



ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN THE **CLIMATE CRISIS:** VOICES FROM ZAMBIA AND ZIMBABWE

September 2021

A 12-year-old girl often finds herself falling asleep at school because her family can only afford one meal a day after drought and flooding ruined harvests. (Zambia).

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Note: This photo is not of a research participant.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This report is the result of collective efforts from various contributors. However, the young women researchers, from Zambia and Zimbabwe, who participated throughout the entire process, and their colleagues in the communities that they visited and engaged with, are the primary authors and true owners of this output. We are grateful for their dedication and hard work.

The authors gratefully acknowledge the mentors Dolly Chanda, Evelyn Lungu and Mwango Mwenya from Plan Zambia and Pamela Chinembiri and Mandy Ruka from Plan Zimbabwe who supported the process, enabling the young women researchers to complete this research successfully.

Additional thanks go to Plan International for technical support: particularly Shadreck Mwaba and Martin Kalumba (Plan International Zambia), Masimba Mujuru (Plan International Zimbabwe) and Isobel Fergus (Plan International Global Hub) who helped coordinate the research process, without compromising the central principle of the research being wholly led by the young women.

Thanks also to SOAS University for technical support throughout the project: in particular Dr Tom Tanner, Lucy Mazingi and Darlington Farai Muyumbwa who all ensured technically robust research that is both representative of the plight and aspirations of young women in the face of climate change and an entirely feminist and young woman led process.

We are also grateful for funding contributions from Plan International Sweden, Plan International Finland, Plan International UK and the Plan International Global Hub.

Thank you to the following Plan International staff who provided valuable feedback on this report: Katherine Philipps (Plan International Australia), Jessica Cooke, Dr Jacqueline Gallinetti and Rachel Lumley (Plan International Global Hub), Sara Tornros (Plan International Sweden) and Masimba Mujuru (Plan International Zimbabwe).

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KEY

DEFINITIONS

There are some terms used, in the specific context of this report, that are critical to our understanding of the research:

Young women researchers refer to the 16 FPAR (Feminist Participatory Action Researchers), aged 20-28, who carried out the study, analysis and writing in the two countries.

Adolescent girls refer to the research respondents in the two countries, aged 14-19.

Feminist Popular Education is an approach, borrowed from Paulo Freire, that builds critical consciousness. It is non-formal education that identifies with the struggles of different oppressed groups as a tool for social change.

INTRODUCTION

This report details the key findings from the Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR) on how climate change impacts on adolescent girls' and young women's access to education in Zambia and Zimbabwe. The research is centred on and carried out by young women researchers. Their individual experiences and analysis of the research process are as important as the research findings.

The report is written from the collective perspectives of the young women and adolescent girls involved. It captures everything leading to the production of the report; including how they understood, analysed, and expressed themselves during the research process which involved detailed capacity building activities, data collection, analysis and writing workshops. Using a FPAR approach, this report is the result of a series of workshops that sought to develop a shared understanding of feminism, climate change, and the gendered impacts of climate change on education.

RESEARCH AIMS

The overall objective of the research was to understand the impact climate change has on girls' education in Zambia and Zimbabwe. Also, to provide evidence of the role of both formal and informal education to build adolescent girls' and young women's ability to adapt to climate extremes and contribute to a transition to a greener economy in these two countries. The research sought to build an evidence base that furthers understanding, through young women and adolescent girls' views and lived experiences, of how climate change is reshaping their lives and their futures. Is it acting as a barrier to quality education and, if so, in what way? The research also sought to determine the views of young women and adolescent girls on the role of quality education to effectively address the urgent climate-related challenges they face.



Presenting the visions for future in Zimbabwe.

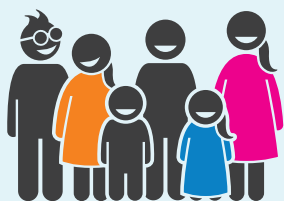
In the two countries, it was clear that the communities are all affected by climate change with varied implications. The most common climate shocks and stresses that they are experiencing are floods, shifting rainfall patterns and recurring droughts. All of which have resulted in food insecurity for most communities, given that so many of them rely on rain fed agriculture.

The study established that although there is limited technical understanding of the concept of climate change young women are experiencing the effects of the climate crisis due, in particular, to changes in rainfall patterns.

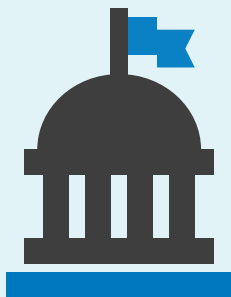
The research noted that climate change is affecting girls' lives in many ways, and they are becoming increasingly vulnerable. Two of the most common impacts of climate change, noted in the research, are school dropouts and the challenge of child, early and forced marriages. From the adolescent girls' perspective climate change has made gender inequality worse and increased their risk of sexual violence:

- Girls are tasked with fetching water from long distances.
- Extreme weather conditions mean schools are often inaccessible for adolescent girls.
- Increased risk and vulnerability to physical and sexual abuse because of climate change when, for example, homes are destroyed and girls are forced to shelter in unsafe places.
- Low school attendance by girls because of climate change induced challenges.
- Limited opportunities of redress for survivors of physical and sexual violence as resources become increasingly limited.

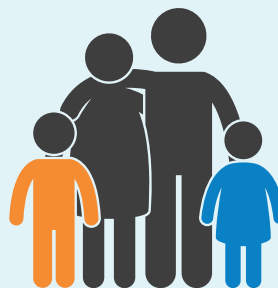
WHAT CAN BE DONE?



Overall, the girls and young women recommended that **communities** should take action to address the looming challenges of climate change, and this includes changing behaviours and practices and ensuring that communities adopt better ways of managing the environment.



They called upon **governments** to mitigate the impacts that are faced by girls and young women especially those that affect their access to and attendance in schools. Recommendations included the need to build more schools, changing the school calendars to accommodate for altered seasons and establishing satellite schools as well as including climate change in the school curriculum.



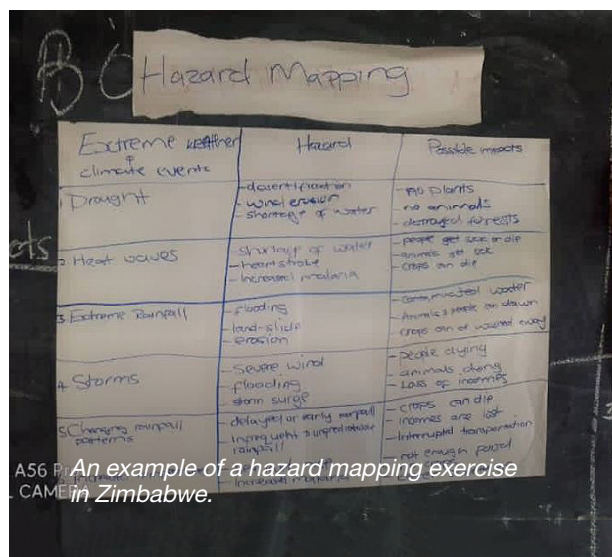
The young women also called for **communities and families** to reduce the vulnerability of girls and young women by avoiding the practice that, faced with climate induced crises, they sacrifice the education and welfare of girls and young women by marrying them off.



For **civil society organisations** and other players including the **private sector**, the girls and young women recommended setting up programmes that enhance the community's resilience to climate change and the creation of alternative climate resilient livelihoods.



Young women researchers from Chisamba and Cheme at the analysis workshop (Zambia).



An example of a hazard mapping exercise in Zimbabwe.

BACKGROUND

This report details the key findings from the FPAR study on how climate change impacts on adolescent girls and young women's access to education in Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The report is written from the collective perspectives of the young women researchers. The following sections – **Introduction and Background, About this Project, Methodology and Reflections** – are compiled by the FPAR consultant team. They capture how the young women researchers understood, analysed, and expressed themselves in the various processes, which included detailed capacity building, data collection, analysis and writing workshops, leading to the production of this report.

Sections Seven and Eight – **Our Findings, and Our Recommendations** – are written in the words of the young women researchers, put together during a writing workshop.

