

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF CUTS INTERNATIONAL, LUSAKA

Economic Governance Desk



Mr. Nair welcoming Mps

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CUTS Hosts Public Lecture Addressing Parliamentary Debt Oversight

On November 6, 2023 CUTS International-Lusaka hosted a successful Educational and Advocacy Session on Zambia's Public Debt and Parliamentary Oversight that attracted participation from Members of Parliament, Committee Clerks, and staff from the Parliamentary Budget Office. The session laid the groundwork, crafting key advocacy messages for the upcoming phase—formulating a comprehensive roadmap on parliamentary debt oversight. Aligned with Zambia's Constitution, PDMA, and PFMA, the focus of this session was on enhancing parliamentary actors' knowledge and capacity for effective engagement in public debt decision-making and oversight.

The workshop emphasized information sharing and advocacy for increased transparency, accountability, and parliamentary oversight of debt contraction, especially in the context of revising the PFMA.

And in a bid to further deepen understanding and engagement on the critical issue of Parliamentary debt oversight, CUTS International organised held a public lecture in Lusaka on 27th November 2023, attracted a diverse audience that included Civil Society Organisations, debt alliances, media professionals, university students, associations, and business representatives. The objective of the lecture was to bridge the knowledge gap, make parliamentary

debt oversight discourse accessible and engaging for all Zambians, with emphasis on the youth and marginalised groups. The event highlighted the vital role of Parliament in ensuring responsible borrowing and effective public debt management.

Opening the event, CUTS regional director and board member Mr. Sajeev Nair, highlighted the significance of transparency, accountability, and public participation in effective public finance management. He also shed light on challenges such as unsustainable public debt levels, weak revenue collection, and inefficient public spending.

The discussion also highlighted the impact of debt on Zambia's marginalised communities, youth, women, and persons with disabilities.

Climate Change and Development Desk

CUTS Conducts Social Profiling for VCA Project in Mazabuka

From October 2nd to 6th, 2023, CUTS Lusaka embarked on a captivating journey of social profiling for our Voices for Climate Action (VCA) project in Mazabuka district, supported by WWF. The VCA project focused on profiling three constituencies: Nakambala, Manachingwala, and Nachipoma.

Since 2021, CUTS has been actively involved in the implementation of the VCA project in Mazabuka. The primary challenges identified in the area include deforestation, sand mining, the illicit

brewing of the spirit known as Kachasu using molasses, the widespread use of charcoal energy, and unsustainable farming practices.

The activities underway in Mazabuka are thoughtfully designed to adopt a mutually beneficial capacity-building approach. Additionally, they aim to provide a platform for amplifying the voices of women, youths, and differently-abled individuals, ensuring that their perspectives are heard and considered in addressing environmental concerns..



Staff from CUTS and WWF preparing social profiling of community members in Mazabuka.

Mazabuka Women Empowered for Climate Justice



Part of the Mazabuka women celebrating their visit to Lusaka with Kanyama women

In a bid to strengthen grassroots climate action and foster connections between Voices for Climate Action (VCA) communities, CUTS Lusaka, in collaboration with South South North and Peoples Process on Housing and Poverty, recently organized a two-day transformative exchange program for the communities of Kaleya and Zambia Compound in Mazabuka District.

21 members from these communities, predominantly engaged in the production of the illicit spirit known as Kachasu, traveled

to Lusaka. The primary objective of the community-to-community exchange was to empower women, whose primary source of income is the brewing of Kachasu, to sustainably manage the by-products of this activity, diversify their income through saving schemes and urban sack gardening. On November 15, 2023, the Mazabuka women arrived in Lusaka and the following day immersed themselves in the dynamic Kanyama Green Space. The program culminated with a visit to the George Compound Resource Centre on November

17, marking the conclusion of their enlightening stay in Lusaka.

Mazabuka is currently grappling with pollution caused by the indiscriminate disposal of excess molasses within the Kachasu brewing communities that has adversely affects farming and nearby water bodies thereby depriving living organisms of oxygen.

CUTS and WWF are implementing the VCA program in the Mazabuka district, paving the way for a just transition in the climate space.

