



# Advocacy for inclusive WASH

The journey of civil society  
organisations in Nakonde, Zambia

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the  
Netherlands



## About SNV

SNV is a global development partner, deeply rooted in the countries where we operate. Driven by a vision of a better world where all people live with dignity and have equitable opportunities to thrive sustainably, SNV strengthens capacities and catalyses partnerships that transform agri-food, energy, and water systems. We help strengthen institutions and effective governance, reduce gender inequalities and barriers to social inclusion, and enable adaptation and mitigation to the climate and biodiversity crises. With 60 years of experience and a team of approximately 1,600 people, we support our partners in more than 20 countries in Africa and Asia, tailoring our approaches to different contexts to achieve large-scale impact and create more equitable lives for all.

## About the WASH SDG programme

The WASH SDG Programme is a manifestation of the Dutch commitment and contribution to realising the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 6. It is a seven year consortium programme (2017-2024) implemented in 7 countries, financed by the Netherlands' Ministry of Foreign Affairs whose members - SNV, WAI, and Plan International - aim to increase access to and use of safe drinking water for at least 450,000 people; and to improve access to and use of sanitation facilities, and good hygiene behaviours for at least 2 million people.

In Zambia, SNV's sub-programme is named the Chambeshi Lukanga Sanitation Project and is implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Water Development and Sanitation and the sector regulator NWASCO, in partnership with Chambeshi and Lukanga Water and Sanitation Companies as well as the Local Authorities of Kabwe, Kasama, Mbala, Nakonde and Mpulungu.

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## Access to Water and Sanitation is a Human Right

Globally accepted as universal, inalienable, indivisible and interdependent, the Human Right to Water and Sanitation and to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment are mandates of country governments. As the duty bearer, the Government of Zambia has made consistent efforts to progressively achieve universal access, as enshrined in multiple National Development Plans, Zambia's Vision 2030 and other key policy and programmatic documents, as well as in the country's commitment towards the Sustainable Development Goal 6.

To reach its 2030 target of ensuring 100% access to basic water and 90% access to basic sanitation, the Government of Zambia is working collaboratively with funding agencies, cooperating partners, the private sector, civic and traditional leaders and civil society organizations. However, with current access to water at 68% and to basic sanitation at 36%, it is acknowledged that progress has been limited and uneven, as the disparity between urban and rural areas remains and inequalities in access for vulnerable groups, particularly women, girls and people with disabilities persist.

## Civil Society Organisations role in increasing access to inclusive WASH

For Zambia to overcome these challenges and fully uphold the Human Right to Water and Sanitation, citizens must be able to voice their views and needs in a manner that influences how national and local authorities work. This makes the participation of CSOs essential in the creation of an open and vibrant dialogue between duty bearers and rights' holders, in the increase of public and social accountability and ultimately in the achievement of an effective and sustainable progress in WASH service provision.

CSOs that represent vulnerable groups, which are disproportionately affected by limited WASH services, play a particularly important role in improving inclusion and in ensuring that Governments Leave no One Behind. The focus they bring to Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) challenges allows duty bearers to understand better how limited WASH facilities in schools affects girls education, or how the lack of accessibility to public WASH facilities hampers women and people with disabilities ability to fully contribute to the economic and social fabric of their communities, amongst many other issues – and the insight and solutions that CSOs provide improves the Government's ability to respond more effectively. Moreover, CSOs have a strong community outreach.

**'It is the duty of the duty bearers to provide WASH facilities to the citizens, especially to the vulnerable communities, in particular, persons with disabilities, and women.'**

**Martin Gondwe**  
Coordinator - Nakonde Forum  
for People with Disabilities  
(NFPD)



## Partnering with CSOs in Nakonde for increased inclusion in WASH services

Through its WASH SDG Chambeshi Lukanga Sanitation project, SNV works with Local Authorities in Kabwe, Kasama, Mbala, Mpulungu and Nakonde. GESI work was conducted in all towns, including through the creation of WASH Inclusive plans, development of WASH information materials for children visually impaired, awareness campaigns for schools, design and construction of public facilities that respond to the needs of women and people with disabilities, and the implementation of gender and disability inclusive audits.

In Nakonde, GESI's ambitions were furthered by the engagement and strengthening of local, well established CSOs that represented the interests of women, people with disabilities and youths.

