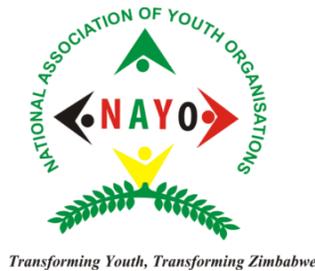


COMMUNITY PRE-MEETING ON DISTASTER PREPAREDNESS AND CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE REPORT



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23 December 2019
Youth Alive Catholic Centre, Mutare, Zimbabwe

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Background

Due to the huge impacts and damage left as a result of the Cyclones Idai and Kenneth in the Southern African States of Malawi, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, a network of partnering regional and national civil society organizations (CSOs) committed itself to convene a joint stakeholder dialogue with communities from affected areas in order to re-think the disaster preparedness of SADC Member States and how to develop an improved resilience against the effects of climate change in the form of a three day Regional Workshop. As noted by SAT, the tropical Cyclones Idai and Kenneth are regarded as two of the worst tropical cyclones on record to affect Africa and the Southern Hemisphere. The cyclones caused catastrophic damage in Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Malawi, leaving more than 1,300 people dead and many more missing. Cyclone Idai was the deadliest tropical cyclone recorded in the South-West Indian Ocean basin. Communities, local, national and regional governments were ill-prepared and unable to provide protection to the most vulnerable social groups. More than 3 million people were affected, out of which 1.85 million people were in Mozambique. It is under this backdrop that the pre-meeting on Disaster Preparedness and Climate Resilience which brought together community representatives from the affected communities and representatives of the organizing organisations in Zimbabwe and Malawi was convened in the Manicaland Province of Mutare and community visit to Chimanimani District as part of preparations for the three-day Regional Workshop. The pre-meeting outputs will be presented and feed into the discussions during the regional workshop.

Engagements

The coordinating Organizations in Zimbabwe made great strides in engaging the Mutare local community leaders including the Minister of Provincial Affairs of Manicaland, District Administrator, Traditional leadership, the office of the President and Cabinet among other key stakeholders as preparations for the regional workshop. In Malawi and Mozambique Action Aid among other partners have engaged local communities and the affected people towards the conference in January 2020.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

The meeting hosted a total of 26 participants and was facilitated by the National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (NANGO) Regional Coordinator Mr. Joseph Kauzani who began by acknowledging all partners including Southern Africa Trust (SAT), Action Aid, SADC-CNGO, PLAN-RESA, OXFARM, Southern Africa Youth Forum (SAYOF) and Amnesty International for all the support rendered towards the meeting. The brief background of the pre-meeting on Disaster Preparedness and Climate resilience as a preparation for the Regional workshop was given by Mr. Lloyd Kuveya from Amnesty International. He noted the serious implications that Climate Change is posing on Human Rights and livelihoods citing how people were affected in the three countries as result of food insecurity and droughts and the need to review the roles of governments, the private sector, civil society, communities and ordinary citizens in responding to these disasters in the region and propose new and sustainable models for stronger and effective climate change adaptation, community resilience and emergency responses within the SADC region. Mr. Kuveya also shared with the delegates that the meeting was to unpack the obligations of the key stakeholders, when the human rights and livelihoods have been affected by climate change. How communities can respond, managing disaster as well as the roles

various actors in disaster preparedness. He welcomed everyone to freely contribute, share experiences and possible solutions.

He closed by asking key questions including whether the Government's response was enough and what it means having people staying in tents one year post the cyclones and what this meant to those living in the communities.

