrigation Livestock Garden Boreholes Pre-school Dams Secondary school

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Tree of Life Zambuko Indicators

CCF: Community Cohesion Facilitator



Tracked conflicts from ToL reports to WFP.

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Community Cohesion Facilitators

All CCFs interviewed reported that they are passionate and committed to the continued provision of community support for implementation of their CAPS and reduction of conflicts. The initial stories of success indicate that CCFs are working in their communities with the support of local and traditional leaders as their impact in reducing conflict and improving social cohesion is being recognized.

There was some initial resistance to CCFs involvement by some leaders in the community (due to concerns of political alliances and interference), but reports show that they now recognize the positive impact that the CCFs have in the community and are supporting them in their efforts. Although conflicts still arise in the communities, CCFs are confident in providing support, especially as they feel they have support from local leaders (particularly in wards 15, 10 and 6).

Community Cohesion Facilitators (CCFs) felt that ToL helped build their confidence and competencies regardless of their education levels. However, there were concerns from CCFs in all 10 wards about the lack of continued capacity building for CCFs from ToL, and limited support structures.

Ongoing online contact with seasoned ToL CCFs has been helpful in accessing real time guidance on conflict matters that may seem beyond their scope of experience or skills sets. The training of additional CCFs within each community could assist in lightening the load.

Finally, a clearly defined referral system was recommended for escalation of matters beyond the scope and capacity of the CCFs. Such matters could include criminal offences and trauma cases requiring professional counselling services.

Multi-tier stakeholders and beneficiaries have commended the work of the Community Cohesion Facilitators (CCFs) and would like to see ToL to continue to provide support and capacity building.



Effectiveness

Community Resilience

In resilience theory⁸ it is argued that it is not the nature of adversity that is most important, but rather how individuals, communities or organisations deal with the adversity. Community resilience emphasises the importance of individual mental health and the development on a social system's capacity to unite and collaborate toward a shared goal or objective.

Illustrated in *Diagram 5.1*, key informants reported that ToL's social cohesion activities strengthened Zambuko beneficiary communities' collective competence and social fabric.

All beneficiary communities reported a new ability to define a shared vision, craft action plans to mitigate against shocks and stressors, collaborate on implementation of these community action plans and hold each other accountable.

In addition, key informants submitted that the willingness to correct oneself, resolve differences and work with community members towards shared goals increased across all 10 participating wards.





Resource Sharing

At the outset Zambuko beneficiary communities recognised poor management of resources (50%) and nepotism and favouritism (30%) as significant barriers to success.

However, all communities observed that following the PACS training, and generation of CAPS, community members now make joint contributions (mukando) to support community projects.

Personal resources are shared to enhance communal infrastructure such as fences for community gardens, bricks for building projects or community roads. Active sharing of resources was reported to have increased even of resources that were not mandatory to share such as personal water sources.

These included personal water sources for cattle to drink or offer their rams (male goat) to fertilise others' does (female goats). Further, youth, women, leaders and those living with disabilities were observed to all set aside their differences of opinion and preferences and give of their resources and efforts voluntarily.



Effectiveness

Collaboration

All groups interviewed reported a marked increase in their collaborative efforts. The willingness to correct oneself, resolve differences, work things out, go and work with community members towards shared goals significantly increased across all 10 participating wards.

The PACS training was unanimously applauded for facilitating the setup of various committees that were tasked to resolve community issues. Examples included dam, garden and VSL committees comprised of individuals from within the same communities. Several wards reported month end (Pfiga Mwedzi) meetings where all community members and leadership engaged on progress on their CAPS and the way forward.

Cross-ward collaboration was also evident. Illustratively, Wards 17 & 18 are participating in an ongoing road and bridge construction project. Communities reported that they have been unified and enlightened, inspired to own their community projects as opposed to relegating ownership to donors who are only with the communities for short periods.

> As a community we can now see where we are going. There is a spirit of oneness. We feel happy and wish ToL would return.

> > Chief Representative, Johannes Manyoka, Ward 25

Conflict Resolution

Following education at the PACS workshops on stress and its impact as well as stress management strategies, individuals were becoming better at reducing conflict through stress management, self-regulation, negotiation, making peace with their neighbours, resolving problems and seeking mediation where needed. Communities were observed to be utilising the CCFs as able mediators in conflict situations. Active, collaborative tracking of CAPS was perceived to pre-empt potential disagreements around administrative issues, coordination of efforts or use of power by leadership. CCFs acknowledged that there are still conflicts, but communities are better equipped to manage them and CCFs are confident in providing support, especially as they feel they have support from local leaders.



CCFs will continue to be a key pillar of our community.

Chief Chekai, Ward 18



Community Actions



Cross Learning

Several wards in Masvingo mentioned that visits from community members in adjacent wards for the purposes of sharing ideas and learning from each other's initiatives. The active CCF WhatsApp platform was also commended for real time interchanges, support and ideas sharing. The lack of smart phone access for all CCFs was considered a damper to cross learning initiatives.