Their profile, track record and robust constituency offered significant potential to advocate local authorities for improved and inclusive WASH services and also to raise the awareness of their own members.

Nakonde is a town in the Muchinga province, at the border with Tanzania. It has a population of approximately 70.000 people, growing at a fast pace and significant numbers of individuals transiting the border, which puts additional pressure in its public WASH facilities. A baseline study conducted found challenges in the limited provision of public WASH facilities and in the hygienic operation and maintenance of existing ones, with most not being adequate for women and/or people with disabilities.

## Nakonde Civil Society Organisations engaged



**Founded in 2015 in Nakonde, Muchinga Corridors is a youth based organization focused on 3 thematic areas: Governance, Environmental Management and Gender & Health. Its main objectives are:**

- To use innovative approaches to support communities, protect and conserve the environment.
- To contribute to poverty reduction by promoting health and education rights.
- To strengthen the capacity of youth to participate in the governance of their community
- To do anything within the ambition of human needs for the purpose of advancing human rights in society especially for the poor people



**The Movement for Promoting Women's Affairs and Conflict Resolution (MPWACOR) is a community based organization that works towards women's sustainable development since 1998. A long standing member of the Non Governmental Gender Organisations Coordination Council (NGOCC), MPWACOR aims are:**

- To enhance women and girls role in sustainable development through the provision of empowering interventions
- Advocate for women and girls rights and enhance inclusive and improved quality of life



**The Nakonde Forum for People with Disabilities (NFPD) was formed in 2015 to advocate for and empower persons with disabilities through the recognition of human rights, and creation of a barrier free environment and inclusive society for all. Its key objectives include:**

- To ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy human rights and opportunities on an equal basis with others
- To advocate and ensure equitable access to opportunities by persons with Disabilities in Nakonde District
- To raise awareness, understanding and knowledge on Health issues to persons with Disabilities.



# Methodological approach for CSOs engagement and capacity strengthening

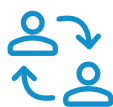


Identify CSOs formally instituted in Nakonde with a well established constituency and conduct a baseline for their knowledge, capacities and ability to engage in WASH advocacy and awareness raising works



Based on the baseline, design and deliver a training programme targeting the selected CSOs that included the following topics:

- I. (Inter)national policies, programmes and guidelines on inclusive WASH
- II. Key principles and approaches for water supply, sanitation and hygiene
- III. Leadership and advocacy skills
- IV. Climate Change and WASH
- V. Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion
- VI. Project management, including financial management, monitoring and evaluation



Promote an inter-learning, peer to peer knowledge and experiences exchange between the different CSOs. Encourage networking through shared ambitions and principles, and by enhancing the added value and uniqueness of each CSO



Support the CSOs to design an activities plan and related budget, for evidence based advocacy initiatives towards Local Authorities and awareness raising activities towards their members and society at large



Assist the CSOs to implement their planned activities, providing technical backstopping and coaching as initiatives unfold, monitoring progressive achievement of results



Evaluate and document results achieved, and further consolidate areas of knowledge and expertise for the CSOs

**'We brought the people from Chambeshi and the village headmen together and then invited people from the community to come on air with their problems. From that end they were able to respond to those challenges and how they plan to address them.'**

**Chimozi Banda**  
Executive Director - Muchinga  
CorridorResolutions  
(MPWACOR)





'We invited everybody from all our different departments for a meeting. And then we split up into groups and made our way through villages and public places, spreading messages and inspecting the state of the toilets.'

**Christina Nambeye**  
Board Member - Movement for Promoting Women Affairs and Conflict Resolutions (MPWACOR)

## Key WASH advocacy and awareness raising activities led by Nakonde CSOs

**MPWACOR** developed a series of WASH behaviour change materials in local languages (Namwanga and Bemba) and conducted awareness raising actions in Nakonde markets and schools. The CSO also engaged in the production of soap. As its capacities consolidated, MPWACOR trained 30 members as community champions, promoting key WASH messages in several wards of Nakonde, including on:

- The need for adequate Menstrual Hygiene Management, particularly in schools
- The importance of building lined toilets to ease emptying and protect groundwater
- Non disposal of solid waste in toilet facilities to prevent functionality problems

**Muchinga Corridors** organized ten 45mn radio sessions, with invited speakers including from the Water Utility and the Local Authority. The radio programmes included phone in participation, to encourage listeners to engage and share questions. Information was disseminated on the Human Right to Water and Sanitation, the importance of providing adequate sanitation and hygiene for girls in schools, the need of using formalized toilet emptying services, amongst others.

