Breaking Traditional Barriers

Giving minoritised communities in the South of Zimbabwe a platform to be heard, informed, and included.

A Mid Term Review of the Zimbabwe Media Development project.

Prepared by: Dr. Samson Mtisi

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Internews is an international non-profit that supports independent media in 100 countries — from radio stations in refugee camps, to hyper-local news outlets, to filmmakers and technologists. We train journalists and digital rights activists, tackle disinformation, and offer business expertise to help media outlets thrive financially. For nearly 40 years, we have helped partners reach millions of people with trustworthy information that saves lives, improves livelihoods, and holds institutions accountable.

We commissioned this research as part of the 25 x 25 initiative, the organisation's strategic commitment to increase robust evaluation of our work by delivering 25 research studies by 2025.

We have made this commitment because we want to know which of our approaches are most effective in order to bring them to scale, to strengthen our understanding of the impact for communities when their information environments improve over time, to make our contribution to the global evidence base and to hold ourselves accountable to the people we serve.

We will do this work alongside external research partners who share our vision to realise the potential of a digitally connected world: a world in which evidence-based information advances human progress, enables broad opportunity and accountability, and fuels vibrant civic debate. We know we will only achieve this through a deep understanding of the contexts we work in and a constant drive to learn and improve.

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Acronyms

CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CRI	Community Radio Initiative
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CVZ	Community Voices of Zimbabwe
CYDT	Community Youth Development Trust
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
KII	Key Informant Interview
MTR	Mid-Term Review
MYDT	Matobo Youth Development Trust
ZMD	Zimbabwe Media Development project

Executive Summary

Background

Marginalised communities in Zimbabwe face the challenge of limited or no access to reliable news and information which reflects their realities. This is due to poor network coverage or the fact that national media do not operate in their preferred language. This deprives them of their right to participate in — and contribute to — the socio economic and political agenda of the country, and engage with issues which affect their everyday lives.

In order to address this situation, Internews is implementing the Zimbabwe Media Development project (henceforth ZMD) in the Southern provinces of Zimbabwe. The project runs from May 2019 to April 2022 and is supported by Sida, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. The project, which operates in the provinces of Bulawayo, Midlands, Matabeleland North, and Matabeleland South, aims to equip independent media and civil society with the skills, knowledge and tools to deliver better coverage of marginalised areas so that people have the information they need and opportunities to have their voices amplified.

The specific objectives of the project are to:

1. Increase the quantity and reach of independent, reliable, and data-driven information in the public sphere, focusing on content production and consumption by women, youth, and rural communities.

2. Strengthen the capacity of media and civil society to inform and elevate citizen voices as key to holding the government accountable on key project themes, including governance, human rights, corruption, health, environment and climate change.

3. Improve the business and financial sustainability of independent media.

Figure 1. The team at Community Podium, a hyperlocal media start up originating from ZMD's media entrepreneurship training.

About this report

Internews is committed to understanding how its projects benefit the communities they exist to serve. With this goal in mind, the organisation commissioned a team of researchers led by Dr Sampson Mtisi to ascertain how the ZMD project has influenced and impacted upon the information ecosystem in Southern Zimbabwe halfway through implementation. This report outlines the findings of that study.

The study's key objectives were to:

1. Assess the extent to which the ZMD project has achieved its objectives.

2. Examine signs of the potential impact of project activities on communities and the sustainability of any results; and

3. Provide solid and evidence-based recommendations on any necessary corrections to the theory of change and activities to achieve the project's overall objectives in the longer term.

Methodology

The study used a mixed methods design where both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods were employed with an emphasis on Outcome Harvesting (as explained in Section 2.2). This is a method chosen for its suitability for complex situations where it is not possible to concretely define at the outset what an intervention will achieve.

A total of 12 key informant interviews (KIIs) and eight community focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with 122 participants for the qualitative strand of the review. An online survey with a sample (subpopulation) size of 165 was used to collect quantitative data from journalists engaged with the project. This yielded 46 responses, representing a 28% response rate. Thus, a total of 168 respondents were involved in the review. The data were collected by a team of four consultants with the assistance of three research assistants. Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussion guides were used as the qualitative data collection tools, whilst a questionnaire was the primary tool for the quantitative strand of the review.

Key Findings

In terms of progress towards meeting the intended outcomes, significant outcomes were noted and harvested in Southern Zimbabwe.

- 93% of the surveyed journalists reported that their skills and knowledge in digital media production and social media news generation and dissemination improved due to the training they received as part of the project.

- The project has increased the participation of women and youth in content creation and distribution. This was achieved through strategic partnerships with organisations dedicated to youth and women, such as the Matobo Youth Development Initiative (MYDI), the Community Youth Development Trust, Amakhosikazi Media and the Emthonjeni Women's Forum. The result has been the inclusion and amplification of women and youth voices in economic, social, and governance issues, as detailed in the body of this report.

- ZMD supported the creation of news content that reached — and was of interest to — marginalised communities and stakeholders in Southern Zimbabwe. This content covered a broad range of issues, including COVID-19, development and governance — including accountability and service delivery, mining and its effects, environment, health, rural infrastructure, and gender. In addition, members of these communities often approached ZMD-affiliated volunteer journalists with local public service delivery issues so they could be raised up with relevant power holders such as local authorities and government departments.

- ZMD strengthened the capacity of licensed and yet-to-be licensed community-based radio initiatives (CRIs). These community-based radio initiatives address access to information gaps for communities in the Southern Region and are considered a reliable source of information. They offer localised content in local languages, which, in turn, facilitates localised consumption of news.

- The ZMD structure, consisting of community-based organisations (CBOs), which in turn recruit community journalists, has revolutionised content creation and dissemination in communities. The ability to report in real time on issues affecting communities has resulted in the provision of solutions to some perennial problems, improved account-ability amongst duty-bearers and underscored the power of the media. It should be noted that 44% of ZMD trained journalists were community or citizen journalists. These are unpaid volunteer journalists residing in rural areas which were ZMD project sites. Others were senior and mid-career journalists.

Key Recommendations

Based on the findings and evidence from the study, the research team recommends the following to the ZMD team:

- Conduct tailor-made capacity building for Boards and Secretariats of each CRI. This would include training on governance, business strategy, and sustainability. Most implementing partners could not attend the available online sessions.

- Increase assistance to CBOs in identifying and developing sustainable business models to guarantee revenue generation and self-reliance.

- Identify and support more ward-based citizen journalists to increase coverage and reduce distances travelled by current journalists.

- Facilitate the accreditation of citizen journalists to protect them from victimisation when covering and distributing news.

- Scale-up facilitation of content creation and distribution in local languages.

- Scale-up activities that ensure participation of rural women and youths in community development.

- Create and continuously update a repository of articles and audio-visual material that help demonstrate the outcomes of the ZMD project.

- Intensify lobbying on behalf of CRIs about the Community Radio Act clause on revenue generation, whose guidelines are arguably impractical and unsustainable: they are not allowed to air commercial adverts for revenue generation as a non-profit making initiative.

- Expand engagement of CBOs which have a specific focus on youth and women empowerment.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Despite the crucial role that news and information play in promoting social, economic, and human progress, marginalised communities and groups including women and youth in Zimbabwe tend to have limited or no access to the accurate and timely news and information they need. In some cases, the information they get is not relevant, is biased or is presented in languages they do not understand. Access may also be restricted by poor connectivity or the simple absence of local media institutions. This situation further limits their full participation in the national socio economic and political agenda. These challenges of information access, asymmetry and reliability deny marginalised communities their right to make informed contributions to decisions which affect their lives.

Figure 2. A community member shares her experience of climate change in Lupane, Matebeleland North.

To facilitate participation by marginalised communities in content development and consumption, Internews works at the intersection of media, information, and development, to ensure people are fully empowered with accurate and timely information. Internews is implementing the Zimbabwe Media Development (ZMD) project between May 2019 and April 2022. The project is funded by Sida, the Swedish International Development Agency, and operates in four southern provinces: Bulawayo, Midlands, Matabeleland North, and Matabeleland South. It promotes access to information in marginalised communities by supporting grassroots media and civil society initiatives to produce and increase the reach of reliable news and information. This enables people to have a voice in their future and to make informed choices for their families and their communities.

ZMD aims to ensure that a resilient, digitally enabled, and sustainable independent media and civil society in Southern Zimbabwe have the skills, knowledge, and tools they need to reach citizens with accurate and impartial information that promotes inclusion and accountability.

[The ZMD project] enables people to have a voice in their future and to make informed choices for their families and their communities.

The program focuses on three objectives:

1. Increasing the quantity and reach of independent, reliable, and data-driven information in the public sphere, focusing on content production and consumption by women, youth, and rural communities.

2. Strengthening the capacity of media and civil society to inform and elevate citizen voices as key to holding the government accountable on key project themes, including governance, human rights, corruption, health, environment and climate change.

3. Improving the business and financial sustainability of independent media.

In order to achieve these objectives under ZMD, Internews is partnering with five Zimbabwean partners; Kubatana, the Centre for Innovation and Technology (CITE), Digital Society Zimbabwe (DSZ — now rebranded as Digital Society of Africa), Humanitarian Information Facilitation Centre (HIFC), and Zimbabwe Association of Community Radio Stations (ZACRAS). In addition, Internews provided support to a range of local organisations listed in Appendix 4.1. The support consisted of the below:

Table 1. Project activities

Target Group	Target Interventions
Community Journalists	Intermediate to advanced journalism training (digital transition, data journalism, investigative journalism)
	Support to grassroots media (production stipends, content production, community engagement)
Community Radio Initiatives	Systems, equipment and institutional support (including registration)
	Supporting development of Board and governance
Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)	Establishment of a training and production hub: Centre for Innovation and Technology
	Support to civil society initiatives (community engagement, content development and distribution)
Independent Media Organizations	Business development/management, digital and physical security aspects (Media Market Forum, audience measurement)
	Institutional support and capacity building (training, coaching, mentoring, subgrants)
	Organisational Capacity Assessments
Youth and Women	Professional mentoring, training, and access to resources (round table events, subgrants program, Sunbox Ambassadors)

Source: Internews (2021)

In working with these CSOs and media organisations, ZMD tackles issues in a wide range of contemporary thematic areas including — but not limited to — health, governance, corruption, climate change, environment and human rights.

1.1.1 The Information Ecosystem

The make up of the population in most districts in Southern Zimbabwe is mixed and diverse. Some districts border neighbouring countries such as Botswana, South Africa, and Zambia, which naturally creates multilingual zones. As detailed in Section 1.1.2, Consumer Challenges, poor network signal and high data costs can mean that people cannot converse or connect on social media platforms, relying on other channels such as word of mouth or community gatherings. The absence of different sources to verify information can also make people susceptible to mis and disinformation.

Communities in areas such as Ntepe Manama include people who have been shut out from the national and local discourse because there are no local radio stations that are covering their area. They rely mostly on radio stations such as Voice of America, as well as other stations in Botswana and South Africa. Limited mobile network connectivity is also a challenge.

While some areas may have national radio coverage, marginalised communities feel the type of information available is not relevant and may not contribute towards their community's development. Their preference is for community radio, which reaches people on relevant issues in their preferred language and can also be used as a vehicle to promote culture and tradition. But it is not accessible everywhere.

There are fears amongst minority and marginalised communities that their languages are slowly being overtaken by dominant ones such as Shona and Ndebele, also the languages of mainstream media. For example, the districts in Matabeleland provinces that were visited for the research had minority languages such as Gwanda (Sotho people), Tsholotsho (San people), and Hwange (Nambya and ChiChewa people).

1.1.2 Consumer Challenges

These challenges were known and provided the rationale for the ZMD project, but this research uncovered more detail about the digital divide that affects rural areas of Zimbabwe, with older and low-income people hit hardest. At Bhazha Village, one location where the study took place, the villagers are setting up a Registry Office. The Government official who comes to collect registry information has to climb a nearby mountain for a signal to get an internet connection to send the information back to the district office. In addition, the radio signal of local broadcasters is weak or non-existent, so community members end up tuning in to radio stations from neighbouring countries. Bhazha is physically very remote, only accessible through a neglected untarred road.

> **"I am not saying I don't have a radio or that I have never listened to one. However, I am mainly informed through the phone when loved ones call me... We miss out on some things because of network connection challenges. To access WhatsApp, we climb mountains and sometimes at night to get better Internet connection."**
>
> — FGD participant, Bhazha, Matobo District.

1.2 Objectives of the Mid-Term Review

The purpose of the study was to ascertain how Internews' ZMD project has influenced and impacted on the Information Ecosystem in Southern Zimbabwe two years into the three-year implementation. The researchers were invited to assess the project's progress in amplifying the voices of vulnerable people, especially women in marginalised communities within the project operating areas. More specifically, the study sought to:

1. Assess the extent to which the ZMD project has achieved its objectives, as stated above.

2. Examine signs of the potential impact of project activities on beneficiaries and sustainability of results; and

3. Provide solid and evidence-based recommendations on any necessary corrections to the theory of change and activities to achieve the project's overall objectives.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Questions

The mid-term review sought to address the following research questions:

1. What has been the ZMD project's progress towards meeting its intended objectives?

2. To what extent has the project affected the supply and demand of news and information in Southern Zimbabwe?

3. How has it increased reach of information to marginalised areas, increased the capacity of media and improved the business and financial sustainability of media?