Objectives

The meeting objectives were given by the Southern Africa Youth Forum (SAYoF-SADC) Regional Coordinator, Misheck Gondo. He unpacked the importance of the pre-meeting and how the inputs from this meeting will be used during the first day of the Regional Climate Change Workshop during the end of January 2020. Below are the objectives that were shared with the pre-meeting delegates, he noted that the meeting was aimed at:

- Identifying key needs and priorities of the communities, in particular with regard to disaster preparedness and resilience against climate change,
- Managing expectations in the context of the three-day regional workshop,
- Discussing and preparing the input to the three-day workshop,
- Identifying key speakers and key messages, especially with regard to Day 1 of the regional climate change workshop and clearly defining the input community representatives will provide on Day one, which will be fully run by the community delegates,
- Preparing the community delegates for Day two and Day three of the regional workshop, with regard to working with civil society organizations in rethinking and defining strategies for improved disaster preparedness and resilience against climate change,
- Identify testimonials

Misheck noted that the meeting was more of a listening session from member of the communities affected and thus will be a learning and a solution-event as pillar to jointly re-think the strategies for disaster preparedness and resilience. Misheck ended by stressing the point that the pre-meeting is based on sharing experiences that will shape the upcoming three-day Regional Climate Change workshop to take place in Manicaland Province in January 2020 and observed that the representatives from two countries have people of different backgrounds including a traditional leader from Malawi, youth, community leaders, general citizens, health workers, a headmaster from local school from Chimanimani among other.

Meeting Expectations from participants

The meeting delegates also added their expectations of the meeting and the following were noted:

- The need to form social networks to share experiences from the different countries on the impacts of the Cyclones

- A re-look of the post Cyclone Idai support towards the vulnerable communities including child headed families
- The role of the International community's assistance in natural disaster preparedness was also raised in the form of a question on whether it was necessary or it was critical to hold Governments of affected communities accountable
- The need to demystify the notion that Malawi is said to have responded to the Cyclone using indigenous knowledge systems, if so, how can delegates learn to learn from such systems.

Session One: Experience Sharing

The meeting delegates began by watching a Short video on how Cyclone Idai Affected Chimanimani (Zimbabwe) and then followed by sharing experiences of the impacts of both Cyclone Idai and Kenneth in the affected Countries including Zimbabwe and Malawi by sharing on what went right and wrong during the period of the Cyclones. This session was facilitated by Joseph Kauzani of NANGO. A number of participants from Malawi and Zimbabwe shared their stories, when the disaster struck. (For more information refer to Short Videos and Documentary for the pre-meeting.)

The following constitute some of the contributions during this session:

- A participant from Malawi who is a survivor noted that at Bangura community in Malawi where they were, it took more than five days for those who were assisting to come with support due to the heavy rains while children were already starving.
- It was also noted that the organizations which came to provide support were not in touch with the reality on the ground as in Malawi some brought materials that were irrelevant with the situation that was on the ground during this time for instance those who brought containers to draw water when these could not be used during this time, as people needed food.
- A participant from Zimbabwe noted that the community had to unite and find solutions, as the government response was slow
- In Zimbabwe participants noted that the figure given to have died from the disaster is less than the people who are uncounted for as to the present day.
- Prostitution- without food while heading families, it was noted that some women in Malawi and Zimbabwe turned into prostitution to get food for survival. The sad part is that the service providers such as the army are the ones manipulating food for sexual favors
- Children had to miss school, some them were also heading families on their own and due to floods
- The challenge of survivors still staying in tents without proper facilities one year after the disaster was a cause for concern, there seems to be no durable solutions, also given that the countries are in another rainy season.
- Sexual abuse was also cited as critical as most women were reported to have been abused sexually in exchange of food in the camps in both countries of Malawi and Zimbabwe while these were afraid to report perpetrators as most of these were service providers and those responsible

for manning the Camps. Part of the reasons why women did not report sexual abuse were cited as:

- i.) Married women- these were reported to have feared for their marriages after reporting sexual abuse
 - ii.) Confiding in other women also led to the victims being judged and such women going back to the husbands of the victims and sharing such sexual abuse experiences leaving the women victims exposed
- The privacy and dignity of women in the camps during the menstrual cycles was also noted as having been hugely compromised in the survivor's camps
 - Early marriages were also cited as key to consider addressing as most girls heading families were said to have opted for early marriages as part of resolving the effects of Cyclone Idai
 - HIV/AIDS- most patients on ARVs were reported to have abandoned medication due to its unavailability in the camps
 - The unavailability of SRHR services and condoms at the camps was noted which also led to unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases
 - Thieves were also noted to be on the increase taking advantage of the Cyclones to benefit from the little belongings of survivors
 - On the lack of protection of survivors in the Camps, the pouncing on Food provided as support by high ranking officials in the affected areas was also raised as a key concern while financial resources were reported to have been misused without being accounted for while beneficiaries are still languishing in deep poverty and food shortages
 - In Zimbabwe, the rotting of Food stuffs at DU and Silver Stone centers was also cited while these were not reaching the intended beneficiaries
 - Participants noted the need for a proper research on the after effects of Cyclone in affected countries, apart from the disaster, there are emerging issues that need urgent attention and healing as raised above i.e. rape, child headed families, unaccounted family members, loss of dignity among other human rights issues.