A method involving capacity building, data collection and reflection was deliberately adopted to ensure that the young women in Zambia and Zimbabwe were empowered to research, analyse and act on climate change. Using an FPAR approach, this report is a result of a series of workshops that sought to develop a shared understanding of feminism, climate change, and the gendered impacts of climate change on education. We chose to focus on the intersections of gender, climate change and education, as gender transformative education is key to advancing climate and gender justice. It can equip girls with the skills and knowledge needed to tackle the climate crisis, claim and exercise their rights, and empower them to be leaders and decision-makers – challenging the systems and norms which reinforce gender and climate injustice around the world. Too often considered a technical issue, during this research, climate change was distilled to match the understanding of the young women researchers. This meant that eventually they too could carry out community engagements and lead discussions that illuminated the understanding and experiences of their own communities.

Plan International partnered with young women from rural areas of Zimbabwe and Zambia that are most affected by climate change, and engaged process facilitators as consultants and mentors who accompanied them to lead and direct the research process. The young women became our co-researchers as they were coached on various tools that they used to gather and interpret information from the communities.

This research managed to invert the traditional power pyramid by empowering those facing climate impacts to understand and tackle them and equipping those who would normally be 'the researched' as the researchers. It also inverted the priorities of traditional research projects by putting empowerment and process first, then resulting activism and finally the academic results which is fundamentally the opposite of a more traditional research process.

In the two countries, the FPAR study was conducted in a number of communities. In **Zimbabwe** the research focused on two areas namely **Chiredzi** and **Tsholotsho** whilst in **Zambia** the research focused on **Chisamba in Central Province** and **Chembe in Luapula province**, with the specific communities engaged being Chipembi, Chowa, Kasoma, Mambilima, Milishi, Temfe and Chiko. For more information on the chosen study sites – see the accompanying [technical report](#).



ABOUT THIS PROJECT

In addition, to providing empirical data on how climate change impacts on adolescent girls and young women's education, the report also captures what the young women and girls themselves feel should be done to reduce their vulnerability to climate change induced challenges, with a specific

focus on education. The report also gives an explanation of the methodology (the FPAR process that was used) in selecting researchers, training them, collecting data, analysing the data and in the writing of this report. Please see [technical report](#) for more detail.

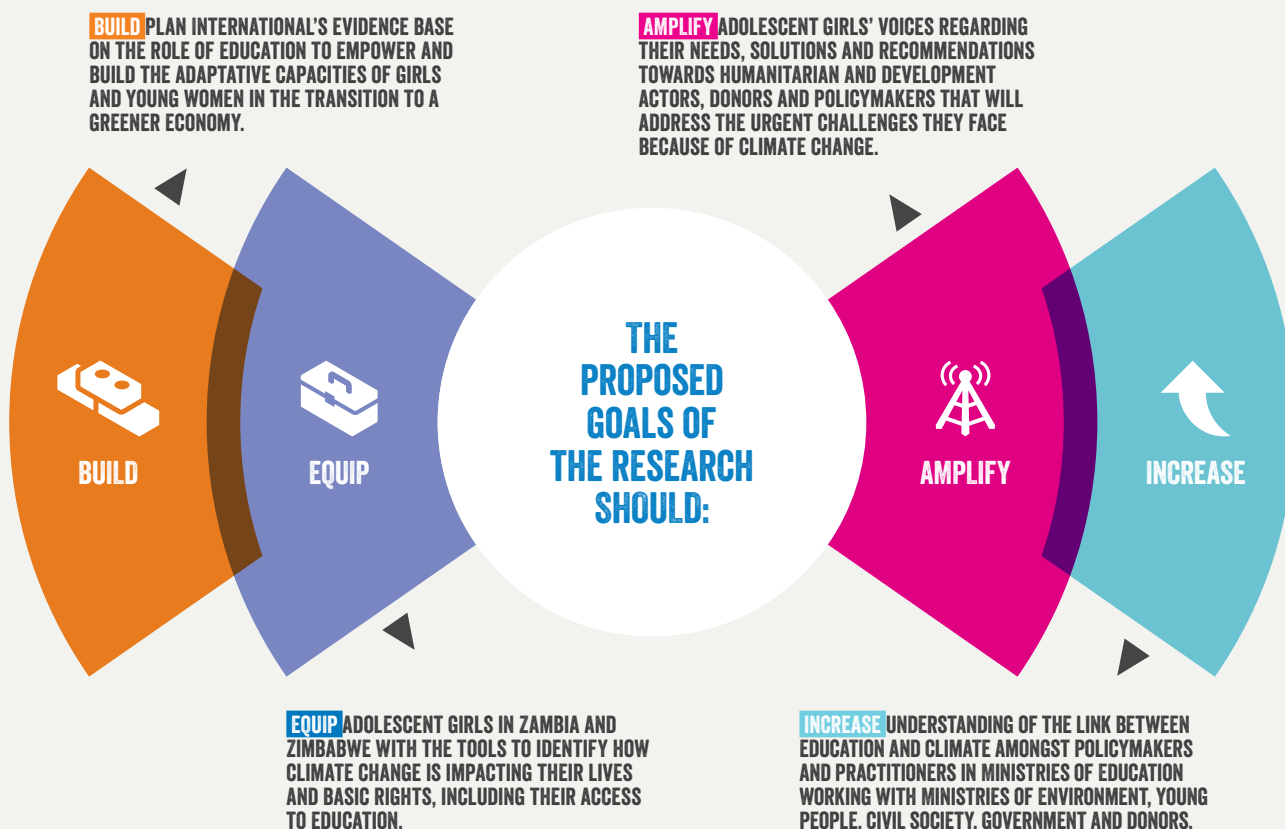
ABOUT THIS PROJECT

Research objectives

The original objective of this project was to focus on education and climate change in Zambia and Zimbabwe but, after discussions with the young women researchers in the first workshop, it was decided to focus more holistically on the gendered impacts of climate change with an emphasis on education. The girls and young women chose to broaden the scope so as to capture other climate change issues in their community which they considered of equal importance. Although the research focus extends further than education many of the issues raised are ultimately interlinked and should not be seen in isolation from each other.

The research sought to build an evidence base that furthers understanding, through girls' views and lived experiences, of how climate change is reshaping their lives and futures. It includes the role of climate change as a barrier to quality education and seeks to effectively address the urgent climate-related challenges girls and young women face.

Through this unique perspective, humanitarian and development actors, donors and policymakers will gain a better understanding of the interventions needed to help realise girls' fundamental rights, particularly through climate policies and processes.



METHODOLOGY



This study used FPAR methodology to collect evidence on how the climate change crisis, deepening inequalities, and deteriorating socio-economic status have serious ramifications for marginalised young women in both Zimbabwe and Zambia. This approach empowered the girls and young women themselves to document their experiences of how they are affected by climate change. They then went on to shape recommendations for solutions and transformative change.

The young women and adolescent girls were involved at all stages of the research process. They had the opportunity to feedback on tools, research questions and conducted data collection and analysis, including contributing to the final report. Researchers were trained in three workshops, dealing with key terms, design and data collection, through to data analysis and a final writing workshop.



Throughout the research process, including the workshops and the field work, the researchers were supported by five Plan International mentors. The mentors, apart from making sure that the girls were comfortable, were available to accompany the girls and young women during all workshops and data collection in their communities. In instances where they needed more explanations, the mentors were there to offer their support. In Zimbabwe, where we worked with four different languages, one of the mentors had to take on extra responsibility for translating during the workshops and translating some research tools and research findings. The young women researchers then went to the communities for data collection involving 80 adolescent girls per country.

