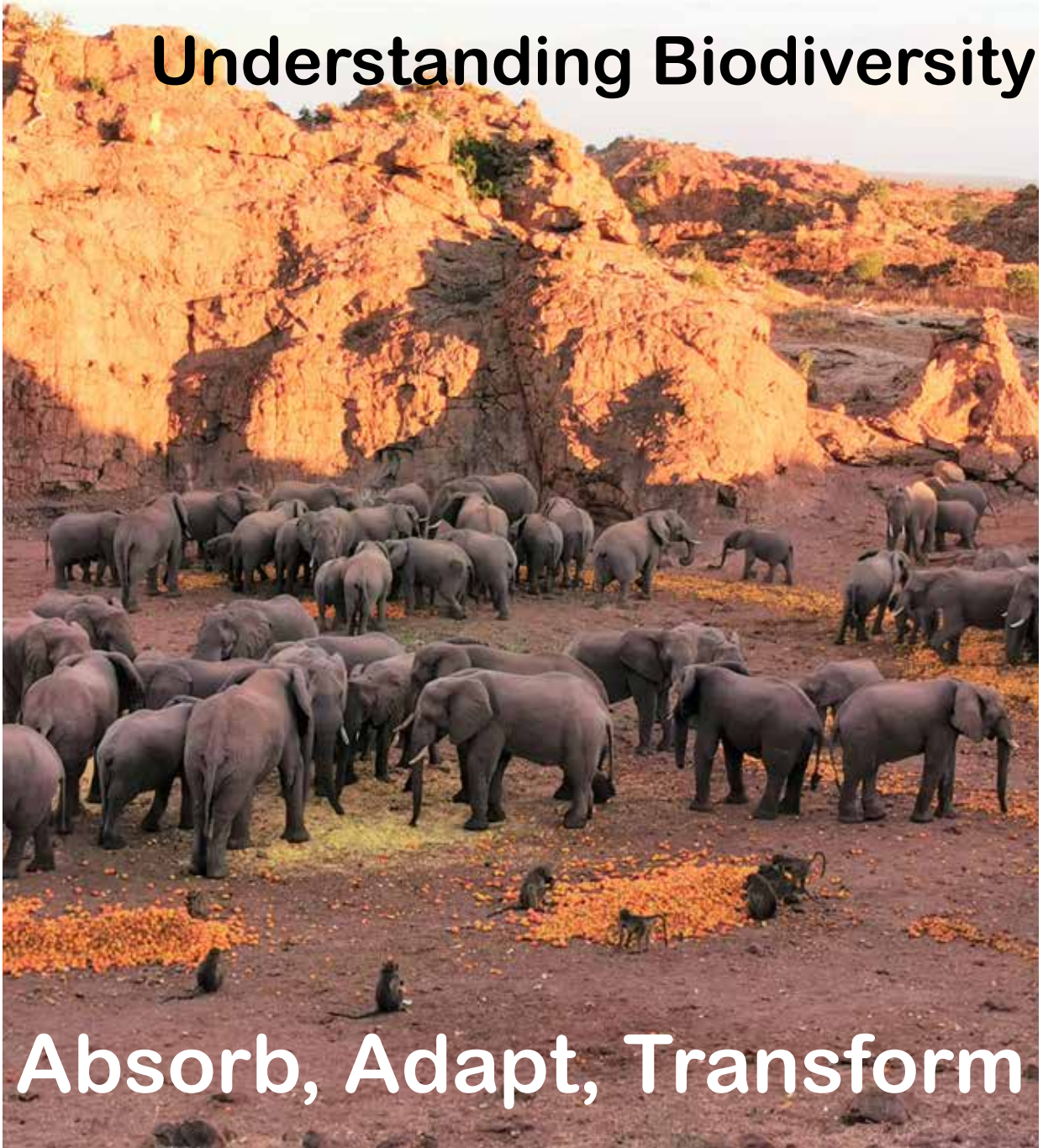


Oracle

Understanding Biodiversity



Absorb, Adapt, Transform

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Patience Ukama

Editors Corner

There is greater realisation that global agreements will not eliminate the immediate risk of climate shocks for poorer countries like Zimbabwe. The trio of phrases Absorb, Adapt, Transform, has therefore become a chorus in DCA ZW Programming.

Working with vulnerable communities who experience the harshest, most severe irreversible impacts of climate change, means getting them to accept that the old ways, patterns, and responses are no longer fit for purpose.