4. Are people in Southern Zimbabwe's information and communication needs being met?

5. How has the project facilitated or improved the inclusion of marginalised groups — women and youth?

6. What are the information gaps that still exist? What can be done to bridge these gaps?

2.2 Research Design

The study adopted a mixed-methods design, employing qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods to answer the research questions. Given the nature of these questions, the qualitative strand of the study was more dominant, with a smaller quantitative strand undertaken as part of a concurrent mixed methods design.[1] Outcome harvesting was central to the data collection approach. This is a technique to identify, describe, verify and analyse outcomes in cases where they are not easily predetermined at the planning stage.[2] It was thus deemed appropriate for this project.

Table 2. Methods used to answer research questions

Research Question	Implementer Interview & Documents	Key Informant Interview	Questionnaire Survey	Focus Group Discussion	Observation
1. What has been the ZMD project's progress towards meeting the intended objectives?	X	X	X	X	
2. To what extent has the project affected the supply and demand of news and information in Southern Zimbabwe?	X	X	X	X	X

Research Question	Implementer Interview & Documents	Key Informant Interview	Questionnaire Survey	Focus Group Discussion	Observation
3. How has it increased reach of information to marginalised areas, increased the capacity of media and improved the business and financial sustainability of media?	X	X	X	X	
4. Are people in Southern Zimbabwe's information and communication needs being met now?	X	X	X	X	X
5. How has the project facilitated or improved inclusion of marginalised groups — women and youth?	X	X	X	X	
6. What are the information gaps that still exist? What can be done to bridge these gaps?	X	X	X	X	

The review questions lent themselves to all data collection methods. Key informant interviews (KIIs) were primarily directed at partner representatives as well as the Internews ZMD project staff. Focus group discussions (FGDs) were employed for community participants. The quantitative survey was for journalists, the only group with large enough a subpopulation size for quantitative data to be collected.

Guided by the Terms of Reference and advice from the Internews project team, the review also emphasized the Outcome Harvesting approach in data collection. Outcomes were harvested from Internews' own monitoring and evaluation processes and through KIIs. These were then validated and elaborated upon through focus group discussions at the community level. Further, a validation workshop was held at a local hotel where the findings of the review, together with the harvested outcomes, were presented to key stakeholders. Outcomes are reported against project objectives in the body of this report.

Figure 3.
Some of the participants are shown at the validation workshop.

Figure 4.
Dr Mtisi making the presentation.

The KII guide, FGD guide and survey questionnaire were developed by the review team in line with the data collection methods listed in Table 2. The guides, which were all in English, were developed and iterated as they were used, with the first few FGDs and KIIs serving as pretesting sessions. The aim was to take advantage of the characteristic flexibility of qualitative research that allows for adjustments of methods and tools with data collection underway.[3] All interviews and group discussions were recorded. The survey questionnaire was pretested face-to-face on a small sample of journalists in the districts visited before being deployed online. The instruments are as per Appendix 5.1.

2.3 Sample

Sampling was done at provincial, district, partner and community level. This being a mixed methods review that was largely qualitative, the sampling technique was mainly purposive sampling, and criterion sampling in particular.[4] [5] The selection was based on information richness sampling unit/element.[6] Table 2 shows the provinces and districts covered for the review and the achieved sample sizes per data collection method and participant category. There were altogether 168 participants in the study.

Table 3. Sampling and data collection methods considerations

Province	District	Data Collection Methods & Sample Sizes				
		Partners		Community		Journalists
		KII/ Mini-FGDs	Participants (#)	FGDs	Participants (#)	Questionnaires (#)
Implementer		2	2			
Matabeleland South	Gwanda	3	3	1	17	46
	Matobo	2	2	2	23	
Matabeleland North	Hwange	1	4	2	33	
	Tsholotsho	3	9	1	6	
Midlands	Kwekwe	1	1	1	15	
	Mberengwa			1	7	
Totals		**12**	**21**	**8**	**101**	**46**

Though part of the ZMD project, Bulawayo Metropolitan Province was not included in the evaluation as the evaluation's focus was on the marginalised, rural communities of the South. All ZMD participating partners in each sampled district automatically became part of the review in that district.

In terms of sample sizes, it was agreed that the study would cover the three rural provinces with two districts per province selected. Each of the three has either six or seven districts with

the two selected in each province being adjudged to be the ones with more project activity coverage, under the criterion sampling explained earlier. There was no predetermined sample size per district as that depended on the project coverage in each selected district; This aligns with literature on qualitative research which makes sample size determination dependent on the nature of the study under execution.[7][8]

All 165 trained journalists were included in the quantitative strand whether rural or urban as the numbers in the sampled rural districts did not make a large enough sample for a meaningful survey. To that end, some 46 completed questionnaires were received and analysed, representing a response rate of 28%.

Of the 21 partner representatives interviewed, 8 (38%) were female and 13 (62%) male. Gender representation took a similar pattern in the FGDs with community groups. In terms of age stratification, there was one specific youth group (under 35 years of age, single or married), another mixed group, and the rest were adult groups.

Figure 5. A Mberengwa community FGD is hosted by Community Voices of Zimbabwe.

Figure 6. Zhwane FM hosts an FGD.

2.4 Data Collection

Four researchers and four research assistants collected data. Most of the qualitative data collection was conducted face-to-face except for two community FGDs over WhatsApp. This was occasioned by the fact that the partner in question had moved to online community engagement as a result of COVID-19 and with support from the project.

The survey was conducted face-to-face for those journalists who were seen during the district visits and online for the rest using the KoBoCollect tool.

Data collection took place in the preferred language of the respondent, with a split between English, Ndebele and Shona and greater use of the vernacular at community level. Language plurality was easily accommodated by a multilingual research team.

2.5 Data Analysis

Qualitative data were analysed using NVivo 11 and thematic analysis.[9] Quantitative data were analysed using STATA 13. Univariate analysis was the statistical approach, once they had been imported from KoBoCollect.

2.6 Limitations

- The fieldwork was delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions. It took off once the government relaxed the rules from Level 2 to Level 4, allowing intercity travel and limited gatherings under strict adherence to the World Health Organisation (WHO) COVID-19 protocols.

- Media is a sensitive sector in Zimbabwe. As a result, some representatives from partner organisations may not have been at liberty to freely express themselves for fear of possible reprisals from security agents. One participant received threats for having hosted the review team for an interview. This was unfortunate — the review was apolitical and focused on developmental stories of impact from the partner organisations, as clearly demonstrated by the harvested outcomes.

- The coverage of the project also limited the sample per district. There were not enough journalists in the sampled rural communities to justify a quantitative survey, therefore this was opened up to all the journalists who participated in the project.

- The available baseline data was contextual rather than specific to the project, limiting its use. This was an Internews sponsored February 2021 GeoPoll Zimbabwe Media Ratings report assessing the audience reach of most news channels in Zimbabwe. Whilst it covered the project sites at provincial level, the content had a national focus which curtailed proper comparison of the before and after situations.

3. Results

3.1 What Has Been the Progress Towards Meeting the Intended Outcomes?

In terms of progress towards meeting the intended outcomes, the ZMD project was remarkable. A number of significant outcomes were harvested as part of this study.

These outcomes can be grouped according to the objectives of the project, particularly i and ii. Objective iii has been more challenging to achieve, as outlined later.

3.1.1 Objective i

This objective focussed on *increasing the quantity and reach of independent, reliable, and data-driven information in the public sphere*. The outcomes gathered during the research process demonstrated not only that ZMD had supported and enabled high quality content on a range of critical local issues, but that the reporting had led to specific actions of benefit to those communities.

3.1.1.1 The Tsholotsho San Community National Identity Documentation

Of particular note is the story written by a Community Podium content creator reporting from Bulawayo for rural Matabaleland who wanted to raise awareness of the marginalisation of the undocumented San community in Tsholotsho. The community has limited engagement with human rights and members are not registered nationally and do not have national identification cards. When people die, burials are difficult without birth records to process burial orders.

After the story was published in online publications and on social media, high-level government officials from the capital city Harare visited. These included the Minister of Home Affairs, the department that issues national identification documents, and the First Lady. They pledged to set a set up a mobile registration office in the area in 2021 so that San people could be documented just like all Zimbabweans. Furthermore, the officials came with food and clothes donations and then asked to submit a traditional leadership structure that has the Traditional Chief at the helm for fair representation in Parliament. In addition, they discussed other issues like school fees payment, access to formal education and the preservation of San culture. Towards the end of this study, it was confirmed that the national registration of 3000 members of the San community had taken place, with each issued with a birth certificate and a national registration card, and the Chief installed.

> **"So we sat and said the right thing is to form our organisation so that we have our voice... because there was no development, human rights were not there.... Then we started this organisation. What we were mostly doing, we were advocating for many things. Firstly, it was development, as it was not there in the minds of the elderly in the community. Secondly, it was education, it was not there. Children from the community ended school at Grade 3, those are the ones said to be educated. When they end at Grade 3, they go and herd cattle in cattle ranches and live there. Human rights in the minds of the community were not there."**
>
> — Key informant, San Community, Tsholotsho, Matobo District.

3.1.1.2 Hwange Town Supply of Basic Services

Substantial action was also prompted for another community by a report produced and posted on Facebook by Hwange FM and subsequently amplified by other media including CITE, The Standard and The Chronicle. Local people had seen a decline in the provision of basic services by the Hwange Colliery Company, the main mining company in the district and the institution responsible for providing clean water in concession areas. This posed the threat of increased water-borne disease and was particularly worrying given the need for people to maintain hygiene measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19. After the story broke, the company started sending out water bowsers to the affected areas.

3.1.1.3 Deka River Pollution

The above was not the only outcome achieved by Hwange FM's reporting: Pollution in the Deka River and road damage caused by heavy trucks had increased as a result of accelerated mining activities in the Hwange district, yet there was no action from the authorities until Hwange FM published three podcast episodes and a story on their Facebook page about the issue. The authorities then called a District Coordinating Committee (DCC) meeting to which the responsible company was summoned. Things then started to change for the better: pollution reduced and repair of the damaged roads was undertaken, with the Government introducing waste disposal policies to be adhered to by the mining companies. As one stakeholder notes, *"Deka stories have illustrated the importance of community media."*

3.1.1.4 The Save Dinde Initiative

In 2020, the government gave mining rights to a Chinese investor without consulting the Dinde community who had ancestral rights to the land concerned, and to whom the implications had not been explained. Hwange FM produced a documentary on the issue as part of a wider Save Dinde initiative. They wanted to amplify community voices and raise awareness

of the need to avoid the same environmental pollution impacting the Deka area. In response to Save Dinde, a parliamentary team was dispatched in March 2021.

3.1.1.5 The Sontala Clinic Construction

In other cases, reporting sparked support, enabling the completion or repair of important community buildings. In 2020, a Community Podium content creator wrote a story about the Ward 12 villagers in Sontala, Matobo, trying to finish the construction of a clinic to increase local access to primary health care, for which they currently travelled seven or eight kilometres. This was picked up and amplified by other platforms, including CITE with 33,000 followers and Kubatana. com with 147,000 followers on Twitter. After reading the story on social media, diaspora in Australia and the UK responded by donating building material, and ten bags of cements were provided by the Children's Hope Foundation.

Figure 7. Consultant conducting a focus group discussion with villagers at Sontana clinic construction site, Sontala village, Matobo District. Sontala clinic received building material after a community journalist wrote a story about villagers struggling to complete the community initiated clinic. The clinic received donations after well-wishers in Zimbabwe and overseas read the story., The building was at roofing level during data collection period. The clinic is the building in the background. **Source: Survey data**

3.1.1.6 Bhaza Registry Office

When rural Bazha villagers in Ward 18 were granted permission to have their own Registry Office in 2012 by Maphisa Rural District, they pooled resources and started building. Progress was slow until a Community Podium content creator reported their efforts, which led to an increase in donations of money and building materials. At the time of the fieldwork, the Registry office was near completion, and the Chairperson of the project said: *"We are happy to say we witnessed an upsurge in donations from members soon after Community Podium publicised our initiative. A lot of people developed interest and joined our WhatsApp group. We are pleased to see elders, women, and youth united for a common cause."*

Figure 8. Bhazha Registry office under construction in Bhazha village, Matobo District. The Registry office received building material after a community journalist wrote a story about villagers struggling to complete the community initiated registry office. The clinic received donations after well-wishers in Zimbabwe and overseas read the story, The building had been roofed during data collection period. **Source: Survey data**

3.1.1.7 Manama Classroom Block Destruction and the Tsholotsho Floods

In Ward 14, Gwanda, a community journalist with Ntepe Manama CRI reported on the destruction of a classroom block and loss of a transformer valued at R27,000 during heavy

rain. The story was distributed through bulk SMS and WhatsApp, prompting the local and diaspora community — including the local MP — to donate to the repair. These donations were matched by Community Development Funds (CDF). During the rainy season in 2021, low land Tsholotsho was hit by strong floods that destroyed houses, crops and crop harvests, and drowned livestock. A Community Podium content creator reported the impact on Nemane Village before mainstream media. This ensured it was the first community in Tsholotsho to receive help from the Dutch Reformed Church by way of food hampers and blankets.

