



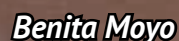
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**H**WANGE Local Board (HLB) town secretary Pastor Ndumiso Mdlalose says the local authority's outstanding feat at the Voice and Choice Summit Awards in October is a testimony of its good governance and unwavering efforts to improve gender diversity at its workplace.

The summit saw 51 COE local authorities showcasing their institutional gender mainstreaming best practices with seven managing to come out winners in various categories while four emerged runners-up.

Gender Links embarked on the Hub and Spoke programme for gender mainstreaming as a way of advancing its work with the country's 92 local authorities.

He said the award should spur the local authority to further improve on issues of gender mainstreaming at its workplaces.



“We continue to improve where there are areas we still have to improve on. When we went to the awards ceremony, we got a number of comments and recommendations...the ones we took most are those, which point out to the areas we needed to improve on,” said Pastor Mdlalose.

He further stated that: “We must then transform ourselves not only in terms of what we say but what we really document and allow ourselves to be guided by”.

Pastor Mdlalose also said the local authority was looking forward to improving its gender policies taking into consideration maternity and paternity issues.

HLB and Pastor Mdlalose have over the last few years been receiving numerous accolades for excelling in various.

“This award is also part of celebrating our culture of being winners, which we have cultivated over the years. We have been winning awards since 2016...,” said Pastor Mdlalose.

HLB systems administrator and gender focal person Benita Moyo said the local authority’s



award was in recognition of the role it had played towards empowering and improving livelihoods of women in communities.

“We are excited and humbled that Gender Links has recognised by the efforts we are doing towards improving the lives of women in the community,” she said.

Moyo said the local authority has embraced

gender mainstreaming at workplace as part of its efforts to improve service delivery.

“HLB adopted gender mainstreaming as a strategy upon realising that decisions made by the Council affected men, women, boys and girls differently as well as the need to offer gender sensitive service delivery,” she said.

Moyo also said Council had adopted a gender sensitive budget to enable it to equitably distribute resources across sexes.

“We are also aware of menstrual hygiene challenges being faced by girls due to high cost of sanitary wear. As such we came up with an initiative whereby we donate sanitary pads to schools. This has ensured girls not miss school due to lack of proper sanitary wear,” she said.

HLB occasionally donates sanitary wear to Chilisa and Kalope Secondary schools and Nechibondo Primary School.

“Council has also tried to raise awareness on issues such as Gender Based Violence (GBV) through carrying out awareness campaigns and child protection programs. We are also working with other stakeholders in supporting survivors of GBV,” said.

## Residents laud Council

**G**REATER Whange Residents Trust co-ordinator Mr Fidelis Chima has commended Hwange Local Board (HLB) for its continuous improvement in service delivery over the past few years.

In an interview Mr Chima said the local authority has made significant strides towards improving service delivery in its area of jurisdiction, much to the delight of rate payers.

“Of late HLB has significantly improved in terms of service delivery. Of note being its ability to rectify the Phase 4 (housing project) issue, where we are seeing some developments. We are also seeing efficiency in attending to sewer faults,” he said.

The local authority is in the process of installing water and sewer reticulation systems in Phase 4 after beneficiaries of residential stands started construction activities before the area could be serviced.

He also applauded Council for improving its interaction with residents with regards to developments taking place in their areas.

“The way Council engages residents has tremendously improved. Over the years there has been an information gap. Now there’s effective communication, which allays concerns of residents being misinformed.

“Effective dissemination of information by Council will enable residents to realise that most of their concerns with regards to service

delivery will be merely out of ignorance,” said Mr Chima.

He however, noted the need for the local authority to avail public documents pertaining to its operations to its rate payers.

“As residents we expect Council to take advantage of the digital era to avail critical public documents such as by-laws, full council minutes, resolutions and other policies on their online platforms...,” said Mr Chima.

He also expressed dismay at the local authority’s failure to curb rampant clay soil poaching activities in its area of jurisdiction.

“Our concerns as residents is also on how the issue of illegal brick moulding is being handled. At one point it appeared Local Board had zest to deal with the matter once and for all then the following day you see the perpetrators back on site. It gives the impression that some Council officials and councillors are also involved in this illegal practice and at the end of the day it’s more of a shame exercise,” said Mr Chima.