The glaring absence of awareness and education programmes to drive the necessary transformative behaviours, means that the poorest continue to be the hardest hit.

Why? Because nobody makes money from creating awareness of unpredictable, uncontrollable climate events. The losses, however, are devastating.

The Zimbabwe Humanitarian Response Plan (2020) predicted that during the peak hunger period in 2021, 35% of the rural population was expected to be acutely food insecure.

Unimaginable livestock poverty deaths amounted to 47,648 across the country (ZimVAC 2020), of which Matabeleland South contributed 16,863, 52% of these deaths occurred in Beitbridge and Insiza alone.

Without effective devolution of power provincial structures are not empowered to respond.

The state of biodiversity protection and conservation has equally been militated by changing climate, uncoordinated legal, institutional and governance frameworks.

On a positive note, however, the country continues to provide habitats for over two hundred plants found only in Zimbabwe and contains an important portion of the internationally significant Eastern Afromontane hotspot. Zimbabwe is host to the habitats of thirty-eight vulnerable species, three of which, including the black rhinoceros, are critically and globally endangered (USAID).

On the other extreme, extractive activities such as deforestation to facilitate household energy and to make way for human settlements, artisanal mining, illicit biodiversity trading including poaching, are on the rise.

COP26 debate summarised this inequality in terms of climate colonialism. The worlds' top 10% of countries consumed 20-times

more energy than the bottom 105. in 2014. One study showed that the average Tanzanian used one-sixth of the the electricity consumed by a typical American refrigerator.

While 1,1 billion sub-Saharan Africans share the same amount of power generation capacity as Germany's 83 million people in 2021.

The adoption of renewable technologies has recently gained much traction to rapidly bypass the conventional path of energy development. Transforming the continent. Unfortunately, alleviating poverty, improving ecological balance, and ensuring basic human rights, are a less profitable pursuit.

Getting these communities to adopt appropriate anticipatory measures to absorb these new climate shocks, therefore falls into the vast category of what is known as development work.

This edition of the Oracle shares an account of our work towards building resilience through multi-dimensional interventions that contribute to disaster recovery. Our premise is that effective recovery is where affected communities participate fully in the recovery process and are empowered to engage with the wider social, economic and political communities through capacity, skills and knowledge transfer.

Editor

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EQUITY: THE GOAL OF DEVOLUTION

The Latin phrase, “*Nihil de nobis, sine nobis*” meaning, “Nothing About Us Without Us!” is a popular slogan used to communicate the idea that no policy should be decided by any representative without the full and direct participation of those affected by that policy.

Chapter 14, Section 264 (1) of the Constitution states that: “*wherever appropriate, government powers and responsibilities must be devolved to Provincial and Metropolitan Councils and Local Authorities.*”

And yet alas, to an ordinary person fighting to make ends meet, that provision has no bearing on their lives!

Thus, the importance of the We Pay You Deliver (WPYD) network Position Paper and alternative legislature framework.

On 11 October 2021, the Dan-ChurchAid led, WPYD consortia presented their recommendations on the Devolution and Decentralisation Policy to the Parliamentary Committee on Local Government.

The WPYD consortia is a network of coalition partners, comprising: the Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association; Combined Harare Residents Association, Harare Residents Trust, Masvingo United Residents and Rate Payers Alliance, United Mutare Residents and Ratepayers Trust, Local Governance Trust, and Women in Law in Southern Africa- Zimbabwe, lobbying and advocating for an inclusive process of devolution implementation.

The outcome of extensive consultations held between November 2020 and March 2021; the presentation was designed to promote dialogue on the involvement of citizens on issues of governing.

In addition, the Position Paper seeks to align devolution laws, practices and policies with the spirit of chapter 14 of the Constitution.

This includes among other things, the right of citizens to access information in the hands of state institutions, agencies, and local authorities, to enable them to participate fully in local government affairs.

Through fiscal decentralization, taxing powers would shift to provincial and local authorities, making it their responsibility to raise sufficient revenue to cover local budgets, though local finance tax systems.

This will reduce their reliance on central government for funding.

Gender mainstreaming is another key recommendation of the consortia, extending to all representative and appointed bodies in line with Section 20 of the Constitution on gender parity.

But again, what does all this mean and why does it matter?