The table below provides a breakdown of the process:

COUNTRY	SITES	PLAN MENTORS	FACILITATORS/ GIRLS & YOUNG WOMEN RESEARCHERS	ADOLESCENT GIRLS (AGED 14-19)
 ZIMBABWE	Site 1 – Tsholotsho District	1	4	40
	Site 2 – Chiredzi District	1	4	40
 ZAMBIA	Site 1 – Chisamba District	1	4	40
	Site 2 – Chembe District	2	4	40
Total	4 Sites	5 Mentors	16 Facilitators/ Girls & Young Women Researchers	160 Adolescent Girls Participants

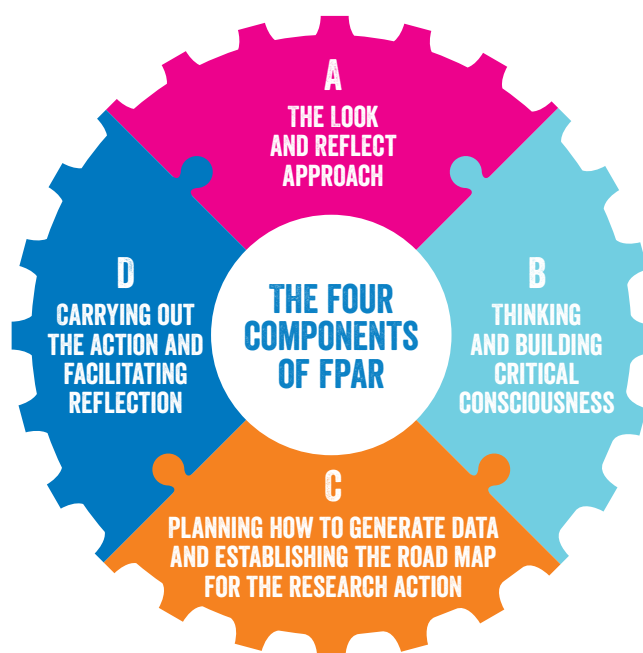
The FPAR process involved getting the young women actively engaged through a process of sharing their experiences and learning from each other. This was a continuous process that was initiated from the onset of the training. The training emphasized throughout that **the focus of the research was on the young women as generators of knowledge and not subjects of research**. It is about their stories, their experiences and how they interpret the reality that they live in and witness. The FPAR process also involved developing a training programme that weaved through different experiences and an understanding of the varying levels of consciousness around the principles of feminism.

The workshops offered opportunities not just to strengthen the capacity of the mentors and the young women but also to incorporate the themes that emerged into the collaborative process for the research and development of further reflection. The process also involved a focus on Feminist Popular Education

as a way of building critical consciousness, a key component of the FPAR method. The young women got an understanding of the key principles of feminism, how to relate it to their own lives and how to use the same framework to interpret and analyse power in the world around them. The FPAR process also entailed facilitating collective planning, and during the workshops, there was a particular focus on coming up with a roadmap for the research, and planning together how the different actions would be coordinated.

Throughout the research, young women and girls collectively identified the root causes of oppressive power, inequality, and violence. They also deliberated on the systemic nature of these issues and produced a grounded analytical frame. FPAR is rooted in the understanding that knowledge production is never neutral and therefore the research approach empowered the young women to research into their issues in a way that is liberating and important for sustaining their own empowerment.

This is a foundational approach that allowed the young women to understand and reflect on key concepts of what FPAR is and why it was important as a research methodology.



Given the nature of how transformative FPAR processes should be, it was critical to develop consciousness that is rooted in the clear understanding of feminism: issues of power, inequality and how these are contested and how they influence the reality that the young women find themselves in. This process framed the young women's thinking and their approach to the issues and information that they gathered in their communities.

An important aspect here was to remember intersectionality, by honouring voice and difference, exploring new forms of representation, or considering reflexivity. And respecting the many forms of action, generated as part of the FPAR process, drawn from the information and knowledge of the young women participants.

The FPAR process ensured that there was collective planning to harness the presence, energy, ideas, and feelings of the participants around the roadmap employed in data collection during FPAR.

THE FIVE-STAGE PROCESS PROJECT-METHODOLOGY



Girls from the community drawing their hopes for the future (Zimbabwe).



The research experienced some limitations which were mostly a result of the COVID-19 context. Due to COVID-19 infection rates at the time of planned data collection, the initial methodology was adjusted to minimize the number of people the adolescent girls would be in contact with. Instead of the 16 facilitators going back to their communities to train the adolescent girls who would in turn collect data in their communities, the 16 facilitators directly collected data with and from the 160 adolescent girls rather than the wider community. Despite this, the research still managed to get sufficient data from the adolescent girls who were very conversant with their own issues as well as broader household level concerns. In Zimbabwe, there was an additional challenge concerning language: some participants were more comfortable using their own local dialect and this meant translation had to be carried out in multiple languages during the training.

Another potential limitation, was that the adolescent girls engaged with the study had initially little understanding of climate change as a technical concept. However, when climate change was explained to them, they showed an understanding of how it was affecting their communities, especially when it came to issues of changes in rainfall patterns. This limited understanding of the technical definition of climate change at first presented challenges in outlining how climate change was affecting adolescent girls. However, after probing discussions, which were facilitated by the participatory design methodology, the young women could see and explain how they were being affected by changes in the climate. It is also important to note that this limited understanding of the technical definition and the effects of climate change allowed the adolescent girls to identify the issues with fresh eyes and this enabled research to pick up specific nuances that might have been missed. For more information on the limitations, please see the [technical report](#).



Our four young women researchers in Central Province: Idah, Penelope, Mwaka and Grace, with Dolly Chanda, Plan International Programme Manager (centre)

INTRODUCING THE YOUNG WOMEN RESEARCHERS AND REPORT CO-AUTHORS

This research is centred upon and led by us, and we think that our individual experiences during the research process, and our personal exposure to climate change, are as important as the overall findings. For this reason, one of the key features of the report is an account of our experiences during the research. Below is a summary of our profiles and reflections on both the process and the findings.

ZAMBIA'S RESEARCHERS' PROFILES AND REFLECTIONS



**MWAKA
SIAMAYUWA**

Age » 20 Years
Area » Kabwe

"This research enabled young people to be free and share their views, for me I was happy to meet new people and hear how they live their lives. To know the decision making in homes was interesting and how girls challenge this."



**PENLOP
MAKOLEKA**

Age » 21 Years
Area » Kabwe

"It was good that we were paired under this research as we complemented each other. The Impact analysis and adaptation tool gave me interesting empowering information. I now know that everyone can be a feminist."



**NAOMY
NAMUKOKO**

Age » 23 Years
Area » Chembe

"It was good to be part of a process that everything was provided and to be part of this process where girls shared their stories. I was really helped by keeping a journal summarizing everything."



**GRACE
CHIPONGE**

Age » 24 Years
Area » Chipemba

"Most of the girls did not know about FPAR until I explained. Now they call me a feminist in my community. I also enjoyed the ride in the vehicle and going around the communities."



**IDAH
SALIMU**

Age » 24 Years
Area » Chipembi

"We were well prepared for the research and the data we gathered gave us an idea of how people live their lives, and it was important for me to know that people out there have plans to adapt to the effects of climate change."



**PURITY
MWEA**

Age » 20 Years
Area » Chembe

"I worked well using the methods that we were taught; it was easy for me because there was always a helping hand from my partner and mentor. Now they all call me a climate change champion."



**ANNIE
NKONDE**

Age » 24 Years
Area » Chembe

"I feel so happy, I never knew that someone like me can do research and now I understand better issues of climate change."



**MUSONDA
CHIBWE**

Age » 23 Years
Area » Chembe

"I am very proud that I helped my community to learn and start discussions on climate change. This process has helped me to gather confidence."

ZIMBABWE'S RESEARCHERS' PROFILES AND REFLECTIONS



**THABISILE PREVIOUS
MPOFU**

Age » 20 Years
Area » Tsholotsho

"We had easy and accessible tools that allowed participants to freely engage in the conversations. I actually learnt that people know their rights and had a lot of knowledge and experience on climate change."



**PATRICIA
LISIMATI**

Age » 27 Years
Area: Chiredzi

"The research was well received from stakeholders, mothers and girls were happy that the programme allowed them to talk about gender issues as they relate to climate change since most interventions in their communities are gender blind."



**IANDRA
NDLOVU**

Age » 20 Years
Area » Tsholotsho

"I never thought I could be a researcher at some point in my life, getting the opportunity to be a feminist researcher was good for my status."



**GRACIOUS
SIBINDI**

Age » 23 Years
Area » Tsholotsho

"The research was one of the few in person meetings after lockdown, hence it was well received, people were excited to participate, the communities helped us to set up the meetings and divide the women and girls into various groups making it possible for the research to have a smooth flow."



**BEULLAH
CHIHOSANA**

Age » 22 Years

Area » Chiredzi

"Participants appreciated the tools and approach to the research, when we went to meet the adolescent girls in schools, teachers especially those who teach geography also attended and took copious notes."



**LIZZINETY
MUDZINGO**

Age » 28 Years

Area » Chiredzi

"Since this was the first week of schools opening, when we visited some schools, we met young girls who had been expelled from school for non-payment of school fees, we could therefore relate with the impact of climate change on girls' education."



**FAITH
MANDUZANA**

Age » 25 Years

Area » Chiredzi

"I felt very empowered by leading this research using the unique tools and methodology that was easy for people to unpack climate change which I thought was very complex."



