



Green Institute in Zimbabwe

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### **Organization Overview**

Green Institute is a youth-led organization meant to develop adaptation strategies that can reduce and mitigate the diverse and complex impacts of climate change through areas such as engaging communities on climate resilience, lobbying, advocacy for policy change in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. Green Institute works with marginalized groups such as those with disabilities, women, youths and children

### **Our Goal**

To mainstream environmental issues and women and climate change adaptation, mitigation strategies in economic and social development at all levels through multi- stakeholder engagement especially the marginalized groups which include women, the disabled, children and the rural dwellers

### **Mission**

To ensure sustainable development and a climate proofed community through engaging all stakeholders recognizing the vulnerable nature of Zimbabwe's natural resources and society.

### **Vision**

We envision a climate change resilient community

### **Area/s of operation**

Chipinge District

## Core Principles

All our activities are guided by the following principles:

**Local ownership**– The Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) methods applied by Green Institute practitioners ensure local ownership and problem framing at the grassroots level.

**Empowerment**– Green Institute believes in empowering the individual in order for them to help themselves, take decisions, and make changes in their lives and their communities.

**Sustainability**– Long-term social, economic, and environmental sustainability is the most important aspect when assessing new projects and evaluating existing ones.

**Strengthening of existing structures**– Green Institute does not believe in building parallel structures, but rather in working in close cooperation with and strengthening systems and structures already set in place by government authorities and civil society.

## Project/s implemented

### Gender and Climate Change Programming

Climate change has a greater impact on those sections of the population that are most reliant on natural resources for their livelihoods and have the least capacity and have the least capacity to respond to natural hazards. Women commonly face higher risks and greater burdens from the impacts of climate change in situations of poverty and the majority of world's poor are women. Women's' unequal participation in decision making processes and labor markets compound inequalities and often prevent women from fully contributing to climate-related planning ,policy –making and implementation .Green Institute acknowledges that women's participation in climate issues will result in greater responsiveness to citizens needs and improved outcomes of climate related projects and policies.

### Community Gardens

Green Institute was able to revive 3 (1 fence was rehabilitated) community gardens in Chipinge Ward 19 and 18 supporting 200 women especially survivors of Gender Based Violence and those affected by Cyclone Idai. The Institute worked together with Agritex officers for technical expertise. Each farmer was given a seed pack containing various vegetables in line with

seasons. For sustainability purposes the farmers were first taught of farming techniques which are climate adaptive.

The idea of these community gardens was to economically empower women as they recover from the deadly effects of Cyclone Idai. If women are empowered cases of Gender Based Violence and Child Marriages are reduced.

### **Tseu- Concept**

This initiative is meant to assist women in land ownership and creation of Tseu-community women cooperatives. It was noted that women in rural areas majority of them do not have own land mainly due to issues of tradition and patriarchy. This resulted in the deprivation of economic rights that are attached to land. The Tseu- Concept was done to make sure that each and every women at every household have a 'Tseu' (a piece of land for women to grow their cash crops). Engagement of traditional leadership ensured that land ownership to women is improved. We then created a Tseu cooperative with 50 women and provide them with hybrid sweet potato cuttings for their small Tseu- plots. Green Institute engaged agriculture extension officers for smart and sustainable agriculture techniques (climate adaptation). At this stage we are working on creating product beneficiation and value chains (through agriculture marketing authority) so that the women will get value out of their produce. The Tseu- Concept is empowering women, in order those to be able to position themselves in strategic decision making processes that take place at varying levels in socio-economic of their lives.

### **COVID-19 Sensitization**

As Green Institute we took the heed of Government efforts to curb the Covid -19. We managed to work with the Ministry of Health and Child care to provide training to Community Village Workers on the prevention and control measures since they are close to communities. The meetings were facilitated by the Environmental Health Practitioner and a total of 38 village health workers were trained. Training was centered on the encouragement of disseminating authentic messages as there were many misconceptions that were circulating on social media thereby creating panic.

### **Young Women forums**

Three young women forums were conducted in Chipinge district. The forums were attended by 124 young women. The forum was a platform where women from different religious, social and political backgrounds meet and discuss constitutional rights from a feministic perspective. The

discussions were mainly centered on access to information (section 62), women's rights (section 67), environmental rights (section 73) the right to safe, clean and portable water (section 77), the right to education (section 75) and the right to health care (section 76). The forums were facilitated by women representatives from the ministry of health, ministry of education, ministry of youth, and women affairs as well as other civil society organization such as Girl Child Empowerment of Zimbabwe, SALT and Community Health Working Group.

### **Menstrual Hygiene Campaign**

Green Institute embarked on a menstrual hygiene campaign which opened up space for girls and young women to speak out issues which are affecting them. During the campaign we were also able to engage the local councilor and the community working group on health to be part of the discussions. Girls mentioned that access to sanitary pads was a challenge forcing some girls to absent themselves to school. Some of them were using rags and cow-dung which have critical health complications. Some girls even mentioned that they are forced into relationships so that they can afford a safe period. Also to note is the lack of enough information on Menstrual Hygiene which in our culture is viewed as something sacred. During the meetings Green Institute managed to distribute sanitary pads to 300 girls and is in the process of organizing a seminar on re-usable sanitary pads manufacturing. Lastly the girls through Green Institute agreed to petition the parliament to make a follow up on the 2020 Budget allocation which specifically highlighted that the government would provide free sanitary pads too school going girls but up to now nothing have materialized. With the help of our own Aunt we have established 10 girls clubs which provides a safe space to discuss issues affecting the sexual reproductive health.

### **Beekeeping project**

Green Institute Zimbabwe in partnership with Girl Child Empowerment Zimbabwe are currently running a beekeeping project. The project is meant to support cyclone Idai victims with life skills training, in a move that is meant to give women in affected communities' financial empowerment. To achieve this, 100 girls and young women from Matanga, Barauta, Dimire, Masheedze and kobeka were trained with sustainable beekeeping skills. The idea behind capacitating these women, is to improve livelihoods and to educate villagers about forestry conservation as most participants reside around Chirinda forestry, one of the remaining natural forests in Zimbabwe-which currently under threat from massive deforestation. We have so far created about 120 beehives, specifically for this project.

## Major Achievements

- ✚ Through the training of trainer's workshop held the young people were capacitated in holding duty bearers accountable due increased knowledge and skills environmental accountability monitoring. The youth were enhanced capacity of to how to organize them in demanding environmental I accountability from local state and non-state institutions.
- ✚ The created whatsapp groups and serviced information centers raised and well-coordinated voices of the young women and men in climate change process. The platforms have also improved the participation of youth in community development initiatives and programs.
- ✚ The community dialogue meetings have improved the interaction between youth and local state and non-state actors.
- ✚ The AAGs managed to have regular interactions with local councils through presentations at full council meetings and other council meetings, and they engaged with traditional leaders, during community meetings articulating issues of concern and suggestions.
- ✚ Establishment of 120 sustainable beehives, for our beekeeping project
- ✚ 3 community gardens were established

## Donors/ funders

- ✓ Dutch embassy in Zimbabwe
- ✓ Alert Fonds
- ✓ Marie-Schlei-Verein
- ✓ Peace first
- ✓ Forest Commission of Zimbabwe