



The Hwange Local Board Chairman and Councillors,
the Town Secretary and staff wishes you
a Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year.

HWANGE

STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE

MONTHLY e-NEWSLETTER

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Govt satisfied by HLB Devolution Fund projects

THE Government has expressed satisfaction at the projects being undertaken by Hwange Local Board (HLB) through utilisation of Devolution Funds.

Speaking after a tour of HLB Devolution Fund projects Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing deputy director Mrs Boetsorelo Mugwagwa said she was satisfied with the way the local authority had utilised \$4 million, which was disbursed to it by Government to embark on infrastructural development.

HLB channelled the funds it received under the Devolution Fund towards construction of a state-of-the-art Early Childhood Development (ECD) block at Nechibondo Primary School.

It also installed a standby water supply facility and erected a fence at its Empumalanga clinic. The local authority is also in the process of constructing an incinerator with most of the material having been procured.

“We have realised that the Devolution Funds allocated to Hwange Local Board are being effectively utilised. We went and saw an ECD (Early Childhood Development) block that is being built at Nechibondo Primary using the funds. So far, they have already bought all the necessary materials needed,” she said.

Construction of the ECD block, which comprises of three classrooms and ablution facilities is at an advanced stage of completion.

“By beginning of next year the (Matabeleland



Hwange Local Board (HLB) chairman Councillor Nqobile Ocean Mabhena (right) addresses Mrs Boetsorelo Mugwagwa (second from the right), town secretary Pastor Ndumiso Mdlalose, the Deputy Director in Matabeleland North Minister of State for Provincial Affairs and Devolution Mr Tapera Mugoriya (partly obscured) and town engineer Philip Nguni during a tour of Devolution Fund projects.

North) Minister (of State for Provincial Affairs and Devolution Cde Richard Moyo) will come and commission that ECD block soon,” she said.

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

“We also went to the clinic where we saw

a perimeter fence that was erected there including the Jojo tanks for the provision of water when supplies are cut. So, its work in progress,” she said.

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. Matabeleland North Devolution provincial councillor Mr Charles Ncube applauded the local authority for putting the fund into good use.

“We are pleased to note that the local authority is moving in the right direction and the funds are being put into good use,” he said. Mr Ncube however, cited the need for the local authority to widely consult on projects it intends to embark on.

“What’s important is to make sure all stakeholders are consulted on time, so that they participate in identifying a project to be done in a particular area,” he said.

HLB takes lead in fight against GBV

HWANGE Local Board (HLB) joined the rest of the world to promote 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) as part of its efforts to promote tranquillity at homes.

The local authority led various stakeholders to campaign against GBV by hosting numerous awareness meetings and embarking on roadshows in Hwange urban.

Part of the stakeholders that partnered HLB in the campaign against GBV included the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development, Ministry of Health and Child Care, churches, the police through its Victim Friendly Unit as well as Women’s Coalition of Zimbabwe.

This year’s campaign will run under the theme - “Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect!”

The 16 Days of Activism against GBV is commemorated every year from 25 November till 10 December.

HLB systems administrator and gender focal person Miss Benita Moyo said the local authority will take advantage of the 16 Days of Activism against GBV to encourage residents to desist from perpetrating against any form of gender oriented abuse.

“The campaigns provide a platform for dialogue and strategy sharing on how best to eliminate GBV within our locality. Violence against women is not inevitable but preventable and as Council we encourage the community to speak out and stand firm against GBV,” she said.

Miss Moyo further emphasised that the 16 Days of Activism were meant raise spotlight on GBV while also providing an opportunity for communities to stand together and encourage conversations on preventing and eradicating



Women pose for a photo during the Activism against Gender-Based Violence roadshow in Hwange

the vice.

Ward 5 and Council Gender Champion Councillor Tendai Sibanda said in the event of misunderstandings couples should seek advice or counselling from elders or community leaders.

“As Council’s gender champion I strongly advocate for zero tolerance against GBV. If you are involved in a misunderstanding as a couple you should always approach elders or community leaders for advice than resorting to violence. I’m also urging victims of GBV to speak out because failure to do so might be detrimental to their lives,” she said.

Clr Sibanda also said the downturn of the economy and effects of the coronavirus (COVID-19) had further accelerated GBV in the country.

“We have seen a marked increase in GBV cases and surveys have largely contributed this to economic challenges being faced by the majority of people. The recently imposed lockdown due to COVID-19 outbreak has seen a surge in cases of violence at homes,” she said.

Clr Sibanda urged women to actively participate in fending for their families as leaving the burden to men often culminates in scuffles at most homes.

HLB town secretary Pastor Ndumiso Mdlalose said the local authority has over the years played significant role in tackling gender disparity at its workstations.

“We are generally a gender sensitive Council and we are therefore sensitive to issues of GBV and any other vices of that sort,” he said.