This is why:

1. DEVOLUTION gives powers of local governance to the people, enhancing their participation in decision making.



2. DEVOLUTION promotes democratic, effective, transparent, and accountable coherent governance

3. DEVOLUTION recognises the right of communities to manage their own affairs, resources, and development

4. DEVOLUTION ensures equitable sharing of local and national resources

5. DEVOLUTION transfers responsibility and resources from national to local government creating a sound financial base at local level.

DCA seeks to enhance active citizenship by promoting social cohesion through peace building, gender equality and women's participation in public life.

This is to improve women's agency, create dialogue and participation platforms, advocate for gender responsive service delivery, and provide technical support for the development of gender responsive legislation and policies.

ABSORBING MULTIPLE SHOCKS

For both the urban and rural poor the past decade exposed communities to more shocks than many had experienced in their lives.

For academic purposes those shocks can be categorised as political, economic, social and climate shocks.

But for the most vulnerable those shocks cannot be easily distinguished

To implement effective programming, there is need to understand the interconnected and structural nature of these shocks.

Decades of disproportionate citizen engagement have generated arresting policy positions that have crippled progress at local level.

This is what the devolution development agenda seeks to redress.

Financial decentralisation is a core concern in the Devolution policy, with the WPYD consortia drawing particular attention to taxes for central agencies. For example, the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA) which manages all national water resources in the country.

Between 1960 and 1980 more than thirty (30) dams were built in Zimbabwe to provide water to the citizenry. Since 1981 less than five dams have been built while the population has more than doubled, from 7.5million in 1980 to 15,1million in 2020 (World Population, 2019).

Clearly, the water is not enough and with climate change, rains are unpredictable. No rain means no water, no crops means no food, no fodder means more livestock deaths, which in turn means more hardships, and even



A silted river with a low lying bridge in Matobo, Matabeleland South, which once provided water for the local community and their livestock.



Cattle losses from a lack of grazing and water in Beitbridge province

less hope for future generations.

In urban areas desperate families have resorted to unsafe and unclean water sources. More-so than ever in our history, the girl child has been exposed to predators and gender-based violence, with cases more than doubling in the past year with COVID-19 lockdowns.

Poor hygiene practices and negative coping strategies have become order of the day to survive, in a world where jobs are few and hard to come by.

For years, subsistence farmers have been encouraged to grow maize – which ironically has the least nutritional and economic value of the grain family. The push was to maintain national grain stocks.

This has kept the subsistence farmer in his economic place, instead of promoting higher market value crops like quinoa, sugar beans, amaranth, millet etc., and improving subsistence incomes.

The ability to secure an income, ensures shelter, among other things. Having no shelter means no stability, and no security.

People like five-month pregnant, Janet Musiwa (29) and her family of five, currently reside in disused stable pens in Harare South, to have a home.

In remote places people continue to reside mainly in traditional pole and dagga huts, easily swept away by storms, flash floods and cyclones, as witnessed by DCA in Matobo, in January 2021.



One of the pole and dagga huts swept away by flash floods in January 2021, in Matobo. ZRBF-Sizimele built 15 new homes for victims of the floods.

The impact of climate, unplanned settlements, poor natural resource, and agroecology- the interactions between plants, animals, humans and the environment within the agricultural system- have led to siltation of water bodies, deforestation, soil erosion, land degradation, and the destruction of wetlands.

Few people know it but ecologically, wetlands play a role in flood control, water storage and climate regulation, as well as purifying water, improving soil and increasing species and numbers of wild animals.

In response to these shocks, DanChurchAid in partnership with the Government of Zimbabwe and others, provided 6,584 individuals with climate change related disaster relief.

DCA provided food parcels to over 18,000 people, mainly women and children in Matabeleland North, and provided food security through its cash voucher programme to 115,000 urban poor in Harare and Bulawayo in 2020.



Janet Musiwa outside her stable pen home where she lives with her three children and husband.



Former stable pens in Eyestone Mabhiza Compound in Harare South. The stables are now occupied by over 200 families. Grass covered pit latrines have been built as there are no sanitation facilities. The community fetches water from surrounding open shallow wells. Those who have jobs are mostly involved in sand poaching in the area.

RESPONDING TO CRISIS IN MOZAMBIQUE



Beneficiaries from the UN World Food Programme initiative in refugee camps, eating beans and rice to supplement their diet. **Below:** A young woman preparing green beans for the family.

In September 2020, the UN's World Food Program warned that tens of thousands of people had been deprived of humanitarian aid in northern Mozambique as conflict intensified, leaving millions isolated and in need of critical assistance.