Partner Relationships

The consortium arrangement of the Zambuko partners (SNV, Goal Zimbabwe, MDTC and ToL) created a unique opportunity to establish useful networks and appreciate other players' strengths for possible future collaborations.



Women & Youth Empowerment

Women of all ages and marital status as well as youth had become empowered to speak up and air their views following the PACS workshops. While there may be cultural reservations in some quarters, women were observed to no longer hesitate to query any matters and were no longer intimidated by gender or rank. This has been noted to help bring leadership into check.



Reduction of Traditional Hearing Fees

Traditional courts (matare) typically place a penalty in the form of livestock, penalty fees or other form of value, which penalties must be adhered to when a guilty verdict is established. These penalties provide an income pipeline for traditional leaders (e.g., the chief, the sabukus and headmen). Some stakeholders reported observations regards some traditional leaders who may have been disappointed with the loss of such income.



Respectful, Participatory Youth

Following the training a number of youths were observed to have desisted from delinquent behaviours such as disrespecting elders or alcohol abuse, or an attitude of entitlement. Instead, they were observed to involve themselves more readily in value adding and income generating activities. Elders commended their youth for their wholesome contributions and participation.



Preferences for Development Partners

Each of the consortium development partners were observed to hold different policies for the provision of pediums, allowances, refreshments and promotional materials. Beneficiaries were observed to prefer one partner over another where there was a perception of an immediate financial value or meal. A synchronised program plan with an understanding that different programs require different support structures was suggested to prevent unintended competition arising between the Zambuko partners.

Evaluation



Relationships

At the outset, issues with leadership were widespread, being reported in 90% of all wards. However, following TOL's intervention, leaders were observed to have become open, transparent and fair, demonstrating an awareness of their accountability.

Abuse of power by those in leadership positions has also been reportedly reduced, and leadership renewal, such as for community assets or projects (e.g., dams or VSLS) is now openly and actively sought out.

District Council administrators noted increased community participation in development issues, and more equitable use of power by local leadership. For example, community members now attend meetings when invited and give their time and resources freely and have the collective ability to speak up, broach issues and hold leaders to account.

Several leaders stated that they now work closely with CCFs and mutually support each other. Additionally, District Council administrators and local leaders celebrated a reduced social conflict burden due to an apparent reduction in cases formerly plaguing 'matare' (traditional court hearings) and the Zimbabwe Republic Police.



Common themes of conflict in the communities included tensions over lack of transparency, personality clashes, political overtones, greediness, and perceived unfair or unequitable sharing of resources or access.

These often gave rise to gossiping, superstitions, a lack of ownership and collaboration, and heightened conflict.



Weakened relationships eroded the social safety nets accessible to individuals and added to the stress levels already heightened by the macro-economic environment.

The PACs training provided stress management strategies and social cohesion skills, which has reportedly helped individuals become better at self-regulation, negotiation and seeking mediation where needed.



Communities were observed to utilise the CCFs as mediators in conflict situations, and as a result, all beneficiary communities reported that collaboration increased significantly.

For example, CCFs in ward 16 are reporting that even those who did not directly attend workshops are looking to take accountability and ownership in the development of the community and the community has worked together to construct a 2km road using their own manpower and resources. Cross-ward collaboration is also evident, for example wards 17 & 18 are participating in an ongoing road and bridge construction project.



Relevance

A Pattern of Community Conflicts

All stakeholders including multi-sectorial partners, Government officials, community leaders and members wished ToL had begun their work within their communities over 10-20 years ago.

It was argued that this would have aided an appreciation of the rich resources within the community and the need for the community to own their own community development, rather than relegate it to development players.

Following ToL's intervention, mindsets have reportedly shifted from assuming that assets installed by a development partner belonged to that partner, to a deep understanding that those assets truly belonged to them. Members of the projects and their communities began to see a heightened need to preserve and protect those assets.

Community leaders further expressed appreciation for ToL's facilitation, citing easier to manage communities with less finger pointing and more mutual effort. Credit was given to USAID for making social cohesion a priority and motivating for ToL's inclusion in the Zambuko project.

Government departments such as district councils further commended ToL's facilitation which enabled ease of administration of various activities such as food handouts. The PACS workshop facilitation style was reported to be notably fun and a much-needed stress relief for community members. The quality of the training, engagement and energy levels and fun components of the workshop created a conducive environment for individual healing to take place, and reflection to commence. "

"It helped for us to know what things we can do without waiting for others e.g. We do not necessarily wait for CARE to open the gardens or Council to do the roads. We agreed all to work in our fields. We mobilised each other to action."