HLB is in the process of rehabilitating vast swathes of land, which were heavily degraded by unscrupulous individuals involved in clay poaching for the sole purpose of moulding bricks.

The local authority has delayed to complete the rehabilitation process owing to inadequate resources.

Mr Chima also lamented failure by most residents to pay rates on time as a bottleneck to



the local authority’s efforts to ensure seamless service delivery.

“As representative of residents we are guilty as charged in the sense that we haven’t done much in terms of disseminating information with regards to encouraging residents to meet their obligation of paying rates,” he said.

Mr Chima added that most residents were failing to pay rates owing to the prevailing economic challenges in the country.

“More than 60 percent households are failing to pay their rates citing the prevailing economic situation. There was also a time when some residents weren’t paying their rates in protest over alleged poor service delivery,” he said.



# Council works on empowering SMEs

**H**WANGE Local Board (HLB) is working on a programme aimed at providing Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and players in the informal sector with decent work spaces as part of its efforts to empower and grow their businesses.

HLB town secretary Pastor Ndumiso Mdlalose said the local authority was making concerted efforts to empower small entrepreneurs through exploring ways of providing them with appropriate areas to operate from.

“There are a number of backyard industries that have sprouted at most homes in residential areas. We have plans to move these enterprises by providing the owners with proper working space,” he said.

Further stating that the setting-up of appropriate working spaces for SMEs and players in the informal sector would also enable the local authority to generate income through licensing their businesses.

“It’s not sustainable for Council to budget on penalising individuals operating backyard industries. We would rather budget on licensing them and in the process generate income from their operations,” said Pastor Mdlalose.

He said the local authority has a number of areas dotted around its area of jurisdiction, which have been designated for light industry and strategically situated to ensure viability of enterprises operating from there.

“In designating areas for light industry we took into consideration the need to bring the services as close as possible to the people because the ability to enter a market is getting close to it.

“One shouldn’t spend most of his or her income on transport going to work. They must spend as little as possible to get to work to ensure that whatever resources they get are put into production,” he said.

Pastor Mdlalose said as a way of showing its commitment towards growing small enterprises the local authority has included



funding of SMEs projects in its budget.

“We need these SMEs projects to be included on our budget and over and above all Government has funds set aside for these type of projects.

“We also have plans to establish SMEs an incubation centre as well as setting up vending bays with proper ablution facilities at the disused Empumalanga bus terminus,” said Pastor Mdlalose.

The town secretary also hinted that the local authority was looking forward to completing construction of vegetable market stalls two of which are in Empumalanga and one in Chibondo suburb respectively.

The vegetable market stalls were constructed by the then Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing in 2008 following an Operation code-named Restore Order/Murambatsvina.

However, the operation winded up before the completion of the structures due to lack of funding. The local authority took over the project but inadequate resources for the project stalled progress.

Operation Murambatsvina was meant to clear Zimbabwe’s urban areas of illegal settlements, commercial activities and eradicate the spread

of deadly communicable diseases such as cholera among others.

“The vegetable market stalls are a Government project and it’s our mandate and obligation to see to it that any Government project within our area of jurisdiction is completed for the benefit of the people,” said Pastor Mdlalose.

HLB housing and community services director Mr Ananias Banda reiterated Pastor Mdlalose’s sentiments hinting that the local authority was committed to accelerate development of start-up and fledging entrepreneurs to effectively impact on growth of the economy.

“We have areas designated for light industry and we have also engaged Urban Development Corporation (Udcorp) to assist us in setting up a SMEs incubation centre.

“The idea of coming up with an incubation centre is aimed at ensuring that these SMEs improve the quality of their products. We also want them to grow and not to remain small,” said Mr Banda.

Last year the local authority organised a workshop where the Standard Association of Zimbabwe (SAZ) certified bricks that are produced by some of the brick moulders locally.

**“Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.” – Thomas Edison**

# Devolution funds bridge development gap

**T**OWN secretary Pastor Ndumiso Mdlalose says the devolution funding has played a significant role in ensuring Hwange Local Board (HLB) to embark on its various developmental projects.