Political analysts state that from 2017, Mozambique has been in a 'crisis-like cocktail of political, economic and social problems'. Human Rights Watch says that approximately 60% of the 27 million population live in poverty. They lack access to basic services such as safe water, health facilities and schools.

UN figures indicated that nearly 670,000 – including some 160,000 women and adolescent girls, 19,000 pregnant women – were internally displaced in Cabo Delgado, Niassa and Nampula provinces.

Seeing the need, DanChurchAid, on the eve of its' 100-year anniversary of supporting the world's poorest people, stepped up to the plate to respond to the humanitarian crisis.



Most IDPs in the refugee camps in Mozambique are women and children.



Basic accommodation for IDPs in refugee camps.

Following the initial preliminary visit by DCA Global Adviser, Tobias Ndlovu, the tag team of Tendai Kausiyo and Garnet Shamu quickly determined the lay of the land and got to work implementing DCA's psycho-social response, in the refugee camp.

Corrane, is the main refugee camp in Nampula province, where over 1,500 families of Internally Displaced People (IDP) are accommodated, many more are with host communities.

Given the language barrier- Portuguese and Makua being the dominant languages, the trauma that the affected population experienced, the team had to work through local structures which included 75 community-based faith leaders and local volunteers, reaching over 10,600 individuals in the camp.

The DCA intervention was targeted at children under the age of five [years], lactating mothers, and pregnant women.

Building on its strength in disaster response, DCA, working with other humanitarian organisations, contributed to the alleviation of suffering, strengthening community and social structures for those most affected, being mostly children, women, and the elderly.

This being a complementary intervention to the WFP effort to provide nutritional food to the IDPs.

DCA provided 1,387 mattresses amounting to one per family, tomato, cabbage, and onion seeds to approximately 2,000 households.

In addition, DCA supported the establishment of water point committees, registration and distribution of water containers and treatment solutions. Trainings on water and hygiene management were conducted in partnership with the Ministry of Health.

The RedRose e-voucher system, provided 300 beneficiaries with MZN2,250 (USD35) redeemable at Spar Nam-pula to buy basic food and household commodities, once again pioneering innovative urban programming

The situation in Mozambique has been greatly aggravated by the Islamic insurgency. Media reports claim that they believe that Islam as practiced in Mozambique has been corrupted and no longer follows the teachings of Muhammad, despite only 18.3% of the population in Mozambique being Muslim.



A community meeting to promote sanitation and hygiene in Corrane Refugee camp facilitated by DCA in September 2021. The bulk of the population in the camp are women in children.



*Social cohesion activities to promote peace and unity despite religious differences among IDPs in Corrane camp. **Above:** Women jumping rope and **Below:** children engaging in various recreational activities in the camp.*



ADAPTING TO CLIMATE SMART TECH

Incorporating Indigenous Knowledge Systems is a key method of back-stopping climate change and the related shocks by integrating disaster risk management and building resilience.

Adaptation therefore is a process of empowering communities, while enhancing their knowledge beyond indigenous systems. This enables them to benefit from imperial as well as traditional practices.

Climate Smart Agriculture seeks to improve productivity, profitability and help farmers adapt to the negative effects of climate change, thus respond to presenting shocks.

One such innovation being adopted at the Tshongokwe Irrigation Scheme is the Chameleon Soil Water Sensor. This simple device improves water efficiency by mimicking the way a plant experiences the amount of water in the soil, and measuring how hard the roots have to suck to extract moisture.

Combined with the information from the ZRBF-Sizimele weather station, local communities have access to better forecasts to assist them to effectively manage their production cycles inline with prevailing weather conditions.

Elsewhere, in Matobo, ZRBF-Sizimele has built the capacity of the local irrigation scheme to adopt a drip irrigation system to improve water use efficiency, where this commodity is scarce.



Lupane Agritex Officer demonstrating the ZRBF-Sizimele weather station and rain gauge facilities



ZRBF-Sizimele Mlido Irrigation Scheme Secretary: Mrs. Iphithule Ndlovu inspecting her tomatoe crop under drip irrigation.



Mr. Christopher Moyo demonstrating the chameleon climate smart irrigation systems at the ZRBF-Sizimele, Tshongokwe Irrigation Scheme in Lupane.

In the urban space, DCA is piloting hydroponics and community garden initiatives to achieve optimum production, in communities with restricted land and water supply.