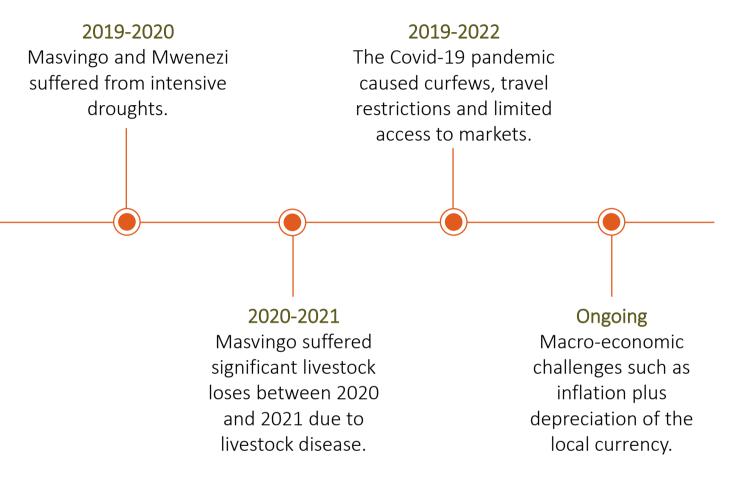




Relevance

A Deep Need

Mwenezi and Masvingo are vulnerable to shocks occasioned by economic hardships, climate extremes such as droughts or erratic rainfall, and livestock disease. From 2019 through to 2022, the districts suffered several shocks, including:

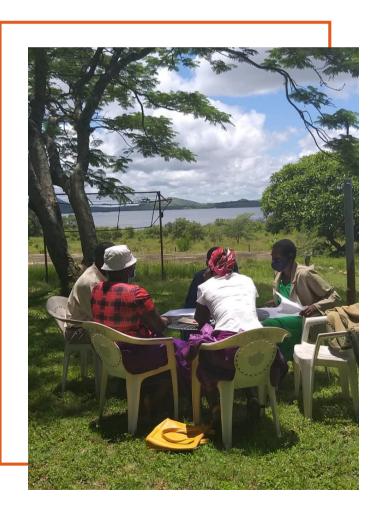


The baseline survey conducted by World Food Program in 2020 demonstrated that regardless of repeated resilience building efforts, the 10 wards spanning Mwenezi and Masvingo remained low on adoptive capacity. This gap was driven by collectively low social bonding capital, poor access to informal safety nets, the existence of significant community conflict, a lot of mistrust followed along with a lack of cohesiveness. Such variables resulted in significant reductions in the communities' absorptive capacity. The net effect of these negative indices was demonstrable incapacity to maintain community assets and projects, sustained vulnerability and failure to continue to work together toward community interests following the exit of any development partner. Both districts therefore needed people and soft skills capacitation, particularly in stress management, conflict resolution and cohesion skills, to enable them to effectively sustain the benefits of development efforts received.



Sustainability

Q Partnership sought to understand whether the gains achieved through ToL's facilitation of the PACS workshops were sustainable across the beneficiary communities. Most stakeholders submitted that there were still a range of uncertainties, and that the program's impact would need to be tracked over time. Some of these considerations included: -



CCF Anchors and Implementation Support Structures

A thriving CCF base is critical to sustain momentum.

CCFs across all wards were observed to be energised, dedicated, and focused. Some fears were expressed regards possible dilution of this enthusiasm in the future. A significant number CCFs identified themselves as ToL, evidenced by repeated requests for clearly branded ToL uniforms or regalia.

Local leaders of wards with heavy political overtones, such as Ward 19 of Masvingo, were noted to have queried whom their CCFs owed their allegiance and why they were still in operation post-ToL's exit. Conversely, external stakeholders such as the Masvingo DC felt they could better support CCFs if they provided monthly feedback to the Council through existing Council community structures.

As an interim support measure, cluster facilitators under SNV and MDTC who also attended the PACS training have been instructed to provide hands on support to any of the Zambuko partner programs, including ToL. Individualism at program cluster facilitator level is not encouraged.

Continued CCF Capacity Building

The calibre of CCF training was considered second to none in building their confidence and competencies regardless of educational levels. Ongoing online contact with seasoned ToL CFs has been helpful in accessing real time guidance on matters that may seem beyond their scope of experience or skills sets. It was observed that the new CCFs did vary in skills and physical stamina levels, with some seemingly requiring more support in order to realise their potential whilst older CCFs struggled to walk the long distances required to attend to cases. In this regard, stakeholders petitioned ToL to provide supplementary support for mentorship and coaching purpose. The training of additional CCFs within each community could assist in lightening the load. Finally, a clearly defined referral system was recommended for escalation of matters beyond the scope and capacity of the CCFs. Such matters could include criminal offences and trauma cases requiring professional counselling services.