**NOMAKHOSAZANA
MLALAZI**

Age » 27 Years

Area » Tsholotsho

"I was surprised to discover that communities actually knew a lot more about climate change, a lot of myths and beliefs were also shared, this made our work much easier and fun"

Thanks also to our wonderful mentors who guided us throughout this process and told us that we too could become researchers and advocates.

In Zambia



**DOLLY
CHANDA**



**EVELYN
LUNGU**



**MWANGO
MWENYA**

In Zimbabwe



**PAMELA
CHINEMBIRI**

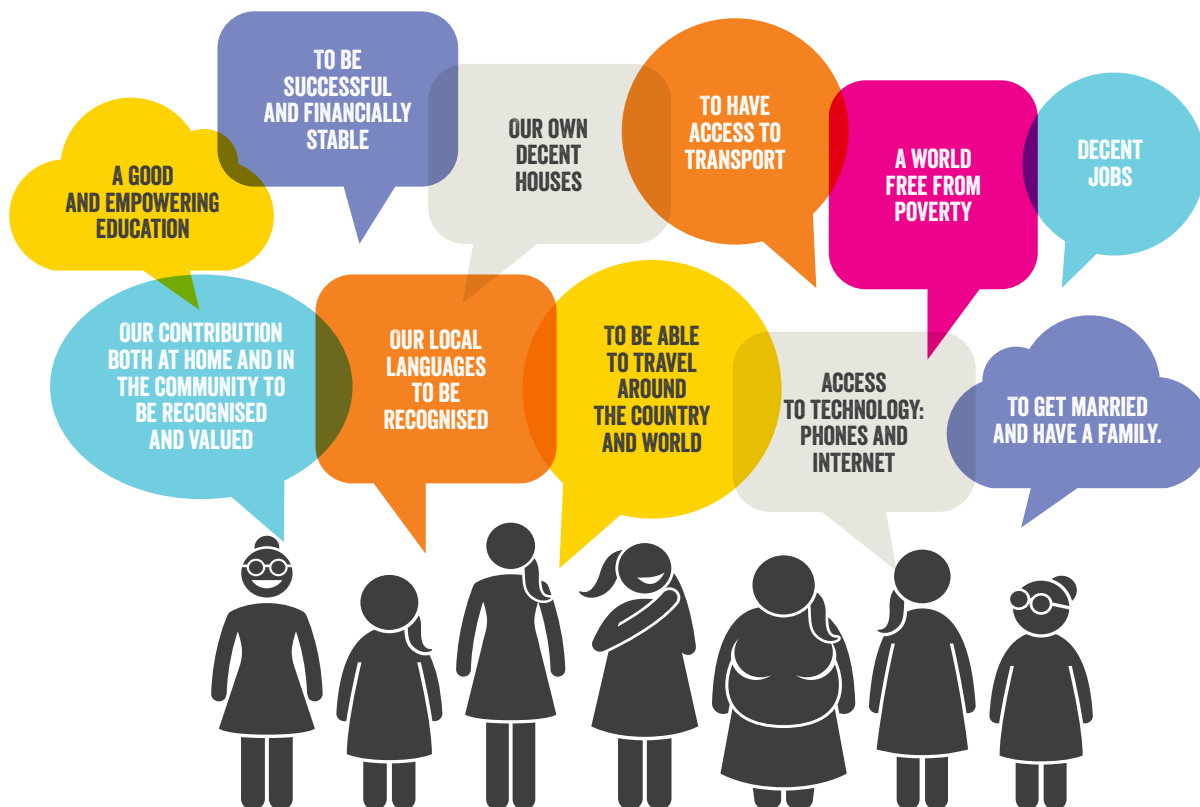


**MANDY
RUKA**

BEGINNING THE PROCESS: OUR DREAMS

At the beginning of the research process, we, the young women researchers, undertook a visioning exercise (adapted from a tool developed by Just Associates), this process helped us to outline our aspirations. The visioning exercise was designed

to generate a common goal, inspire hope and encouragement, and give us a sense of control, as well as giving the group something to move towards and generate creative thinking and passion. Based on our visioning exercise, we want:



HOWEVER, CLIMATE CHANGE IS THREATENING OUR ABILITY TO MAKE OUR DREAMS AND THOSE OF OTHER YOUNG WOMEN IN OUR COMMUNITY COME TRUE.



This picture by one of the young women researchers aptly summarises the girls' dreams.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE CONSULTANCY TEAM ON THE FINDINGS



A young researcher collecting data in the community in Zimbabwe.

CLIMATE CHANGE AFFECTING COMMUNITIES

In both Zimbabwe and Zambia, the research noted that all six communities being investigated are affected by climate change with varied implications. The most common impacts are floods, strong winds, increase in pests, shifting rainfall patterns and recurring droughts which have resulted in food insecurity for most communities, as the majority of them rely on rain fed agriculture. This has fuelled the feminisation of poverty¹ and increased vulnerability for marginalised groups like young women, people with disabilities and people living with HIV/AIDS.

Social norms such as male ownership of land and assets have worsened the impact of climate change on women and girls in both countries. Socially and geographically disadvantaged people including people facing discrimination based on gender, age and disability are particularly negatively affected by climate change as they experience unequal access to and control over resources, information, education and decision-making. Unequal gendered power relations in the communities have got worse – climate change is exacerbating existing inequalities.

1. Feminisation of poverty means that women have a higher incidence of poverty than men and that their poverty is more severe than that of men.



IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON YOUNG WOMEN

The young women and adolescent girls who participated in the research noted the multiple impacts of climate change on young women which are accentuating their vulnerability.

One of the most common of these is the challenge of child, early and forced marriages and unions. The girls asserted that as a result of the climate induced economic and livelihood shocks many girls are taken out of school and become more vulnerable to early marriage: they can be considered a burden by their families who then marry them to older men. The case story on the right, shared by one of the young women from Luapula during a pile sorting exercise,² provides critical insights on this issue of early and often forced child marriage.

A girl in Luapula Province was forced to be married by her parents. This is due to the cultural and political powers and factors established in the community. Culturally, a father makes all the important decision within the household including when their children should get married and to whom. Like most of the girls in the community, a grade nine pupil became a victim of circumstance when her parents insisted that she was going to get married sooner than she thought. Without considering her best interests, and her wish to continue her education and pursue her dreams, she was informed by the father that her education had come to an end. The father told the young woman that the decision would stand even if she were to qualify to proceed to grade ten. To make the situation worse, the community was hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and schools were closed indefinitely. This situation made the girl more vulnerable as this was when she fell pregnant, and the father accepted money from the groom's family for "damage" (money paid by the man when he impregnates the girl). This money also signifies an agreement between the two families that their children will marry. On digging deeper, it was noted that most recently the community was hit by floods and a lot of crops were destroyed. People lost their source of income, and the father justified his decision to give away the daughter to make ends meet.

2. Pile sorting is a tool that is used to explore who in the household has authority on how to make important decisions and to discuss how decision-making could be more equal as a means to increase resilience.

FINDINGS FROM THE YOUNG WOMEN RESEARCHERS

We, the 16 young women researchers leading this project, spoke to over 160 girls and young women aged between 14 to 19 years old in our communities and are honoured to share their stories.

OUR CLIMATE CHANGE STORY FOR ZAMBIA

In Zambia, we noted that the adolescent girls we spoke to in the communities were experiencing various climatic conditions. These conditions included hot and dry seasons, wet and cold seasons, as well as wet and dry periods. However, they had all experienced an increase in floods and recurring droughts which showed that they are witnessing climate change over time.

In **Chipembi, Chowa, Kasoma, Mambilima, Milishi, Temfe and Chiko** we noted that the communities have been witnessing some changes in rainfall patterns. The girls from these areas indicated that sometimes rains are delayed leading to crop failure while at other times there is too much rainfall which also results in crop failure. Generally, temperatures all year round have increased in all the areas under study and the highest temperatures ever recorded were during a recent summer. In **Luapula**, extreme weather conditions such as floods and droughts have also resulted in loss of livestock, destruction of buildings, contamination of water and outbreaks of diseases such as malaria. The extremity of the conditions is captured in the two quotes below which show the impact of too much rainfall and of too little:

“THE RAINS THIS YEAR IN CHIPEMBI COMMUNITY HAVE BEEN SO EXTREME TO THE EXTENT OF CARRYING OFF A BUS FROM THE BRIDGE AND PASSENGERS SUSTAINED SERIOUS INJURIES.”

FGD CHIPEMBI



Young women researchers from Chisamba and Cheme at the analysis workshop (Zambia).