3.1.1.8 The Buchwa- Rutenga Road

Community Voices Zimbabwe have published a range of stories leading to concrete outcomes. For example, in Mberengwa, the community has long experienced poor roads. An article published by Community Voices Zimbabwe on the need to improve the Buchwa-Rutenga Road prompted the authorities to start work. Follow up articles provided clarity on the type of improvements being made and enabled continued engagement with the Council and MPs in order to ensure that the project would be completed.

3.1.1.9 Kwekwe Dumpsites and Poor Waste Management

The Kweke community had long endured the environmental and health risks associated with dumpsites and poor waste management. Community Voices published an article resulting in the Kwekwe City Council clearing the dumpsites and the community becoming more vigilant with regards to waste management. A podcast further explored the issue: the local Councillor, the Mayor and environmental experts came together 'on air' to discuss recommendations on sustainable solutions. Some of the actions which emerged included the establishment of Community Health Plans for each ward whereby community health workers train 30 community members to help in raising awareness and monitoring local waste management. The adoption of this model has been overwhelming, with Community Voices Zimbabwe also facilitating meetings for regular feedback.

3.1.1.10 The Murerezi Dam

There was a drought in 2020. Cattle belonging to the community around Murerezi Dam were drowning in the mud whilst they tried to quench their thirst from the little water remaining in the dam. Community leadership came together as Ward Development Committees (WADCOs) and Village Development Committees (VIDCOs) to come up with suggestions on how to address the issue at hand. Village heads therefore put together contributions of $10 per person in order to engage the council. Since the resources were insufficient, the Councillor, who is a community journalist, presented the story to Community Voices. The story was then written by Mr Maphosa and flighted on the Community Voices platforms (Facebook and

Twitter platforms) as a means of amplifying the issue.

The local and diaspora community made contributions which were managed by the Local Community Development Trust and enabled the dam to be scooped. The 2020-21 rains filled the dam, allowing the community and its livestock access to water, as well as the resuscitation of community gardens close to the dam. These are a source of livelihoods and nutrition for the community.

Figure 9. Murerezi dam with mounds of soil which were scooped by the excavator mobilised and paid for as a result of a published article that brought attention to the plight of communities around the dam.

Figure 10. Community garden revived providing nutrition and income for communities around the Murerezi dam.

> **"We had a challenge during the 2019-2020 season due to the drought. Our only dam, Murerezi Dam, dried up and there was no water left in the dam, even the fish died. Our cattle would consistently drown in the mud. A story was written on the issue which attracted the audience of our children, locally and in the diaspora. We put in contributions and hired equipment to scoop the dam with support from the local leadership. We are now confident that the dam will not run out and our livestock will have water."**
>
> — Key informant (Councillor), Mberengwa Ward.

3.1.1.11 Access to Education for Children Living with Disabilities

The COVID-19 pandemic further disadvantaged children living with disabilities as most had limited access to education due to the special needs care requirements and or need for special guardians. Generally, most of these students did not have access to online learning. An article was written by Community Voices Zimbabwe on the theme of access to education for children living with disabilities which resulted in support being given by Plan International and an unnamed trust fund. CVZ also received a request from Association for the Disabled and Elderly Persons in Zimbabwe to visit their area and also capture the lived realities of children with disabilities, and were invited by the Gokwe Town Council Deputy Mayor to visit the area to do the same. One result of this coverage was the introduction of one on one physical lessons for these children.

3.1.2 Objective ii

This objective was focussed on strengthening media and civil society organisations which could drive and sustain the flow of information referenced above. Again, the outcomes gathered show positive signs that this is underway in some cases.

3.1.2.1 Ntepe-Manama Community Radio Initiative

This CRI has the potential to serve 65,000 people in 13 wards which had previously been denied access to information, thanks to poor mobile connectivity and no local radio frequency. The organisation was granted a broadcast licence by the Broadcasting Association of Zimbabwe, but had no sustainable source of income. ZMD provided training for the Secretariat and the Board and also provided two grants of $5,000 to strengthen programming and operations. ZMD also supported Ntepe-Manama towards its vision of greater community engagement and ownership, helping the organisation secure space at the Manama Bible School to renovate as a radio studio. Local councillors have expressed their support for Ntepe-Manama

Community Radio Initiative on social media.

Ntepe-Manama has been working with its cohort of community journalists to source news from the community and distribute it through community dialogues, local leadership networks, bulk SMS campaigns, WhatsApp and flash drives played at beerhalls and shops — also known as beerhall casting, shop casting and combi casting. One content creator talked of how these efforts were key in ensuring that, 'no one is left behind.'

> **"We may be happy that we can access news on the phone but that is more for the young. As the elderly we can no longer read as our eyesight is bad. It is therefore important to have a local radio station to listen to."**
>
> — Key informant, (CRI Board Member), Ntepe Manama

3.1.2.2 Local Languages COVID-19 Information Dissemination

Hwange FM has used support provided by ZMD to strengthen their use of online platforms. They have created a range of community-oriented WhatsApp groups and make use of bulk SMS. At the time of writing, they have 2,600 followers on Facebook and 320 on Twitter. They were also able to generate some revenue through partnerships, as discussed below. After the breakout of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a pressing need for COVID-19 information to be available in local languages for improved awareness and to dispel myths and misconceptions. Hwange District has 6 local languages, hence its nickname the 'rainbow district.' In April 2020, during the initial lockdown, HFM did a COVID-19 story on their Facebook page, some podcasts and also used bulk SMSs to effectively reach the rural communities, thanks to the ZMD training. By September 2021, their Facebook story had realised over 5,000 hits and Kubatana.net, a popular content site with over 143,100 followers on Twitter, picked up some of their podcasts. One stakeholder commented on the value of Hwange FM's COVID-19 coverage: *"When this programme was started, people's understanding of COVID-19 was a little low...the importance of masking up, sanitising and vaccination was not fully recognised, but as the Hwange FM increased and localised its programmes, there was a change in communication of COVID-19."*

> **"We have also been using offline type of disseminating that content like the one we mentioned — we would put our content on memory sticks and give it to kombi drivers, we called it kombi-casting. Then we also took our content to shops like TM and some small shops that were around and we used to call it shop-casting and now there is WhatsApp-casting."**
>
> — FGD Participant, Hwange FM.

> **"Yah, health issues like the COVID-19, I remember when there was a time, a number of people who died from that area and most people were thinking that it's malaria, so I saw a lot of podcasts that spoke about it really checking if it wasn't COVID-19 and this happened last year, and actually the Ministry of Health from Gwanda took a team and went down there to do some tests because apparently some communities had been affected and they kept on saying it was malaria"**
>
> — Key informant (CYDT Program Officer)

3.1.2.3 Trust and Interaction Between the Community and the Media

As noted in the previous section, Community Voices Zimbabwe in Kwekwe has produced a range of stories which sparked positive outcomes. Historically, there had been limited trust and interaction between the community and the media. However, this was improved through the identification of — and support to — citizen journalists who are part of the community and more easily approached by community members with a story to tell.

Engagement now takes place at all levels from the community to local councillors, the Mayor, Member of Parliament and Kwekwe Residents Associations. One example of how this works in practice was an incident in Redcliff where a young man was brutally assaulted. The matter was taken to the police but no action followed. The boy's father then approached the citizen journalist, who published the story with support from local leadership including the Mayor. The article resulted in the deployment of police officers and soldiers in the area. These examples facilitated by Community Voices Zimbabwe give confidence to the community that their voices are being heard and that action is being taken.

Community Voices Zimbabwe has received cumulative funding of $10,000. The funding was used for various institutional capacity strengthening components, such as setting up a website, training citizen journalists, producing documentaries, news articles and podcasts, media monitoring and conducting community listening clubs in various districts within the Midlands province. All staff members received one or more training sessions, which included mid career upscaling, political reporting, COVID-19 reporting, health reporting, multi media content development and presentation, data journalism and digital security training.

3.1.2.4 Youth Organisations

ZMD has made targeted efforts to support organisations which focus on youth. Matobo Youth Development Trust (MYTD) received training and a small grant which allowed them to launch a magazine focusing on local youth and development news — particularly needed given the lack of coverage of the area by mainstream media. The magazine is distributed in PDF

format on Twitter and WhatsApp, improving access to information and giving young people a platform to share their views. At the time of writing, MYTD have more than 1,000 followers on Facebook and more than 1,200 on Twitter. They also created WhatsApp groups for all the Matobo District wards except for Ward 1 and 12, and an apex WhatsApp group comprising members from all wards. These WhatsApp groups also comprise duty bearers such has the Ministry responsible for Youth Affairs, which has improved the relationship between the youths and local government authorities and has resulted in three written requests to RDC, which have been responded to. Prior to the ZMD project, citizens had lost faith in local authorities.

MYDT has cordial relationships with the local media community that share its stories on their social media platforms for a wider reach and readership, for example, Community Podium and Centre for Innovation and Technology (CITE). They were also supported to strengthen their administrative and business functions, receiving training in report writing to document and file its activities as part of its MOU for operating across Matobo District, and gaining access to an office in the Central Business District Centre in Maphisa to raise income offering printing and photocopying services. The Matobo Youth Development Officer confirms that support from the ZMD project has improved youth engagement: *"I have gone out with them, they will be discussing youth issues on human rights, sex and reproductive health, gender-based violence, conflict management, governance and accountability with local communities with youths,"* and notes the popularity of the magazine locally.

Elsewhere, young people with the Community Youth Development Trust (CYDT) received training in content production. They have developed podcasts covering various themes including health, COVID-19 and other community development initiatives. These have been distributed through WhatsApp across the different wards where CYDT has representation and where radio signals are weak and where there is limited access to Zimbabwean content. CYDT worked with the Ministry of Health to dispel misconceptions about COVID-19.

3.1.3 Objective iii

This objective focussed on *improving the business and financial sustainability of independent media.* Most of the implementing partners were still struggling with this at the time the study was conducted. In general, they lacked equipment, financial resources and exposure, and the funding made available through ZMD was inadequate to meet their longer term operational needs.

COVID-19 induced lockdowns exacerbated the situation. Many people were worse off economically, which meant they could not afford data to access the internet and, therefore, the content provided by ZMD partners. This was particularly problematic for those community

radio stations without formal registration. Two amongst them, Zhwane FM and Hwange FM, rely heavily on social media platforms to distribute content and engage audiences. They cannot broadcast as they are yet to be licensed. Hwange FM was able to overcome this to some extent. They have been raising revenue through podcasts which they produce for client organisations for a fee. They share the proceeds with volunteers to motivate them by covering certain costs incurred in their activities.

3.2 To What Extent Has the ZMD Project Affected the Supply and Demand of News and Information in Southern Zimbabwe?

The objectives of ZMD discussed in the previous section were designed in relation to the wider context and rationale for the project. ZMD was created to ensure that people had access to more information which reflected their concerns and met their needs. In other words, to align demand and supply.

To understand whether this objective was underway, the research team compared the news and information that people wanted with the news and information made available to them through the project. They used a mixed-methods approach which included key informant interviews and questionnaire surveys to establish content creators' most frequently covered news, set against information needs expressed in the focus group discussions with the communities.

They conducted and transcribed 20 KIIs and FGDs from the six survey districts and uploaded them onto NVivo. Through this process, they identified a total of 48 news topics that respondents prioritised. The most commonly cited news topic was COVID-19, which may be expected given the timing of the project. Before the ZMD project, these communities might have been denied vital information about the virus by their remoteness in relation to public service centres, lack of connectivity, and literacy levels. In addition, most of the public health announcements are made in English, Ndebele and Shona. As part of ZMD, project partner and community radio station, Hwange FM, disseminated COVID-19 information in Nambya, a language local to the Hwange District.

Other topics mentioned are shown in Table 4 and include current affairs in development, mining activities, environment, health, road conditions, and issues that affect women. This aligns with the fact that South Zimbabwe is deemed underdeveloped, and also that it is rich in minerals and the host for related mining activities. Roads connecting remote areas

to towns and cities in the region remained untarred during the data collection period. Local authorities for years had neglected the roads; as such, they became unusable. In some cases, mining activities were causing accidents, especially in Hwange District, as drivers failed to observe traffic rules. It is clear that people want information that relates to the day-to-day reality of their lives.