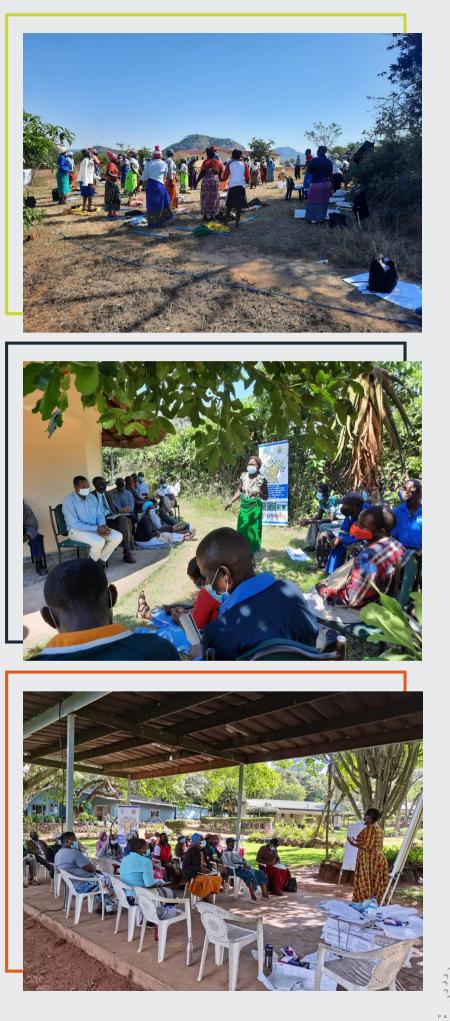
Sustainability

Support for CCF Running Costs

Several CCFs lamented resource limitations that could potentially cripple their efforts in the future. Most CCFs often cannot afford the airtime required to attend to cases or coordinate them sufficiently. Travel between villages to attend to matters arising often requires arduous long walks, a shorter bicycle or a commute. As the CCFs own resources are often limited, this could potentially limit the amount of support they can avail to the community, and protracted frustrations could eventually hamper their enthusiastic spirits. In mitigation and with the true spirit of commitment, some CCFs have started their own mukando (saving schemes), whilst others suggest CCF specific VSLs and community gardens to fund their unique operating costs.

Program Monitoring and Evaluation

Community plans may require renewal in the future, with enhanced community capacity to elevate them to ensuing dimensions. Continuous tracking and monitoring could be helpful in maintaining momentum in the light of upcoming election pressures. Wholesome, combined partner monitoring and evaluation efforts would assist in the capturing of key lessons and the refinement of a consolidated resilience building program. Going on their own steam, some wards were to be commended for installing internal review systems. Ward 19 holds Pfiga Mwedzi (month end) meetings with their chief, Councilor, sabhukus and all community members to review progress and realign efforts. This is reported to have been helpful in maintaining momentum.



Observations

Zambuko Livelihoods Resilience end of project evaluation revealed the strength of ToL's community cohesion program as an important contributor to the development of community resilience competencies. It is a tried and tested tool, and it ably facilitates positive mindset shifts within its participants. It is important to celebrate the successes; it is equally important to anchor their sustainability.

The limited interface with beneficiaries and perhaps even more limited funding was heavily underscored by CCFs, ToL facilitators, local and community leadership, beneficiaries, implementing partners and government stakeholders. Natural attrition, demotivation due to resource limitation or reduced leader support may result in a potential dilution of a critical mass of the converted.

Tree of Life's intervention demonstrated:



Consortium led interventions can achieve greater value for beneficiary communities, and greater success for each development partner.



Holistic stakeholder engagement, involvement and inclusive communication served the program well. Inclusion and integration of multiple players from all ages, walks of life and political affiliations was helpful in mobilising for a common cause, enhancing successful implementation and increase the probability of program sustainability.



Enhanced emotional wellbeing, with an important sense of ownership of individual mental and physical health was possible.



Significant attitudinal changes including positive shifts in attitudes around developmental projects and assistance can be achieved and are critical to community healing.



Material strengthening of the social fabric and social cohesion dynamics of beneficiary communities is possible.



Communities could indeed be equipped with a shared community capacity i.e. the ability to dialogue, reason, resolve issues and self-regulate into the future. These are the tenants of good social capital, and a strong start to collective competence.



Constructive deliverables such as shared community visions and community action plans that mobilise common action are achievable and can be owned and driven at grassroots level.



Community malpractices such as individualism, blame gaming and finger pointing, a lack of cohesion and cooperation, can successfully be replaced with the willingness to work towards reconciliation, community cohesion and active collaboration.