Council to roll-out community gardens

HWANGE Local Board (HLB) will soon identify areas to establish nutritional community gardens in every ward within its area of jurisdiction as part of efforts to improve income and household food security among vulnerable families.

HLB chairman councillor Nqobile Ocean Mabheha said the local authority sees the setting-up of community gardens as one of the numerous initiatives aimed at alleviating poverty among vulnerable members of the society.

“We are working on introducing at least one community garden in each ward as early as the beginning of next year. This is a standing Council resolution. These community gardens are expected to play a pivotal role in improving the livelihoods of less fortunate members of our communities,” he said.

Cllr Mabheha said the local authority would expedite establishment of community gardens in each ward buoyed by the success of a pilot project in Ward 5.

“We have seen successful implementation of such projects in Bulawayo and in some urban areas. We are also grateful that the one pioneered by Councillor (Tendai) Sibanda in Empumalanga suburb has proved to be a success,” he said.

About two decades ago, Bulawayo City Council availed portions of land in most of its high-density suburbs, which were turned into community gardens targeting not more than 100 members per scheme. Last year, Cllr Sibanda through her ward committee identified a bushy area for the setting up of Sizimisele community garden close to Empumalanga shopping centre.

“I’m a woman who believes in undertaking in various income generating projects and I have been always encouraging others to partake in any project with potential to improve their livelihood.

“This community garden is one of the many projects that was embarked on by women in my ward last year, with other projects being quarry mining, poultry, rabbit keeping and piggery,” she said.

The quarter of an acre Sizimisele community

garden is home to 14 ward 5 women with varying vulnerability backgrounds.

“Beneficiaries of this scheme comprise of vulnerable women such as widows, people living with HIV/AIDS, single parents, elderly and pensioners.

“We had to deliberately select these women as beneficiaries upon realising the difficulties they face in their efforts to fend for themselves and their families,” said Cllr Sibanda.

Last year, Sizimisele community garden beneficiaries managed to realise a substantial yield from their maize crop although they were forced to harvest the produce before it could fully mature due to theft and menacing baboons.

Cllr Sibanda said there are plans to turn the community garden into a thriving horticultural project.

“Our intention is to farm right throughout the year thus it means we have to embark in horticultural production, whereby we will be producing crops such as tomatoes, onions, cabbages among others. We see this as one way of improving the sustainability of our project and increasing income for the beneficiaries,” she said.

Cllr Sibanda however, said efforts to turn the small agricultural enterprise into a fully-fledged horticultural project were being hampered by lack of funding.

“We need to erect a security fence right round the garden. We also need a borehole to provide us with a reliable source of water to irrigate throughout the year instead of relying on rains as doing so will limit us to cropping maize only,” she said.

One of the beneficiaries Mrs Margret Chitonje said the zeal that was exhibited by the women in starting the agricultural project was a sheer testimony of the confidence they have that it would play an integral part in improving their livelihoods.

“This area used to be a bushy, full of boulders and we had to tirelessly clear it on our own as women to make sure the land was ready to be cultivated on,” she said.

Mrs Chitonje further added that: “turning this area into a garden was also a blessing in disguise for the community, as it had turned



Councillor Tendai Sibanda

into a haven of illicit practices. Youths had turned it into a gambling place while some residents were dumping piles of litter here. At night it was used for promiscuous activities and people were even mugged here”.

Another beneficiary Ms Beauty Ndlovu said the sustainability of the community garden was likely turn around livelihoods of its beneficiaries.

“We are very optimistic that if we get enough support this garden will play a big part in assisting us to fend for our families as well as pay for our bills as we will be selling the produce realised from the project,” she said.

HLB town secretary Pastor Mdlalose said the local authority was seeking partners to assist it in the operationalisation of the community gardens.

“We are quite aware that it’s (community garden) a livelihood enhancement programme thus the reason we have availed land for that purpose.

“We are inviting other stakeholders to partner us in operationalising the concept be it through their Corporate Social Responsibility mandate or otherwise,” he said.

Pastor Mdlalose noted the need to avail reliable water sources to ensure the viability of the community gardens.

“We are inviting willing partners to partner with us in setting up boreholes. The gardens aren’t going to be watered using treated water because of the costs associated with doing so,” he said.

A dream does not become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination, and hard work. – Colin Powell, former U.S. Defense Secretary

Council to embark on major sewer infrastructure upgrade

HWANGE Local Board (HLB) will next year embark on a major sewage rehabilitation programme as part of its efforts to ensure its reticulation system is in tandem with the massive infrastructural development in its area of jurisdiction.

HLB town secretary Pastor Mdlalose said the upgrading of the sewer reticulation infrastructure at an estimated cost of about \$10 million, could not be undertaken this year due to lack of funding.