In addition, the DCA led ZRBF-Sizimele consortium, has strongly promoted, high value cropping away from traditional maize which has low returns.

These crops have higher yield, over a shorter season, and greater market value, making them more attractive for smallholder farmers.

Where subsistence farmers have traditionally reared cattle for ploughing, meat and milk, DCA has

introduced farmers to dairy farming creating capacity through a Public Private Partnership with Kefalos working with Agritex and FACHIG, in Mashonaland West Province.

DCA has supported 65,874 households, through its resilience building activities, translating to approximately 329,370 individuals in 2020.

These numbers are set to grow in future years as DCA intensifies its focus on climate smart agriculture..

URBAN MULTI-NEEDS VOUCHER

In 2019, when DanChurchAid pioneered Urban programming in Zimbabwe, the vision was to restore dignity to poor urban communities in Harare and Bulawayo.

The baseline, at the time indicated that food insecurity was the greatest need.

DCA, with the generous support of the UN World Food Programme and the European Union Humanitarian Aid, therefore championed the provision of food, through the Urban Cash voucher programme, enabling beneficiaries to purchase a basic food basket worth USD12 per person, per household, per month, at partner retail outlets.

Upon reflection a year later, DCA has come to appreciate that while the cash voucher revolutionised humanitarian programming, there was yet more to be done.

A Needs Assessment survey, indicated the need to expand the programme focus to encompass the multiple and evolving needs of vulnerable communities.

To exercise good stewardship and promote good health through balanced nutritious daily meals at household level among Zimbabwe's most vulnerable, DCA is now partnering with local vegetable vendors. In this way DCA is making fresh pro-



DCA Urban Social Assistance Programme Officer, Beauty Ncube assisting 'Gogo' Maria Mooyi to purchase her medications at BR pharmacy in Bulawayo.

duce accessible to all those on the European Union (ECHO) funded, food assistance support across the country.

At the same time, by listening to communities DCA has identified other needs, including health care.

For many families like that of Auxilia Tafara (43) whose nine-year-old daughter suffers from hydrocephalus, a build-up of fluid in the cavities (ventricles) deep within the brain. The excess fluid increases the size of the ventricles and puts pressure on the brain.



The owner of BR Pharmacy, Mr. Daniel Makura engaging with the DanChurchAid Urban Social Assistance Programme team in Bulawayo, in October 2021. BR Pharmacy was the first pharmacy to sign-up for the ECHO multi-purpose cash voucher programme, assisting beneficiaries to purchase medications

Auxillia typically spends up to USD35 a month on medications. This cost is now covered by the ECHO multi-purpose cash voucher.

Samuel Moyo, another beneficiary, dislocated his wrist while illegally searching for firewood, on a private farm to sell to support his family.

Samuel suffers from asthma while his wife was diagnosed with cancer of the leg and needs a constant supply of pain medications.



Beneficiaries from the ECHO multi-purpose cash voucher programme, expressing their appreciation after redeeming their entitlements in Cowdray Park. Mrs. Lucia Chivasa (centre) sitting proudly in her wheelchair, is one of 280 special needs individuals enrolled in the programme in 2021/2.



Mrs Thokozani Ncube purchasing gas for her home using the ECHO multi-purpose cash voucher

Thus, to improve the lives of the most vulnerable in areas like Cowdray Park, Empompini, Ward 28, in Mzilikazi, and Harare-South, DCA has also piloted gas purchases from vendors such as Joe Mthombeni (36), using the ECHO e-voucher.

After two months accepting the voucher Joe confirms that he has seen his revenue increase.

“Business is good.” Said Joe.

These medicines costs approximately USD30 per month.

This is now possible with the partnership negotiated with BR Pharmacy to accept the ECHO multi-purpose cash voucher.

The programme is also benefiting the disabled. DCA is focusing on assisting people with special needs, both with food assistance from the monthly multi-purpose cash voucher, and security when they redeem their entitlements, as well as pro-

viding transport for them.

DCA seeks to continuously provide relevant solutions including environmentally friendly and climate smart energy solutions, through innovation.

Firewood is a critical source of household energy, enabling the preparation of food. It also promotes hygiene and provides safe drinking water through boiling.

But it also needs to be preserved to avoid deforestation.



Purchasing fresh vegetables from Entumbane Market using their ECHO multi-purpose cash voucher cards are Mr. Rodwell Tembo and Mrs. Lydia Muchapireyi.