Session Two: Group Breakaways

This session was led by Ms. Esther Moyo from Action Aid Malawi, to share on durable solutions to natural disasters and disaster preparedness in the affected countries. Key questions guiding the discussions were: How best should countries prepare for disasters? Whether Governments, communities and non-state actors should lead preparedness and in what way? The groups were divided into two and were country specific, Malawi and Zimbabwe.



Esther Moyo facilitating the session

Session Three: Group Feedback

The feedback from the two groups can be summed up below:

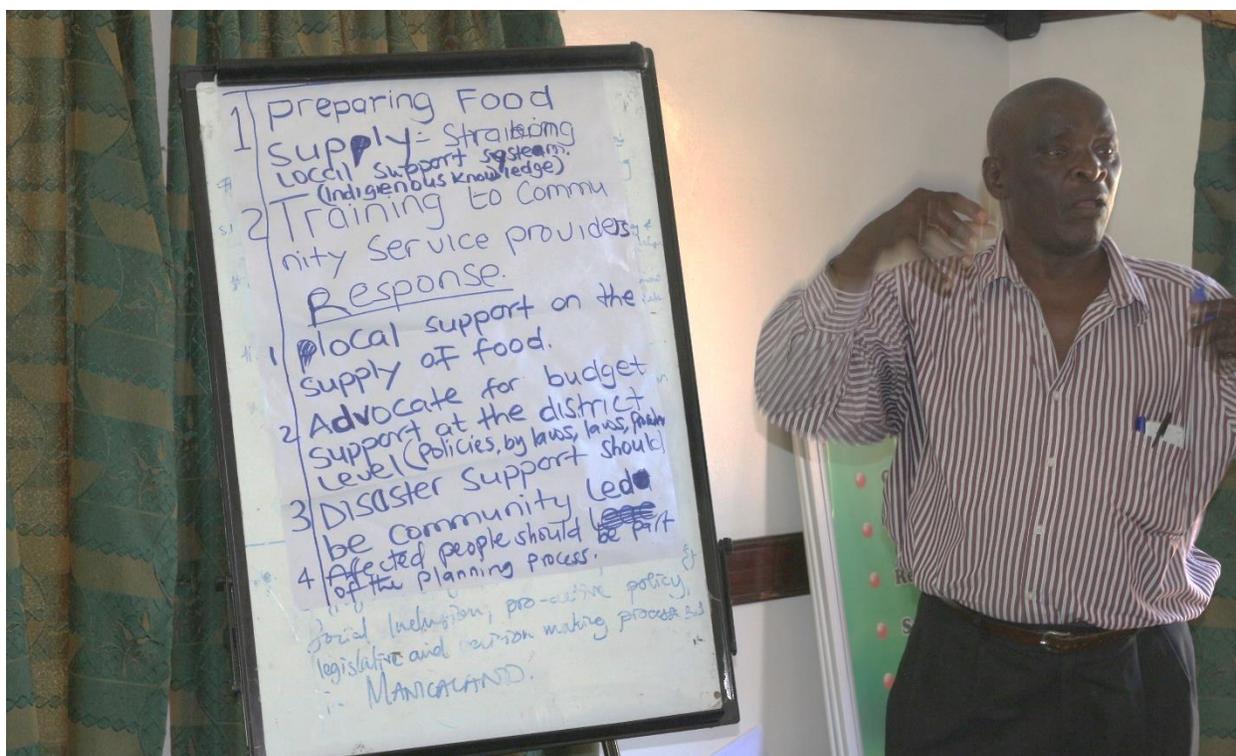
Group 1, Zimbabwe-the following constitute the inputs by the Zimbabwe group:

- The need for a budget to be put in place for managing natural disasters at a National and Regional level was cited
- Engaging the media as a key stakeholder during disaster times was also noted as critical
- The establishment of community civil protection units trained on natural disasters was also cited
- Factoring in the role of Traditional leaders to cater to the beliefs, values, and norms of affected communities during disasters
- The adoption of various legal frameworks, for instance, the Kampala Convention urging Governments to effectively implement these to enhance disaster preparedness was also noted
- The need to de-politicize/militarize all activities done concerning Climate Change and disaster risk preparedness was also cited as key to consider
- The need to resuscitate the **Zunde raMambo** concept led by Chiefs at the community level to assist the vulnerable communities in the times of emergencies
- The need to educate communities on climate change, and the link to disasters (Awareness campaigns)
- On long term response; the need for a serious investment in Climate Change mitigation
- Some governments in SADC must be held to account for failing to prepare for disasters



Group 2, Malawi- the following constitute the inputs by the Malawi group:

- On Preparedness- the group noted the need for sustainable local food supply systems to assist affected communities before external assistance is rendered (the bad weather and destruction of roads led to food support having taken more than five days to reach beneficiaries in affected communities)
- Training of local service providers in case of disasters
- The need for Budget support at the District level to enhance disaster preparedness
- It was also submitted that disaster support should be community-led as the group cited that those affected should also be leaders of efforts to assist and being part of all the planning processes



Session Four: Plenary

The meeting delegates also shared ideas during the plenary session in response to the presentations that were made by the two groups. The following were part of the contributions during this session:

- The need for local-level response mechanisms to be factored in the National response plans was raised as important
- The need for Governments in the Region to prioritize devolution to allow local communities to make many decisions as a lot of time was lost waiting for Central Governments to react during the times of the Cyclone disasters
- The need for all human rights to be protected during disasters
- The need to put mechanisms to protect women, people with disabilities and children during disasters

Closing and Way Forward

The National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (NANGO) National Director, Mr. Leonard Mandishara gave the closing remarks and way forward to mark the end of the meeting. He noted that the issues of Climate Change will continue to be faced in the future hence the need to find durable solutions to these challenges. Mr. Mandishara also appreciated the touching stories shared by victims of the Cyclone and challenged the meeting delegates that the period between this meeting and the Regional Climate Change workshop was the time to document with evidence all experiences of the impact of the Cyclones to back up the information to support the influencing of favourable policies on natural disasters and disaster preparedness in the SADC Region.

Selection of Community Representatives

The two countries were tasked to select their leading representatives to present at the actual conference in Mutare. The groups agreed there must be gender balance and those selected must work with groups in their country for final preparation for the presentations. It was noted that it would be better if all representatives from communities will be accorded the opportunity to attend the upcoming conference. The pre-meeting delegates undertook a process of selecting their representatives who will be responsible for presenting on the first day of the Regional Climate Change workshop. The process was held in a transparent manner and was being led by NANGO. Below are the names of those selected to be the presenters during day one of the Regional Workshop:

Malawi:

Ms. Mary Kachola 088 537 0471

Mr. Isaac Falakeza 088 459 5522

Zimbabwe:

Mr. Panganai Murime +263 776 163 963/ +263 712 031 764

Ms. Sheila Chitenderu +263 773 910 364

Key Messages from the Meeting

- Investing in Climate Change mitigation is investing in the future
- Climate financing should reach local level
- Leveraging Indigenous Knowledge Systems as tools to mitigate effects of natural disasters
- Standing with SADC in mitigating Climate Change
- Leaving no youth behind and standing with young men and women against abuse and exploitation during natural disasters
- Devolution is the new revolution- towards the efficient handling of natural disasters at a local level during natural disasters
- Sexual abuse and exploitation against women and girls during natural disasters is a crime- as SADC we stand with Women and Girls
- Together, Climate Change can be defeated- State and Non-State Actors have a role to play on the fight against Climate Change
- The communities have solutions on climate change, if
- De-politicization of humanitarian assistance during disasters builds united communities
- Climate Change is a threat to peace, hence a priority
- Link between climate change and poverty need to be explored, awareness needed at community level.