Recommendations

The following considerations could contribute favourably to the sustainability of similar, future ToL interventions: -

- There could be an opportunity to showcase the successes of Zambuko to potential stakeholders (development partners and donors, government partners and stakeholders, local and traditional leaders and communities themselves) and create awareness of the community transformation that the consortium model facilitates. This awareness could generate fresh opportunities to nurture resilience capacities and bring healing to new communities, or resources to further support communities already trained.
- Periodic, joint key stakeholder engagements during program implementation could further enhance implementation efforts. Broader management of stakeholder perceptions could help to reinforce program appreciation and support. These could include provisional, district, and ward levels in additional program partners and enable fuller program synchronisation and integration to achieve mutual objectives.
- Multi-tier stakeholder engagement could be helpful in developing sharper beneficiary selection criterion.
- Strong structural support could be installed with nominations for post-intervention program ownership to compliment program installation and nurture the continued strong will of the beneficiary communities.
- Alternatively, a sustained ToL presence within beneficiary communities could provide helpful ongoing support.
- The training of a critical mass of beneficiary community members could mitigate the possible dilution of the potential strength of collective competencies and shared responsibility each beneficiary community could enjoy.
- Ongoing CCF support through provision of referral pathways and capacity development could be helpful as CCFs mature in their roles
- Periodic CAPS renewal, perhaps with fresh facilitation to enable development of next-level visions and plans.
- Further action could be required to facilitate resolution of outstanding conflicts of a longer-term nature, such as community boundaries or land ownership.
- Sustained funding models that can continue post program installation could help to support implementation of CAPS,
- There are opportunities to broaden the scope of impact to other development issues of interest such as gender-based violence, physical and emotional abuse, substance abuse, in addition to issues of conflict resolution, leadership and cooperation.
- As an add on product, the trauma healing could be a useful ride on service to provide deeper appropriate support for cases of trauma.
- Ongoing, periodic monitoring and evaluation post program implementation could provide learnings for continued program modifications and renewal.

Methodology Primary and secondary data review and analysis.

Primary Research

Q Partnership carried out primary research in the form of field work in Mwenezi and Masvingo from the 12th to the 17th of June 2022.

35 Interviews

- **28** Community members
 - Key staff
- **3** Implementing partners
- **11** Focus Groups
- **0** With trained CCFs
- 1 With ToL Facilitators

Annex 2 provides a breakdown of the field work respondents and annex 3 shows the field work instruments used.

Secondary Research



A desk review was conducted to verify Tree of Life's (ToL's) relevant outputs against initial targets set within the Zambuko Livelihoods Initiatives Project

Literature Review

The desk research commenced with a review of key documents shared by Tree of Life covering the Zambuko project, see **annex 4** for the full list.

Organisation and Analysis Matrices

The documents were reviewed systematically by firstly organising them into review matrices, and then verifying outputs against ToL targets.

Three separate review matrices were developed to address quantitative outputs, qualitative outputs and to analyse ToL's operations as follows:

- 1. Workshop and participant tracking;
- 2. PACS workshops reports including barriers, enablers, CAPS and Community Visions;
- 3. Reports to WFP.

Evaluation

Performance

Project

o f

End

Zambuko

Research Limitations

In each ward a CCF was identified to facilitate logistical arrangements and mobilizing of respondents ahead of time. The field work was conducted successfully. However, a few limitations were experienced such as:

a. Sample size

Household numbers across Masvingo and Mwenezi Districts are estimated at a minimum of 1,400 per ward. Twenty-eight individual key informant interviewees may therefore not be a representative sample size. Desk review findings from alternative sources and interviews served to triangulate field work findings.

a. Time constraints

Reporting deadlines limited the time budget for evaluation logistics set up, research team deployment, and mobilisation. Whilst good coverage was achieved, it was necessary to corroborate primary data with secondary data to mitigate possible gaps arising from a lack of sufficient field work time.

a. Budget limitations

A limited budget restricted the research team's timelines for visits to the communities, and the researchers' capacity to mobilise and compensate respondents for costs associated with focus group and interview attendance. In mitigation, research teams travelled closer to respondents' location to reduce transport cost burdens and mitigate possible reduced participation. The researchers further observe that the sample size could be sufficient for generalised feedback from the communities representing each ward.



Acronyms

CAPS	-	Community Action Plans
CCF	-	Community Cohesion Facilitator
DC	-	District Council
FFA	-	Food for Assistance
IPTT	-	Indicator Performance Tracking Table
MDTC	-	Mwenezi Development Training Centre
PACS	-	Psychosocial Awareness and Coping Skills
RDC	-	Rural District Council
ToL	-	Tree of Life
USAID	-	United State Agency for International Development
VSL	-	Village Savings and Loans
WFP	-	World Food Program



Annex 1: Zambuko Partners' Resilience Building Foci Areas

Partner	Niche
SNV	Financial literacy, financing and access to markets
MDTC	Small livestock production, capacity building and support
CIMMYT	International maize and wheat improvement centre; sustainable agrifood systems and research
GOAL Zimbabwe	Resilient health, sustainable livelihoods, food & nutrition security and emergency response

Annex 2: Field work breakdown

Target Group	Target #	Total Target	Achieved
Community Klls	3 per each of 10 wards	30	28*
Key Staff Klls	4	4	4
Implementing Partners KIIs	-	-	3
CCF Focus Groups	3 – 4 cluster focus groups	3 - 4	10
CF Focus Group	1	1	1