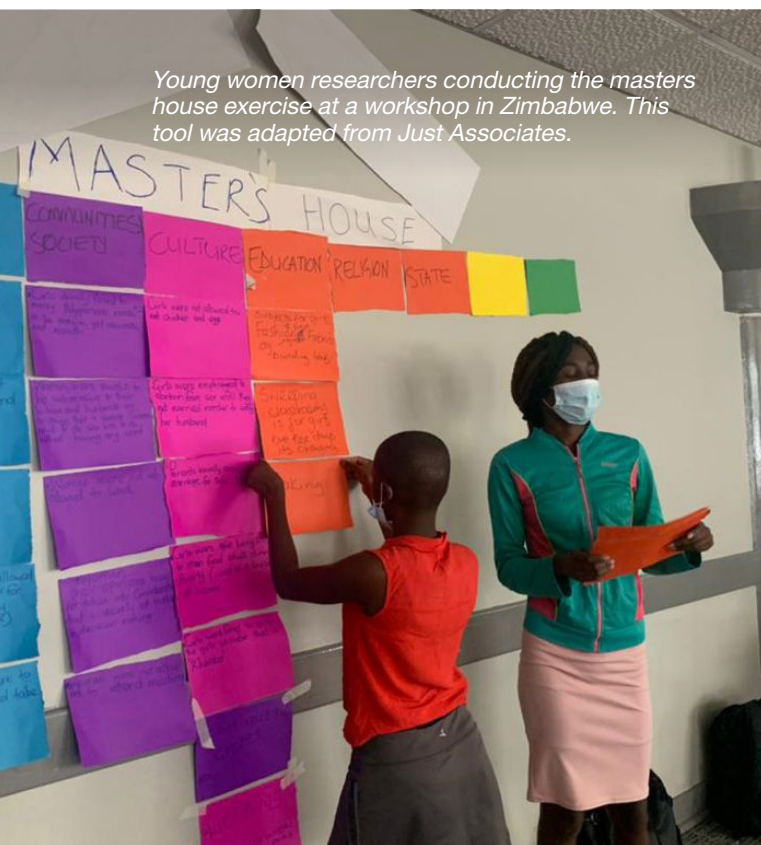
“BECAUSE OF LOW RAINFALL RECEIVED WE NOW SHARE WATER WITH ANIMALS AND THAT CONTAMINATES IT MAKING IT DIFFICULT TO MAINTAIN A GOOD HEALTH AND MENSTRUAL HYGIENE.”

FGD CHIKONKOMENE

Through the exercise that we conducted mapping the hazards, we identified that some of the impacts of flooding the communities are experiencing include water contamination which has compromised water sources for household use. The flooding in some instances has cost human life as cars and buses have been washed away by floods. We also noted that the communities do not have designated and well-built marketplaces with ablution facilities and with extreme rainfall businesses are affected.

As a result of our research, we made an interesting observation in **Mambilima** about something that is not often linked to climate change and its impacts. The adolescent girls in Mambilima noted that they do not have social amenities and that the church is a key social space that promotes harmony in the community. However, when there is flooding, people are unable to go to church and they strive to find a means to do so. This determination increases their vulnerability to the floods. Even when there is a lot of flooding and it is not safe to travel, community members are always trying to get to church.

Young women researchers conducting the masters house exercise at a workshop in Zimbabwe. This tool was adapted from Just Associates.



We noted that, generally, climate change impacts such as flooding have resulted in lower school attendance for girls. Although there have been an increased number of schools in areas such as **Mambilima, Kasoma, Milishi and Temfe**, floods have often destroyed roads and bridges which makes schools inaccessible. Young women and girls generally find it difficult to cross flooded rivers in a dress or skirt and it gets worse when they have their menstrual cycles. They are not able to cross flooded rivers without risking soaking their sanitary pads or any alternative materials they use to manage their menses. The girls indicated that their male counterparts do not have such problems.

Furthermore, the research revealed that climate induced shocks affect agriculture and other related livelihoods resulting in child, early and forced marriages and unions, and school dropout as parents opt to support the boy child. The other indirect effect of climate induced economic challenges on the girls that we learnt about is selling or exchanging sex for money or goods. Milishi village, which is near the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo, is a hub for haulage trucks and the presence of so many drivers means an increase in cases of girls and young women selling and exchanging sex because they have no other way of surviving – the result of climate change and other push factors.

Through our interaction with the girls during the field work, we learnt that they are often abused while seeking shelter when their homes are flooded. Cases of this sort of abuse are common and often unreported or ignored. One of the girls told us:

“AS GIRLS, WHEN THE RAINS DESTROY OUR HOUSES, OUR PARENTS SEEK SHELTER ON OUR BEHALF IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD. WHILE THERE, WE ARE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF BY BOYS AND MEN LIVING IN THAT HOUSE WHERE WE WILL BE SHELTERED.”

The girls we spoke to further reported limited access to water because of climate change and this affects their menstrual hygiene, reducing their self-esteem at school and in some cases confining them to their homes during the whole of the menstrual cycle, forcing them to miss school. Limited access to water also increases the time allocated for house chores such as fetching water from far-away places. Additionally, because they fetch water from a long way away the risk of abuse and sexual violence is increased: the cattle headers who use the same drinking places often sexually harass them. Teachers were also reported to be sending girls to fetch water for them which means less time concentrating on schoolwork. The girls also noted, that there is a further risk of being abused by the teachers while doing house chores for them.

In the communities prone to floods, we also noted that access to services, such as clinics, has been compromised and this affects contraception, including access to condoms for young women.

Zambia: Key adaptation strategies we learnt about

The adaptation strategies, already in place, that emerged from our discussions with the girls who participated in the study include building tanks to capture and store water in **Chipembi** and building houses away from shores in **Luapula**.

The research participants also reported growing of drought resistant crops such as cassava and sweet potato in **Luapula** and preserving or drying food such as vegetables, cassava and cow peas.

Farming methods that adjust to the changing climate were reported as one of the strategies in

Mambilima and in **Luapula** planting crops on higher ground was noted as an adaptation measure. Other girls in **Chikomeni and Lupani** spoke about tree planting in areas that were already affected by deforestation. In areas affected by drought, communities are also being taught water harvesting methods.

Another adaptation method shared was around economic livelihoods. In **Chipembi** learning other skills like tailoring and hairdressing was reported as an ongoing initiative. Girls in **Temfe and Kasoma** shared their experiences with chicken rearing as a source of a viable livelihood.

Zambia: Climate change induced decision-making affecting girls and young women

Within the context of climate change, we noted that, due to the patriarchal nature of the communities, there were few instances, if any, where the young women could contribute to decision-making at household and community level. Many of the decisions made for them are having a negative effect on girls and young women. Chief amongst these is girls and young women being forced by their parents to marry. Another key decision that is often made without the participation of girls and young women is the relocation of families to faraway places during farming seasons in search of pastures or to find temporary shelter when there are floods.

Stakeholder working to address climate change

We facilitated stakeholder mapping with the participants in the research and noted that there are few organisations working with the communities on adapting and mitigating against climate change. One of the few is **Plan International** who in response to the effects of climate change have been drilling boreholes so that the girls do not walk long distances to fetch water. They have also been providing dignity kits. These are kits that have sanitary pads, soaps, and other materials that young women need to enhance their menstrual hygiene, especially in cases of limited access to clean water which is one of the impacts of climate change. **Agricultural Cooperative** have also supported struggling families. Another stakeholder that was mentioned is the **Kasongo Chomba Foundation** which is focused on promoting entrepreneurship as a response to climate induced economic shocks.



A 17-year-old girl and her family are living with the devastating effects of prolonged dry spells in Zambia.