“We were looking forward to upgrade sewer reticulation infrastructure this year. We have already done the tender and we are just waiting to award it subject to confirmation of funding,” he said.

The local authority has set sights at using part of the funds it would be allocated by Government through the Devolution Fund to carry out the rehabilitation programme.

However, residents have hailed HLB for effectively managing to curtail sewer bursts at its high density.

A voice pox conducted by HLB at Empumalanga, revealed that most residents were satisfied with the way the local authority

has managed to deal with rampant sewage overflow in Empumalanga over the last few years.

“As residents we have realised that there has been a significant improvement in the way the Local Board is managing its sewer reticulation system since it took over its management from Zinwa (Zimbabwe National Water Authority),” said one resident, Mrs Venus Phiri.

The local authority handed over the running of its sewer and water reticulation system to Zinwa in 2007 but the water authority later handed back the management of sewer to HLB in 2018.

“Prior to the takeover, the situation was threatening to turn into a health hazard as we were now continuously being exposed to sewage overflowing into the streets from manholes. However, it seems there are some few areas, where it seems to be struggling to contain,” said Mrs Phiri.

Another resident, Mr Tobias Mugari expressed the same sentiments as Mrs Phiri and further applauded the local authority for its efficiency in attending to sewer bursts.

Although HLB oversees service delivery in three suburbs in Hwange namely Chibondo,

Baobab and Empumalanga, the latter has been the one that has been mostly affected by sewer bursts.

HLB civil engineering technician Tinashe Tapfumaneyi said the local authority has managed to contain widespread sewer bursts through rehabilitating its infrastructure.

“Council has over the years channelled more resources towards improving its sewer reticulation system and this has seen it constructing a trans-sewer.

“It also increased the size of its trunk line thus the main trunks are no longer congested as they used to be. This has improved the sewer systems,” he said.

Eng Tinashe Tapfumaneyi said the local authority was still facing difficulties to curb sewer bursts in certain areas in the suburb due to use of outdated ablution facilities at some households.

“We continue experiencing sporadic sewer bursts in areas that are still using squat pan toilets. These type of toilets easily allow different objects to fall into them and this causes trunk lines to choke culminating in bursts,” he said.

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.

Council works on curbing floods



Council workers clear culverts in Hwange suburbs



HWANGE Local Board (HLB) is working on coming up with a long lasting solution aimed at curbing perennial floods in particular areas at two of its suburbs.

HLB town secretary Pastor Ndumiso Mdlalose said the local authority was aware of flood prone areas in Empumalanga high density and Chibondo medium density suburbs and was exploring ways to effectively curtail the mishap.

“We are quite aware of the poor road infrastructure at Empumalanga which includes the drainage system and this dates back a long time ago. This has significantly contributed to flash floods in some areas in the suburb,” he said.

Pastor Mdlalose said there was a need to come up with appropriate storm water drainage designs so as to guard against the human

inflicted floods.

“We have plans to come up with permanent storm water drainage designs. We are likely to use funds that will be allocated to us by Zinara (Zimbabwe National Roads Administration). The other way is to ring fence the project through levying residents and this will see a certain levy being included on their bills,” he said.

Three houses at Chibondo are also prone to floods.

HLB civil engineering technician Tinashe Tapfumaneyi said the local authority had already started coming up with interim measures to restrain flooding in affected areas.

“Council saw the need to channel water properly through storm water drains and we have since started doing so through clearing culverts in most affected areas. We have excavated many tonnes of silted soil,” he said.

Eng Tapfumaneyi also noted that the local authority was sensitising residents to desist from dumping sand and garbage on storm water drains and streams so as to guard against blocking culverts.

“We realised that culverts along the Independence Road in Empumalanga were major causes of flooding in that particular area because they were filled and closed with sand.

“Thus, whenever it rained water would start to build-up and start opposing the flow since it would be blocked from flowing through the culverts uninterrupted,” he said.

An elderly resident at Empumalanga, Mr Joseph Hove said about 10 houses were perennially prone to floods.

“About 10 houses in this area have been susceptible to floods since 1981 resulting in the damage of our household property,” he said.

Low malaria control uptake irks Council

HWANGE Local Board (HLB) has expressed dismay at the alarming rate at which most residents are refusing to undertake malaria control measures.

HLB environmental health technician Mr Nqobile Ndelaphi Mabhena said it was saddening to note that most residents are perennially barring teams under the auspices of the Ministry of Health and Child Care's National Malaria Control Programme to carry out in-door residual mosquito spraying at their homes.

This integrated vector control strategy does not only assist in the eradication of mosquitoes only but it exterminate other pests as well.

"If you look at our statistics in terms of rooms sprayed (over the years), you will find that we range below 50 percent because people don't allow the spraying teams to enter their homes. It's even worse at the (Hwange) Colliery side. The occupants tend to come up with timid excuses while others bluntly refuse," he said.

