

# **Community Projects in Zombodze**

**A SLUSE course in interdisciplinary Land Use and Natural Resource Management**

**Department of Agricultural Sciences**

**15 ETC points**

**“It doesn’t only rain on the Members.....”  
- Mr. Titus Thwala, MP**

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Sincerely

The Community group

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## **Abstract**

Development is most effective if initiated from the grassroots level. Projects, if operating efficiently, can identify the needs of a community and work to strengthen and facilitate the transaction of information and resources. This report looks at projects within the community of Zombodze, Swaziland and attempts to identify some of the major constraints faced by both the individual and group directed efforts. From an intensive one week field study, the authors have gathered data through interviews and observation of 8 major projects that focus on a variety of issues from infrastructure to income generation. It is the purposes of this report to illustrate what are the crucial constraints faced by the projects of Zombodze.

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## **Introduction**

Swaziland like most African countries faces many overwhelming challenges, water shortages, high unemployment, rising HIV rates and the continuous threat of famine. To overcome these obstacles various development strategies have been employed throughout the country. In Zombodze, which lies in the southern part of the country close to the South African border, community projects have taken root and are addressing many of the local concerns.

In an attempt to address the challenges faced by the community of Zombodze, the local people have responded by initiating various projects aimed developing capacity in terms of generating income, improving the infrastructure, joining the community in social activities, creating political cohesion, or offering skills training opportunities for the people of Zombodze. These initiatives can be seen as ways of trying to improve livelihood strategies and as mechanisms to cope with the problems of Zombodze. To some degree the different projects in Zombodze do as well focus on providing for the greater need of the Zombodze community.

It is largely understood by development theorists and agents that to focus on community encourages participation of a broader body of people than by focusing on individuals and as such the benefits and long-term success rates are greater. It is assumed that with a higher rate of participation, the impact in term of spill over effects<sup>1</sup> will also be greater. One of the most common examples of participation is the promotion of community projects. It is the goal that through participation community members will be active on all levels of development as Cohen and Uphoff explain, "With regard to rural development... participation includes people's involvement in decision-making processes, in implementing programmes, their sharing in the benefits of development programmes and their involvement in efforts to evaluate such programmes. (1980)" Once fully immersed in the process, individuals then become empowered as contributors to the project, gaining ownership over the outcome.

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<sup>1</sup> Spill over effects will be discussed later, but for now can be understood as the indirect benefits obtained from an investment or initiative.

Therefore there has been an immense support for participatory community projects, because they are seen as a tool for development. But for the projects to be effective tools for development they must meet some measure of success and providing benefits for their members. Therefore in order to begin to appreciate the impact of a project on a community it is first necessary to investigate the various difficulties the projects are facing.

In order to develop the capacity of Zombodze one has to first analyse and understand the constraints faced, so that the tools for development - in this case community projects can work efficiently, offering the greatest return of benefits to the local community.

Therefore we ask the question:

## **Research Question**

*What are the crucial constraints faced by projects in Zombodze?*

To properly examine this research question we need to break it down into three sets of working questions that have been slightly modified from our original synopsis. These questions will enable us to analyse the different elements of the research question to receive a deeper understanding of the area of examination.

## **Working Questions**

- 1) Where does decision making occur, local, national or international level?  
How do these levels interact with the (power) structures of the community?
  
- 2) What are the goals and aims of the projects? How do projects determine their success according to their goals and aims?

- 3) What are the interactions between the levels of decision-making and the aims of the projects? What patterns can be seen in these interactions? Can these patterns begin to identify some of the crucial factors for success?

As a way of structuring not only our research but also our analysis we have highlighted three important sets of working questions, which build upon each other to create a framework of understanding and investigation. The first two questions while relatively independent of one another are the basic components of our analytical foundation that are fused together with the third question. By identifying the interactions between the various components, we begin to see trends, which link directly to recognizing the crucial constraints faced by the projects.

## **Key Concepts**

### **Community**

For the purpose of our report, we will define community as representing a group of people who engage and identify with one another through institutions at a certain place or location. These three concepts can be further defined as; **place or location** where people interact and engage with one another; a social system which provides for peoples needs meaning **institutions** like churches, schools, medical centres etc... and finally a shared sense of **identity** for example through their work

This overall definition of community enables us not to put too much westernised bias on the concept. We are aware that there are various definitions of community; community as understood by someone in Copenhagen, Denmark is very different from the community context of Zombodze, Swaziland. While both represent valid experiences it would be impossible to force one model on to the other and yet western expectations of community are often imposed in development work with little regard to the subtle differences that may represent either the success or failure of a project.

## **Projects**

Early in our research we discovered that the notion “community projects” didn’t suit the different project within the Zombodze area, because of the fact that many projects are individual projects, which didn’t precipitate more than one person or at least one family. Therefore we had to change our understanding of the cases that we wanted to study. This led us to change the notion of “community projects” into “projects” at the same time we found out that their understanding of “community project” might be different because when asked in the questionnaire different answers appeared.

## **Methodology**

We concentrated on primarily three types of data collection methods, semi-structured interviews and questionnaires (see Appendix A & B) and observation. For the first two days in the field, the entire SLUSE team conducted 220 questionnaires covering households from all areas of Zombodze. This exercise not only provided the team with valuable information regarding demographics but also allowed for a general understanding of the region including physical boundaries and resources. Conducting the questionnaires effectively proved to be a difficult task for several reasons. First, we required the use of interpreters that had to negotiate language and cultural barriers; second, for many of the interviewers, this was the first experience of conducting questionnaires in such a context; and third, the questions being asked were difficult to translate and delivery varied amongst the groups. As such, the data collected for our group from the questionnaire was unusable for precise analysis.

Following the questionnaires, we continued our research through semi-structured interviews. These were carried out with key members of projects and the community, general members and also non-members. Initially we were working from a common list of questions that operated as a guide for the interviewer (see Appendix A), but with time, the interviews became less structured and more influenced by the context, including the knowledge and experience of our counter-parts. We attempted to follow the same structure in all interviews, both in what we were asking and how the questions were



asked, meaning that one asked the questions, and one or two took notes. In order to be as effective as possible, we divided ourselves into smaller working groups that were able to pursue particular interests such as the local politics or poultry projects. We also conducted numerous informal interviews with various members of the community, including our interpreters that served to provide contextual basis for understanding.

## Presentation of Fieldwork

The following section will present the results from the questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaires provide us with information about the community and the interviews about the projects.

### Community description

The data retrieved from the questionnaire relevant to the community projects was largely not precise enough for the analysis. It was suspected that the way the questions were asked and who asked them differed among the interviewers. As such while we cannot make as precise an analysis as we wanted to, we are still able to use the data to identify patterns and correlations between different variables.

Figure 1 Zone participation in projects

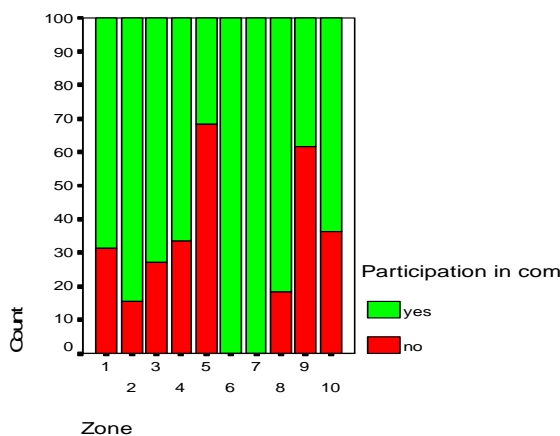


Figure 1 shows that varying participation rate in community projects between the different zones. The zones were divided into 10 zones according to the geographical relief visible from the aerial photographs, two zones for each group. In general, Zone 5 and 9 appear not to participate in projects with an approximate rate of 70 and 60 non-participation percent, respectively. The contrary seems to be the case in Zone 6 and 7 where everybody interviewed seems to participate in projects. The rest does not vary that much, the level of people not participating in projects is ranging from, approximately, 15 to 35 percent.

The participation levels in the zones do not give a clear picture of the situation without looking at the division of zones. The following figure illustrates the division of zones.

Figure 2 Zones of Zombodze

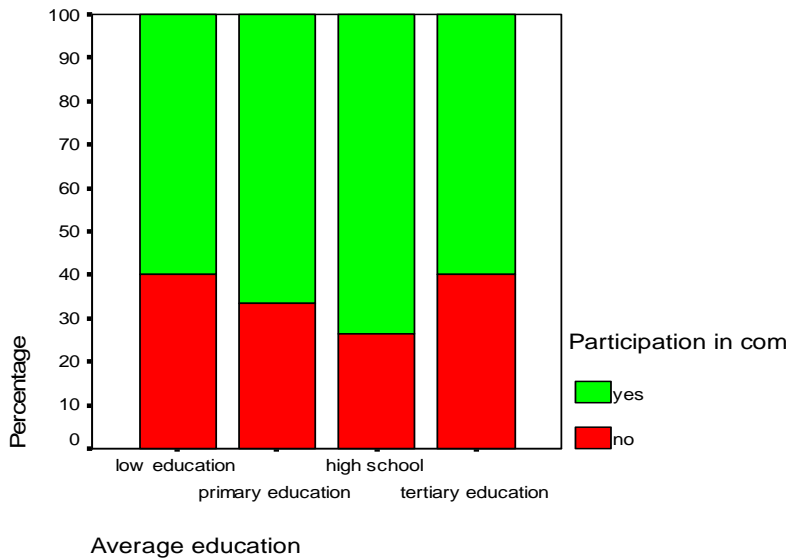


Zone 10 is the centre of Zombodze and here that the majority of the projects are allocated. There are two shops, school, transport facilities, and most activities and resources all with easy access. North of this zone is the highland in Zone 6 and 7 and further down south lies the lowlands of Zone 5 and border to South Africa.