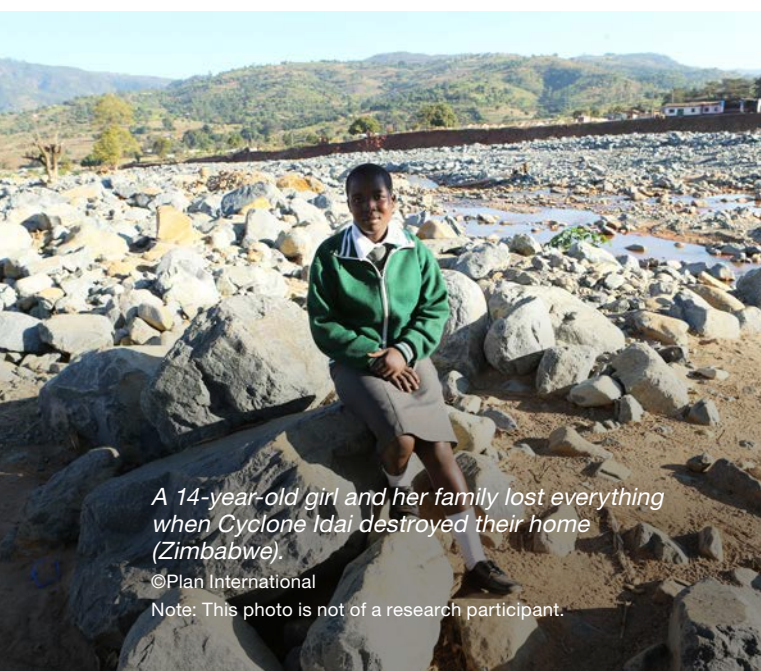
©Plan International

Note: This photo is not of research participants.

OUR CLIMATE CHANGE STORY FOR ZIMBABWE

As young women in **Chiredzi and Tsholotsho**, we have witnessed the dry periods and an increasing demand for water from a growing human population. There is a heavy reliance on underground water which has led to significant saline water intrusion, poor environmental management practices and an institutional failure to monitor access. We identified these factors as worsening the impacts of climate change. We also witnessed Cyclone Dineo in the 2016/17 season and a shift in annual temperatures. Our communities are prone to floods. In 2019, two school children from **Muhlanguleni** died when 50 homes were destroyed by floods. One of the girls we interviewed during data collection reported:

“THERE ARE DRASTIC SWINGS IN THE WEATHER PATTERNS IN CHIREDDZI, WITHIN A SINGLE FARMING SEASON, WE ARE EXPERIENCING BOTH EXCESSIVE RAINFALL AND A DRY SPELL, LOW LYING AREAS EXPERIENCE FLOODS WHILST HIGH ALTITUDE AREAS EXPERIENCE STRONG WINDS, THIS PUTS A LOT OF PRESSURE ON COMMUNITIES.”



A 14-year-old girl and her family lost everything when Cyclone Idai destroyed their home (Zimbabwe).

©Plan International

Note: This photo is not of a research participant.

In **Tsholotsho**, we have experienced excessive crop failures over the years. We have also seen an increase in pests and locusts due to climate change.

In both communities, we came across various beliefs and myths about the causes of climate change. Some are gendered myths, for example, for rainmaking ceremonies in the community there are no restrictions on men's participation but women must be older, not sexually active and not of childbearing age. Females are also blamed for some of the negative impacts of climate change which further marginalises and oppresses them.

EXAMPLES OF MYTHS WE DISCOVERED

RAINMAKING CEREMONIES SHOULD BE DONE BY WOMEN WHO ARE NO LONGER GIVING BIRTH AND THEY SHOULD NOT BE SEXUALLY ACTIVE, IF THIS IS BREACHED THERE WILL BE DROUGHT. (CHIREDDZI AND TSHOLOTTSHO)

ABORTIONS RESULT IN DROUGHT. (CHIREDDZI)

BEER IS BREWED AND SENT TO NJELELE EVERY AUGUST TO PRAY FOR THE RAINS- NJELELE IS A SACRED PLACE – IF THIS IS NOT DONE PROPERLY THERE WILL BE DROUGHTS. (TSHOLOTTSHO)

IF THERE ARE CLOUDS FOR THREE DAYS WITHOUT RAINING, ELDERS MUST GO AND CHECK THE GRAVEYARDS IF THERE IS AN OPEN GRAVE, THIS CAN CAUSE THE RAINS NOT TO FALL. (CHIREDDZI)

Our research revealed an increase in gender inequality because of climate change. We have noted that extreme weather events increase the vulnerability of girls and women to sexual violence and exploitation. For example, in both **Chiredzi and Tsholotsho**, women and girls have been forced to stay in temporary shelters (tents) during extreme weather conditions like floods. Continuing with their education is also difficult: schools are frequently closed as a result of climate change emergencies and, additionally, girls have less access to toiletries, clothes and lighting which again increases their vulnerability.

From our research in the community, we could see what an impact the inaccessibility of schools during flooding has on girls' education and also on their sense of safety. When rivers flood during school hours, girls are forced to stay in classrooms or travel at night. The adolescent girls we spoke to reported that they do not feel safe when they stay in classrooms or travel at night as this increases their vulnerability to sexual abuse.

In **Chiredzi**, adolescent girls shared that they have to wait at school until the weather improves and they are able to travel. In some instances, girls have to sleep in their classrooms as extreme weather conditions make travelling back home impossible. This heightens their vulnerability to physical and sexual abuse.

In **Tsholotsho**, the adolescent girls reported that economic hardship caused by climate change increases the risk of child, early and forced marriages and unions: families marry off their daughters at a very early age in order to have one less mouth to feed. This automatically means they drop out of school. Girls turn to selling and exchanging sex because of economic vulnerabilities and again drop out of school (there was no evidence to corroborate this in **Chiredzi**). The girls there had experienced floods that had destroyed infrastructure such as schools and colleges as well as the roads and bridges leading to schools. Chiredzi was affected by Cyclone IDAI in 2019 forcing girls to stay in inappropriate, unhygienic, and indecent accommodation where they shared bedrooms with boys and/or older men. This exposed girls to abuse and teen pregnancies which again disrupted their schooling and may affect them in very many ways for the rest of their lives.

In **Chiredzi**, we learnt that some girls cannot swim across flooded rivers to go to school or go home whilst boys can. Girls must walk for several kilometres to get to school (up to 10-15km in both districts). They get tired along the way before they even start classes. In Chiredzi, there is a maximum of 15km for those who travel from Guluji to Ndali secondary school and up to 20km for those who travel from Guluji to Mupunga secondary school.

Climate change affects education in a number of ways:



Climate change reduces the availability of food. Parents' attention is diverted from sending children to school to sourcing food.



Where parents can only afford to pay fees for some of their children, they give priority to the boys.



Children have to endure climate induced weather extremes during classes and girls from poor families cannot afford winterwear such as shoes, socks and jerseys.³



Household chores are either before or after classes and mean no time for homework or after school studies. The adolescent girls reported that in March 2021, in Guluji Village 2, Selina Sumbani a young girl aged 12, was sent to fetch locusts (due to climate change there is an increase in outbreaks) during school hours and never came back. She is still missing.



Inaccessibility to water affects girls' menstrual hygiene. Girls miss classes during their menstrual cycle especially in instances where they don't have access to water. In some cases when girls must walk 20km in very hot conditions without proper sanitary pads and underwear, they find it more comfortable to stay at home and only go to school when they finish their period.

Other risks that have emerged include girls facing sexual harassment when they travel further afield in search of resources such as water, firewood and fruit. Confinement to temporary shelters, with limited infrastructure and Water, Sanitation, Hygiene (WASH), exposes girls and women to diseases in addition to sexual assault and rape. Due to social norms and entrenched cultural beliefs, rape is not considered sexual violence in these two communities. One of the girls had this to say:

“TRADITIONAL LEADERS WHO ARE THE CUSTODIANS OF CULTURE DO NOT BELIEVE WOMEN AND GIRLS WHEN THEY REPORT THAT THEY HAVE BEEN RAPED, THEY ALWAYS ASSUME THAT THERE WAS CONSENT. THIS BELIEF MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR PERPETRATORS TO BE BROUGHT TO BOOK AND FOR THE GIRLS TO GET JUSTICE IN TRADITIONAL COURTS.”

3. Girls interviewed only spoke about girls on this point, we do not know if the problem also effects boys.

OUR FINDINGS

Restricted access to radio and television, newspapers, or social media increases girls' vulnerability to extreme weather conditions, as, in both Chiredzi and Tsholotsho, early warning for impending disasters, such as floods, is limited. The girls reported that they sometimes get such news from their brothers and fathers who have the opportunity, and time, to go to local shops and drinking places that have TVs and radios, especially during European soccer seasons.

Key adaptation strategies in Chiredzi and Tsholotsho

In **Chiredzi**, the government is planning to convert the area around Chilonga into a green belt by planting lucerne grass. There have, however, been widespread complaints from the Chilonga community that such a project will render over 12,000 families landless, adding an extra layer of vulnerability to communities already impoverished by climate change.