The local authority received about \$3 million last year under the Devolution Fund. This year it was allocated \$3.2 million but has since taken delivery of \$1.1 million.

“The Devolution Fund has gone a long way in assisting us to deliver critical services to residents,” said Pastor Mdlalose.

Parliament has an oversight role to play in ensuring that the funds are used for their intended purpose.

This year, Government has set aside \$2.9 billion for local authorities, although disbursements have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

So far treasury has released approximately \$290 million to local authorities.

HLB has utilised its devolution funds towards construction of an Early Childhood Development (ECD) classrooms block at Nechibondo Primary School.

It also installed a standby water supply facility, constructed an incinerator as well as enacted a fence at its Empumalanga clinic.

He said construction of the ECD block would go a long way in averting hot seating at the school.

“Construction of the ECD block will go a long way in ensuring that children are not subjected to hot seating as has been the case due to shortage of classrooms. The infrastructure is tailor made for the young learners including the ablution facilities. In actual fact it’s a modern learning facility,” said Pastor Mdlalose.

He however, said there was still a need to install an air-conditioner at the clinic’s drug storeroom as well as other ancillary equipment.

Pastor Mdlalose said more funding was needed for the upgrading of Empumalanga sewer plant. The plant has been non-functioning for over a decade.

“We also need funding for another bigger project-the sewer infrastructure upgrading. We might need about \$10 million. A growing town requires more efficient water and sewer reticulation. So, the sewer upgrading will go a long way in addressing that...,” he said.



*Empumalanga Clinic*



*Work on the ECD block*

# Council committed to end Ngumija water woes



*Councillor Albert Vendasi Sibanda*

**THE delay in incorporating seven of the wards in concession areas under Hwange Local Board (HLB)'s administration is constraining the local authority's efforts to assist in solving perennial water woes in Ward 14.**

HLB town secretary Pastor Ndumiso Mdlalose said ward 14 residents have over the years approached the local authority to assist in ensuring efficient water supply to the area.

Ward 14 comprises of Ralyton and Ngumija low and high density suburbs respectively. These two suburbs are located within National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ)'s concession area, which also encompasses some Government departments' housing units. The ward consists of more than 500 households.

The area has over the years been receiving water through a supply agreement between Hwange Colliery Company Limited (HCCL) and NRZ. However, dilapidated infrastructure has

over the years affected effective distribution of water. As a result it culminated to erratic supplies, with most households situated in high laying areas hardly receiving the precious liquid.

"Residents from the Railways have over the years been approaching Council to assist with water reticulation, this is after Colliery started facing challenges to supply the area," said Pastor Mdlalose.

He said although the local authority was committed in solving the water woes, which have bedevilled ward 14 for almost 20 years it was failing to do so as the area is under the administration of NRZ.

"Council took a position and promised to assist but we are still tied with the issue of incorporation. Thus at the moment we can't deploy funds that side because we have no administrative jurisdiction over that area," said Pastor Mdlalose.

He acknowledged that owing to the local

authority's unwarranted failure to address the water challenges initiatives have since been undertaken by councillors and well-wishers.

"We can't assist them (ward 14 residents) because our hands are tied. Our budget is supposed to be spent on seven wards only, hence now the individual efforts of ward councillors to address this water challenge," said Pastor Mdlalose.

Access to reliable potable water has since improved in the ward water following an installation of a borehole by a donor facilitated by the Roman Catholic Church.

Ward 14 Councillor Albert Vendasi Sibanda said the recently commissioned borehole would alleviate perennial water shortages in his area of jurisdiction.

"The water crisis has been there for about 20 years, so when I was voted in as the Councillor, that was one of the most pertinent issues I





sought to address so as to alleviate residents from this problem,” said Cllr Sibanda.

He played a pivotal role in facilitating a meeting between the residents’ committee and Priest Mathias, whereby the clergyman was convinced to seek a donor to put up a borehole.

“The borehole, which was used as an alternative source of water at the Catholic run St George Primary School was now overwhelmed. As such we pleaded with the Priest to source for a donor to put up a borehole and he gratefully obliged,” said Cllr Sibanda.

Residents have started fetching water from the borehole using 12 taps at the site.