Looking at the map and recalling the participation levels from the zones we can try to explain the patterns of participation within the each area. In Zone 6 and 7 we see the most participation and in Zone 5 and 9 we see least. We cannot say that it is the direct distance to the centre that influences whether people are involved in projects or not, but what we found out from Zone 5 was that the inhabitants in this area believed the centre was too far away and the lack of information available was discouraging participation. Between Zone 4 and 5 there is a steep slope, which is seen as a barrier for the people living there. The altitude of this area has made transportation and infrastructure more difficult. In fact the electricity network has not reached Zone 5 yet and no water projects have been initiated here. Whether or not the geographical situation of Zone 5 is a determining factor that is influencing the participation level of people is difficult to say, but the people in Zone 5 refer to Zone 5 as the “Forgotten City of Zombodze”.

As much as one would expect to think that areas closer to the centre have higher level of participation than other, is not a certainty. In Zone 10, in the centre, we could expect a higher participation rate but as it will show, this is not the case. We found out that a big percentage of the people living here were teachers, coming from outside the area, who were not involved in projects in general. It is difficult to say what the reasons are behind why Zone 6 and 7 were the ones with the highest participation rates. These are the same areas that we were staying in, which might suggest that the people living in these areas have greater access to resources and more time to invest and diversify their activities. Before leaving from Denmark we had the idea that education level may be a significant indicator to who was active or not in projects; the higher education level, the higher the level of participation in projects. As the graph shows there is in fact no correlation between education levels and involvement in projects, despite our expectations.

**Figure 3 Participation and education level in community projects**



### **Description of Projects**

We made several interviews with different kinds of projects and chose 8 of them to be in our report. In the following part we will present a short description of each them, further details can be found in the Appendix C.

#### Women’s Buying Group (Zone 4)

This project is run by a group of 6 friends who started the project with the idea of sharing the burdens of food purchasing during financially demanding times such as funerals, weddings and holidays like Christmas. Once a month the women come together, pool their 100 R fee and collectively decide what they will buy. The pooling of resources enables them to expand their purchasing power, decrease transportation costs and benefit from monthly specials on bulk items. The project is run collectively without the designation of an official leader. The women say they would eventually like to expand their operation to the buying of furniture and other household goods beyond food.

#### Rural Educational Center (REC) (Zone 10)

The Rural Education Centre was initiated in the 1970s by Swaziland Ministry of Education with aim of generating income opportunities for the young and unemployed

elder with skills in carpentry, sewing, metal work and cooking. The cost of the applying to the nine-month program is 100 Rand. Currently in Zombodze only the carpentry and the sewing classes are operational largely due to the lack of membership in the cooking and metal work. Carpentry has only 2 members/students, one of whom is 80 and will be soon retiring; the other is a young man looking for alternative opportunities in the nearby towns. The sewing project has about 5 students, all female who are at various levels in their education.

#### SMART Zombodze (Zone 10)

Currently there are 6000 members of SMART making this the largest project in Zombodze. The project started in the beginning of June 2003 as an organisation to distribute food aid to people of the local community. The individuals who benefited from the food aid then became members of the organisation, paying a monthly fee of 5 E. There are two reasons for establishing the project. First reason is to involve young people by creating jobs and second to alleviate poverty in the Zombodze area. The future goals of the projects are to provide free education to all children in Zombodze in the next 5 years, to provide tapped water for all the homesteads in Zombodze by December 2004, to have most of Zombodze wired and electrified in two years time, and to improve the present projects like poultry and piggery.

#### The Zombodze Youth Organisation (Zone 10)

The Zombodze Youth Project (ZYO) was launched 16 August 2003, as sub-organisation of SMART, in the hope that sport could be used to motivate the youth by bringing them together, discouraging teenage pregnancy and offering alternatives to the high rate of unemployment. Today there are almost 30 members from all areas in Zombodze. Members need to be within the age group of 15 – 29 and can join with a payment of an annual membership fee of E 5. The most successful thing of the project so far is that it is bringing youth together to do something that is highly recognized within the community. A future strength would be the construction of a sports and recreation centre giving people access to facilities beyond work and church.

#### Pig/Poultry/Bridal project (Zone 4)

This is a project run by an individual woman who saw the need to generate a greater income for her family after the husband had passed away. Her goals and objectives were to earn substantial money to sustain her family. Her future plan is to expand her business such that she can sell to supermarkets by doubling the number of pigs that she is raising.

#### Borehole project (Zone 10)

The project was to alleviate a shortage of clean water for washing, drinking, bathing purposes. The initiator knew a council from where they could apply for money to start the borehole project. He organised people to form a scheme and 8 homesteads paid E100.00. The council agreed to provide technical and personnel assistance and a borehole was installed in a centrally located area.

#### Mission water project (Zone 7)

Initially established with the technical help of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the project is now self-sufficient with 20 households all of whom have access via pipe line to water. Community meetings are held during the summer months to discuss expansion projects and perform maintenance and repairs. Each member household was required to pay an initial fee of 100 Rand and now expenses are divided equally amongst the participants.

#### Women's Cooperative (Zone 10)

This project operates a grocery store, kitchen, petrol station, telephone service and would like to expand into the sale of gas and a larger grocery store. Restricted solely to mothers, members are required to buy a share, which then entitles them to yearly dividends of the profits into the business and as well take a business management course. Many of the 30 members are also employed in the running of the various projects.

## Aims and Decision Making

In order to structure the data for our analyses more, we have divided all the projects we encountered, including the 8 we investigated in detail, according to their own aims and levels of decision making of the projects. From this basic division of projects we have created a table showing the different type of projects.

Table A – Aims/ Goals and Decision Making

| Level/Aim            | Money  | Social                                    | Infrastructure                 | political                                   | Education                      |
|----------------------|--|---|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <b>Local</b>         | - Women co-op<br>- Sewing project<br>- Pig/Poultry/Bridal<br>- Grocery Group | - ZYO                                     | - Borehole<br>- Mission<br>H2O | -Smart                                      | -Enviro<br>Water<br>Management |
| <b>National</b>      | -Vukamfazi   | - Zombodze<br>Youth<br>Friendly<br>Clinic | -Electricity<br>Scheme         | -Indvuna<br>(Traditional<br>and<br>Elected) | -REC                           |
| <b>International</b> | -Peace Corps   | -Unicef                                   | -CIDA                          |   | -SLUSE                         |

The vertical axis shows the levels (Local, National, and International) and the horizontal axis shows the division of projects (Money, Social, Infrastructure, Political, and Educational). Before going into the discussion we briefly want to show how we got our main thoughts to this table. First, according to the projects own criteria's and main goals we have categorized the projects into projects focussed on money, infrastructure, social, political, and educational. From this distinction we will be able to say more of the different types of projects and their constraints, which will be analyzed more in detail later. Second, we categorised different levels of projects according to how the project was

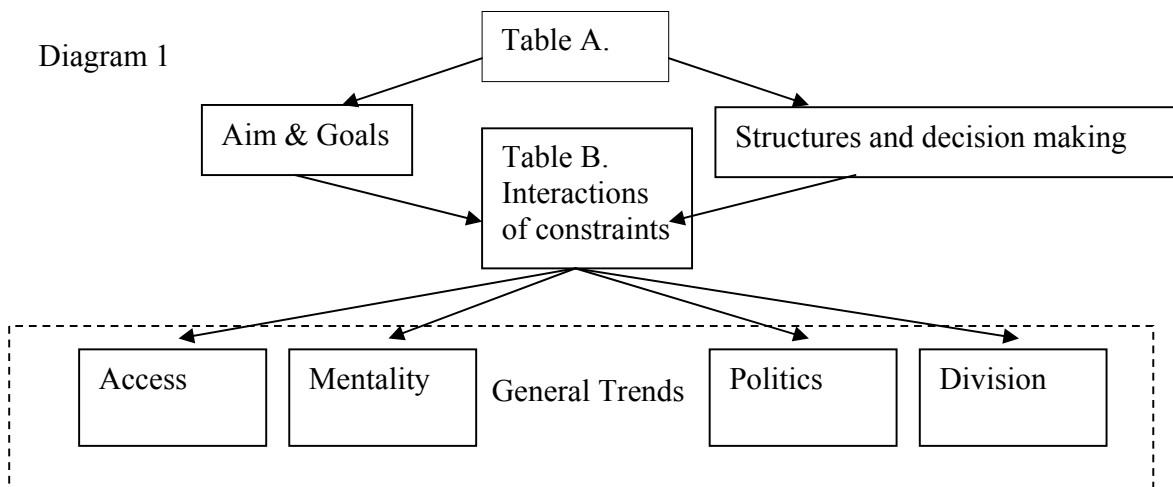
administered, which is Local, National, and International, which will give indication of the difference of the decision levels and what constraints they are facing.