In both **Chiredzi and Tsholotsho**, farmers grow drought resistant crops such as sorghum, rapoko and millet, peanuts and round nuts, maize, watermelons, pumpkins, sunflower, mashamba, cotton and bhondasi. However, these small grains are only sufficient for subsistence purposes and in most cases do not provide sufficient income for expenses such as school fees. In **Chiredzi**, farmers get some income from engaging in contract farming, growing sorghum for Delta Beverages, a beer and soft drink manufacturing company.

Government has also laid down plans to construct sub-basins such as dams for surface water supply. Proposed projects include Runde Tende Dam, and the Tokwe Mukosi Dam was completed recently.

Communities in both **Chiredzi and Chilonga** are resorting to livestock farming instead of growing crops. The Lowveld is a hub for livestock which can thrive under the harsh climatic conditions: tough Mashona cattle, goats, pigs, sheep, donkeys, guinea fowls and chickens. Communities are also mobilising to reforest and replace trees that have been cut down by people who do brick moulding. The Environmental Management Agency (EMA), a regulatory body set up by government to enforce environment management laws, has also introduced a strict penalty system for people who cut down trees.

Climate change induced decision-making affecting girls and young women

As young women researchers, we noted, from the research done in Tsholotsho and Chiredzi, that climate change induced challenges have particular ramifications for the welfare of girls and women.



Young women researchers in Central Province, Zambia: Idah, Penelope, Mwaka and Grace, with Dolly Chanda, Plan International Programme Manager (centre).

Most people in the two areas are subsistence farmers who rely on tilling land to produce food and income. The adolescent girls we spoke to told us that in instances where agriculture ceases to be productive, children, girls first, are withdrawn from schools. As mentioned earlier in this report, the adolescent girls also highlighted how climate change has resulted in increased gender roles for girls such as fetching firewood, fetching fruits, catching locusts and queueing for food aid.

Adolescent girls in **Chiredzi** said that, where a choice has to be made between which of two school-going children would miss school to queue for aid, it is always the girl child who does the queuing because normally they have responsibility for cooking and general household duties. The girls also revealed that, in some families, economic hardship resulting from climate change has meant parents marrying off daughters in exchange for food. One of the girls in Chiredzi explained how girls must always be prepared to be married off.

“IN CHIREDDI, GIRLS ARE STILL BEING FORCED TO GO FOR INITIATION IN ORDER TO BE READY FOR MARRIAGE, THE PRACTICE IS CALLED UKOMBA, SOME GIRLS ACTUALLY MISS SCHOOL WHEN THEY GO FOR THIS INITIATION CEREMONY.”

Stakeholders working to address climate change

The study noted that there are some organisations responding to the climate change crises that the communities find themselves in and these include **Agritex** who are assisting in the farming of drought resistance crops as well as access to markets.

Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED) also has a project for girls that is supporting school fees, uniforms, and sanitary pads. Through the village health workers, the **Ministry of Health** is supporting testing for malaria which is one of the conditions that has got worse because of changes in the climate.

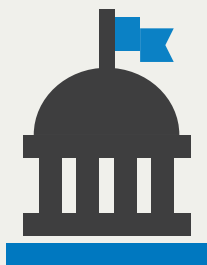
OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that communities should take action to address the looming challenges of climate change, and this includes changing behaviours and practices to ensure that they start adopting better ways of managing the environment: including not cutting down trees and stopping brick moulding which damages the soil and also requires trees to be cut down. We need behavioural change at a personal level. It is clear that all our individual actions are connected to the negative impacts of climate change.



More young people need to learn, understand, and act on climate change in their communities.



Governments should soften the impacts of climate change on girls and young women especially those that affect their access to and attendance in schools. Recommendations include the need to build more schools closer to communities that are prone to floods, changing the school calendar so that it fits into the shifting seasons and establishing satellite schools. Furthermore, government should ensure that the school curriculum covers climate change education that recognises local knowledge on climate impacts and adaptation and addresses how communities can develop mitigation strategies.



As young women, we feel that **communities and families** have a role to play in ensuring they reduce the vulnerability of girls and young women. This should be done by prioritising their education and welfare and choosing not to marry them off in times of hardship when they are faced with climate challenges.



For **civil society organisations** and other players including **the private sector**, we recommend the setting up of programmes that enhance the community's resilience to climate change and the creation of alternative livelihoods that are not sensitive to climate change.



COUNTRY SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS: ZAMBIA

CONCLUSION	TARGETED STAKEHOLDER	RECOMMENDATIONS
Low school attendance	Ministry of Education Ministry of Water Development, Sanitation and Environmental Development	Build more schools so that pupils don't have to cross rivers. Reschedule school calendars to fit shifting seasons. Build bridges and drainages. Establish satellite schools in flood prone communities. Provide scholarships to cover school fees for girls.
Limited access to water	Ministry of Water and Sanitation	To drill boreholes and provide safe, clean, gender sensitive water systems and storage.
Failing to maintain a livelihood	Ministry of Gender Ministry of Forestry	Empower girls with entrepreneurial skills that are not sensitive to climate change. Encourage people to stop deforestation.
Loss of Crops	Ministry of Agriculture Ministry of Forestry	Provide drought resistant and water-resistant plants. Enforce policies on deforestation. Encourage afforestation and re-afforestation.
Destruction of Infrastructure	Ministry of Infrastructure and Development	Provide high quality safe and gender sensitive climate resilient infrastructure.
Contamination of water	Ministry of Water and Sanitation Ministry of Health	Provide safe, clean and gender sensitive water systems. Provide chlorine.
Vulnerability of girls when seeking shelter	Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit	Provide safe, gender sensitive temporary shelter for those affected by floods and other disasters. These include protection components such as separate toilets and adequate lighting, referral systems to easily report or complain where necessary.
Low attendance in school due to increased malaria	Ministry of Health	Provide more mosquito nets. Provide information through gender sensitive channels on the importance of sleeping under a mosquito net.
	Ministry of Fisheries	Implement the guidelines in the Fisheries Act to ensure that people engaged in fisheries are adequately supported and do not have to resort to using mosquito nets earmarked for malaria prevention.
	Traditional Leaders	Mobilise the community to understand and support the sleeping under a mosquito net and its importance in preventing malaria in the community.



COUNTRY SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS: ZIMBABWE

CONCLUSION	TARGETED STAKEHOLDER	RECOMMENDATIONS
Inaccessibility of schools during extreme weather events such as floods, and cyclones: schools can be as far as 10km away	Ministry of Education Rural District Council Members of Parliament Councillors	Gender budgeting by Rural District Councils: Their budgets must mirror the social needs and concerns of women and girls (provision of safe water, construction of schools within reasonable distances from homesteads, construction and repair of roads and bridges, provision of health care facilities, projects that reduce the economic vulnerabilities of women. Provide scholarships to cover transport and fees for girls. Community Development Funds (CDF) to be used for the above listed purposes.
Unequal gender roles between boys and girls	Parents NGOs Ministry of Education	NGOs to support capacity building of family members on gender equality. Ministry of Education to mainstream gender equality and climate education in primary and secondary education curricula.
Access to information on gender equality, early warning systems for climate change induced disasters such as floods and droughts	Ministry of Information Mobile Service Providers District Civil Protection Unit Meteorological Department	Girls, through their local councillors and members of Parliament, engage to demand installation of boosters in areas where there is no mobile network coverage so as to devise ways of sending information to those with personal and family-owned mobile phones. Ministry of Information to provide radio and television coverage to areas where this is not available.
Lack of legal and administrative remedies for survivors of gender-based and sexual violence before, during and after climate change induced emergencies (not taken as important priority as access to food)	Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) Ministry of Justice NGOs Traditional Leaders Church Leaders	Girls engage with NGOs to support local ZRP offices in the establishment and operationalization of Victim Friendly Units (VFUs). Girls to engage with local NGOs working on GBV to establish referral pathways for the survivors.
Addressing economic vulnerabilities of women and girls	Local NGOs Local MPs Local Councillors	Demand local MPs prioritize climate change responsive economic activities (projects) for women and girls from the Capacity and Delivery Fund (CDF) and other funds at their disposal. Attend budget consultation meetings for Rural District Councils (RDC) and demand investments in climate change responsive gainful economic activities (projects) for women and girls.

ANNEX 1:

ADVOCACY STRATEGIES

These advocacy strategies were discussed with the young women facilitators in the analysis workshops, the young women facilitators want to focus their advocacy efforts from this research with local stakeholders and to make changes in their local context.