CUTS Advocates for 'Fund of Funds' to tackle climate Change



Speakers at the side event hosted by CUTS International during COP28 in Dubai

At a side event hosted by CUTS International during COP28 in Dubai, key discussions unfolded around innovative finance for climate, pushing beyond the confines of the Loss and Damage Fund.

The event brought together experts, activists, and policymakers to address pressing challenges in climate finance.

CUTS regional director and board member Mr. Sajeep Nair emphasised the conference's commitment to tackling climate finance challenges and introduced CUTS International's ambitious campaign, aiming to establish a "Global Alliance for Leveraging Innovative

Finance."

Mr Nair called for the establishment of a 'fund of funds' to address challenges beyond the loss and damage fund.

Africa Lead for Delivery Quality and Impact, Development Initiatives Martha Bekele cited examples of misrepresentations, stressing the crucial need for accuracy in reporting to build trust and foster effective climate action.

Similarly, World Wide Fund For Nature (WWF) Zambia Programme Manager, Dr. Rowen Jani, highlighted the intricate connection between biodiversity and climate change.

Advocating for biodiversity preservation and community-led climate actions, Dr. Jani emphasized the holistic approach needed to address these intertwined challenges.

Further, Zambia Climate Change Network national coordinator Ms. Lydia Chibambo voiced concerns over the lack of a clear definition for climate finance and called for quality funds for Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

She emphasized the urgent operationalization of the Loss and Damage Fund, the reform of multilateral development banks, and the necessity for collaborative solutions.

The panel discussion underscored the complexities and challenges of climate finance, calling for innovative and accountable financial mechanisms.

CUTS Advocates for Gender Response Budget



Ms. Mulenga welcoming Parliamentarians



On November 18th and 19th, 2023, CUTS International in collaboration with Oxfam hosted a transformative Gender 2024 National Budget Analysis Meeting on fiscal justice for women and girls at the Tiffany Lodge in Kafue district.

The event brought together key stakeholders, including Members of Parliament, Government officials from the Ministry of Finance, Zambia Revenue Authority, and think tanks such as EAZ, PMRC, and ZIPAR. Representatives from various civil society organisations also joined forces to deliberate on crucial issues.

Some of the outcomes of this meeting was to elevate

stakeholder awareness on public finance and gender-responsive budgeting, foster stronger networks, and promote collaboration among diverse stakeholders committed to advancing gender budgeting.

As part of the initiative, CUTS is actively engaged in a three-year project, "Fiscal Justice for Women and Girls," in partnership with FEMNET and Oxfam. The project aims to amplify the voices of African women in economic decision-making, fostering inclusivity and gender-responsive fiscal policies. By enhancing the capacity of CSOs, women's rights organisations, and citizens, the project seeks to empower them to hold decision-makers accountable

Some of the highlights under the Fiscal Justice for Women and Girls project in partnership with Oxfam included town hall meeting in Lusaka as shown in the picture below



Chongwe Urban Futures project



CUTS International in partnership with Global Network Solutions (GNS) are pleased to announce a five-year project titled “Chongwe Urban Futures” supported by Hivos International to transform the urban food systems and empower youth.

The project with the theme “Empowering Urban Youths through Agri Urban Connect: A journey of transformation to sustainable Urban Food Systems” aims to reshape the urban food systems, address the complex challenges posed by urbanisation, food security, climate change, and youth unemployment in Chongwe, district.

On 6th November 2023, the project began with an inception meeting at Chongwe Council, graciously opened by Mr. Mwakoi

Sililo, the acting town clerk. The momentum continued with a three-day workshop held at Legacy Hotel from 8th to 10th November 2023, which was opened by his Lordship the mayor of Chongwe Mr Christopher Habeenzu and on the third day, the meeting was closed by Chongwe Member of Parliament, Ms Sylvia Masebo.

This dynamic gathering drew participants from various sectors, including youths, government, private sector, CSOs, HIVOS regional office, CUTS, and GNS.

Together, with our partners, the project aims to craft a detailed vision statement for Chongwe, outline a comprehensive theory of change, and raise awareness about our impactful project.