The projects are structured differently and can basically be divided into two kinds of structures, single and group administrated type of projects, which is not showed in the table. Individual projects are defined as having one person is in charge of investment-, management- and general production decisions concerned the single administrated projects, namely agricultural projects. Whereas group projects often has a constitution and well formulated job descriptions for the members like a Chairlady, Vice Chairlady, Secretary, treasurer and ordinary members. Of these kinds of projects we can mention Women's Cooperative, Sewing project and SMART. Of the former we can mention the poultry-, pig- and bride projects.



## Discussion

In order to answer our working questions and analyze our data obtained from the interviews and questionnaires in our discussion we want to explain how we will divide up the analysis. To make it clear we have created the following diagram to show the structure and evolution of the analysis as it is presented in this chapter. In the first part we look at projects by breaking them up and distinguishing between aims & goals and level of decision making. Once the two axes are presented, we then recombine them in Table B which also presents the first stage of our analysis through the labelling of ‘key word’ constraints. The crucial component of Table B is the interactions between the various constraints which create unique challenges for each project. In describing the interactions, the complexity of the constraints and the situation in the community begins to become obvious. As such we then attempt to identify general trends which are impacting projects at a communal level.



## **Structure & Projects**

As can be seen by the Table A, most of the projects within Zombodze are active in terms of decision making on a local level: The Women's Cooperative, the Grocery Buying Group, the Borehole Water Project, Mission Water Project, the Poultry, Youth Organisation and SMART. One project in the community that we looked at operates at a national level, the Rural Education Centre (REC) and several from the international, CIDA, UNICEF, Peace Corps and SLUSE but mostly as donor agents, not long term decision makers. In an attempt to organise and classify the projects, Table A has focussed primarily on the levels of decision making largely avoiding the sources of funding because they are so varied and diverse. For example, SMART is accessing funds not only at a local level from its members but also from national government funds and international donor agents. Therefore while funding may be a primary constraint, classifying projects according to where decisions are made offers clearer distinction to the patterns and trends that are affecting projects.

With most projects in Zombodze operating at a local level, all decisions regarding implementation, funding, and organisation are made by local members. Given the number of projects working from a local level as well as their diversity in aims and goals there is an interesting relationship to the influences of the local political, economic and social structure. These projects tend to respond to a specific concern of a small group of people, it is for example in this level that all income generating projects, both individual and group are initiated. As such the notion of 'community development' becomes distorted because as will be discussed in detail in the next section, so many of the projects are localised with few spill over effects.

The concentration of localised decision making at this level helps to demonstrate the influences of social and economic divisions and the impact of the close familial ties and networking. Zombodze is a community like most communities of many social and economic divisions. Those with access to resources, such as water and electricity have generally more economic capacity than those who find themselves isolated and without access. The economic divisions follow closely with the social divisions which are also

connected to a few large families. For example in the area we were staying, the Mission Community, there were the homesteads of several prominent families who had also established one of the only working water pipelines in the area. This combination of access, organisation and initiative distinguished the Mission Community from other areas which had more limited economic advantage. Family/Social networks are further represented within the positions of leaderships of numerous projects including Smart, the Youth Organization and the Women's Cooperative. While it doesn't seem unusual to place trust within one's own family, the consequence of such exclusivity can result in the development of jealousy as the impact regarding who benefits can be isolated to a few individuals and not the whole.

The community of Zombodze also illustrates the dynamic relationship between the traditional and modern system in Swaziland. The traditional and modern systems are represented at a local level by two Indvunas one elected (modern) and one appointed (traditional). While the elected Indvuna's mandate is to enhance development within the community, he is only able to proceed once he has gained the approval of the traditional Indvuna. Projects that do not receive the support of the traditional Indvuna will also face difficulties with the elder leaders of the community. Therefore if any new development is to be accepted by the local community, it must first pass through a lengthy discussion between the two systems. It soon became clear that this arrangement has presented significant obstacles because the two systems have dramatically differing perceptions of what development for Zombodze includes. As a result of the effort needed to gain approval and the complexities associated with gaining land, individuals find it very difficult to move forward with ideas and projects. All these factors, social and economic segregation, interaction of political systems and the concentration of power characterize local level decision making.

The Rural Education Centre (REC) offers a good example of how the different agendas result in lost time and resources particularly when operating from a national perspective. Initiated at the national level by the Ministry of Education, this skills training project is managed at the local level by the local head master of the high school. When it was first started in the mid-70's the Ministry of Education project needed the approval of the

traditional Indvuna in order to acquire land to build their buildings. While the official goals of the project have always been directed towards skills and education, the traditional Indvuna has regarded the establishment of the center on communal land as an opportunity to increase income-generating activities in the community.

Consequently, in the 25 years that the project has been active, there has been a continuous push by the traditional authorities to include income generating as a primary objective. Today we find 2 moderately functioning projects, sewing and carpentry, which are neither wholly educational nor profitable, and one non-functioning project. The carpentry and sewing projects are run from the same compound outside the school grounds; the sewing project has retained its educational format by providing 9-month classes, it also offers the students use of the equipment to earn money during non-teaching hours and the carpentry project, barely functioning as a business, is also on the verge of collapse as a teaching project because no new members are joining and the two existing members (one elderly and one young) neither collaborate nor cooperate amongst themselves. The traditional Indvuna has always viewed these projects as income opportunities for the village, but the headmaster insists that they are solely designed to offer training. Both of these projects are failing to meet their mandate and by attempting to straddle the combined goals of education and income generating, the projects have become marginally successful.

In a move that could be considered to be more political than practical, the headmaster has decided to return the projects to school property so that it can be shown that the projects are strictly for educational purposes. This difference in meaning, income generation versus skills, while seemingly unimportant, has a rather significant impact on the community projects whose aims and goals may be subject to change due to the opposing interpretations of these political figureheads. Thus there are problematic elements with the communication between these systems that make development difficult, particularly when initiated at a national level without direct contact with the local community. While the possibility of removing the traditional system is not necessarily conducive to development, as it represents security and foundation for the community, the system could be opened and held more accountable to the needs of the whole as opposed to a

few. Furthermore, without the clarity of political systems whether traditional or modern there is a loss of accountability and transparency which discourages development and investment.

In attempting to increase community activism and interest, transparency and accountability play a major role in enhancing the involvement of national and international efforts. And while we agree that these are important goals for the local political system, we still recognize the significance of the systems to the community and are not proposing their elimination. Both the traditional and modern system provides critical resources to the community which are largely beyond the scope of our understanding.

When project decisions are made at a national level, like those of REC, there are problems regarding communication between the two levels as well as effective representation of interests. Bureaucracy plays a significant role in how decisions are made and implemented. The mandate of the national interests such as those of the Ministry of Education may not coincide with the aims and goals of the local community. This is also the case when discussing the role of international programmes and their influence on local projects.

At an international level, most decisions are made through an external agent whether foreign or Swazi who can coordinate with the community members to create a plan of action. Decisions made at this level are usually in response to a pre-established agenda, a vision so to speak of the academic paradigm regarding development, usually involving a form of infrastructure and capacity building. Typically internationally decided projects also exhibit cases of large short term injection funding efforts. SLUSE presents an example of a project whose decisions are largely made externally on an international level, in this case Denmark, and offers the community a large injection of money in a very small amount of time (in this case 1 week). While not attempting to be a development project per say, SLUSE does have a substantial impact on the community providing a few members of the community with a considerable opportunity for income generation and skills development such as interpreting, cooking, project facilitation and

coordination. As such the project directly impacts and interacts with the local forces, inadvertently supporting the existing political, social and economic structures.

### **Projects aims and their impact on Zombodze**

This part will focus on the projects categorized on the horizontal axis of Table A, looking at their aims and how nature of the impact on the community. It is important to recognize that many projects may have proclaimed aims and goals that in reality are not achieved; this identification process enables us to see the difference between theory and practice.

#### **Income generating projects**

The first types of projects we categorised in Zombodze were projects aimed at generating income, and therefore classified as “Income generating projects”. The different projects in this category can be further divided into two types; “individual” and “group” projects. The division of the projects is important because it reflects the projects’ distinctions between individual or group income generating projects, which will be illustrated below.

Individual income generating projects aim only at generating income and creating a living for the family. Group income generating projects tend to have a social responsibility in the sense that they are looking to not only generate income but also to help the community at large. Although the question remains as to how significant the impact of their efforts goes towards actually helping the general community or whether they are only generating income for the members of projects.

Individual projects are reaching their goals, but because their aims are largely self-beneficial, they have little impact on the greater community. From the interviews it was clear that a number of the different individual project members were not very willing to work with others from outside the family. Part of the reluctance stems from the fact that previous group projects have failed creating mistrust among the people of Zombodze,

therefore there is a tendency for individuals to only trust their close family.<sup>2</sup> Initially, this mistrust and the fact that the individual projects are largely family oriented suggested to us that there existed high levels of nepotism within Zombodze, but we began to appreciate it as a consequence of previous experiences and as a perhaps a necessary factor for successful projects.