ADVOCACY STRATEGIES FOR CHIKONKOMENE, CHIKOBE, CHOWA AND CHIPEMBI

CHALLENGES/ ADVOCACY ISSUE	STAKEHOLDER	DESIRED CHANGE	KEY MESSAGES	KEY INFLUENCERS	CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION
Low school attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Education Ministry of Water Development, Sanitation and Environmental Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build more schools so that pupils don't cross rivers. Reschedule school calendar. Build bridges and drainages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Even with Affirmative Action, there is low school attendance by girls due to floods and other extreme climate events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Chief 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dialogue meeting
Limited access to water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Water and Sanitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To drill boreholes and provide sustainable water systems and storage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I need safe access to clean water, it's my right. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan International Zambia Water Aid World Vision (NGOs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder Meeting
Failing to maintain a livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Gender Ministry of Forestry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empower girls with entrepreneurial skills that are not sensitive to climate change. Encourage people to stop cutting down trees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I need skills for a sustainable livelihood. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Leader and NGOs (Plan International Zambia) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A detailed letter
Loss of Crops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Agriculture Ministry of Forestry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide drought resistant and water-resistant plants. Enforce policies on deforestation. Encourage afforestation and re-afforestation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large portions of crops are destroyed due to floods and drought. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Camp Officers of the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed Letter
Destruction of Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Infrastructure Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide high quality climate resilient infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need high quality, strong, reliable and gender-sensitive infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dialogue Meeting
Contamination of water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Water and Sanitation Ministry of Health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide sustainable and accessible water systems Provide Chlorine. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I'm entitled to safe water for good health and hygiene. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of good Health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder Meeting
Vulnerability of Girls when seeking shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide temporal shelter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide safe, adequate and gender sensitive temporary shelters in disasters to protect girls and young women from gender-based violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TV programs on local channels e.g., Sunday Interview on ZNBC

ADVOCACY STRATEGIES FOR TEMFWE, MILISHI, KASOMA AND MAMBILIMA

CHALLENGES/ ADVOCACY ISSUE	STAKEHOLDER	DESIRED CHANGE	KEY MESSAGES	KEY INFLUENCERS	CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION
School dropout due to floods	• Ministry of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build more schools • Seasonal Calendar • Provision of boats • Satellite School • Educational financing for girls All the above should be done in consultation with girls	• Education for girls should be prioritized.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Media • Traditional Leader • Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radio programs • Dialogue
	• Disaster Management	• Provide relief food and gender sensitive sanitary facilities	• We need food and gender-sensitive dignity kits during times of emergencies.	• Traditional Leaders	• Meeting
	• Road Development Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of roads. • Construction of bridges. 	• Safe roads and bridges for better education.	• Traditional Leaders	• Dialogue
	• Meteorology Department	• Provide accurate information on weather.	• Information is power to us as girls.	• Media	• Media
Low attendance in school due to droughts	• Ministry of Health	• Provision of chlorine.	• Our health matters.	• Traditional Leaders	• Meeting
	• Ministry of Agriculture	• Growing drought resistant crops (Cassava and sweet potatoes).	• Think beyond now.	• Traditional Leaders	• Meeting
	• Plan	• Drilling boreholes.	• Water is life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDF • Community Members 	• Community Mobilization
	• Forestry Department	• Sensitization on reforestation.	• We have the power we can plant more trees.	• Forest Officers	• Meeting
Low attendance in school due to increased malaria	• Community	• Have alternative source of green energy.	• Promote diversified sources of energy.	• Traditional Leaders	• Drama
	• Ministry of Health	• Provision of more mosquito nets.	• We can fight malaria by concerted efforts.	• Traditional Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media • Drama • Posters
	• Ministry of Fisheries	• Implement the guidelines in the Fisheries Act.	• Let's act now for a sustainable ecosystem.	• Fishery Officers	• Meetings
	• Traditional Leaders	• Provide information on the importance of sleeping under a mosquito net.	• Let's work together to end malaria.	• Ministry of Health	• Meetings
Relocation due to farming	• Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the surroundings clean. • Burying ditch holes. 	• When we as communities face uncertainties such as floods or droughts, my best interest should be a priority.	• Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drama • Posters • Music
	• Traditional Leaders	• Sensitization on importance of education.	• Education is key for girls.	• Ministry of Education	• Dialogue
	• Community	• Prioritize education.	• Whenever you see a girl, you should see potential, strength, someone who has a dream, wants to live a fulfilled life. You don't have to see house chores and a wife.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PTA • Traditional Leaders 	• Meeting
	• Plan	• Help construct schools.	• Better buildings better education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDF • Community Members 	• Community Meetings
Relocation due to farming	• Parents	• Encourage their children to attend schools.	• Girls have the power to foster and drive development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional/Religious Leaders • Ministry of Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting • Drama

ADVOCACY STRATEGIES FOR CHIREDDI AND TSHOLOTSO

CHALLENGES/ ADVOCACY ISSUE	STAKEHOLDER	DESIRED CHANGE	KEY MESSAGES	CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION
Inaccessibility of schools during extreme weather events such as floods, cyclones. Schools can be as far as 10km away	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Education Rural District Council Member of Parliament Councillor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building of schools in the vicinity of homesteads so that girls do not need to travel several kilometres and cross several rivers and bridges to school. Where it is not possible to build proper schools, satellite schools can be built in the meantime. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Education: Engage Community mentors – community hubs – where they assist children with homework. Provide reading materials Build temporary structures Rural District Councils – build schools Build bridges. Build schools close to homes. MP – Campaign messages to include climate change issues. Online learning Councillors – to get donors who can pay fees for children – councillors should prioritize climate change issues in their meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Radio – Hevoi FM, Great Zimbabwe FM WhatsApp Email SMS Newspapers Facebook Community meetings Newsletters
Unequal gender roles between boys and girls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents NGOs Ministry of Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equal distribution of gender roles between boys and girls Mainstreaming gender equality in primary and secondary school curricula. NGOs support girl school dropouts to continue with school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents to treat both children equally including duties, involve girls in planning for anything in the family. CAMFED – Continue to pay fees. Campaign for girls' education. Depict gender equality in book content, e.g. men as nurses. Include gender in school curricula, 	
Access to information on Gender Equality Early Warning Systems for climate change induced disasters such as floods and droughts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Information Mobile Service Providers District Civil Protection Unit Meteorological Department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women and girls have access to information on impending climate change induced disasters such as cyclones, extreme temperatures such as heat waves, floods. Communities receive information and knowledge on gender inequalities and climate change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry to publish weather conditions in local language, e.g., Shangaan. Access to mobile phones and internet Organise face to face meetings in rural areas where there are no TVs or mobile networks. 	
Lack of legal and administrative remedies for survivors of gender-based violence and sexual violence before, during and after climate change induced emergencies (not taken as important priority is access to food)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zimbabwe Republic Police Ministry of Justice NGOs Traditional Leaders Church 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survivors of gender-based violence get healing and justice. Perpetrators of gender-based violence get rehabilitation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take GBV seriously. Stop abuse of women – fair judgement: "Rape is not believed they just say it was consensual they consider that they are in love." Early warning system should be continuous, climate is changing District Child Protection Unit – should always be active – send routine messages "in Tsholotsho its now extremely hot – and droughts are the order of the day. 	
Addressing economic vulnerabilities of women and girls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local NGOs Local MPs Local Councillors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities for women to pursue climate change responsive gainful economic activities (projects) e.g., livestock production, irrigation facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects for women Livestock for women Source of income Transport – clinics are far away 	



A 17-year-old girl's family are struggling to pay her school fees after Cyclone Idai caused widespread devastation across Zimbabwe.

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Note: This photo is not of a research participant.





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Design: Out of the Blue Creative Communication Solutions – www.outoftheblue.co.za

About Plan International

We strive to advance children's rights and equality for girls all over the world. We recognise the power and potential of every single child. But this is often suppressed by poverty, violence, exclusion and discrimination. And it's girls who are most affected. As an independent development and humanitarian organisation, we work alongside children, young people, our supporters and partners to tackle the root causes of the challenges facing girls and all vulnerable children. We support children's rights from birth until they reach adulthood, and enable children to prepare for and respond to crises and adversity. We drive changes in practice and policy at local, national and global levels using our reach, experience and knowledge. For over 80 years we have been building powerful partnerships for children, and we are active in over 75 countries.

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