Key # Probes		Brokes	Additional searches/ Ranking	Posponso	Response		
inquiries	#		instruction	Response	Kesponse		
Awareness and Buy- In	1	Did stakeholders know and understand ToL's work with the Zambuko Project?	How did the other Zambuko partners (SNV, SIMIT, MDTP, SMIT, AQUA Culture, GOAL Zimbabwe) viewed ToL's intervention and how did they perceive ToL's impact				
Relevance	2	Was the ToL intervention relevant within the Zambuko Project?	Yes/No, How?				
Collaboration	3	Have you noticed a change in community collaboration and resource sharing?	Yes/ No, If yes, what role do you think that ToL has had in the above change, if any?				
Conflict Reduction	4	What types of conflicts, if any, did the communites have 2 years ago vs now?	How were conflicts resolved in the past, how has this changed?				
Sustainability	5	Do you think that the community is better able to handle conflict and increase collaboration now and in the future?	Yes/ No, How?				
Ŀ	6	Did you observe any unintended consequences that came about as a result of ToL's facilitation?	Yes/No, How?				
Other	7	Are there any other comments you wish to share regards ToL's intervention on the Zambuko project?					

Annex 3a: Zambuko Livelihoods Resilience Program Evaluation – Stakeholder Questionnaire Guide

Annex 3b: Zambuko Livelihoods Resilience Program Evaluation – Key Informant Questionnaire Guide

Key in <u>quirie</u>	es Key Points (guidance for interviewers)	#	Probes	Additional searches/ Ranking instruction	Interviewer Notes
	Did they attend Psychosocial Awareness and Coping Skills PACs workshops & what did they think (in one word or sentence)? This section should be used to see if the participants bring up the Community Vision and Community Actior		How did you become involved with the ToL workshops?	Did you have any previous engagement with World Food Programme projects? When, how and why did you get engaged?	
Engagement			How would you describe your experience with ToL in one word?	What impact do you think ToL has had in your community?and on your life?	
	Plans unprompted.	1.3	What did you do as part of the ToL workshop?		Do participants bring up the community vision or action plans without being prompted?
ty	Did they have one and can they talk about it? Do they think the vision has had impact?		Do you have a community vision? [yes] [no]	What is the community vision? Obtain copy of vision statement if available.	Can participants articulate the essence of the broad community vision?
Community vision			Has the community vision changed the way you feel about your community?		
Con		2.3	Do you think the vision has helped the community? [yes] [no]	lf yes, in what ways?	Indicative of whether the community vision has been embraced.
& Enablers	Can they identify any barriers and enablers to community collaboration?	3.1	What do you think are the barriers to community collaboration and development?		Can participants articulate several barrie to community collaboration? 1=None (no barriers remembered), 2=okay; (1 barrier remembered 3= Good (at least 2 barriers remembered)
Barriers & F			What do you think are the enablers?	What do you think enabled/facilitated this?	Can participants articulate several enablers to community collaboration? 1= Poor (no enablers remembered), 2=Okay (1 enablers remembered 3= Good (at least 2 enablers remembered)
su	Did they have one and can they talk about it?	4.1	Did you create a Community Action Plan? [yes] [no]		
Community Action Plans (CAPs)	Do they think the CAP has had impact?	4.2	What impact do you think the CAP has had on the community?	were not direct beneficiaries of the Zambuko or R4 support?	Do people think that they have been working together better than they were before? If so, to what extent?
unity Acti (CAPs)		4.3	Do you think that community collaboration and development has changed since the ToL processes?	What type of change has occurred? Were there less dropouts in cooperatives?	
Сотт		4.4	How do you intend to continue to use your CAP in future, if at all?		Assess plans for continuity
	What types of conflicts happened previously? Have ToL and the Community Cohesion Facilitators (CCF's) provided support in resolving conflicts? Has resource sharing improved?	5.1	What types of conflicts, if any, did you have before the training and after?	changed?	
reduction		5.2	Have the relationships between community members and community leaders changed in any way as a result of the ToL interventions?	What about the relationships between community members at large?	
ct		5.3	Did you receive any help from the CCF's in resolving any conflicts? [Yes] [No]	If yes, what form did the support take?	What proportion of people reported receiving support from CCFs
Confli		5.4	Do you think that management of shared resources is more or less equitable?	Do you feel that the community has a fair and representative voice? Do you think that the community is sharing donations with people who were not direct beneficiaries of the donations?	Probe on natural, financial assets and social capital for sustainability. If yes, give examples
Sustainability	Have they taken the learnings on board for future? For CCF's- will they continue?		What is it that you are now able to do on your own without ToL?	Do you think the impact from ToL will be sustainable? [Yes] [No] Please expand on why you think yes or no? Do you think community resilience has been improved?	Type from main question, number from probe
Sust		6.2	For CCF's- how are they planning to continue their role in the community in future?		
ct	Rating the workshops on a scale of 1-5 If there is still time, ask for a summary of the	7.1	Overall rating of the ToL PACS (Psychosocial Awareness and Coping Skills) workshops (scale of 1-5)	How much on a scale of 0-5?	
npa	programme successes and challenges.	7.2	Overall rating of the role played by the CCF's	How much on a scale of 0-5?	
Overall impact		7.3	What changes would not have occurred without ToL?	Did ToL have its own impact alongside the other partners in the Zambuko project?	Indicative of attribution versus contribution
٥ ٨ ٥		7.4	Successes - examples	Can you explain why you think this is a success?	
		7.5	Challenges - examples	Can you explain why you think this is a challenge?	