“We are very excited about this development because people had suffered for long. What’s left now is for the NRZ to connect pipes to draw the water from two storage tanks to the main reservoir for onward distribution at households,” said Cllr Sibanda.

Plans are also underway to set up a community nutritional garden close to the borehole.

“The water from the borehole will not only

be used for household consumption. We are planning to set up a nutritional garden, which will benefit the less privileged members of the community targeting widows, elderly, women and youths,” said Cllr Sibanda.

He said efforts are also being made to come up with a number of livestock projects for the youths.

“We also have plans for our youths to venture into small-scale livestock farming. Our intention is to set up a piggery project. We already have a few people keeping pigs around, but we want to put up proper infrastructure to house the animals.

“We also want our youths to be involved in goat keeping and poultry. It has been realised that most expatriates working on various projects in Hwange are fond of goat meat and free range chickens thus the youths will be assured of a ready and lucrative market,” said Cllr Sibanda.

He hinted that he was in the process of approaching NRZ authorities to avail land for the setting-up of small livestock projects

infrastructure.

“The land is administered by the NRZ, so we are in the process of approaching them to avail a portion to enable us to put up infrastructure for our intended projects. We are also looking for well-wishers to assist with funding for commencement of these projects,” said Cllr Sibanda.

He also stated that there was a need to rehabilitate the storm drainage system in Nguminja, after it was destroyed by floods last years ago.

“Last year we experienced severe floods, with water finding itself in most of the households and damaging property. It was so bad that we had to engage the Civil Protection Unit. I’m in the process of identifying companies that might assist us to rehabilitate our drainage system as well as to do gully reclamation,” said Cllr Sibanda.

He is also spearheading the expansion and fencing of Ngumija cemetery.

## Corporates’ sluggishness threatens progress in Phase 7

**H**WANGE Local Board (HLB) has expressed dismay at the slow pace in kick-starting preliminary construction works by some companies, which benefited residential stands at Empumalanga Phase 7 housing project.

Speaking at a stakeholder meeting last month HLB town engineer Philip Nguni said the local authority has noted with concern the lack of urgency exhibited by some corporates, which were allocated land to construct houses in Empumalanga Phase 7.

Council had anticipated that a collaborated effort by the corporates, which it allocated stands in Phase 7 would expedite development in the area.

Beneficiaries of stands in Phase 7 are Zimbabwe Power Company, Hwange Electricity Supply Company, Zambezi Gas, South Mining Private Ltd and OK Zimbabwe.

Phase 7 is one of the biggest ever housing projects in Hwange, which will see construction of more than 1000 houses.

“We are very disappointed by some of the corporates (we allocated stands) because it appears they only paid for the intrinsic value of the land...so it actually brings this whole effort, which we are trying to put in motion in



**Engineer Philip Nguni**

doubt, because there is no way we can proceed with these other stakeholders not having done the basic at least,” said Eng Nguni.

He cited that Zambezi Gas, OK Zimbabwe and South Mining Private Ltd’s commitment

towards the project was questionable.

“I linked up with OK Zimbabwe and emphasised to them to at least do the basic in terms of having the title surveys...but to date there is no joy. There is no joy either at South Mining. We even went to the extent of writing them a letter to withdraw the stands from them and gave them a deadline and it has since lapsed with no reaction. At Zambezi Gas there is no reaction as well,” said Eng Nguni.

However, Zambezi Gas exploration and technical services manager Constance Reid reaffirmed the company’s commitment towards the project.

“As Zambezi Gas we are in the process of finalising the process of topographic survey and hopefully we will have that done before the end of year...from our end we are committed to see this project through but cash flow might be a challenge,” she said.

OK Supermarket-Hwange manager Mr Stephanos Sanyamandwe said the retail giant was in the process of mobilising funds to participate in the initial stage of the project.

“As OK we are in the process of mobilising resources so that payment for the outstanding works on the project can be done,” he said.

# Council joins world in fight against breast cancer

**E**MPUMALANGA clinic sister-in-charge Sindiso Mhlanga says there is a need for women to constantly examine their breasts so as to detect signs of the disease earlier.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and it was celebrated under the theme 'Give Hope. Save Lives'.