Table 4. Demanded news in Southern Zimbabwe

Themes (codes) \ Demanded News	Coding Reference (Mention)	Percentage (%)	ZMD project Thematic Areas
COVID-19 Updates	23	10.4	Health
Development	20	9.0	Climate Change/Cross-cutting
Governance, Accountability, Service Delivery	19	8.6	Governance
Mining	15	6.8	Environment
Women Issues and Empowerment	13	5.9	Cross-cutting
Environment	12	5.4	Environment
Health	9	4.1	Health
Arts and Culture	9	4.1	Cross-cutting
Roads and Accidents	8	3.6	Cross cutting
Human Rights	7	3.2	Human rights
Parenting and Children Rights	9	4.1	Cross cutting
Current Affairs	7	3.2	Cross cutting
Corruption	5	2.3	Corruption
Policy	5	2.3	Governance
Schools	5	2.3	Cross cutting
Gender Based Violence	4	1.8	Cross cutting
Disabled People	3	1.4	Cross cutting
Drought and Relief	3	1.4	Climate change
Economy	3	1.4	Cross cutting
Electoral Processes	3	1.4	Human rights
Farming	3	1.4	Cross-cutting
Youth	3	1.4	Cross cutting
Investors	3	1.4	Cross cutting
Social	3	1.4	Cross cutting
Waste Management	3	1.4	Environment

Source: Survey Data (2021)

Zimbabwe is a patriarchal society, but women make up 52% of the population. In that case, issues affecting women automatically become important and of value to citizens so that

women are protected or empowered as they are considered marginalised.

Other demanded news listed in Table 4 and constituting 11.3% includes the Auditor General's report on climate change, devolution, and energy. Additionally, other topics mentioned were entrepreneurship, water and sanitation, debt accumulation and management, eviction, illicit financial flows, local music, market information, available opportunities for citizens, mopane worms, property rights, religion, and tourism.

The yellow highlighted represent information which people requested which corresponds with ZMD project thematic areas. This demonstrates the project's relevance.

The outcome harvesting exercise set out in Section 3.1 further supports the finding that news content produced by implementing partners matched the needs of the targeted communities in Southern Zimbabwe.

In terms of access to news, most respondents to the research reported that they accessed news from community radio, WhatsApp, podcasts, national radio, Facebook, Twitter, volunteers, and documentaries. This is shown in Table 5.

WhatsApp is the main distribution platform for content from partners supported by the project, thus the platform was ranked highly. Other news and information sources not included in Table 5, and constituting 9% combined, included traditional chief officers/messengers, digital video discs (DVDs), friends, guest speakers, health clubs, Instagram, internet, kombi casting, listener clubs, shop casting, SoundCloud, word of mouth, workshops, and YouTube.

Table 5. Platforms, formats and channels for accessing news in Southern Zimbabwe

Themes (codes) \ News Supply Tools	Total Coding Reference (Mention)	Percentage (%)	ZMD project Supported (x)
Community Radios	32	18.5	X
WhatsApp	30	17.3	X
Podcast	14	8.1	X
National Radio	12	6.9	
Facebook	10	5.8	X
Social Media	9	5.2	X
Twitter	7	4.0	X
Volunteers	7	4.0	X
Documentary	5	2.9	X
Councillor	4	2.3	X
Road Shows	4	2.3	X

Themes (codes) \ News Supply Tools	Total Coding Reference (Mention)	Percentage (%)	ZMD project Supported (x)
Bulk SMS	4	2.3	X
Newspaper	3	1.7	
Television (TV)	3	1.7	
Compact Disc (CD)	2	1.2	X
Community Leaders	2	1.2	
Health Officials	2	1.2	
Magazine	2	1.2	X
Newsletters	2	1.2	X
Phone Calls	2	1.2	
Stakeholder Meetings	2	1.2	

Source: Survey Data (2021)

The ZMD project positively affected the supply and demand of news and information in Southern Zimbabwe, ensuring that these were aligned. By working with local partners, ZMD cultivated grassroots involvement in news creation and distribution. Community members were able to influence content creators to produce news and information that they needed, and the project trained community journalists from the communities where the project was being implemented. CRIs have been instrumental in ensuring reach and coverage of local information in a cost effective manner. There is a clear recommendation to replicate and expand the model across other marginalised areas in order to ensure they are all granted access to information.
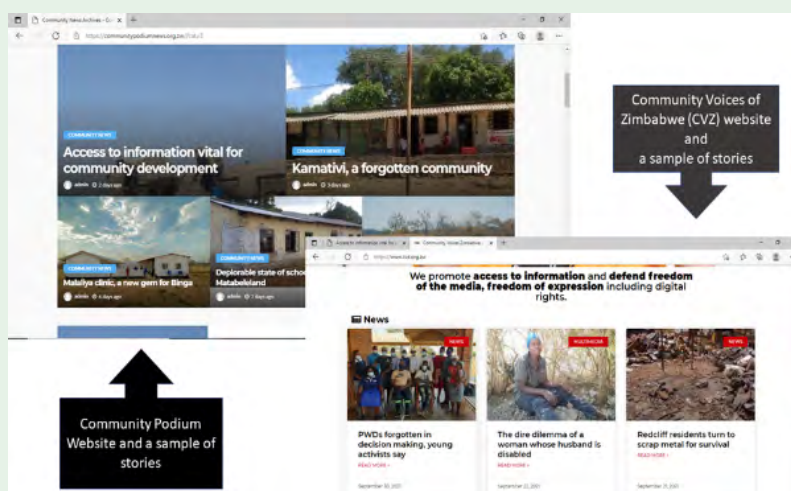
Figure 11.
A selection of stories published by ZMD partners.

Whilst a lot of work has been done to address information and communication needs of people in Southern Zimbabwe, the evaluation noted some themes which still require improved coverage such as human rights and corruption at local level. These are not usually discussed in detail due to fear of victimisation as these are mostly considered political themes. The low coverage is also possibly because community journalists do not have the requisite skills and experience in investigative journalism which helps to bring out such issues.

It was suggested that the project could have achieved more if local partners were able to form additional relationships with local Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) which have existing

community structures. This would enable broader outreach through those structures and would support sustainability.

> **"So we use local languages that is Nambya, Tonga, Nyanja and Chewa...I remember part of our volunteers were trained on fact finding in terms of fake news to do with COVID-19. Like, how do you verify information, which was important to us as a community noting that there were a lot of conspiracies particularly at was first around COVID-19 and its origins, then it came to vaccinations...In Hwange, we had a problem that people did not want to be vaccinated, so we had to do a series of programmes around that promoting issues to do with vaccination."**
>
> — FGD participant, Hwange FM.

3.3 Content Creators/Partner Challenges

3.3.1 Political Pressure

The journey for most implementing partners and other stakeholder has not been easy. Security agents express mistrust of ZMD project affiliates. For example, in Matopo District, three community journalists and a youth organisation representative were surveilled. From time to time, they were summoned to explain their activities and involvement in the ZMD project. This happened after a routine monitoring visit by Internews. In another incident, the team involved in this study visited a partner organisation in Tsholotsho District. Security agents subsequently requested information about the visit from the host. A community journalist interviewed as part of the study noted that private media in his district, Kwekwe, has been viewed as hostile to the state, although he felt that politicians were slowly, cautiously appreciating their role.

> **"I think the other thing is security surveillance, yah, that one we have been having a lot of interviews with the President's Office on why and who is funding this programme with a lot of questions trying to link it to the opposition. I had nothing to hide and I told them everything that no, mina (myself) I'm a young person from Matopo; what I do is out of passion and I will do everything to achieve my goals. I was not giving them that hide and seek approach. I invited them that if they need anything they (could) come. At times they would call me to their office."**
>
> — Key informant, (Implementing Partner, Youth organisation), Matobo District

The Government of Zimbabwe is noting the impact community radio initiatives have in all the provinces and dangles financial resources for community radio initiatives, only accessible to those who are deemed to be 'politically correct', say some participants. This mistrust was seen to have affected the smooth licensing of community radio stations, resulting in one of the community radio initiatives that was denied a license taking the licensing authority, Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe (BAZ), to court.

> **"So that's the only thing that troubles us. The government, instead of putting community radios, is putting party community radios which that doesn't tie up with our constitution, which says we must have a community radio which is controlled by the community, run by the community; which is independent and it must be non-partisan."**
>
> — Key informant, (Implementing Partner), Thsolotsho District.

3.3.2 Resource Challenges in Engaging Audiences

The ZMD project sometimes provided resources for community members to access the internet for engagement activities. When the implementing partners tried to run similar activities without such support, stakeholder participation was often low. Citizens tend to want to engage if there are gains, and sometimes implementing partners would have nothing to offer, making online sessions with locals about issues affecting them difficult to implement.

> **"I think one challenge that I can say we faced is, you know, when you bring in people and give them something and later on you want them to come back again, people have a tendency of wanting to come if they are given something and sometimes we would have nothing to give them. So sometimes we would have a challenge in terms of participation whereby in a time when we gave them something we would have 100% participation and when there is nothing there is 50% or 60% participation."**
>
> — FGD Participant, Hwange District

During COVID-19 induced lockdowns, it was challenging for the ZMD project implementing partners to engage the rural constituency in the survey sites. Resultantly, they engaged with citizens through WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook and bulk SMS. Only a few community radio stations were broadcasting — others were awaiting licensing. WhatsApp restricts participant numbers to 257 per group. To counter this, implementing partners formed many groups, which proved taxing in terms of administration and management.

3.3.3 Recruitment of Content Creators

Content creators are volunteers. They have to be passionate about reporting for development, particularly when they have to walk long distances to collect information to write an article. Implementing partners, in most cases, are running on slim budgets. They have limited resources including cars, transport money, cameras, and recorders. Some of the marginalised communities are so remote that they can only be accessed by an off-roader vehicle.

> **"Challenges, I can say our approach in recruiting content creators is kinda voluntary. We want someone who has that passion of writing about their communities, so we find that a few youths or people show interest. That's why we find that we have very few community content creators, something that is affecting our coverage, I can say".**
> — Key informant, (Implementing Partner), Matobo, Tsholotsho, Hwange and Nkayi Districts

4.1 Journalists' Evaluative Survey

As part of this review, a quantitative survey was conducted with ZMD trained journalists. A structured questionnaire was administered in person, or prospective respondents received a web form version of the questionnaire. The subsections that follow present the findings. Forty-six (46) journalist(s) participated in the survey.

4.1.1 Gender

Fifty-nine (59%) percent of the surveyed journalists were female, as shown in Figure 12. If the sample is representative of the wider participant group, the project lived up to its objective of supporting gender equal participation.
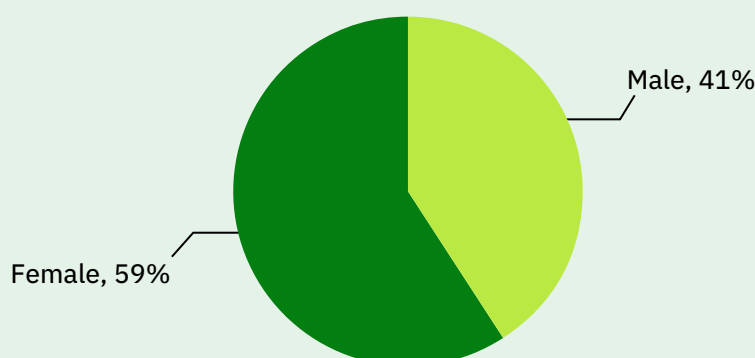
Figure 12. Gender of surveyed journalists. **Source: Survey Data (2021)**

4.1.2 Highest Level of Education

Half (50%) of the surveyed journalists were holders of a Bachelor's Degree, as shown in Figure 13. Thirteen (13 %) did not have college qualifications — these were likely to be community journalists based in rural areas.
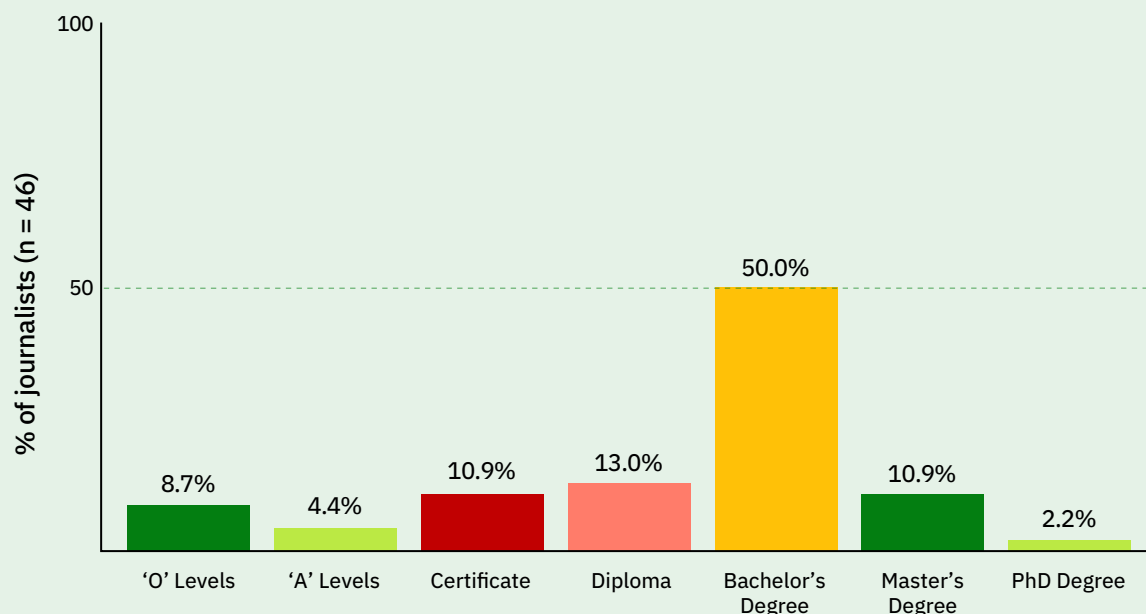
Figure 13. Highest level of education of surveyed journalists. **Source: Survey Data (2021)**