Annex 4: Desk Review Documentation availed by ToL

Folder	Files		Folder	Sub Folde	Files	Folder	Sub Folder	Files
	1. Zambuko Community Action Plans (CAP) plans				1. 2020 March Tree of Life Monthly report to WFP.docx			2020 Dec ZAMBUKO MONTHLY REPORT DM.docx
	by ward updated April 2022.xlsx				2. 2020 April Zambuko Monthly report Tree of Life April CL LW.docx			2020 Nov ZAMBUKO MONTHLY REPORT Dickens.docx
	ToL Mid-Term internal evaluation report F.				3. 2020 May Zambuko Monthly report Tree of Life to WFP.docx			2020 Sept WFP ZAMBUKO PROJECT MEETING REPORT.docx
	Mavasa - 16 November 2021- Final 17 Nov 2021b.docx				4. 2020 June Zambuko Monthly report Tree of Life to WFP.docx		2020	Sept 2020 WFP- Zambuko Masvingo Ward 13 Report.docx
	TOL name database of PACS participants from				5. 2020 July Tree of Life Zambuko Monthly report to WFP.docx		reports DM	ZAMBUKO MONTHLY REPORT August 2020.docx
	registers verified by Anne 310522.xlsx			2020 reports to	6. 2020 August Tree of Life Zambuko Monthly report to WFP.docx			ZAMBUKO MONTHLY REPORT July 2020.docx
M_E Various	WFP Baseline Study - TOL results extract 2020.docx				7. 2020 September Tree of Life Zambuko Monthly report do Windows			ZAMBUKO MONTHLY REPORT October 20.docx
	WFP ZAMBUKO BARRIERS.docx				8. 2020 October Tree of Life Zambuko Monthly report LW1.docx			2021 May WFP-ZAMBUKO MONTHLY REPORT DM.docx
	WFP ZAMBUKO BROAD VISION.docx			WFP				2021 August WFP- ZAMBUKO MONTHLY REPORT DM.docx
	WFP Zambuko Conflict Analysis 2020-2022.xlsx				9. 2020 November Tree of Life Zambuko Monthly report.docx 10. 2020 Dec Tree of Life Monthly Report to WFP Zambuko Dec 2020			2021 FEB WFP- ZAMBUKO MONTHLY REPORT DM.docx
	WFP-Zambuko Pacs Training Report June				final LWedit.docx			2021 Jan WFP ZAMBUKO MONTHLY REPORT JANUARY
	2021.doc Zambuko revised workplan up to 2022 ToL.xlsx	1			2020 Q2 Tree of Life Quarterly Report to WFP Zambuko Q2			21.docx
	2020 August WFP PACS REPORT MWENEZI	1			draft1.docx			Annex 1 - ZAMBUKO SUCCESS - IMPACT STORIES Feb-
	WARD 10 Consolidated.docx				2020 Q3 Tree of Life Quarterly Report to WFP Zambuko Q3.docx	Monthly		March 2021.docx
	2020 July Mwenezi Ward 6 WFP ZAMBUKO PACS				2020 Q4 Oct - Dec Tree of Life Quarterly Report to WFP.docx	reports from Dickens		Annex 1 - ZAMBUKO SUCCESS - IMPACT STORIES.docx Tree of Life Monthly Zambuko Report, July 2021
	 Barriers and Enablers.docx 2020 July Mwenezi ward 6 WFP ZAMBUKO PACS 	-			1. 2021 Jan Tree of Life Zambuko Monthly report to WFP.docx			draft1.docx
	- Broad Community Vision.docx				2. 2021 February - Tree of Life Zambuko Monthly report to WFP.docx		2021 reports DM	Tree of Life Zambuko Monthly report - April 2021 AW.docx
	2020 July Mwenezi Ward 6 WFP Zambuko PACS	1			3. 2021 March Tree of Life Zambuko Monthly report to WFP.docx			WFP- ZAMBUKO MONTHLY REPORT August 2021.docx
	Consolidated report.docx	-			4. 2021 April Tree of Life Zambuko Monthly report to WFP.docx			WFP- ZAMBUKO MONTHLY REPORT December 2021.docx
	2020 Nov WFP PACS REPORT MASVINGO WARD 12 Consolidated.docx				5. 2021 May Tree of Life Zambuko Monthly report.docx			WFP- ZAMBUKO MONTHLY REPORT June 21.docx
	2020 Nov WFP PACS REPORT MASVINGO WARD	1	Monthly &		6. 2021 June Tree of Life Zambuko Monthly report to WFP.docx			WFP- ZAMBUKO MONTHLY REPORT MARCH 21