As in the case of the individual projects, the group projects are also trying to generate income for the people involved, i.e. members of the project. Therefore the projects focus on being self-beneficial and provide for the needs of the members, and so there is a restricted magnitude of the communal benefits. It could be argued that all the people of Zombodze should *just* be members of different group income generating projects and in so doing receive the benefit from the projects, but then the mistrust as illustrated with the individual projects can be applied. In the case of the Women's Buying Club, who were also all members of the failed organisation of Masepele, the women are now suspicious about including future members into the group. In the case of Women's Cooperative, before becoming exclusive, they had a male member who took all the goods and money from the shop. These cases all address the difficulties for future members to be included in projects as well as establishing networks and as such helping the general community. If the earned money from different projects is spent within the community of Zombodze, then it can be argued that there is a certain spill over effect that does go towards benefiting the overall community. As such this can be seen as a positive but relatively limited impact.

In general the different income generating projects whether individual or groups tend not to have a great impact of the community as a whole. It can be argued that the projects do not have to benefit the greater community, but the fact is that when a project aims to benefit the community and does not fulfil this ambition, it can create future problems for the project or even for other projects. Furthermore the individual projects are not aiming

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<sup>2</sup> An example to illustrate this is a plantation owner that previously was a member for an organisation called Masepele that tried to join members together so it would be easier to apply for grants. He paid the 50 member fees but then nothing happened, and he hasn't seen his money. This is not an isolated case; in fact Masepele had 45 members all from Zombodze, whom all lost their money. As a consequence of this the plantation owner prefers to work alone.

at the greater community, which is not necessarily a problem, but in the eyes of development, which generally tends to focus on community projects, it can be difficult to financially support this type of project, and therefore it could present obstacles for individual projects later when new investment and capital are needed.

### **The infrastructural projects**

The general aim of the different infrastructural projects is on improving elements of the physical infrastructure of the community particularly roads, water, electricity. Due to the different factors involved such as access to resources, the process of organising the projects and financing the materials, the infrastructure projects have some difficulties in reaching their aims. Because not all households can be provided with equal access, the project can create further problems for the projects which illustrates the considerable impact the projects have on the community. The Mission Community Project has had difficulties in getting the water system optimally operational and extending it to neighbouring communities. This creates disputes, tension and jealousy among the community, which in the case of the Mission Community Project has resulted the sabotage of their water linkages. This tension is further exacerbated by the relative scarcity of this essential resource. Therefore the projects can create division in the community to those who receive water and those who do not.

This illustrates that the infrastructure projects have a significant impact on the community, both negative<sup>3</sup> and positive<sup>4</sup>. These impacts can create new problems for the community. Nevertheless the projects can also serve as examples for other people to start other infrastructural projects and the above mentioned projects could help with establishing contacts and transferring knowledge regarding maintenance and expansion.

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<sup>3</sup> A negative impact will decrease the efficiency of a community, creating restrictions and barriers to development.

<sup>4</sup> Whereas a positive impact will promote cooperation, communication and trust, increasing efficiency and the opportunities for further development.



## **Social projects**

The primary aims of the social projects are to improve the social life within Zombodze. Using the Zombodze Youth Organisation (ZYO), we can see that their aims include “to promote interests of the members of the organisation as the youth of Zombodze ... to promote youth involvement in community development programmes...” (Zombodze Youth Organisation, Constitution; § 1.3.1, §1.3.2). From these general statements it is difficult to know the exact aims of the Zombodze Youth Organisation, but in talking to different members and members in the General Executive Committee we found out that there are more informally defined aims. These include bringing the youth together and getting them away from the streets. In Zombodze, as in many other areas of Swaziland, there are high levels of unemployment and the youth have difficulties in getting jobs, which ZYO is trying to remedy by offering the youth new hope and skills. The project is still only 6 months old and as such while the ZYO may be effective in the short term, the long term goals towards providing skills and development are still only ideas. But because of the strong vision and commitment present within the members, as well as the recognition they receive from the elders as a worthwhile project, ZYO is likely to be successful.

ZYO, like all group projects in Zombodze, is dependent on members and their fees to achieve its goals. This dependency while it may hinder the overall consideration of who the project benefits will not totally limit the ZYO because they have the advantage of also having access to external funding from Peace Corps, SLUSE and also the support of SMART. Therefore the potential resilience of ZYO is greater than most membership based organisations.

Referring again to the statements of the constitution when ZYO speaks of “the community of Zombodze”, ZYO are referring to all the youth, members and non-members. But in fact the ZYO is only, as the different interviews with members and members of the General Executive Committee said, providing skills and hope for the members. Therefore there isn't a proper correlation between what is written in their constitution and what they are doing in practice. Nevertheless the ZYO have engaged more 30 people into the project so far. As well the ZYO is also working to help other projects

with different activities and therefore the ZYO do have considerable impact on the community in general. In this sense that the help the ZYO are giving to the community may be to the benefit of the whole community.

### **Political Project**

According to most people in the village, there are no political projects in Zombodze, as we see it, there was one – SMART. SMART is new, ambitious and bold and as such it is also full of contradictions and promise. The implications SMART as political organisation will be discussed in the next section and for now we will just outline what we understand to be the goals and their impact. There are three main goals of SMART, first to increase employment opportunities, second to alleviate poverty and third to supply the community with water.

Despite what Mr. Thwala, leader of SMART states about the fact that it does not only rain on members, meaning that rain is neither specific nor limited in how it falls, the benefits that are being generated within SMART are directed first and foremost to the members. As an example of its limited scope of impact, is that people have to be a member of SMART in order to receive help. SMART, a project were one of its aims is to reduce poverty by helping vulnerable and orphaned children (VOC's), often the poorest of the poor who find it difficult to pay for school and food at the same time. Therefore SMART has initiated a campaign to help them by giving them food and offering scholarships for school fees. But the orphans and vulnerable children also have to be a member of SMART. The membership fee for SMART is 5 Rand per month, with an additional application fee of 30 Rand, far more than most VOC's can afford. The problem is that SMART is seeking to help the poor children, but if the children are so poor they can not join the organisation then they can't receive food aid. We met one family or rather the children of a family. Their mother had died last year, and their father a shortly after abandoned them and now lies dying in the hospital. The eldest of the family, a fifteen year old boy, supports his seven younger siblings and also attend school on the weekends

in Nhlango. Prime candidates for SMART support, but when questioned said they could not possibly afford the additional cost of the application and membership fees.

SMART is only attaining some of their aims. SMART is providing some help for orphans and vulnerable children just not for the most desperate children needing the most help. This inconsistency could negatively impact the community by reinforcing the economic and social segregation, but this impact could be limited and easily solved if the process were improved. But more likely SMART will have a considerable positive impact on the community through its efforts to unite the area and strengthen local infrastructure.

### **Educational Projects**

This category looks at projects that focus on improving the skills for students are within this category. The overall aim for these types of projects is to provide the students with skills in the areas of practical trades and business management. The hope is that this will create better opportunities for the students to make a living and support their families. An example illustrating this is the Rural Education Centre (REC) that aims at teaching the unemployed elders and the youth skills in sewing, metal work, carpentry and cooking. Now because of the lack of membership the overall project is having problems reaching their aims in these education areas, so there are only the carpentry and the sewing. At the same time the carpentry is also lacking new applicants threatening its continued existence. It is only the sewing project that is able to continuously recruit new members and also provide students with applicable skills that can enable them to start up their own business. Unfortunately graduates struggle within Zombodze due to the limited market and their inability to purchase the required equipment and supplies. Although there is one successful sewing project in Zombodze, which makes mostly uniforms and employs up to eight people, who are all former students of the REC project. The impact REC has on the community includes its ability to offer training and facilities in the off season to students for various endeavours.

All projects in Zombodze, whether income generating, infrastructural, social, political or educational, have an impact on the community. This can be negative or positive

depending on the aims and goals of the project. In the examples presented we see that the aims and goals also depend on level of decision making. The fact that many projects claim a social responsibility and commitment to help further the development of Zombodze at times contradicts with their interests.

## Structures and Constraints

So far the discussion we have presented has concentrated largely on the information received from the projects members, leaders and people not involved in any projects. The information has been highly descriptive with limited analysis in the sense that we have been focused on what the informants have told us and not what we think. The two previous parts have been directed towards the aims of the different projects and the structures surrounding the projects, meaning the structures of the local, national, international. As well and both parts have also discussed the impact and magnitude of the individual projects. The aims and level of decision making is presented in our result section as Table A. The information received has given us the opportunity to further understand the different constraints of the projects, as illustrated in Table B and develop an idea of the patterns and interactions among the projects.

**Table B Constraints faced by projects**

|                | Money                  | Social                 | Infra-structure              | Political              | Education               |
|----------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Local          | Investment             | Membership             | Maintenance & Social justice | Admin. & Vision        | High turnover Subsidies |
|                | Capacity, Jealousy     | Capacity, Jealousy     | Capacity, Jealousy           | Capacity, Jealousy     | Capacity, Jealousy      |
| National       | Investment             | Membership             | Maintenance & Social justice | Admin. & Vision        | High turnover Subsidies |
|                | Top-down & Bureaucracy | Top-down & Bureaucracy | Top-down & Bureaucracy       | Top-down & Bureaucracy | Top-down & Bureaucracy  |
| Inter-National | Investment             | Membership             | Maintenance & Social justice | Admin. & Vision        | High turnover Subsidies |
|                | Blueprint & Short term | Blueprint & Short term | Blueprint & Short term       | Blueprint & Short term | Blueprint & Short term  |

These two axis give us 15 further levels of classification for the projects of Zombodze. Looking at Table B, we can begin to see not only the constraints but also the complexity of their interactions. As well, we see some patterns developing between the different projects and the different constraints they are facing. These patterns between the different projects are our understanding of the projects in Zombodze and therefore are not based directly of the information gathered but rather on our analysis of all the interviews with the different projects.