4.1.3 Professional Category

Forty-four (44%) percent of the surveyed journalists were community or citizen journalists, as shown in Figure 14. Others were senior and mid-career journalists. Citizen journalists were located in project communities. Some were operating from cities and towns close to their communities.
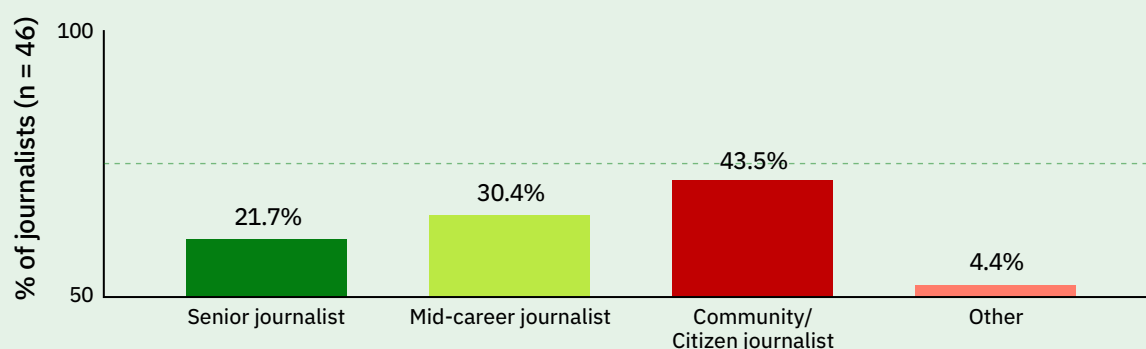
Figure 14. Professional category of surveyed journalists. **Source: Survey Data (2021)**

4.1.4 Type of Support and Training Received by Journalists from ZMD

The surveyed journalists received various types of support from the ZMD project, as shown in Figure 15. For example, 83% received training, whilst others received mentoring and grant funding. The training covered many topics including content creation, digital media, journal-

ism, and stakeholder engagement. This is shown in Figure 16.
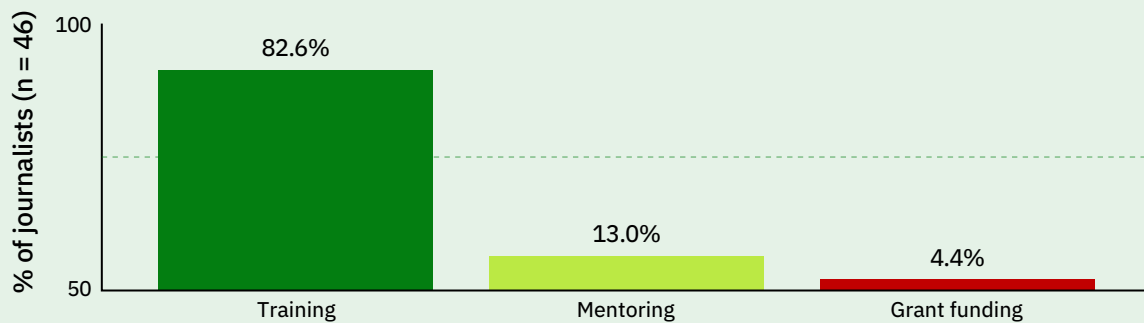
Figure 15. Type of support received from ZMD by surveyed journalists. **Source: Survey Data (2021)**
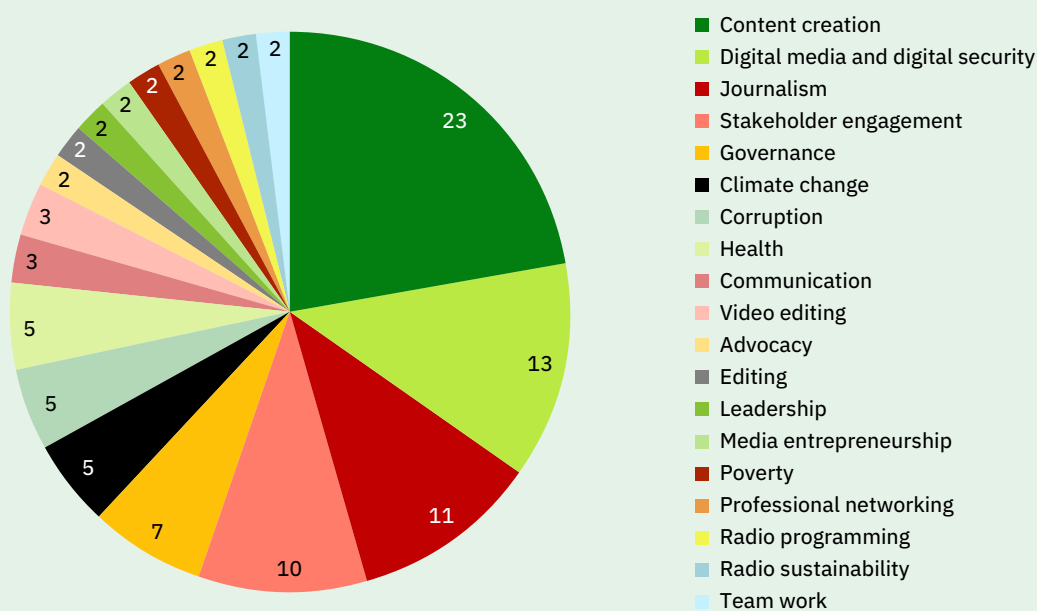
Figure 16. Type of training received from ZMD by surveyed journalists (% of topics, n=61). **Source: Survey Data (2021)**

4.1.5 Inclusive Content Produced

Sixty-five (65%) percent of the surveyed journalists responded that at least 40% of their content included women and other marginalised groups, as shown in Figure 17.
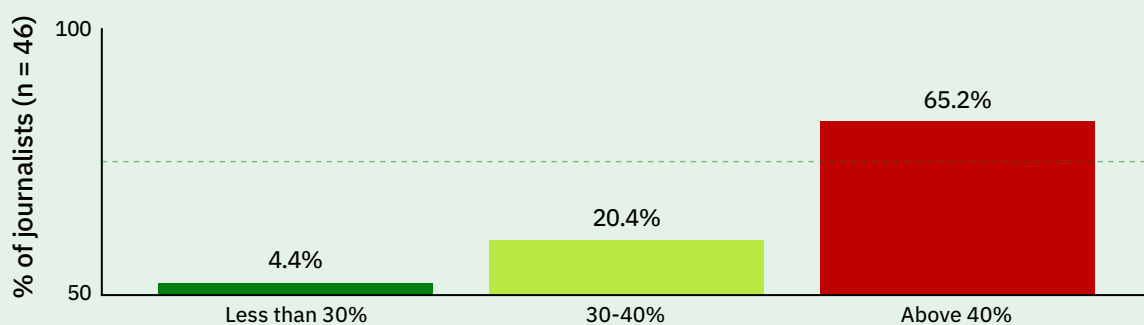
Figure 17. Inclusive content produced by surveyed journalists. **Source: Survey Data (2021)**

4.1.6 Impact of ZMD Project

Of the surveyed journalists, 93% agreed to the Likert questions that their knowledge and skills in digital media production, social media news generation and dissemination improved due to the training they received from ZMD, as shown in Table 6. They say they acquired other skills and knowledge about governance issues, human rights, corruption, health, and climate change. The ZMD platform created opportunities for networking and professional development.

Table 6. ZMD impact on surveyed journalists

Skill Area	Disagree (%)	Uncertain (%)	Agree (%)
My skills and knowledge concerning digital media production have improved.	0	2.2	97.8
My skills and knowledge concerning the use of social media in news generation and dissemination have improved.	0	6.5	93.5
My skills and knowledge in relation to governance issues have improved.	0	21.7	78.3
My skills and knowledge in relation to human rights issues have improved.	0	8.7	91.3
My skills and knowledge in relation to corruption issues have improved.	6.5	13.0	80.4
My skills and knowledge in relation to health issues have improved.	6.5	6.5	87.0
My skills and knowledge in relation to environmental issues have improved.	6.5	13.0	80.4
My skills and knowledge in relation to climate change issues have improved.	4.4	19.6	76.1
I have been able to increase networking opportunities and develop professional contacts as a result of the Internews ZMD project.	0	8.7	91.3

Source: Survey Data (2021)

4.1.7 Skills and Competencies Gained

Surveyed journalists reported that they gained various skills and competencies by participating in ZMD. For example, 41% of the surveyed journalists say they can now create content, as shown in Table 7. Others reported that they had gained skills in community journalism, stakeholder engagement, climate change issues, corruption issues, and digital skills. Of the surveyed journalists, 11% noted that the ZMD project improved their confidence, while 9% highlighted that it gave them exposure and improved access to networks.

Table 7. Skills and competencies gained by surveyed journalists

Skill /competencies gained by Journalists in the ZMD project	Number of Journalists	% of Journalists
Content creation	19	41.3
Digital skills	14	30.4
Community journalism	11	23.9
Stakeholder engagement	5	10.9
Being confident	5	10.9
Climate	4	8.7
Networking	4	8.7
Exposure	4	8.7
Corruption	3	6.5
Health	3	6.5
Video editing	3	6.5
Communication	2	4.3
Editing	2	4.3
Governance	2	4.3
Leadership	2	4.3
Radio programming and sustainability	2	4.3
Research	2	4.3
Advocacy	1	2.2
COVID-19	1	2.2
Environment	1	2.2
Ethics	1	2.2
Media entrepreneurship	1	2.2
Partnership development	1	2.2
Teamwork	1	2.2

Source: Survey Data (2021)

4.1.8 Recommended Improvements to ZMD

Thirty-three (33%) percent of the surveyed journalists highlighted that they needed training for specific topics including climate change, monitoring and evaluation and health as part of the blend of activities to improve ZMD, as shown in Table 8. Other proposed improvements included the provision of equipment such as cameras, recorders, and smartphones. Furthermore, it was noted by 20% of the surveyed journalists that the ZMD project was not habitually conducting monitoring to understand challenges as they arose. For instance, in

some cases, volunteer journalists walked long distances to gather information for their stories and would have benefitted from assistance with transport or the recruitment of more reporters in each district.

Table 8. Improvements to ZMD

Items required to improve ZMD project	Number of Journalists	% of Journalists
Capacity building for a specific topic, e.g., Climate change, M&E	15	33
Frequent monitoring visits	9	20
Extend practical lesson time in training workshops	6	13
Cameras	4	9
Recorders	4	9
Recruit more reporters	4	9
Smartphones	3	7
Transport or allowance	3	7
Community radio capacitation	2	4
Press card	2	4
Working space	2	4
Offer free online courses with certification	2	4
Consult grantees before funding	1	2
Data allowance	1	2
Should not consider media house names in training invitation	1	2

Source: Survey Data (2021)

4.1.9 Key Takeaways

Twenty six (26%) percent of the surveyed journalists noted that their experience with ZMD made them recognise that digital media has become an alternative to print media, as shown in Table 9. Supported by the project, they wrote and distributed stories on social media that assisted communities champion their development plan, held duty bearers accountable and raised voices of the youths, persons with disabilities, women, and young girls. Other lessons learned from the ZMD project included that professionalism in journalism is necessary, networking and engaging with others in the field is essential, digital media has more readership than print media, and that community journalism is an equally important tool in the development of communities along with other approaches in the development practitioner's tools box.