THE JOY OF A THRESHER

Who knew that a simple diesel powered thresher would be such a game changer in the lives of Mbuso village farmers. The ZRBF-Sizimele managed villages project, supporting five villages, with the generous contributions of Danish corporate partners, has farmers singing with hope, across Mata-beleland. From Matobo, to Lupane, to Insiza - *Siya phambili leSizimele, Phambili!* (We are moving forward with Sizimele, forward).

Farmers were aggrieved with the losses they incurred through manual threshing of their crops, especially small grains like wheat and millet. But those grievances were effectively reduced to tears of joy when ZRBF-Sizimele delivered a brand-new thresher to Mbuso village in June 2021.

Threshing is the process of loosening the edible part of the grain from the stork. The thresher reduces losses from processing crops manually. Furthermore, the thresher prevents the grains from being soiled since manual threshing is done on the hardened ground

The time taken to harvest their crops has been drastically reduced giving farmers time for other livelihood activities. It has also benefited famers in adjacent villages, who have been permitted to use the machine by the Mbuso community.

More than R10,000.00 (USD714) has been raised by participating farmers who have since invested the money into the purchase of goats, and are planning to secure another thresher in the near future.



The Matobo TsetseMbuya womens group showing off their diesel powered thresher purchased by ZRBF- Sizimele with support from Danish Corporates through the Villages Project.



Farmers manually threshing their crops at the ZRBF-Sizimele, Tshongonkwe Irrigation Scheme in Lupane



Women from the Menyezwa:Simunye group in Lupane, showing off their wares, including woven baskets, ground nuts, maize, beans, dried vegetables and more. A solarized borehole has been drilled for them with support from Danish corporates through the villages project.

UTARIRI - STEWARDSHIP OVER NATURAL RESOURCES

As DanChurchAid enters into its global centenary, DCA Zimbabwe will launch the next 100 years with a shift in country programme focus. The flagship project under the new biodiversity programming strategy, is called "Utariri" meaning stewardship. The Utariri Biodiversity project is targeting geographies where increased human settlement has interfered with traditional biodiversity conservancies and corridors through agrarian land use, firewood extraction, poaching and illicit wildlife trading. Shrinking biodiversity habitats amid increasingly dry conditions owing to climate change and prevailing macroeconomic challenges have exacerbated biodiversity losses. Once internationally recognized for its conservation of threatened biodiversity, Zimbabwe is suffering from accelerated biodiversity losses accompanied by an underperforming economy and compromised livelihoods. The cumulative effect of political, development and colonial binaries greatly accounts for the state of biodiversity in Zimbabwe today. Given the conflict between the conservation and development agenda, DCA will continue to build on the century-long lessons to eradicate chronic vulnerability in communities living in the Zambezi valley basin. Climate change has severely increased water stress and habitat depreciation exacerbating human-biodiversity conflict. Notwithstanding these constraints, Zimbabwe's ecological regions still provide habitats for an abundant and diverse flora and fauna.



A homestead in Hwange province where there has been previous contact with elephants from the National Park. According to the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority, 60 people died due to human-wildlife conflict in Matabeleland North, between January and November 2021, while 40 people were injured. In the same period, 4000 cattle were killed by lions and hyenas.



Six crocodiles enjoying the sunset on a crocodile island on the Mutshlichokwe dam, in Beitbridge. The high population of crocodiles has increased the threat of attacks on humans. Zim-Parks says the two main animals to attack humans are elephants and crocodiles, followed by buffalo and lions.

TRANSFORMING LIVES FOR THE FUTURE

Across the country, DCA is imparting skills on disaster preparedness, crop and livestock production, diversified income generation, policy advocacy and engagement whilst at the same time promoting climate smart agriculture and green energy solutions. The goal – transformation!

The vision of this transformation is premised on the inclusion of all citizens rich or poor in the economic ecosystem of Zimbabwe, beyond DCA programmes.

A reality of modern-day society is that in one way or another we are part of the economic ecosystem. The question that follows is how we choose to participate in it. Do we benefit or are we at the mercy of the status quo, where only a handful get ahead?

DanChurchAid supports both the most vulnerable, and smallholder farmers to increase food, household income and nutrition security through multi-layered and integrated resilience building activities. These include climate change actions such as value chain development, entrepreneurship and other activities.

Done successfully, all of this will transform the lives of many people.