	15 Consolidated DM.docx	-	Quarterly reports sent to WFP		7. 2021 July Tree of Life Monthly Zambuko Report.docx			finalised.docx
	2020 Sept WFP PACS REPORT MASVINGO WARD 13 Consolidated - DM.docx				8. 2021 Tree of Life Monthly Zambuko Report - August 2021.docx			WFP- ZAMBUKO MONTHLY REPORT May 2021.docx
	2020 Sept WFP PACS REPORT MASVINGO WARD	1		2021 reports to WFP	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,			WFP- ZAMBUKO MONTHLY REPORT November 2021.docx
onsolidated PACS	17 for WEP Consolidated undated docx				9. 2021 September Tree of Life Monthly Zambuko Report.docx 10. 2021 Tree of Life Monthly Zambuko Report - October 2021			WFP- ZAMBUKO MONTHLY REPORT September 2021.docx
vorkshop reports	2021 23 April WEP ZAMBUKO PACS MASVINGO				draft1.docx			ZAMBUKO MONTHLY REPORT October 2021.docx
ber Ward	WARD 18 Consolidated.docx 2021 May WFP PACS MASVINGO WARD 18	-			11. 2021 November Tree of Life Monthly Zambuko Report.docx		2022	WFP-ZAMBUKO MONTHLY REPORT January 22.docx
	Consolidated.docx				12. 2021 December - Tree of Life Zambuko Monthly report.docx		reports DM	ZAMBUKO MONTHLY REPORT February 22.docx
	2021 Oct WFP PACS MASVINGO Additionals				Annex 1 - Zambuko internal evaluation report F. Mavasa.docx			2020 Dec SUCCESS STORY FROM WFP ZAMBUKO PROJECT-
	Consolidated.docx 2021 Oct WFP PACS MASVINGO WARD 25				Q1-2021 Tree of Life Quarterly Report to WFP Zambuko Q1			final.docx
	Consolidated.docx				2021_HN_MTM corrected 260421.docx			2020 July - 2021 January ZAMBUKO SUCCESS - IMPACT STORIES (1).pdf
	2021 Sept WFP PACS MASVINGO WARD 19	1			Q2-2021 Tree of Life Zambuko Quarterly report April - June 2021.docx			2021 Feb - March Annex 1 - ZAMBUKO SUCCESS - IMPACT
	Consolidated.docx	0			Q3-2021 - Tree of Life Quarterly report to WFP Zambuko Q3 July-Sept			STORIES sent to WFP.docx
	3. June 2020 to March 2021 combined stories to USAID Annex 1 - ZAMBUKO PACS COVCAP				2021 draft1.docx Q4-2021 Tree of Life Quarterly report to WFP Zambuko Q4 October -			2021 Feb - March ZAMBUKO SUCCESS - IMPACT STORIES
	SUCCESS - IMPACT STORIES June 2020 - March				December 2021 finalb.docx		es with conflic	by DM.docx 2021 Jan Annex 1 - ZAMBUKO SUCCESS - IMPACT STORIES
	2021.docx				Tree of Life Zambuko Monthly report - June 2021.docx	and CAP upd	ates	sent to WFP.docx
	Tree of Life - PACS Facilitator Manual - WFP				Tree of Life Quarterly report to WFP Zambuko Q1 2022, Jan-Mar			2021 March USAID MISSION VISIT Zambuko report by
	Zambuko Project.pdf WFP ZAMBUKO PACS MASVINGO WARD 16				2022.docx			ToL.docx
	Consolidated.docx				1. 2022 January Tree of Life Zambuko Monthly report.docx			June 2020 to March 2021 combined stories to USAID Annex 1 - ZAMBUKO PACS COVCAP SUCCESS - IMPACT
	1. ToL Mid-Term internal evaluation report F.				2. 2022 February Zambuko Monthly report Feb 2022 final.docx			STORIES June 2020 - March 2021.docx
nternal	Mavasa - 16 November 2021- Final 17 Nov				3. 2022 March - Tree of Life Zambuko report to WFP.docx			Rumwanjiva Weir and garden Donor brief March
Evaluations	2021.docx 2. Zambuko Internal Evaluation Report F.				4. 2022 April - Tree of Life Zambuko Monthly report to WFP.docx			2021.docx
	Mavasa September 2021.docx							Copy of Zambuko IPTT workplan b.xlsx
		4				T		PIRS sheets TOL for Zambuko.docx
						To guide def	nitions	WFP and TOL Field Monitoring visit November 2021

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