As usual, men and women were asked to show support for breast cancer survivors and those battling the disease by wearing pink ribbons or clothing.

Empumalanga Clinic is a Hwange Local Board (HLB) run health institution.

"We (health practitioners) continue to encourage women to do self-breast evaluation and visiting any nearest healthcare facility to seek medical advice. If they do self-breast evaluation and observe something queer they should immediately seek advice from any nearest healthcare institution," said Sister Mhlanga.

She said currently there is no sufficient knowledge on the causes of breast cancer, therefore, early detection of the disease remains the cornerstone of breast cancer control.

When breast cancer is detected early, and if



*Sister Sindiso Mhlanga*

adequate diagnosis and treatment are available, there is a good chance that breast cancer can be cured. If detected late, however, curative treatment is often no longer an option. In such cases, palliative care to relieve the suffering of patients and their families is needed.

Sister Mhlanga noted that not much was done in raising breast cancer awareness in the month of October in Hwange District.

"In most cases flyers with information pertaining to breast cancer will be distributed

and campaigns will be done on raising awareness on the disease during the month of October but I didn't see any in Hwange this year..." said Sister Mhlanga.

The Breast Cancer Awareness Month, marked in countries across the world every October, helps to increase attention and support for the awareness, early detection and treatment as well as palliative care of this disease.

On its part, the local authority frequently posted information pertaining to breast cancer on its social media platforms as a way of raising awareness on the disease.

HLB systems administrator and gender focal person Miss Benita Moyo reiterated Sister Mhlanga's sentiments on the importance of early detection of the disease.

Miss Moyo further emphasised the need for continuous awareness on the disease and men's active participation in the fight against the illness.

"October, the breast cancer month has ended, but that doesn't mean we have to stop raising awareness on the ailment. Men should also be aware that breast cancer is not a disease for women only, but it also has an effect on them as well," she said.

## Poor road infrastructure haunts Empumalanga

**T**HERE is a need for the reconstruction of road infrastructure at Empumalanga high density suburb owing to poor workmanship, says Hwange Local Board town secretary Pastor Ndumiso Mdlalose.

According to Pastor Mdlalose most of the road infrastructure at the suburb was improperly constructed date backing to the local authority's inception in 1973.

"Unfortunately the design of the road infrastructure is something, which needs urgent attention. We have to rectify it. It's actually the entire Empumalanga," he said.

Pastor Mdlalose said the poor workmanship has culminated in the road infrastructure failing to serve its purpose and deteriorating at an alarming rate.

"When the roads were constructed not much attention was paid to the road furniture. There are no storm water drains and there is nothing that makes the road functional without it getting eroded when it rains," he said.

Pastor Mdlalose said due to lack of adequate funding the local authority has over the years

been forced to carry out modest work road infrastructure.

"At the moment we want to focus on hot spots, these are areas where we experience perennial challenges-year in year out when it starts to rain. We went out (with other executive members) to identify these hot spots.

"We are currently doing routine maintenance but we may need periodic maintenance so that we have a permanent solution with regards to permanent repairing of our road infrastructure," he said.

Poor drainage systems in the suburb has led to some homes being prone to floods in rain seasons.

The local authority was given \$2,2 million by the Zimbabwe National Roads Administration, which town engineer Philip Nguni said would be



*Road maintenance in Empumalanga suburb*

channelled towards routine road infrastructure maintenance.

"We have started clearing water storm drains and culverts as we seek to deal with that before the onset of the rains. We are trying to move with speed to ensure our work won't be affected by the rains. Thereafter we will patch potholes as well as cover road edge breaks," he said.



# Wards incorporation nigh

**H**WANGE Local Board (HLB) town secretary Pastor Ndumiso Mdlalose says Government is making concerted efforts to incorporate seven wards in concession areas under local authority administration.

Pastor Mdlalose has expressed optimism that the seven wards under companies' administration would soon be incorporated under HLB.

Although Hwange urban has 14 wards, five of them are under Hwange Colliery Company Limited (HCCL)'s administration with the National Railways of Zimbabwe and Zimbabwe Power Company overseeing one each.