In the first part of our discussion we found out how the different level whether local, national or international influence the different projects, and therefore identified some keywords that characterise the projects in the specific type of projects. For the local perspective “Capacity and Jealousy” are the keywords. At the national level its more about “Top-down decision making and Bureaucracy” and at international level it is “Blueprint and Short-term”, this is showed on Table B at the vertical axis.

In the second part of the previous section we looked at the horizontal axis of Table B, which deals with the aims of the projects, where we focused on the different projects aims and how they were impacting the community. In the category of the income generating projects we found out that the keyword was “Investment”, in social projects is was “Membership”, in infrastructural projects the keywords are “Maintenance and Social justice”, in political projects the keywords are “Visions and Administration”, and finally, in educational projects the keywords are “High-turn over and Subsidies”. These keywords illustrate the different factors which are typical for the different types of projects, and joining by the two axes. We can further illustrate the specific constraints faced by the projects. Therefore by joining the two parts we have begun to understand the complexity of the different projects. In order to illustrate this point we have chosen three examples, the Women’s Cooperative; Borehole project; and SMART.

As previously described, the Women’s Cooperative is a local income generating project and looking at our previous Table B we can see that the constraints they are facing are

capacity, investments and jealousy. By combining these constraints together, we can see that their interactions have created a unique context of challenges for the project. From the interview with various members of the Women's Cooperative we identified the specific problems the project is facing concerning capacity, investment and jealousy. Because of the fact that the project is not accumulating enough money, the Women's Cooperative would like to expand their activities with greater storage facilities and a larger supermarket. Currently, the project is only selling at a local level, meaning there is a limited market for the services and goods. Due to the transportation from nearby towns the costs of inputs to the activities are high increasing prices and therefore the customers may tend to shop elsewhere. This also means that the project is generating low profit making the return to members low and its ability to expand difficult.

At the same time the project has difficulties receiving external funding, for example from the CCU. As such the capacity in terms of the project is limited meaning that it has difficulties in overcoming its future obstacles. One way out of this would be further education. In general there is a need for management skills, which could enable projects to be better at solving business related constraints. But in order to educate its members the project is reliant on the fact that the members will have the time and interest to learn such new skills. In Zombodze we conducted a seasonal survey calendar (Appendix D) that illustrates the allocation of time during the year. This calendar shows that during the summer, Christmas preparation requires a lot of time, and in autumn they are busy with the harvest. This only leaves time for education and project work in winter and spring time.

From our interviews we found out that family and political relations seem to have an impact on how to run business. Another way to overcome future problems and obstacles can be to pay more attention to the powerful institutions and networks in Zombodze. In the Women's Cooperative that seems to be the case as there was a strong linkage between SMART and the Cooperative. The Chairlady of the Women's Cooperative is also treasurer of SMART and it was suggested that the leader of SMART had a leading position in the Cooperative. It seems that there is a significant connection between these

organisations but due to the sensitivity concerning these issues we could not investigate it further.

The second project we will present is the Borehole project that is also operating at local level. According to our analysis and understanding this project faces the constraints of maintenance, capacity and jealousy. Again like the Women's Cooperative, the interactions between these constraints reflect the distinctive obstacles the Borehole Project must face. The problems related to this project, according to the members themselves are primarily the lack of skills and knowledge to effectively implement the project in terms of maintenance and testing. The project has required expertise from outside and only few people have the necessary knowledge or skills to maintain the investments of the Borehole. The price to install a borehole is E3000. Further, the Borehole Project is a rather small group of only 8 members the project may have problems in overcoming the requirements of large investments or repairs. Maintenance also includes the issue of water quality since poor water is a health risk, and thus there is also a need to have the skills required to ensure the quality of the water.

The Borehole Project has recognised that in order to have sustainable water supply the exploitation of the resources needs to be controlled and limited to some extent. As such, the members of the project are only allowed to collect water between 6.00 am and 9.00 am and then again between 4.00pm and 6.00pm. In doing so the project is taken ownership over the water resource, which is normally regarded as a common resource. This has created division within the community, because the project is not able to include more members in the interest of protecting the resource from exhausting. This division within the community could be a future constraint because in time of water shortage there might be jealousy from people not involved and have no access, which can result in sabotage of the system. Sabotage has been an issue at other water projects, which was linked to jealousy created by the project between the non-member and the members due to the lack of access.

The third project we will use to illustrate the various interactions of constraints is SMART. SMART as mentioned earlier, is a local political project that is constrained by administration, vision, capacity and jealousy. Initially started to distribute food aid, SMART had its first membership coming from the aid recipients. Since its inception, the project objectives have changed from distributing food aid to a variety of goals including alleviating poverty, offering scholarships and improving the water and electricity supply. As mentioned regarding the alleviation of poverty Smart has focused its efforts on the VOC's. In a previous example we illustrated the inconsistency of SMART wanting to provide food to the poorest but failing because the VOC's are required to pay a membership fee they cannot afford. This is an obvious contradiction that needs to be rectified in the future if they want to obtain their goals. This also illustrates the importance of the interaction between goals and organization of the projects. These different objectives also demonstrate that Smart is a young organisation in a difficult transition period, and therefore the various efforts still need time to be completely implemented and to maximise their potential. This leads to the constraints defined by the interactions of administration, capacity and vision. As mentioned earlier, SMART is run by Titus Thwala, a strong leader with many ideas and clear vision. Given his strength of leadership, the concentration of the operation of Smart is restricted to a small group of people, namely Mr. Thwala and the vice president, the politically elected Indvuna Mr. Samuel T. Dlamini. Because of concentration of the power within the project relies on these two figures for direction and dedication. And while many successful efforts rely on strong leadership, it presents creates a weakness in terms of sustaining the momentum when operational duties are not delegated within the membership.

These three examples describe not only the specific constraints projects are facing but also help to illustrate the complexity of the community given the intricacies of the interaction between all the various constraints. In order to begin to appreciate the general trends affecting the overall community of Zombodze one has to first analyse the many interactions between the various constraints. In the following section we will try to use our previous detailed discussion to expand upon and generalise the trends of constraints impacting the projects at a community level.



While the particular constraints and their interactions have been discussed at length, it the purpose of this section is to step away from the individual projects and identify the trends affecting the community as a whole. It is important to generalise the Zombodze context because it offers a perspective on how the community may increase their opportunities for development. As mentioned in the introduction, there is an assumption that in general projects are designed to have the largest impact possible. There is an interest in maximising the benefits obtained particularly when concerning outside funding, upon which many of the local projects are dependant. Therefore community efforts are favoured over individual projects because the magnitude of the impact is greater. The assumption is that communities are naturally efficient, open and cooperative by promoting an equitable transfer of the information, skills and resources needed to encourage development. In Zombodze, people tend to favour individual projects at a local level claiming that the gains are greater and the risk less. And so while these projects have proven to be successful and most will continue to be, their impact at a community level is restricted. Using the examples of the Women's Cooperative, the Borehole Project and SMART we see that there is also an interest for people to work together and pool their resources and as such extend their impact beyond the confines of a selected few.

Given that all projects are directed towards improving livelihood in one form or another, there are several features of the community that are limiting the ability of projects to maximise their impact and investment. Some of the general constraints that emerged from our interviews, questionnaires and observation were largely connected to access to resources. Access referred not only to physical resources such as water, electricity and roads, but also to social resources such as skills training, education and knowledge. As well people spoke about the unwillingness to come together as a community and the overall lack of cohesion felt towards critical issues regarding the development of the village. From our deeper understanding of the complexity of the interactions of the constraints faced by the projects particularly at a local level, we can begin to see general trends emerge.

These trends not only involve access to resources but also the division of the community at an economic, social, geographical and political level, the transfer of information, capacity levels, efficiency and the mentality of people themselves. We are reluctant to call these elements constraints, as they can also be beneficial to the community and the projects, but from our perspective they are the primary obstacles to creating an optimum environment for community development. Using the examples of the three projects previously mentioned, the Women's Cooperative, the Borehole Project and SMART, we will show that by using the interactions outlined in Table B we can identify the patterns that are having considerable impact on the success or failure of projects in Zombodze.

Looking at the Women's Cooperative, Borehole project and SMART, we can see that in all three cases there are common constraints, namely capacity and jealousy, affecting the efficiency of the projects. If we place the constraints of capacity and jealousy within the general context we can understand capacity as a lack of access to resources and jealousy as creating division within the community as a result of this unequal access. As mentioned, in Zombodze, people further defined these resources as being skills, information, knowledge, time, finances and also physical resources such as water and electricity. As such it is the division of and access to economic, social, political and physical resources that is creating difficulties for progress. These divisions are largely a result of tight family networks, the lack of trust, the social and economic segregation and the at times contentious interactions between the two political systems. Defined by division and stratification, the community struggles to transfer and distribute its resources efficiently resulting in further concentration and elitism. When projects or the investment of funds call these central elements of the community into action, they engage to either limit or enhance the impact of the initiative. As a result it is difficult to create a common understanding and framework within the development of projects that can benefit the greater community.