Table 9. Key takeaways

Lessons learnt	Number of Journalists	% of Journalists
That digital media is an alternative to print media	12	26.1
Professionalism is needed in journalism and reporting	9	19.6
Importance of networking and engaging others in the field	8	17.4
Digital media has more readership than print media	7	15.2
Community journalism is equally vital in the development of communities	6	13.0
That media can help communities develop	6	13.0
Importance of information verification when reporting	5	10.9
Importance of journalism training and matching new demand in journalism	4	8.7
Security risk association with journalism	4	8.7
Importance of accuracy, persistence and patience in journalism	3	6.5
Importance of community-driven news production for development of communities	2	4.3
The need for skills to approach stakeholders	2	4.3
That there is a huge information gap in rural communities	1	2.2
Importance of teamwork in journalism	1	2.2

Source: Survey Data (2021)

5.1 How Has the Project Facilitated or Improved the Inclusion of Marginalised Groups — Women and Youth?

In Zimbabwe, youth make up 36% of the population while women constitute 52%. Youth and women are key drivers of the socio-economic development processes of the country and communities but have not been fully engaged in mainstream structures and discourse. To create and strengthen youth participation, ZMD forged strategic partnerships with youth organisations whose focus and role is to empower, strengthen and amplify youth voices. These organisations benefitted directly or indirectly through implementing partners by accessing institutional support, training or grants. These efforts helped organisations such as the Matobo Youth Development Initiative (MYDI) grow and professionalise by setting up offices, expanding its operational area, documenting its interventions and developing MoUs to operate in all the wards in Matobo District. Prior to the ZMD project, it was only operating in two.

> **"As a young organisation we were able to be capacitated in how we can structure our reports and being time cautious. We lacked a lot. We even developed a new Memorandum of understanding for the district."**
>
> — Key informant, Matopo District

In addition, MYTD began publishing a magazine focusing on youth and development in Matobo district. The editorial policy is youth-led, with young people sharing their opinions and packaging the information so that it is relevant and accessible through different channels. In addition, MYDT has endeavoured to stimulate discussion and feedback between duty bearers and community members through simple innovations like WhatsApp groups. These include members from all the wards, duty bearers and government departments. This initiative has seen the Matobo Rural District Council (MRDC) being more responsive to requests made by the community, using the WhatsApp groups as a feedback platform.

Figure 18.
MYTD journalist holds their publication

> **"As an organisation we've really been talking about having the youths being included and involved in everything that happens within their community. Now we have seen like a paradigm shift whereby youths are now also in the community structures, the WADCOS and VIDCOS and … we felt that if youths are not really involved there then it means all decisions will not speak into youth issues."**
>
> — Key informant, Gwanda District

The ZMD project engaged with the Community Youth Development Trust (CYDT), a youth organisation focused on advocacy, lobbying and capacity strengthening which is based in Gwanda and covers Matabeleland South. CYDT has a network of volunteer youths across the province who have been supported through Ntepe-Manama to develop community journalism skills, including content creation, writing and ethics. Trained youths have been developing podcasts and content covering various themes such as health, including COVID-19 and community development initiatives. This content has been distributed through WhatsApp groups across the different wards where CYDT has representation. The podcasts have also been used as an information dissemination tool to the various wards where communities do not have access to local content due to lack of a radio signal. CYDT once distributed a podcast on youth-focused job opportunities which resulted in some getting employment.

> **"CVZ has helped on many child violations cases. I had no voice as Harare and Bulawayo as they have access to mainstream media. Issues of abuse, child labour are rampant as Kwekwe is a mining town. Also, some children couldn't access e-learning during COVID-19 lockdown. I used to go with stories to them and they would develop articles and podcasts which they sent to the people. Before CVZ it was difficult, we could see these issues but had nowhere to take the issues."**
>
> — FGD participant, Kwekwe

In addition, young people involved with CYDT are participating in governance structures at village and ward level (VIDCOs and WADCOs). They have an opportunity to influence community decisions and development plans.

Involving young people as citizen journalists has helped to influence more content that speaks to the issues they care about.

Figure 19. Community journalists working with CVZ.

Community Voices Zimbabwe, which operates in the Midlands province, has a team of young and energetic citizen journalists who have been receiving training and mentorship as part of efforts to mainstream youth voices.

The young journalists follow up on stories which do not otherwise receive much coverage. Kwekwe district is synonymous with violence, child marriages, sexual harassment and child labour, though these issues — and their impact on children — are not addressed in the media. A child rights advocate, Junior Brigadier General, has been working with Community Voices Zimbabwe to change that.

Figure 20. Junior Brigadier General sharing his perspectives during the FGD. The Brigadier has been instrumental in bring out youth issues which were rarely covered before.

For instance, a group of students at Manunure High School were bringing machetes to school, resulting in some children being victimised and assaulted and an unsafe learning environment. This story was covered by Community Voices Zimbabwe and the army and police were deployed to the school to bring order. The Junior Brigadier General now actively participates in content creation, using his position to bring out and amplify the voices of the youth.

Hwange FM is providing a platform where women can speak out on women rights issues, sharing challenges faced and encouraging other women to participate in leadership positions

and electoral processes. In Kwekwe, three young boys were sexually harassing women. This was brought to by a local Councillor to Community Voices Zimbabwe, whose reporting generated additional coverage in H-Metro and Midlands News. This raised awareness appeared to lead to a decrease in incidences.

The ZMD model of working with community-based organisations has resulted in identification and amplification of underreported stories which have a significant social impact. Gender stereotyping has always affected women, especially in business. There are business sectors dominated by men where traditional gender norms prevail. Community Voices Zimbabwe identified the story of a female entrepreneur trying to penetrate the construction industry with her women-led supply and fix construction company. She was struggling to break through despite having the requisite business and technical skills. Community Voices Zimbabwe published her profile, placing her on equal footing with men in the construction sector. She has seen improved business and has acquired new clients as a result, and believes the story has impacted on perceptions of women in industry.

Access to education in the rural areas mostly affects the girl child, due to patriarchy. Access is further limited in cases where someone has a disability which impacts on mobility. A young female student in Mberengwa could not attend classes as often as others due to this. This was known in her community, but a story published by a citizen journalist under the ZMD project helped to raise awareness of her situation, resulting in the donation of a wheelchair by Matibi Mission Hospital. The young girl can now attend more classes.

Table 3 shows how the news and information required in the Southern Region of Zimbabwe aligns with the issues addressed through the project. This confirms the relevance of the project's thematic areas. Those gaps which do exist between demand and supply are at the lower end of the ranking scale for demanded news and information. These include music and religion.

Community radio initiatives, social media networks, podcasts and documentaries are the most commonly used platforms and formats to access news and information, and are all encompassed within the project. Once again, this speaks to project appropriateness.

The study confirmed that some communities have no access to local or national radio signals, and are instead accessing foreign radio broadcasts. Therefore, the project's efforts to strengthen CRIs and other community-based media outlets is well placed: it is enabling the disadvantaged and marginalised communities of the South to have access to local/community news — a clear gap left by mainstream media.

> **"Some of us do not have smartphones with Whatsapp but with a community radio station we are able to access local news"**
>
> — Key informant, Mberengwa

The fact that a number of outcomes were harvested at the project's midway point speaks to its potential impact. If recommendations for improvement are implemented for the remaining period of the project, many more outcomes will be achieved by the project's close.

Already, significant progress has been registered towards the overall project objectives, though objective 3 on business and financial sustainability has proven more challenging to realise — project partners have some way to go to achieve financial sustainability. The Zimbabwean macro-economic environment is a key challenge to media sector resilience write large, let alone the kind of emerging community based initiatives supported by ZMD.

It is interesting to note more active community engagement using online platforms in Hwange than other districts which were part of the study, particularly WhatsApp. Here, the review team was able to conduct two virtual FGDs, one with youth and the other with a mixed group of adults. This finding was partly attributed to the small grant and technical training in online participation and dissemination provided to Hwange FM by ZMD. The COVID-19 pandemic did force people online, but there is sufficient evidence that the project supported enhanced online engagement with communities by project partners. In addition, Hwange FM only reported using Bulk SMS after undergoing related training.

The study suggests that participating partners and journalists had improved digital skills. The production of podcasts, documentaries and the reported increase in use of social media platforms for information and news dissemination bear testimony to this. A very high number of journalists surveyed (90%+) reported that they had increased knowledge and skills in all project thematic areas. In fact, the quantitative results suggest that journalists are very satisfied with their participation in the project.

Nonetheless, they also request more training and equipment, as well as improvements in some aspects of the project. These include increased support in certain thematic areas like climate change and more follow-up and mentoring, as reported earlier in this report.

Although development is not one of the specific thematic areas of the ZMD project, the results demonstrate that the media can deliver concrete results for communities. The Sontala Clinic in Matobo and Registry in Bazha are examples where reporting helped mobilise resources for the construction of civic buildings. Construction may have taken place without the coverage, but feedback from FGDs suggests it would have been at a slower pace. The story about the

Chirumanzu District dam in the Midlands province resulted in spinoff developmental and livelihoods projects around the scooped dam.

Again in Matobo, Kwekwe and Hwange districts, the study shows some fairly high levels of active youth participation. This is attributed to project partners in the focus districts taking deliberate steps to include the youth in their programming. As one Hwange youth FGD participant put it: *"We want something for the youths, with the youths, by the youths because we are not only the future, we are the present."*

Therefore, youth participation in youth-led initiatives is a critical success factor for this project. The fact that these successes came about by deliberate efforts to engage youth groups is a lesson for increasing women's participation. A positive about working with the youth is their ability to easily gain traction in the community due to their zeal, adaptability and techno-savvy outlook — aspects of which might even promote sustainability, if well nurtured and harnessed.

Only one participating community radio initiative has been licensed, Ntepe Manama. The slow pace of licencing has a negative effect on programming, as well as project outcomes — ZMD may have to include three recently licensed CRIs in the South which aren't currently part of the project. Nonetheless, it is heartening to note that the unlicensed CRIs are still disseminating community news and information through social media platforms and other innovative means addressed elsewhere in the report.

The lack of transport for partners to visit information sources in the heart of communities may suggest that partners need additional assistance to recruit community volunteers who can be trained as citizen journalists, thereby enabling wider rural coverage.

In addition, community members have serious connectivity challenges including limited network availability and access to data. This is an issue that is perhaps beyond the project's ability to solve at the community level, but progress might be made at the partner level.

The review limitations as reported in Section 2 did not necessarily have a significant impact on the results. The response rate for the journalist questionnaire survey was admittedly low, but the results are most likely a true reflection of the subpopulation from which the sample was drawn given their consistency. Of course, the non-availability of an appropriate baseline curtailed proper attribution of the achievements of the project to date.

Recommendations

Based on the results from the project review, the following recommendations are made:

Responsible	Recommendation
Internews — ZMD project	The build-up towards the 2023 elections and coverage of issues deemed sensitive makes citizen journalists vulnerable to victimisation by some politicians. Formalised channels to safeguard citizen journalists should be adopted. This could include accreditation.
	Instituting a training of trainers model (ToT) could enable more traction at community level. The ToTs can also involve local leadership and other marginalised groups within the community to enhance their voices.
	Scale up support to CRI Boards to develop their governance capacity to ensure continuity and a clear accountability framework between the Secretariat and the Board.
	Consider incorporating emerging thematic areas of importance for Zimbabwean people — for example, development and agriculture. Tweak others — for example, combining environment with climate change.
	Expand the offer of intensive training on podcasting, packaging and distribution. This will broaden reach with the target communities.
	Consider providing licenced CRIs with additional capital and capacity to set up. The Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe (BAZ) sets specification standards for software and hardware that must be met, as well as requiring that CRIs constitute themselves as a Trust.
	Train partner organisations on proposal development and mobilising financing bodies and impact funds. UNESCO can complement efforts by Internews.
	Increase footprint in rural areas through creating partnerships with a larger number of community based organisations.
	Work with local leadership to increase understanding within the community of the benefits of engaging with media practitioners and of how communities can contribute towards content creation.
	Replicate and expand the ZMD model of involving the grassroots across in content creation and dissemination to other marginalised areas.

Responsible	Recommendation
ZMD Partner Institutions (CRIs and CBOs)	Content creating partners could accelerate their efforts towards deepening community involvement and enlisting more community volunteers.
	Podcasting in local languages does address an gap in access to information. However, high data costs and poor network coverage in the rural communities can limit reach. Innovations on data cost management and access are therefore critical, such as low/lite bandwidth solutions and offline methods of dissemination.
	The distribution of content via flash drives and through physical, local platforms such as shops and beerhalls can be effective and less expensive, overcoming data costs which tend to be a barrier to access for most communities.
	The Outcome Harvesting process should be ongoing in order to build a repository of documentation on the project's impact. The project should consider building the monitoring and evaluation capacity of partner institutions.
	Ensure meaningful participation by women in content creation and consumption to enhance social sustainability. Forge partnerships with women focused institutions to further amplify women voices.
	Whilst the establishment of community radio stations is urgent, each must have a business development strategy. These are considered non-profit making entities under the Community Radio Act which should, therefore, find other means of making money for survival.
	Community based organisations working under the ZMD project are largely under resourced in terms of their equipment and operational financing. Monetisation of content and other business development activities to finance programmes and possible expansion strategies is crucial for sustainability.
Internews/ ZMD Partners	There is need for continued advocacy and lobbying by Internews and other partners around the Community Radio Act, in particular the revenue generation clauses which tend to stifle the financial sustainability of these institutions.