Community Visits

The pre-meeting delegation managed to visit two sites of the Cyclone Idai affected areas namely Charles Luwanga Seminary and Secondary School as well as Ngangu Community in Chimanimani respectively. The visits were aimed at assessing the impact of the Cyclones from a first-hand experience guided by

some of the survivors of the Cyclones who formed part of the meeting delegation and meet with people at the community level.

Impacts at St Charles Luwanga Seminary and Secondary School

St. Charles Luwanga School was the first site where the pre-meeting delegation stopped as the community members shared experiences of the impact made by the Cyclones. It was noted that the Cyclone Idai resulted in major stones and mud falling from the nearby mountain to destroy half of the School dining block and further destroyed a school dormitory block that stood by the side of the dining block. It is sadly believed that two pupils perished while in the dormitory block as a result of this tragedy. Meanwhile, the operations of the school are said to have been affected as the school is no longer a boarding facility but now a day school accommodating both boys and girls.



Llyod Kuveya of Amnesty International sharing his views at St Charles Luwanga School

It is also believed that there are still major rocks that stand as future threats to pupils as some of these have remained hanging above the school premises. Meanwhile, a new school premise has been allocated and a new school will be built at this new site. Below are part of the pictures of St Charles Luwanga Seminary and Secondary School post Cyclone Idai:



The School Dining Hall that was destroyed by the rocks which fell from the mountain



The Dormitory Block that was destroyed by the Cyclone leaving two pupils dead

Impacts at Nangu Community

The pre-meeting delegation proceeded to Nangu Community which is also one area that was heavily affected by Cyclone Idai. It was shared by Mr. Panganai Murime, the Coordinator of Sosha under PDI in Chimanimani, who was the lead tour guide that this area was one such face of the ugly impacts of Cyclone Idai. He also shared how up to this day families are still living in Tents although they have been promised housing facilities some months back. The first stop of the pre-meeting delegation was the Cyclone Idai survivors camp where families are still housed in tents. The delegation proceeded to Nangu residence where many houses were destroyed, the media team interviewed some volunteers chronicling what had happened.



Part of the Camp site of Cyclone Idai survivors housing families in Tents

Further, the delegation passed through the Ngangu community where the Cyclone heavily hit and families are still housed there while major threats of huge stones still stand for such families. Houses were destroyed while people also perished during the Cyclone disaster. Some of the community members also shared their views on their expectations post the Cyclone disaster.



Part of the houses destroyed by Cyclone Idai in Ngangu Community

Annex

2. Photo Gallery







Programme

Date: 23/12/19

Venue: Youth Alive Zimbabwe Conference Room

Theme: “Rethinking Current Models on Disaster Preparedness, Response and Adaptation in Southern Africa”

Time	Activity	Facilitator
8:00am	Registration and House -keeping issues	NANGO/SAYOF
8:10am	Introductions	NANGO
08:20am	Opening remarks	Lloyd Kuveya (Amnesty International)
08:30am	Workshop Objectives and Plans for Regional Dialogue	Misheck Gondo (SAYOF Regional Secretariat)

08:45am	Short video on how Cyclone Idai Affected Chimanimani (Zimbabwe)	Joseph Kauzani (NANGO)
	PLENARY DISCUSSION: Reflection on the Tragedy & Community Experiences from Zimbabwe, Malawi & Mozambique- (What went right & What went Wrong Before, During & After the Cyclones)	ALL
10:00am	TEA/COFFEE BREAK	All
10:15am	Group Discussion Durable solutions of Disaster Preparedness & Response in Southern Africa	Esther Moyo (Action Aid)
11:00am	Feedback from Groups	
11:30am	Consolidation of an Advocacy Framework for Climate Change & Disaster Management in Southern Africa	Leonard Mandishara (NANGO)
12:00pm	Lunch & Community Visit: Chimanimani	All