"The chief director for urban local authorities has advised us that the issue (of incorporation) is receiving attention, and that specifically, the re-drawing of Hwange urban boundaries will be attended to this year through the ZEC (Zimbabwe Electoral Commission) delimitation exercise," he said.

Pastor Mdlalose said a blueprint on how the incorporation was to be carried out was jointly prepared by the HLB and HCCL and submitted to the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works for recommendation.

"The Local Board and Colliery agreed in principle to incorporation. The President gave an instruction to the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works when he officiated at the Hwange Power Station expansion project to implement the incorporation," he said.

Pastor Mdlalose said the seven wards, which fall under concession areas are being excluded from

benefitting from any Government funding and programmes.

The town secretary also hinted that the local authority would also use the incorporation of wards to push for its quest for town status.

"Incorporation will allow us to have a proper Master Plan for Hwange urban. It will enable people to see the perpetuation of Hwange beyond coal mining because we have other sectors of economy.

"On our part, in addition to the incorporation, we also need to renew our application for elevation of status from a Local Board to a Municipality or City," said Pastor Mdlalose.

Ward 9 Councillor Fani Chirwa says the delay in incorporating seven of Hwange urban's wards under HLB's administration is stifling development and rendering policy makers ineffective in carrying out their duties.

Cllr Chirwa said failure to have the seven wards under the local authority's supervision had reduced her and other councillors in those particular areas to subdued roles in their respective communities.

"Implementing any developmental programme is difficult as it has to go through the company. I'm just recognised as a political figure with no administrative role in the community," she lamented.

The policy maker has to be content with playing supportive roles to community initiated programmes such as coordinating financial assistance for bereaved families through residents' groupings as well as facilitating non-governmental organisations to sensitise residents on policy issues.

"If the issue of incorporating the wards was brought on board, it will mean whatever comes in terms of service delivery in my ward, I will be actively involved in overseeing it," said Cllr Chirwa.

Ward 9 comprises part of Lwendulu and Sinderella compounds as well as Thompson Junction residential area.

Cllr Chirwa said the

delay in integrating the seven wards under the local authority's administration was to blame for the continued colonial settlement set-up, which people are being subjected to in her area of jurisdiction.

"We have this issue of shared public ablutions, which we use here. If we were incorporated, council will have a budget towards (rectifying) that, either through Wash or any other programme. We will definitely have a way of fixing that wrong.

"It's something that should have been done away with long back but because we are not incorporated, the company running the premises concentrate mainly on its core business (coal mining). It only managed to put up ablution facilities at few house in some sections," she said.

Cllr Chirwa also said wards in concession areas are losing out on most Government funding programmes, implemented through local authorities.

"When we do our budget we consider Ward 1 to 7 since the rest are in concession areas. This is a disadvantage to us (who are in concession areas) especially when Devolution Funds are disbursed. The Government will look at our small population and allocate us a small budget and this doesn't encompass the whole town," she said.

Cllr Chirwa also noted that her ward was failing to develop social amenities as a result of being under a concession area.

"We have no schools in this ward, what we have are sporting facilities (netball, volley ball and soccer grounds) and a bar. Of course the school is just across the road but it's in another ward. If only we were incorporated we would have constructed schools using funds set aside for such purposes," she said.

***"The Local Board and Colliery agreed in principle to incorporation. The President gave an instruction to the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works when he officiated at the Hwange Power Station expansion project to implement the incorporation"***



Pastor Ndumiso Mdlalose



# Tshuma new workers' committee boss



*Temba Tshuma*



*Jones Sambo*



*Charles Chitambira*

**T**EMBA Tshuma is the new Hwange Local Board workers' committee chairman taking over from Jumeck Muzamba.

Tshuma was ushered to the helm

of the local authority's workers' representative body in an election held on 18 October.

He is deputised by Jones Sambo who was the secretary in the previous committee while the former vice chairman, Charles Chitambira has

assumed the post of secretary.

Levison Ncube, Swaniso Mwinde, Sibusisiwe Mumba, Thandumuzi Swene, Faluza Tembo and Mathew Guvamombe are the new committee members.

## CORONAVIRUS SAFETY

Follow these easy steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.



Disinfect surfaces around your home and work.



Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds.



Sneeze or cough? Cover your mouth.