INTERNEWS THEORY OF CHANGE

Impact: Healthy information environments enable everyone to make better-informed decisions, bridge divides, participate more fully in their communities, and hold power to account.

	Good Information	Strong Business Models
Intermediate Outcomes	Communities have increased access to good information that is trusted and trustworthy, which meets their needs and which drives transparency, accountability and participation.	Trusted and trustworthy information sources increase their reach, engagement, brand loyalty, financial sustainability and operational security.
Immediate Outcomes	Information producers consistently produce high quality accurate, evidence-based, inclusive information in diverse formats.	Information producers develop and deliver on effective business strategies.
Activities		
Challenges	News and information content is inaccurate and untrustworthy. Communities don't have good information.	Media outlets don't have business strategies; audiences and advertisers don't support local media; platforms, governments, and corporate interests dominate media markets.

Problem Statement: In an unhealthy information environment, people are unable to make informed choices, false and hateful information divides communities, citizen participation in civic life declines and the structures for holding power to account are weakened.

INTERNEWS THEORY OF CHANGE

Safe, Inclusive Access

Marginalized groups safely access quality information that meets their needs, they are able to participate fully in society, and they can see themselves represented fairly and accurately in the media

Information consumers can safely access locally-relevant information, in languages they understand, whilst information producers meet gaps in provision.

Lack of access to information on all platforms and spaces limits participation and freedom of expression. People coming online for the first time, especially ethnic, political or religious minorities, are vulnerable to harassment, surveillance and intimidation. Lack of connectivity and uneven access to adequate bandwidth limits information access in 2G areas.

Critical Assessment

People critically engage with information, reject false and harmful information and seek out high quality, accurate information.

Information consumers know how to identify false information and are motivated to reduce its spread.

Consumers' inability or unwillingness to distinguish between fact and falsehood leaves them vulnerable to manipulation and liable to participate in the spread and amplification of misinformation and disinformation, which in turn creates confusion, erodes trust, and damages democracy.

Accountable Institutions

Governments, institutions and platforms are held accountable for protecting human rights.

Legal, regulatory and business environments support independent media and freedom of expression.

Civil society is equipped to hold power to account, promote freedom of expression and ensure human rights are upheld.

Hostile governments deliberately suppress freedom of expression in increasingly sophisticated ways, whilst technology and digital platform companies operate with little transparency or oversight. Governments and institutions are not accountable to people.

Intermediate Outcomes

Immediate Outcomes

Activities

Challenges

Assumptions:
- Internews has the financial, technical and human resources to achieve significant reach and operate in every setting where this work is needed.
- Media and information providers share Internews´ commitment to high quality, accurate, evidence-based, inclusive information and are open to collaboration.
- The existence of shared global norms continue to value freedom of expression and independent media.
- High quality information acts as a driver of positive change.

4. Appendices

4.1 ZMD Project Partner List

#	Partner/Beneficiary	Organisational type/ Core Business	Location	Support received
1	Centre for Innovation and Technology (CITE)	Online Media	Bulawayo	Subgrantee
2	Kubatana	Online Media	Harare	Subgrantee
3	Humanitarian Information Facilitation Centre (HIFC)	Online Media	Harare	Subgrantee
4	Newsgain	Media Business Strategy	International	Subgrantee
5	GeoPoll	Research/Data analytics	International	Subgrantee
6	Zimbabwe Association for Community Radio Stations (ZACRAS)	Community Media	Harare	Subgrantee
7	Digital Society of Africa (DSA)	Digital Security	Harare	Subgrantee
8	Sunshine Cinema	Mobile Cinema	South Africa	Subgrantee
9	Ntepe Manama Community Radio Station	Community Radio	Gwanda	Small grants
				ZMD trainings
				ZMD equipment
10	Twasumpuka Radio Station	Community Radio	Binga	Small grants
				ZMD trainings
				ZMD equipment
11	Radio Bukalanga	Community Radio	Plumtree	ZMD trainings
12	Radio Kwelaz	Community Radio	Kwekwe	ZMD trainings
13	41 FM	Community Radio	Lupane	Small grants
14	Shashe Community Radio Trust	Community Radio	Beitbridge	ZMD trainings
15	Bayethe FM	Community Radio	Matobo	ZMD trainings
16	Sebakwe-Silobela Community Radio	Community Radio	Silobela	ZMD trainings
17	Zhwane FM	Community Radio	Tsholotsho	ZMD trainings
18	Nkayi FM	Community Radio	Nkayi	ZMD trainings
19	Llyeja-Nyal FM	Community Radio	Hwange	ZMD trainings
20	Godlwayo FM	Community Radio	Filabusi	Small grants
				ZMD trainings

#	Partner/Beneficiary	Organisational type/ Core Business	Location	Support received
21	Radio Dialogue	Community Radio	Bulawayo	ZMD trainings
22	Nkabazwe Community Radio Station	Community Radio	Gweru	ZMD trainings
23	Hwange FM	Community Radio	Hwange	ZMD trainings
24	Community Voices Zimbabwe	Media Start-up	Kwekwe	Small grants
				ZMD trainings
25	Community Podium	Rural Media Start-up (Online)	Matabeleland	Small grants
				ZMD trainings
26	Midlands Observer	Community Newspaper	Kwekwe	Small grants
				ZMD trainings
27	Addins TV	YouTube Channel	Kwekwe	ZMD trainings
28	Women's Weekly Journal	Online Magazine	Zvishavane	ZMD trainings
29	Amakhosikazi Media (WMDF)	Online Media	Bulawayo	ZMD trainings
				Small grants
				ZMD equipment
30	Zimbabwe Centre for Media and Information Literacy (ZCMIL)	Media Literacy	Bulawayo	Small grants
				ZMD trainings
31	Louder Magazine	Online Magazine	Kwekwe	ZMD trainings
				Small grants
				ZMD equipment
32	Community Hub for Information Trust (Zambezi Times)	Online Media Start-up	Matabeleland North	ZMD trainings
				Small grants
33	Besane Mall	Media Start-up	Matabeleland North	ZMD trainings
34	Zambezi Current	Online Media Start-up	Matabeleland North	ZMD trainings
35	Victoria Falls Live (Vic Falls Live)	News website	Matabeleland North	ZMD trainings
36	Kwekwe TV (Impact Stories ZW)	Online Media	Midlands	ZMD trainings
				Small grants
37	CommuTalk	Online Community Media	Midlands	ZMD trainings
				Small grants
38	Citizen Bulletin	Online Media	Matabeleland	ZMD trainings
				Small grants
39	Tikobane Trust	Community Based Organisation	National	ZMD trainings
				Small grants

#	Partner/Beneficiary	Organisational type/ Core Business	Location	Support received
40	National Aids Council	Civil Society Organisation	National	Media Market Forums
41	Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCOZ)	Civil Society Organisation	Bulawayo	Media Market Forums
				Roundtables
42	ZIMCODD	Civil Society Organisation	National	Roundtables
				Media Markets
43	Matabeleland Institute for Human Rights (MIHR)	Civil Society Organisation	Matabeleland	ZMD trainings
				Small grants
44	Bulawayo Vendors Trust Association	Civil Society Organisation	Bulawayo	ZMD trainings
				Small Grants
45	Matobo Youth Development Initiative	Civil Society Organisation	Matobo	Media Market Forums
				ZMD trainings
				Small grants
46	Woman in Communities	Civil Society Organisation	Gweru	Small grants
47	I am for Bulawayo (IAM4BYO)	Civil Society Organisation	Bulawayo	Small grants
48	Woman to Woman	Civil Society Organisation		Small grants
49	Emthonjeni Women's Forum	Civil Society Organisation	Matabeleland	Small grants
				Roundtables
50	Gracious Compassion	Civil Society Organisation	Plumtree	Small grants
51	Hands of Hope Trust	Civil Society Organisation		Small grants
52	Women's Institute for Leadership Development	Civil Society Organisation	Matabeleland	ZMD trainings
				Reflect Reality
				Small grants
53	Daily News	Mainstream media	National	Media Market Forums
				ZMD Trainings
54	Newsday	Mainstream media	National	Media Market Forums
				ZMD Trainings
55	The Chronicle	Mainstream media	National	Media Market Forums
56	Girls Table	Online Media Start-up	Bulawayo	Media Market Forums
				Women's Roundtables
57	Skyz Metro FM	Mainstream media	Bulawayo	Information Saves Life campaign
				ZMD trainings
58	Breeze FM	Mainstream media	Victoria Falls	ZMD trainings
				Media Market Forums
59	Sunday News	Mainstream media	Bulawayo	Media Market Forums

#	Partner/Beneficiary	Organisational type/ Core Business	Location	Support received
60	Sly Media	Online Media	Harare	Content cross sharing
61	Environment Management Authority	Government Dept	National	Reflect Reality
62	Harvard University	University	USA	Research Collaboration with Kubatana
63	National University of Science and Technology	University	Bulawayo	Provided students with training
				Lecturers facilitated Media Entrepreneurship and Media Upskilling
64	Midlands State University	University	Gweru	Provided students with training
65	Lupane State University	University	Lupane	Provided students with training
				Lecturer facilitated Media Entrepreneurship

Source: Internews (2022)

Notes

1. ZMD Trainings include: Mid-career upskilling, media entrepreneurship, training of trainers, board effectiveness trainings, thematic trainings as well as various tailor-made capacity building trainings.

2. The ZMD Equipment includes a newsroom ready starter combo which has a laptop, voice recorder, video camera and a mobile phone.

3. Subgrantees have a confidential (Subgrant Agreement) contract whose total amount will only be confirmed at the end of the project upon producing expenditure reports.

4. Small grants were rolled in various batches worth between $1,000 and $4,000. According to the finance standards, 80 percent of the grant amount is disbursed at the onset of the project and the remainder upon completion.

Appendix 5.1 — Data Collection Tools

Key Informant Interview Guide Funder

Internews is collecting data as part of its midterm review of the Zimbabwe Media Development (ZMD) Project. ZMD is being implemented by Internews Europe (IEU) and is operating in four southern provinces: Bulawayo, Midlands, Matabeleland North, and Matabeleland South. The ZMD project aims to ensure that a resilient, digitally enabled, and sustainable independent media and civil society in Southern Zimbabwe have the skills, knowledge, and tools they need to reach citizens with accurate and impartial information that promotes inclusion and accountability. This mid term evaluation will help the Internews team determine the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the project and draw lessons for future related programming. With this key informant guide, we are engaging you today to contribute to the verification and tracing of Internews outcomes that have been achieved to date.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this process, which will last approximately 30 minutes. Documented information will be kept private and confidential. Please note that partaking in this exercise has no present or future financial and non-financial benefits or implications on your relationship with Internews.

Your name	
Position	

Introduction

Tell us how you were involved in the Internews ZMD project.

Question	Response
1. What is your mandate and nature of work?	
2. What is the rationale for the ZMD project focus?	
3. What role do you play in achieving the objectives of the ZMD project?	
4. Are there any groups which you feel you could have included as beneficiaries, e.g., people with disabilities?	
5. What needs / gaps / problems does the ZMD project address? *(key interventions)*	
6. Were all these delivered in time?	

Question	Response
7. If NOT, what were/are the limiting factors?	
8. What challenges did you face in delivering the interventions?	

Internews Partner Support

Question	Response
1. Who are the partners you are working with under the ZMD project and what are their roles? *(Establish operational location and enquire on Byo based partners with coverage in the rural areas)*	
2. What support did you render to partners and beneficiaries under the ZMD project? *(institutional, community and individual support)*	
3. How did the partners and beneficiaries utilize the support they received from you?	
4. How important was your support in addressing the needs of communities? And the needs of partners?	
5. What challenges are partners and beneficiaries facing in utilizing the support they received from you?	

Indepth Interview — ZMD Outcomes

Question	Response
1. What are the most significant changes that have resulted from the activities and actions being promoted by the ZMD project? *(access to info, voicing participation, responsiveness, response to shocks, accountability)*	
2. Who has been responsible for these changes? *(individuals, institutions, champions etc)*	
3. When and where were these changes produced?	
4. Is there any evidence to substantiate that these changes occured?	
5. Why do you think that these are major changes that ZMD contributed to?	
6. How are these changes relevant to citizens' right to democratic, accountable, inclusive governance and other thematic areas?	