Nevertheless SMART is attempting to bring Zombodze together, create cohesion and promote trust amongst locals. Working within the social framework of family networks by building on the structure established by long-time projects such as the Women's

Cooperative and Borehole, SMART is pushing the boundaries, providing most people with greater relative access to information and resources. People are enthusiastic not only about the energy that is being generated in the community but also by the unity that is developing among the areas. While the ultimate motives of the projects may be suspect, the overall outcome could be very beneficial to the success of projects in the community. Because of the overwhelming popularity of SMART, there must be a common understanding of the need to work together in order to develop. With its large membership and support, SMART has the potential to promote cooperation, trust and accountability in Zombodze.

Trust is essential if a community is to operate efficiently and maximize its potential capacity. The trust available to a community also encourages the development of social capacity, the creation of networks and support systems. But if restricted to only a few elite people, namely those within the family, it can create division and isolation, especially if the networks determine access to resources. Fragmented societies rampant with mistrust will only produce greater isolation, elitism and division. Hopefully SMART can bring members closer together and combine with other projects so that the different initiatives. As well, Smart can also help to set the framework for projects to work together and create greater interconnectedness, improving the opportunities for projects to be help and use each other. By working together, Zombodze projects may have a chance to overcome the challenges of social division and poor distribution of resources. Even if the majority of projects remain as individual efforts, their success and the associated spill over effects can be very beneficial to the whole community. Spill over effects vary greatly between the different projects and can serve as one way of measuring the impact a project has on the community. Depending on the aim, the spill over effect can be significant or not, for example a water project's benefits extend far beyond providing clean accessible water to a community.

In discussion with members of the Women's Cooperative, some women recognized the magnitude of the SMART's impact on the community in terms of generating cohesion. The women stated that they hoped to maintain the level of enthusiasm and direct towards

benefiting the community. Currently in Zombodze, there is a strong network of active individuals, particularly those associated with the Women's Cooperative, the Mission Community Project, SMART and ZYO. While these organisations involve many of the same families, it is also these groups that recognize the strength and benefit of efficient communities to provide for the needs of the individuals. SMART has the opportunity to step beyond the structure that has existed for years and take the community to the next step of development.

One way could be increase the networking amongst the existing projects. For example, ZYO could promote its members to become involved in the education offered that REC provide and because they are already within ZYO then there is a possibility that once they have completed their training they could join together to make an income generating project either of Carpentry or Sewing and further use the ZYO contacts to apply for funding for equipment and supplies. At the same time, if all 30 members of ZYO engage in REC there is chance that the Cooking and Metalwork shops could also be operational, in doing so provide greater resources for the youth of Zombodze. This interconnectedness can promote education such as management skills not only for the members of the Women's Cooperative, but also for the ZYO, individuals, or members of other projects. By joining together and sharing in each others benefits, the projects are able to lower the production and transaction costs, increasing profits and maximising competitive ability. We suggest that with increased cooperation, trust and openness, Zombodze could begin to address some of the general constraints experienced by the projects concerning poor access to resources, community division and jealousy.

## **Conclusion**

By breaking down the projects and attempting to investigate them from various angles, we have been able to conclude with great certainty that the situation within Zombodze is complex and intricate in nature. The projects at local, national and international level engage with the structures of the community to create an elaborate web of interactions that is very difficult to unravel and understand completely from our position as outsiders. We have attempted to illustrate the important trends we feel hinder the efficiency of Zombodze in terms of its projects. Still we recognize that these trends are based on our understanding and as such limited. This conclusion is relevant as it reflects the perspective of most development agents who attempt to influence the future of communities such as Zombodze. While we can predict, propose and postulate on the reasons for and how issues exist within Zombodze, it is impossible for us to have an entirely in-depth appreciation for the approaches taken towards particular actions. And while we have made recommendations and suggestions in our analysis on how Zombodze could maximise its potential and increase the benefits of the projects to the greater community, we acknowledge that these have been made according to our own perception and bias. Initiative must come from within. Only those entrenched in the complexity and obscurity of the situation can begin to find clarity of direction and purpose. One can never develop if one is not involved in the process of development.

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# Appendix

## Appendix A - Interview guides

### Key person

#### 1. Name & personal data

- a) Name
- b) Title
- c) Gender
- d) Income
- e) Job description

#### 2. History

- a) Brief history of project?
- b) How did the project start?
- c) Who initiated it?
- d) When did the project start?
- e) What was the idea behind starting?

#### 3. Project leadership and membership

- a) How is the project influenced by the local political system? E.g. traditional or modern?
- b) Qualify to be a member?
- c) How do the members communicate and advertise information about the projects?
- d) What are the problem facing the problems?
- e) Who can join the projects?
- f) Who cannot?
- g) Where do you normally hold your meetings?
- h) How do you actively seek new members?
- i) How is leader chosen?

#### 4. Goals & implementation

- a) What are the main aims/goals? Of the project?
- b) How is it run and managed?

#### 5. Trust & equity

- a) How do you benefits from the projects?
- b) How do the members benefit from the projects?
- c) Draw the structure of the organisation?
- d) How did you formulate the structure?
- e) Do you have a constitution? If yes. How did you formulate it?

#### 6. Funding

- a) Where does the money come from?
- b) What do you use it for?
- c) Do you have storage buildings?

- d) What do you keep in them?
- e) Do you have any new ideas for new developments and to sustain the projects?
- f) Do you have any accounting records?

**7. Collaboration & co-operation**

- a) Do you collaborate with other projects?
- b) Within the community?
- c) Do you get any educational/skill experiences? If yes. By whom and where?
- d) How do the members of the projects collaborate amongst them selves?
- e) Is there any problem concerning communication?
- f) Suggest ways in which collaboration amongst projects can be improved?

**8. General Issues**

- a) How is the most successful?
- b) What is the strength of the organisation?
- c) What do you consider as the weaknesses/constraints in the project?
- d) How can you improve your weaknesses?
- e) How do see the future of the project?

**Non-members**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: Male \_\_\_ Female \_\_\_

Which project(s) do you know in your community? And are they in the whole of the community? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you involved in any project? \_\_\_\_\_

Why not? \_\_\_\_\_

Were you invited to join the projects? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you normally attend community projects? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you consider becoming a member in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, when will that be? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think the current projects benefit the community (fulfilling their objectives)? \_\_\_\_\_

How can they be improved? \_\_\_\_\_

Are the projects helping uplift the community? \_\_\_\_\_



Are their conflicts in the community? \_\_\_\_\_

**Members**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

What are the functions of the project? \_\_\_\_\_

What role do you play? \_\_\_\_\_

When did you join the project? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you join the project? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about the project? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you benefit from being involved? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you get more recognition from being involved? \_\_\_\_\_

Where do you normally meet? \_\_\_\_\_

How often do you meet? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you like being involved? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think the project is successful so far? \_\_\_\_\_

Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

Have nay of the activities not been successful? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think they did not work? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think about the leadership in the project? \_\_\_\_\_

Is the project exclusive or open to everyone? \_\_\_\_\_

What is you regular job outside the project and does it impact on the project? \_\_\_\_\_

Is there any constitution or set of rules that guide the members of the project? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a copy? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you been involved in ay other project(s) before? \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix B**  
**Questionnaires**







## Appendix C

### Summaries

#### Women Buying Group

**History:**

The 6 women came together with the original idea of sharing the burden incurred by the individual households, during particularly financially demanding times such as funerals, weddings and holidays like Christmas. They said that they wanted to share the burden of providing for their families by collecting money and putting it towards buying food and other important necessities. They had been involved in another project called Masepele which promised them access to funds for a joining fee of 50 R each, but they have seen nothing of it and so they decided to create their own project. They have been together for almost one year, and although they find it difficult to allocate the funds required, they appreciate the benefits the project brings.

**Project Membership and Leadership:**

The group originally consisted of six women, all living in a similar area who had been friends for a long time, 10 to 20 years. Unfortunately there are currently only four women participating because one is experiencing family problems and has returned home and another woman has died. They say that the group is not exclusive and is open to new people but while other people have expressed an interest no one else has taken the initiative to join.

Once a month the women come together, pool their 100 R fee and collectively decide what they will buy. They find that the best prices are in town where they can benefit from the sales and discounts. Examples of their purchases include rice, fish oil, sunflower oil and sugar. After the food is purchased they must then all come together again for the process of distribution.

**Problems:**

Some of the problems that they are experiencing include being able to prioritize the money away from the needs of the household and their families. All the women have side business including selling bananas, tomatoes, iceblocks, clothes, pies and chickens. But they appreciate the benefits of buying collectively and so they are willing to make the sacrifices needed. Their husbands support their venture as they realise the benefits for the household but they do not contribute to the month fundraising, the women must come up with the money on their own. They commented that women are better at organising because they experience the hardships of daily life more acutely than men because of their responsibilities in looking after the household and the children.

Getting information and finding how to expand the operation has been a challenge for the women, they said that they do not know how or who to contact regarding this process. They also stated that they feel that there are problems in the community regarding how funds are distributed saying that 'money often gets stuck at the top'.