The work of the We Pay You Deliver consortia empowers citizens to fully participate in local governance, while financial decentralisation will enable local budgets to be set by local authorities for local development.

By working with the church fraternity and residence associations DCA is promoting social cohesion through peace building initiatives at local level. While the disaster



The Grade B, Jotsholo Abattoir in Lupane is currently operating at 30% capacity slaughtering approximately 136 cattle per month, it has the capacity to process 100 cattle per day. The vision is for it to become the biggest abattoir in the province. The result of a Public Private Partnership, the abattoir is in line with the National Development Strategy and Vision 2030.



Tjehondo community garden member, 'Gogo' Lita Sibanda giving a tour of the cleared garden where they plan to grow onions and other vegetables for household consumption using water from the solarised borehole made possible by contributions from Danish corporates through the Villages Project.

relief programme is designed to improve the conditions of many in times of crises, it also seeks to restore dignity and enable people to recover from the immediate shocks of the crisis.

The Marirangwe United Bush Dairy project in Mashonaland West has enabled 39 smallholder farmers to enter into dairy farming with support from government agriculture extension workers, in partnership with a private sector player – Kefalos.

On the other hand, the ZRBF-Sizimele weather stations in Matabelerland North and South have improved transformative thinking through scientific and indigenous knowledge systems for disaster forecasting and early action.

The ZRBF-Sizimele facilitated Jotsholo abattoir in Lupane is offering reliable and profitable markets for farmers in Lupane and periphery districts. Since the maiden slaughter in October 2020, almost 3,000 cattle have been slaughtered, generating over USD1,2million for the local community from cattle sales, in addition to the slaughter of smaller livestock such as goats.

Meanwhile, the Urban Social Assistance Programme has provided food assistance for over 100,000 people through USD12 per person, per household per month vouchers.

In 2021, it has expanded to accommodate immediate community needs such as health, nutrition and energy. The programme in 2022 will focus more on resilience building in urban communities where it will introduce hydroponics, poultry and rabbitry among other initiatives.

In nutshell, DCA's programmes seek to assist vulnerable communities to establish and diversify their income streams, and in turn enhance their livelihoods.



Getrude Ndlovu and Portia Khumalo, two members of the Tshongokwe Irrigation Scheme, share their delight at their harvest as they are winnowing their wheat. Winnowing is a process by which chaff is separated from grain. The same process also removes pests from grains



'Old man' Sibanda gathering his wheat with his grandson Richard, to transport it to the threshing site. The harvesting process is done by hand, using a sickle cutter, before the wheat is manually threshed with sticks.

COVID-19 VACCINATION DRIVE



Training of traditional and religious leaders in Manama, Gwanda, Matabeleland South, by MoHCC staff

Like the grim-reaper claiming lives of the rich and poor alike, the COVID-19 pandemic swept through communities and brought the world to a global stand-still.

Rural communities, where information dissemination was not as efficient as in the metropolis, were immediately at a disadvantage.

Mobile network penetration in Zimbabwe stands at 33.4%. Most people today receive and consume information on a mobile device, but only 8.7% of Zimbabweans, most of whom are in urban areas, use social media. (Data Report, 2021)

The challenge in the dissemination of information in modern society therefore becomes apparent.

The Ministry of Health and Child Care (MoHCC) has experienced significant challenges reaching the rural population with COVID-19 information and vaccinations, resulting in only 39% of the population having received both doses of the vaccine by October 2021.

DanChurchAid together with CARE and Plan International came together to conceptualise an approach to complement government efforts to increase the vaccination drive from 3 million vaccinated, towards herd immunity.

The goal being to increase rural take-up and awareness of COVID-19, fight mis-information, thus bring the rural majority into the fight against the pandemic.

In Zimbabwe 68% of the population is located in rural areas.

The partners split the geographical cake between them, with DCA taking on Matabeleland South – the country's least populous province with a population of 683,893 (2012 census), in Beitbridge, Gwanda and Plumtree.

Despite its population size, the province is an important one, as it connects Zimbabwe to Botswana and South Africa-providing an important corridor for migrant movement, a key factor in the global spread of the pandemic.

According to the MoHCC database, in October, the province had recorded 8,969 COVID-19 cases, 8,747 recoveries and 183 deaths.

Gwanda district recorded 1,592 cases. Here the MoHCC has a target of 84,044 people to be vaccinated. Of those 24,863 have received both doses of the vaccine, and 33,465 had received one dose making up 40% of the target population being vaccinated.