Indepth Interview — DAC Creteria

Questions	Responses
Relevance	
1. In what ways did the project activities or interventions align to local context/situation?	
2. If not aligned, what could have been done differently?	
Efficiency	
3. What standard data collection methods and guideline for analysis, presentation and dissemination were established by the ZMD project?	
4. How did the ZMD project identify operational issues in a timely manner and enabling the project to make evidence-based decisions?	
5. Would you say the project results were achieved at the lowest possible cost, leveraging on environmental and context analysis? Justify your response.	
Effectiveness	
6. How did the ZMD project prioritize change management and environmental analysis to proactively respond to the changing / fluid and socio economic context?	
7. How did the ZMD project deliberately implement activities suitable for different demographic groups e.g women, youth, PLWD, and others in order to build their confidence to participate on governance issues? Are there any groups which you think were left out?	
Impact	
8. To what extent has the ZMD project activities "changed" or "not changed the lives of women, men, elderly, and people with disabilities and any other beneficiary categories?	
Sustainability	
9. How did the project work with community structures to ensure sustainability of Internews ZMD outcomes?	
10. How did the ZMD project promote community ownership of the project?	
11. What is the project transition/sustainability strategy?	
12. Any continuity / sustainability concerns / challenges?	
13. How did the ZMD project influence sustainable revenue generation strategies amongst its partners?	

Questions	Responses
Lessons learnt	
14. Did the ZMD project establish collaborative learning platforms for all partners to identify issues negatively impacting project activities?	
15. What are some of the key lessons learnt through your participation in the ZMD project?	
16. In what ways were lessons learnt utilized to inform quality implementation of the project?	
17. What are your suggestions for more effective project implementation?	
Adaptive management	
18. Where there any project modifications as a result of data on changing context, environment, economic context and also based on Mand E and lessons learnt findings?	
19. How did COVID-19 affect your operations? How did you overcome some of the challenges?	

Thank you for your time

Key Informant Interview Guide
Implementing Partner

Internews is collecting data as part of its midterm review of the Zimbabwe Media Development (ZMD) Project. ZMD is being implemented by Internews Europe (IEU) and is operating in four southern provinces: Bulawayo, Midlands, Matabeleland North, and Matabeleland South. The ZMD project aims to ensure that a resilient, digitally enabled, and sustainable independent media and civil society in Southern Zimbabwe have the skills, knowledge, and tools they need to reach citizens with accurate and impartial information that promotes inclusion and accountability. This mid term evaluation will help the Internews team determine the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the project and draw lessons for future related programming. With this key informant guide, we are engaging you today to contribute to the verification and tracing of Internews outcomes that have been achieved to date.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this process, which will last approximately 30 minutes. Documented information will be kept private and confidential. Please note that partaking in this exercise has no present or future financial and non-financial benefits or implications on your relationship with Internews.

Your name	
Position	
Organisation	

Introduction

Tell us how you were involved in the Internews ZMD project.

Question
1. Where are you currently working under the ZMD project? (*District, ward, province*)
2. What is your mandate and nature of work?
3. How were you selected to be part of the ZMD project?
4. What is the nature of your involvement with the ZMD project?
5. What support did you receive from ZMD project? (*NB. Separate support received to capacitate partners and support received to pass on to the ultimate beneficiaries*)
6. How important was the support in improving your work? (*what would it have been without*)
7. How did the support help you to meet/accomplish the project objectives?
8. What challenges did you face in utilizing the support from ZMD? How did you address some of the challenges?

Indepth Interview — DAC Creteria

Questions
Relevance
9. In what ways did the project activities or interventions align to local context/situation?
Efficiency
10. How has the ZMD project brought some level of efficiency to your organization, if any?
11. Would you say the project results were achieved at the lowest possible cost? Justify your response.
Effectiveness
12. How has the ZMD project made your organisation to be more effective in your operations?
Impact
13. What are the most significant changes that have resulted from the activities and actions being promoted by the ZMD project? (*probe fully and list changes*)
14. When and where were these changes produced?
Sustainability
15. Being a beneficiary of the ZMD project, how do you see yourself being able to continue with your operations (*or ZMD initiated activities*) **post ZMD project support?**
16. Any continuity / sustainability concerns / challenges?
17. How did the ZMD project influence sustainable revenue generation strategies amongst its partners?
Lessons learnt
18. Given your participation in the ZMD project, what is that you would say has worked and what is it that has not worked? Why?
19. What are some of the key lessons learnt from your participation in the ZMD project?
20. In what ways are lessons learnt being utilized to improve on your operations?
21. What are your suggestions for more effective project implementation? (*Probe fully*).
Adaptive management
22. How did COVID-19-19 affect your operations and how did you adapt? (*during implementation of the ZMD project*)

Focus Group Discussion Guide Consumers

Internews Europe (IEU) is an international non-profit organization whose mission is to empower local media worldwide, to give people the news and information they need, the ability to connect and the means to make their voices heard. Internews trains both media professionals and journalists, introduces innovative media solutions, increases coverage of vital issues, and helps establish policies needed for open access to information. Programs implemented are aimed at creating platforms for dialogue and enabling informed debate, which bring about social and economic progress.

Internews Europe is implementing a SIDA funded project entitled 'Zimbabwe Media Development (ZMD)'. The project is operating in four southern provinces: Bulawayo, Midlands, Matabeleland North, and Matabeleland South. The ZMD project aims to ensure that a resilient, digitally enabled, and sustainable independent media and civil society in Southern Zimbabwe have the skills, knowledge, and tools they need to reach citizens with accurate and impartial information that promotes inclusion and accountability.

Having implemented the project for the past two years, Internews has commissioned a mid-term review exercise to rigorously measure and assess the impact of the ZMD project interventions. You have been selected to be part of this discussion due to your involvement with the project.

Your involvement in this evaluation is voluntary and information you disclose will not be used for purposes other than the intended use. *(Explain that you will record the interview as well as write down the responses).*

Location:

 _____

Facilitator:

_____

Partner/Group:

_____

Number of Respondents:

_____

Gender:

_____Males_____Females_____

Theme	Question
Information needs	▪ What information/news themes would you want to get from the media? ▪ What do you need the information for?
Information sources	▪ Where are you currently getting information/news from? **(Check for most popular radio, tv station, social media platform)** ▪ How relevant, reliable and trustworthy is the information/news content to your community and individual needs? ▪ Which radio station frequency is accessible in your area? ▪ Are you aware of community radio stations operating in your area? (State names)
Access to information challenges	▪ What challenges are you facing in accessing the news/information you need? ▪ How are you dealing with these challenges?
Inclusion	▪ To what extent have you contributed input into local news content production? ▪ What platforms (safe spaces) are available to ensure your views are included/ considered in content generation? ▪ How can access to information/news from independent sources be improved for marginalized groups and or communities?
Utilization / Application of interventions	▪ To what extent does your existing news platforms cover themes such as — governance, human rights, corruption, health, environment, climate change? ▪ Have you felt more informed or empowered because of access to information on the above themes? In what ways? ▪ Have you been able to act on information provided to you? In what ways? ▪ If not, what has been preventing adoption/utilisation?
Sustainability	▪ In what ways has the project promoted community ownership of the project? ▪ Any continuity / sustainability fears/challenges?
Suggestions for improvement	▪ Suggestions for sustainable community participation platforms in content generation and consumption by marginalized groups and communities?
AOC	▪ Have you noticed any changes in the quality of information available to you? If YES, what has changed? (*Give examples*) ▪ Are your information needs being met? IF YES, state examples of information you are accessing. ▪ Have you been represented in the media over the last 2 years? (*Give examples on issues representing you*) ▪ Any other comments

Midterm Review Questionnaire (Journalists)

To The Respondent

Internews Europe is implementing a SIDA funded project entitled 'Zimbabwe Media Development (ZMD)'. The project is operating in four southern provinces: Bulawayo, Midlands, Matabeleland North, and Matabeleland South. The ZMD project aims to ensure that a resilient, digitally enabled, and sustainable independent media and civil society in Southern Zimbabwe have the skills, knowledge, and tools they need to reach citizens with accurate and impartial information that promotes inclusion and accountability.

Having implemented the project for the past two years, Internews has commissioned the Consultants to undertake a midterm review exercise on its behalf to rigorously assess the effectiveness and impact of the ZMD project interventions and draw lessons for improved implementation going forward. You have been selected to be part of this evaluation due to your involvement with the project. It is important to note that your participation in this evaluation is entirely voluntary and that all ethical considerations will be observed. Also, please note that there are no right nor wrong answers, therefore, feel free to respond in a way that expresses your most objective opinion in each case by ticking the box that corresponds to your answer.

SECTION A

1. Your Gender:
   - 1. Male ❑
   - 2. Female ❑

2. Your Age Group:
   - 1. Less than 20 years ❑
   - 2. 20 – 30 years ❑
   - 3. 31 – 40 years ❑
   - 4. 41 – 50 years ❑
   - 5. 51 years and over ❑

3. Your highest level of education:

1. Primary education	❑	5. Diploma	❑
2. 'O' Levels	❑	6. Bachelor's Degree	❑
3. 'A' Levels	❑	7. Master's Degree	❑
4. Certificate	❑	8. PhD Degree	❑

4. Your Province: 1. Midlands   ❏   2. Matabeleland North   ❏

                    3. Matabeleland South   ❏

5. Your District: 1. Matobo   ❏   2. Gwanda   ❏

(coverage)   3. Kwekwe   ❏   4. Mberengwa   ❏

                    5. Hwange   ❏   4. Tsholotsho   ❏

6. As a journalist, which of the following categories are you in?

     1. Senior journalist   ❏

     2. Mid-career journalist   ❏

     3. Community/Citizen journalist   ❏

     4. Budding journalist   ❏

     5. Student journalist   ❏

     6. Other (Specify..)   ❏

7. What form of support did you receive from the Internews ZMD project?

     1. Training   ❏

     2. Mentoring   ❏

     3. Grant funding   ❏

     4. Other Support (Specify...............................)   ❏

8. What has been the proportion of content you produced that is inclusive of women and other marginalised groups after you received support from Internews ZMD project?

     1. Less than 30%   ❏

     2. 30% — 40%   ❏

     3. Above 40%   ❏

SECTION B

9. Below are a number of outcome statements related to your participation in the Internews ZMD project as a **journalist**. PLEASE INDICATE HOW YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH EACH OF THE STATEMENTS BY TICKING THE BOX (NUMBER) THAT CORRESPONDS TO ANSWER WHERE:

     1.SD=Strongly Disagree; 2.D=Disagree; 3.U=Uncertain; 4.A=Agree; 5. SA=Strongly Agree

OUTCOME #1		SD	D	U	A	SA
13.1	My skills and knowledge in relation to digital media production have improved.	1	2	3	4	5
13.2	My skills and knowledge in relation to use of social media in news generation and dissemination have improved.	1	2	3	4	5
13.3	My skills and knowledge in relation to *governance* issues have improved.	1	2	3	4	5
13.4	My skills and knowledge in relation to *human rights* issues have improved.	1	2	3	4	5
13.5	My skills and knowledge in relation to *corruption* issues have improved.	1	2	3	4	5
13.6	My skills and knowledge in relation to *health* issues have improved.	1	2	3	4	5
13.7	My skills and knowledge in relation to *environmental* issues have improved.	1	2	3	4	5
13.8	My skills and knowledge in relation to *climate change* issues have improved.	1	2	3	4	5
13.9	I have been able to increase opportunities for networking and develop professional contacts as a result of the Internews ZMD project.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION C

10. What have you gained/what positive results have you seen from your involvement in the ZMD project?

_____
_____
_____
_____

11. In your opinion, what aspects of the Internews ZMD project need improvement?

_____
_____
_____
_____

12. What lessons, if any, have you learnt as a participant on the Internews ZMD project?

_____
_____
_____
_____

END OF QUESTIONNAIRE — THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND VALUABLE INPUT

Endnotes

1   Cresswell, J. W., & Cresswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. Fifth edition.* (5th ed.). Los Angeles: SAGE.

2   Outcome harvesting is an approach in which 'evaluators, grant makers, and/or program managers and staff identify, formulate, verify, analyze and interpret 'outcomes' in programming contexts where relations of cause and effect are not fully understood.' See Wilson-Grau, R., & Britt, H. (2013). *Outcome Harvesting*. Ford Foundation.

3   Saunders, M., Lewis, P., Thornhill, A (2016). *Research Methods for Business Students* FT Prentice Hall-Pearson Education.

4   Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods (4th Edition ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publication Inc.

5   Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Leech, N. L. (2007a). A call for qualitative power analyses. *Quality and Quantity*, 41. Pp 105 – 121

6   Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods (4th Edition ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publication Inc.

7   Flick, U. (2012) Expert Voice in Baker, S.E., Edwards, R. (2012) *How many qualitative interviews is enough?* National Centre of Research Methods (NCRM) Discussion Paper. Retrieved from http://eprints,ncrm.ac.uk/2273 23rd September 2016.

8   Saunders, MKN.; Townsend, K. *Reporting and justifying the number of interview participants in organisation and workplace research*. British Journal of Management. Pp 1 – 16.

9   Cho, J.Y; Lee, E. *Reducing Confusion about Grounded Theory and Qualitative Content Analysis: Similarities and Differences*. The Qualitative Report. Pp 1 – 20.