**Goals and Implementation:**

Their primary goal is to help ease the burden of providing for the needs of their households during demanding times. They run the project collectively and have not designated an official leader, although the eldest women present seemed to be taking the role.

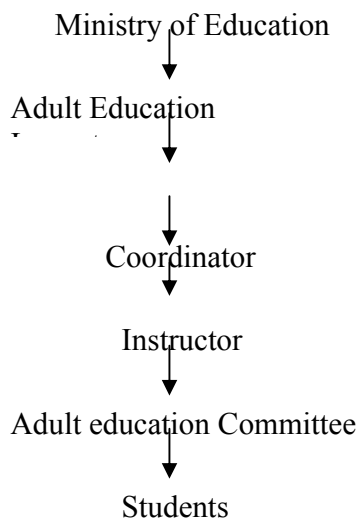
**Plans:**

The women would eventually like to expand their operation to the buying of furniture and other household goods beyond food.

## Rural Education Center (R.E.C.)

### History

The Rural Education Center was initiated in the 1980s by Swaziland Ministry of Education with aim of generating income opportunities for the young and unemployed elder with skills in carpentry, sewing, metal work and cooking. The Swazi government created four rural centers in the country, two in the region of Sciselweni and two in other regions. The students were then educated during the day as a part of their daily schoolwork and the elderly in the afternoon after school. The location of the project was in the parameter of the school but soon the project grew and alternative options were needed. Therefore the school chose to re-locate the project outside the school parameter at the nearby ground, which is its present location.



The cost of the application is according to the headmaster around 100 Rand. At Zombodze there is only the carpentry and the sewing education, which is due to the lack of membership in the cooking and metal work. Within the carpentry there aren't many member, currently there are only two within the project. This is according to the interview with both members of the project a huge problem because the men within the Zombodze community don't want to work with carpentry because of a takes out at lot of manpower. At the same time the men are often working outside the community and therefore it is difficult to attract men to the project. The opposite is the case in the sewing project, here there great amount of women within the project, which the headmaster think is because of the fact that the women are the one that stays at home while the men are away. Therefore the women have a leading role in the homestead. So the sewing project can be seen as an additional income. Both projects are facing the problem of lack of jobs opportunities after achieving the certificate. The carpentry is facing problems of lack labour and lack, which then creates additional problems because of the project, is not able to make a large of products and then sell it at the nearby markets. The sewing project are faced with problems are included the cost of capital. They are reliant on the costumers ordering a product paying for the materials and then they can work.

As earlier mention there have been some conflicts between the projects and the traditional authorities, because of the fact that the projects aim were to educate and not as a income-generating shop.

So far the project is a success because as the headmaster mention " people are making a living" but in the same sentence he also address some of the problems, which needs to be taken care of so the project in the future can survive and continuously create livings for the people of Zombodze. These elements include, money after graduation, further collaboration with each other. so far some have jointed together in order to start own business and the headmaster hope that more will do the same.

## Smart Project

**Name:** Titus Tuwala

**Title:** Member of Parliament, and the founder of the Smart project.

**Gender:** Male

**Job description:** Former headmaster of Majeni High School.

### History of the project.

- the organisation is a work from the previous work by Smart Partnership, which previously was known as Zombodze Mission. The project started in the beginning of June 2003 as an organisation that was distributing food aid to the local community.
- Those members who benefited from the food aid became members of the organisation, and each member has to pay a monthly fee of 5 E.
- The reason for establishing the project was of two reasons.
  - o To keep young people that was involved in anything busy (This point is also mentioned by vusi; our interpreter.)
  - o Create jobs for the local and alleviate poverty in the Zombodze area.
- In order to meet these terms the Smart project is focusing on different projects such as 1) establishing youth clubs such as soccer and netball teams. 2) Create the opportunities for the different clubs, such as buying the materials like balls, net or jersey. 3) In order to diminish poverty the project has established a poultry project that is already up and running.

### Membership

- At the time of the interview there were above 5000 members.
- The Smart project has been influenced by the traditional system, in that the project operates within Zombodze consistency, which has nine chiefdoms and obviously, before anything can happen in these things has to be reported to the leaders of the community. (the leaders and the elderly)
- It is also attracting people from outside Zombodze, like people that copy the patterns and ideas of smart Zombodze. The ideas that were used in order to establish the organisation.
- The Smart Zombodze is influenced by the modern government structure in that donor aid is being financed by the members of parliament. In this case Mr. TT.
- the membership is open to everybody except the people that have taken the founder Mr. TT to court. Within the constituency of the smart Zombodze there are more than 20 branches.
- The information regarding the organisation is communicated to members through the secretaries who are working in the different branches.
- each branch has its own sub-committee like the Chairman secretary.
- the organisation is advertising the giving of food aid within the community. Secondly the organisation is advertising itself by organising the bursaries for orphaned and VDC Vulnerable Orphaned Children.
- This year the project has raised E 200.000 for this and they hope to get more money from bank loans which they hope to pay back by members' subscriptions and donors.
- The main problems facing the organisation are
  - 1) the negative attitude of local people who see this as nothing more than a tool to make people vote for the present MP
  - 2) competitors of MPs who sidetrack activities and have taken Titus to court several times. These court cases are because they believe that the MP should be disqualified because the food aid has been used as a political tool. This has delayed the progress of the organisation.
- meetings of the organisation are held in the Inkhundla (constituency)
- those for sub-branches are held in places which control them.
- leaders for the organisation are elected and voted for by the members-presently there is an Interim Committee which will be dissolved by April 2004



- the structure of the organisation consists of : (see diagram)
- the organisation does have a constitution which the president promised to show the team of researchers.
- future ideas for the organisation: to provide free education to all children in Zombodze in the next 5 years  
to provide tapped water for all the homesteads in Zombodze by December 2004  
to have most of Zombodze wired and electrified in two years time  
improve on projects presently functioning like poultry and piggery
- applicants of SMART include – sewing project  
brick making  
poultry

### **Zombodze Youth Organisation (ZYO)**

#### FUNCTIONS

- the functions of the community project are to help develop the community as a whole and at the same time develop the youth organization so that the members can benefit from the project and cultivate the land.

#### WHAT ROLES DO THEY PLAY

- Sandile is a member of the sports council and is trying to organize activities in the area
- Vusi is just a member

#### WHEN DID THEY JOIN

- they joined the project about 3 months ago

#### CRITERIA FOR MEMBERSHIP

- there are about 30 members within the group between the ages of 18-30

#### JOINING FEE

- the cost of membership is E5 which only has to be paid once

#### COMMUNICATION

- the way they communicate is through meetings held by the group leader - MT

#### WHY DID THEY JOIN

- they joined the project primarily as a way of 'keeping themselves busy' but they both hope that at some time the project may give some profit.

#### HOW DO THEY BENEFIT

- they benefit from the project because within the group there is a workshop which will serve to upgrade the members' skills. these include computing and other important skills. they both already have skills in farming, which can be used when the cultivation of the land begins next week.

#### DO YOU GET ADDED STATUS/RECOGNITION

- both members acknowledged that they have received some recognition from the community, however, until such time as they can make signs or t-shirts the recognition will be limited.
- in the group there are more males than females but the project is non-discriminatory except about age.

#### MEETINGS ARRANGEMENTS

- the meetings are held every wednesday at the SMART building where they are centralised (please see diagram)

#### IS IT A SUCCESSFUL PROJECT

- the project has been a success thus far because it has educated the members and enabled them to understand one another. at the same time it helps the community in general and gives the members a spirit of working.

#### CONSTITUTION

- the project has a constitution which has been written by the members of the project and all have a copy of it

#### PREVIOUS PROJECTS

- both have done some community work previously. Sandile has made bricks in other projects and

Vusi has done work to do with AIDS and child abuse.

FUTURE:

- they both addressed the question of further development and more community projects which can keep people involved in different projects and at the same time show the people within the community the possibilities of community projects.

## Poultry/pig and bridal project

### History

Poultry and pig production

\*NAME started by raising 300 layers bought in Manzini at E30.30 each. The chickens were producing far less eggs than expected and was sold after six months (genetics).

### Project member- and leadership

Run three small projects alone and consider involving other with same interests. She is aware that people work better as a group, the problem is that most people don't co-operate.

### Goals and implementation

- Main goal is to Earn more money to sustain her family as she is the only breadwinner. Would like to develop her business such that she sells even to other markets nationwide such as big supermarkets like SPAR etc. She also wants to double the number of pigs (3 → 6) that she is raising because she feels that the production of pigs has high profit than the rest. Needs to learn more Training in record keeping and advise on budgeting.

### Sources of funding

She started and funded the projects from her teaching salary, and she does not co-operate with any other organization within the community. She has built up the pig project, bought a car, been able to send her children to school and established a bridal shop from money generated from the poultry project.

### Success criteria

Her first criterion to succeed is to earn enough money to support her family. The manure from the animals is becoming important to the agricultural production. Her interest and commitment to the production is also very important. She sees herself as a role model in the community and more women has approached her to help them in the establishment of their own poultry and pig production. Future goals are to train other interested women in poultry and pig production, and perhaps to build a fishpond to exploit the waste from poultry and pig production.