The local authority in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Child Care conducts annual in-door residual mosquito spraying in Hwange urban in December in an effort to reduce the pest's population and malaria cases in the area.

Mr Mabhena said malaria cases in Hwange have generally been on a slump over the past few years.

"Nowadays we are no longer having many cases of Malaria. Of course there is a period between February and March that's when we experience isolated cases but there are no longer as alarming as in the past years," he said.

Mr Mabhena attributed the decrease in malaria cases to reduction in mosquito population.

"The type of mosquito which is in abundance in the district is mostly the nuisance mosquito, this doesn't spread malaria, but due to movement of people, one might bring the anopheles mosquito from elsewhere," he said.

Mr Mabhena however, said the District together with Binga remain susceptible to malaria due to high mosquito population presence.

"The challenge with Hwange, is that we have



Malaria control spraying team at work

a lot of water bodies emanating from leaking water pipes largely due to old infrastructure. If you look at our breeding sites, it's mainly where we have continuous presence of water mainly due to leaking pipes. The anopheles mosquito, which spreads malaria favours clean water. It does not breed in dirty water but of course these other nuisance mosquitoes can breed in sewer water," he said.

Malaria remains one of the leading causes of death in Africa including Zimbabwe.

"Other districts are at pre-elimination stage where usually they have imported malaria cases. At these districts people use

barrier methods to prevent themselves from mosquito bites. They also conduct focal spraying, targeting areas where mosquitoes are densely populated and nets are widely used as a barrier," said Mr Mabhena.

The Ministry of Health and Child Care last distributed mosquito nets in Hwange in 2012.

"The critical message, which we are disseminating is that people should have their houses sprayed to reduce the mosquito population. In as much as they are to use barrier methods against mosquitoes, these can only protect them from being bitten at that particular time," said Mr Mabhena.

Chairman calls for formation of Wadcos



Hwange Local Board Chairman Nqobile Ocean Mabhena addresses stakeholders during a 2020 Budget Review meeting

HWANGE Local Board (HLB) chairman Councillor Nqobile Ocean Mabhena has urged fellow councillors to establish ward development committees (Wadcos) so as to spearhead progress in their areas of jurisdiction.

Cllr Mabhena said it was of paramount importance for councillors to form Wadcos to enable them to plan and coordinate developmental activities at grassroots levels.

“There should be Wadcos in each ward. Of course some councillors claim to be having them, but for some of them the claims are not substantiated. A Wadco determines the development thrust of that particular ward,” he said.

Cllr Mabhena said most wards were failing to utilise the five percent realised from the annual collection of rates in their areas by the local authority due to lack of Wadcos.

“In every cent paid to council as rates from

a particular ward, five percent of the money is ploughed back through the Wadco. It’s the Wadco, which then decides what it needs to do with the funds,” he said.

Cllr Mabhena further hinted that council should not initiate projects in any area without residents’ buy-in.

“Even when council has its own projects lined-up, prioritisation will always change depending on what will be most sought after by residents in that particular area. Residents are the ones that pay rates, so they should determine, which project they need most,” he said.

Ward 5 Councillor Tendai Sibanda said the Wadco in her area of jurisdiction has initiated numerous self-help projects, which have since played an integral role in improving livelihoods of many families.

“Through Wadco we have initiated a burial society and formed a women’s savings club. We

have also come up with a number of income generating projects particularly targeting the most vulnerable members in our society,” she said.

Ward 6 Councillor Andrew Mupande said although there was a Wadco in his area of jurisdiction it has not been effective.

“A Wadco was established but it hasn’t carried out its mandate, so I’m pondering whether to give the committee another chance to perform its duties or to come up with a new one,” he said.

Cllr Mupande acknowledged the important role played by Wadcos towards initiating development in communities.

“There’s a certain percentage drawn from rates paid by residents in a ward, which is channelled to Wadcos. The Wadco identifies a project needed in a ward and utilises the funds towards that particular project,” he said.

HLB to unveil flag



The flag designs which the council has to choose from

HWANGE Local Board (HLB) will soon unveil its corporate flag as a way of enhancing its identity to stakeholders.

HLB town secretary Pastor Mdlalose said the adoption of a flag was agreed on at an end of year full council meeting.

“We intend to come up with a corporate flag. We are still consulting, but it was accepted in

principle at a full council meeting. The final decision with regards to the designs will be undertaken at a special council meeting,” he said.

The local authority has been without a flag since its inception in 1974.

“This is a landmark decision in the history of the council because we haven’t had a flag since inception,” said Pastor Mdlalose.

Flags and banners are an important part of any business or corporation as they uniquely identify each organisation.

“In essence a flag represents the work culture and values of one’s business. It also brings about an effective way to create a lasting impression to our stakeholders’ minds,” said Pastor Mdlalose.