**NFPD** conducted advocacy sessions with Local authorities and line ministries, national assembly representatives and civic leaders. The focus of the discussions was on the limited accessibility of public WASH facilities for people with disabilities, and the consequences it has on people's dignity, safety and

health. Requests were made to the Local authority to ensure new public WASH facilities are built with accessibility features, and that existing ones are progressively retrofitted.

## Key results

- CSOs developed additional knowledge about WASH, strengthened their ability to advocate duty bearers and to mobilize their constituents for better WASH practices.
- Networking was enhanced, with the CSOs able to identify and rely on each other's strengths to jointly deliver their goals
- CSOs gained awareness of different dimensions of vulnerability, learning from each other's approaches, values and principles
- A dialogue was established with the duty bearers, with the CSOs now having recognition as community representatives and the access to decision making spaces, where their agenda can continue to be implemented and accountability upheld
- The awareness raising activities through direct community engagement, radio programmes and social media have reached an estimated 35.000 people, roughly half of the population of Nakonde

## Lessons learned

The wealth of the CSO experiences and resulting reflections are summarized as follows:

- Increasing awareness of duty bearers and changing WASH systems, investments and public infra-structure towards increased inclusion are long term processes that require continuous dialogue and perseverance from CSOs
- Anchoring the demands of CSOs on Government policies, programmes and targets enhances the Authorities understanding of their own responsibilities and drives a higher level of responsiveness
- Engaging with media channels and bringing the CSOs advocacy agenda to the public realm creates additional accountability for decision makers and leads to stated commitments materializing faster
- Once technically and financially supported, CSOs can play a pivotal role in bringing about change both at the institutional and at the community level in a sustainable and context adequate manner
- There are limitations to what CSO led WASH interventions can achieve in the face of the overwhelming disadvantage of their constituents, as they address a wide range of challenges and are primarily driven by economic empowerment efforts



**'Through the training, I learnt how we can be assisted considering our circumstances as people living with disabilities, how we can access public toilets, and how to build the courage to approach people and advocate for better sanitation'**

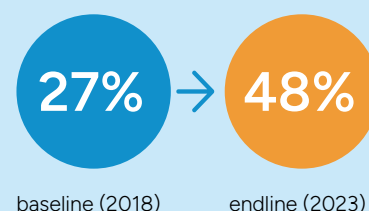
**Evelyn Nayame**  
Beneficiary of NFPD sensitisation activities

(Key results continued)

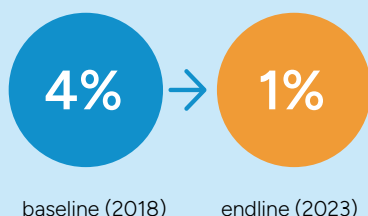
**The CSO participation resulted in the revision of the district WASH behavioural change communication strategy, and the development of a task force to focus on sanitation and hygiene for people with disabilities. This task force is constituted by representatives of the local authorities, health and education sectors, civic and traditional leaders, and people with disabilities.**

Their efforts complemented and strengthened other initiatives led by GRZ, SNV and other cooperating partners in Nakonde that resulted in:

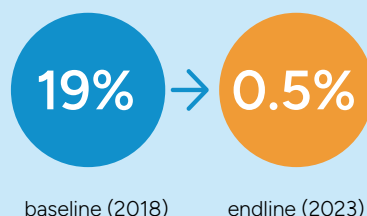
**School toilets that were clean, functional and offered sufficient privacy increased from**



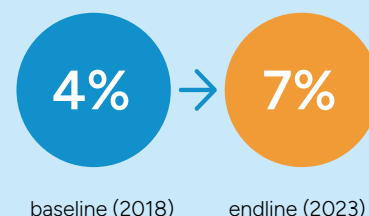
**The percentage of lined toilets increased from 52% to 66%. Rates of open defecation in Nakonde decreased from**



**Households with no provision for safe Menstrual Health Management decreased from**



**Health facilities that provided access to WASH facilities for people with disabilities increased from**





Impact  
that matters



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