Beitbridge district has a target population of 87,511 to be vaccinated, 15,892 have received both doses and 24,922 have received one dose, being 28% of the target.

Mangwe district has a target of 43,116 to be vaccinated, 20,666 have received both doses, and 24,285 have only received one dose, that is 56.3% coverage.

To help achieve these targets by December 2021, DanChurchAid has facilitated the training of 118 Volunteer Health Promoters and 131 traditional and religious leaders in the three districts.

This, in addition to facilitating the training of MoHCC staff on COVID-19 and implementing risk communications and community engagement in the three major languages using van messaging.

The national broadcaster has no reach into the three districts making it impossible for radio and television messaging in these communities.

WELL WISHES

In August, our DCA colleague and friend, Denver Kativhu was taken ill and admitted into hospital.

As a team we were all shaken to learn of these events, but in the time that lapsed Denver has been on the road to recovery, slowly and resolutely regaining his strength.

None-the-less, his absence from the team has not gone unnoticed.

We all wish Denver a speedy recovery. We also take this time to wish Denver and his family seasons greetings!



Denver Kativhu

“Work isn’t the same without you there. Once you feel better, we’ll feel better too.” *Richard*

“Wishing you a speedy recovery. Hope you find strength with each day as it comes.” *Loveness*

“We pray for your recovery soon. Get well soon Denver.” *Primrose*

“May the good Lord heal our brother in arms” *Simba*

“Get well soon Denver”
Taona, Mercy, Gugu, Gabriel, Sindiso, Nyasha

“Wishing you a speedy recovery Denver” *Esther, Taurai*

“It Shall be Well Soon Denver”
Brighton

LOOK & LEARN INFORMATION EXCHANGE

In November, the DCA Urban Resilience team participated in a look and learn visit to Gweru and Bulawayo, hosted by Welthungerhilfe.

Among other initiatives including poultry and rabbitry, the team had the opportunity to observe two hydroponics systems in use. The Dutch bucket system, and the Nutrient Film Technique (NFT) on two demo backyard farming sites using solar powered greenhouses.

The two sites specialise in kale, green pepper, spinach, and tomatoes for household consumption.



Pictures by Tinashe Bete: DCA Urban Resilience team observing water efficient hydroponic systems in Gweru. Temperatures in Zimbabwe have increased by two degrees making it more difficult for urban farmers to grown vegetables for household consumption using traditional methods.

DCA HONoured FOR EXCELLENCE!



DCA Communications accepting the environmental stewardship award from Hon. Modi flanked by Environmental Management Agency representative and Hon. Judith Ncube

At a glamorous Awards dinner, held on 22 October, in Bulawayo. DanChurchAid Zimbabwe was conferred with the honour of Responsible Business, for Excellence in Community Empowerment and Social Impact.

The Award was presented by the Environmental Management Agency of Zimbabwe and handed over by the Honourable Deputy Minister of Industry and Commerce, Rajeshkumar Indukant Modi.

It was received by the joint DCA Denmark and Zimbabwe Country Office communications team.

Award adjudicators the CSR Network Zimbabwe sited DanChurchAid's work with communities in the Matabeleland South and Bulawayo Metropolitan Provinces.

This rare honour comes as DCA prepares to celebrate its' global centenary of humanitarian and development programming in 2022.

Notable guests in attendance included the Honourable Minister of State and Devolution for Bulawayo, Judith Ncube.

Other winners of the award included the UN World Food Programme; Beitbridge Juicing and several others.

TO ONE & ALL A HAPPY HOLIDAY!

This year has been a mixed bag for us as DCA Zimbabwe. Sadly, I won't be sad to close the chapter that is 2021.

We had some losses, personal and professional, welcomed many new additions to our DCA family. We felt the full effects of the COVID-19 global pandemic and along with it, we survived the Lockdown restrictions, that greatly affected the implementation of many of our projects.

I sincerely hope that all of you find time to rest over the holiday season and come back refreshed,

re-energised and raring to go as we launch the new Country Programme.

The new programme has a strategic focus on biodiversity and climate change. I'm excited about the prospects of this shift for all us.

I have seen and know what we can achieve together as a team, with our partners, and look forward to getting back to being **Champions League Winners** in 2022!

Thank you all for your hard work through-out the year!



From the Boss!

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2021 AND INTO THE FUTURE, OUR WORK WOULD NOT BE
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