### Constraints

Water, diseases, access to lending and credit facilities, and training – she feels that the poultry and pig officer from the Ministry of Agriculture & Co-operatives based in Nhlanguano are not easily accessible and available. Also, they do not receive follow-up support from the suppliers and in general problems with marketing and advertising. Further, electricity for lighting and a freezer and competition with other poultry producers for the local market.

## Borehole Project

### HISTORY

Interviewee was working with the Council of Churches based in Manzini and to know of funds the council had to help rural communities who wanted to install water in their homestead in 1996 ;He then organised people to form a scheme and each homestead paying E100.00 .Only 8 homesteads paid this amount of money and this meant that the scheme had only E800.00 collected and this was banked in the Swazi

Bank. He then approached the Council about what they already had and the Council agreed to give technical material and personnel assistance and a borehole was installed in an area which they agreed as members to be central. The money i.e E800.00 they collected continued to be kept in the bank and was to be used for maintenance purposes.

A water committee was set up in a meeting through elections and voting system and it came out to be:

Mrs Kunene –Chairperson  
Mrs T. Ndzinisa – Vice Chairperson  
Mr .Philemon Mhlungu – Treasurer  
Mrs .H Khumalo –Secretary  
Mrs Mkhalihi –Additional member .

The water is used basically for domestic purposes and can be obtained between 6.00 a.m –9.00am and 4.00 –6.00pm. The reason why it is rationed they are trying to conserve it. The members meet once a month. New members can still join project provided they pay the initial E100.00

**Goals:**

The project was initiated because there was a general shortage of clean water for washing, drinking, bathing etc.purposes.

Interviewee views project as a success because it is meeting the need it was created for and the fact that it has not collapsed up to this point.

**Future Plans:**

Is to buy a windmill at Boksburg where they appear to be much cheaper.

**Problems:**

Its difficulty in getting funds to maintain the project

## **Mission Community Project**

**History:** 8 years ago the Mission Community came together to discuss the problem of their contaminated water source, a local river. The nineteen concerned households found a new source in the mountains which required greater development for proper access. They contacted the Canadian International Development Agency who they had heard had been helping other water projects in the north. CIDA met them half way by providing the materials and technical expertise while the group had to contribute 100R per household. The pipes and taps were installed and then the Mission Community received interest from neighbouring communities to extend the system. It was extended but because of insufficient water pressure, the source was unable to supply both communities and so the lines were separated last year.

**Membership and Leadership:** The project is coordinated by the Mission Community, which is composed of 19 households in Zone 10. Two members, Elias Magagula, our informant and his neighbour are primary leaders. They collect complain and concerns from the community, organise meetings, and arrange repairs. Three men were trained by CIDA in how to repair and maintain the system; one is the son of Mr. Magagula. All decision is made at the local assembly at community meetings that are held every 2 month in the winter.

**Source of funding:** After getting the initial help from CIDA for the equipment and technical training the Mission Community has been self supporting. Members originally paid 100R as a joining fee and now contribute equally towards repairs.

**Goal & implementation:**

- To provide clean, safe, accessible water to members

- To protect and maintain for members
- To extend system to communal hall

**Success criteria:** The ability to supply safe water to all members, eventually expand the lines to other community members and provide in house access with large holdings tanks for one to three households.

**Constraints:**

- Pipes and taps are used by non members, not contributing to sustainability to the system
- Lack of fund for purchasing secure holding tanks
- Tim and resource are limiting for extending the system

### Women’s Cooperative

**History:**

The project was initiated in the 70s, by a group of women and slowly the project has grown to include a grocery store, kitchen, petrol station and telephone service. The project includes 30 members that have paid a joining fee of 50 Rand. As addition, contribution the members are allowed to buy four shares at a cost of 100 rand each. By buying additional share the members are able to gain more at the end of the year when the profit are divided according to amount of share one have.

**Membership and leadership:**

|                           |                                   |                            |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Structure of project      | Chairlady                         | (Mrs. Mngomezulu)          |
|                           | Vice chairlady                    | (Mrs. Motsebula)           |
|                           | Treasury                          | (Mrs. Dlamini)             |
|                           | Secretariat                       | (Mrs. Nthsangase)          |
|                           | Different departments             |                            |
| Kitchen<br>(Mrs. Dlamini) | Filling station<br>(Mrs. Mkhonta) | Shop<br>(Mrs. Hlope)       |
|                           |                                   | Phone<br>(Mrs. Mngomezulu) |

The project is open is all women within the community with children because of women with children are more responsible that women without. At the same time men are not allowed, which was because of unfortunate episode in 1999, where a male member sold all the goods and ran away with the money.

**Goals and Implementation:**

- To alleviate poverty of their members and the community
- Operate a successful, profitable business
- To provide the basic needs of the community, both a market and social level

**Success Criteria:**

- Are now able to pay for their children’s school fees0
- Generate a profit each year which they are then able to divide amongst their members
- Able to by small amounts of surplus maize from local farmers
- Employ and include young women from the community

**Constraints:**

**Funding –**

- Wanted to set up a gas filling station to solve the problem of firewood shortage in the homes, but found that it is to expensive to buy the machines required for dispensing
- Began to build a larger building to house a new restaurant and grocery store with initial funds from the government but have run short and now cannot complete the project
- CCU the overarching organisation will not grant loans for structural changes and improvements on pre-existing projects, only for stock.

## Appendix D

### Seasonal Calendar

| Jan     | Feb     | Mar     | Apr | May   | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep                             | Oct     | Nov     | Dec                 |
|---------|---------|---------|-----|---|-----|-----|-----|---------------------------------|---------|---------|---------------------|
|         |         |         |     |   |     |     |     | Early Maize planting            | weeding | weeding | harvesting          |
| weeding | weeding | harvest |     |   |     |     |     |                                 |         |         | Late Maize planting |
|         |         | Peanuts |     | Cabbage, Spinach, Beetroot, Tomatoes                                |     |     |     | Beans, Sweet Potatoes, Pumpkins |         |         |                     |
|         |         |         |     | Planting preparation: seed collection, equipment and cattle repair, |     |     |     |                                 | Plowing |         |                     |
|         |         |         |     | Grass Collection for mat & thatch making & animal feed              |     |     |     |                                 |         |         |                     |
|         |         |         |     | Construction Projects; building houses, installing pipe lines       |     |     |     |                                 |         |         |                     |

## Appendix E (Dairy)

### Dairy (From 16.01.04 to 27.01.04)

1. Friday (Arriving in Zombodze)

2. Saturday

Collecting common questionnaire (All group)

3. Sunday

Collecting common questionnaire (All group)

4. Monday

Search for the community garden (All)

Interviews

- Youth Organisation (Henrik S.)
- M.T. (Henrik S. & Henrik A.)
- Smart (Paris)
- Intepreters (Henrik A.)
- Carpenter 1 (Paris & Henrik S.)
- Sewing group – REC (Henrik A. & Paris)

5. Tuesday

Buying T-shirt supplies in Nhlangano with Phumzile (Paris)

Interviews

- Carpenter 2 (Henrik A. & Paris)
- Meeting with Womens Co-operative (Henrik A. & Paris)
- Borehole project (Henrik S.)
- Sewing group (Henrik S.)
- Poultry/pig/bridal (Henrik S.)
- Failed poultry project (Henrik S.)
- Peace corps (Paris)
- Poultry project 2 (Henrik S.)

6. Wednesday

Chicken Brie (Henrik S, Phumzile, Hlobsile and Paris)

Interviews

- Headmaster (Henrik A. & Henrik S.)
- Indvuna (Henrik A. & Henrik S.)
- CIDA – water project (Paris)
- Health clinic (Paris & Henrik A.)

7. Thursday

Data entry, compiling information

Interviews

- Women buying (Paris & Henrik A.)
- Women's Cooperative – kitchen (Paris & Henrik A)

8. Friday - Day off (rain, rain, rain)

9. Saturday

Football & Unicef Concert  
Seasonal Calendar (Paris)

Interviews

- Non members in zone 5 (Henrik & Henrik)
- Indvuna (Paris)
- Unicef representative (Paris)

10. Sunday

Church  
Data Entry

Interviews

- Non members in Zone 5 (Henrik S. & Henrik A.)
- Interpreter (Henrik A. & Henrik S.)
- Plantation owner (Henrik A. & Henrik S.)
- Non members in Zone 9 (Paris)

11. Monday

To town for supplies (Paris)  
Meet with REC (Paris)  
Presentations

Interviews

- Traditional Indvuna (Paris)
- Agricultural manager at highschool (Henrik S.)

12. Tuesday

Return to Manzini.

Interview

- Agricultural teacher (Henrik A. & Henrik S.)

General:

The fieldwork was conducted with out counterparts and during the work we divided up the assignments of interviewing and taking notes. In the evening we made summaries and worked on the data. The first part of the fieldwork was interviewing and data collection and second part basically involved analysing and group working.

## **Community Projects in Zombodze**

Synopsis

A SLUSE course in Interdisciplinary Land Use and Natural Resource Management

15 ETCs

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Copenhagen, 2003



## **Introduction**

Swaziland like most African countries faces many overwhelming challenges; water shortages, high unemployment, rising HIV rates and the continuous threat of famine. In an attempt to overcome these obstacles various development strategies have been employed throughout the country. In Zombodze which lies in the southern part of the country close to the South African border, community projects have taken root and are addressing many of the local concerns.

Zombodze is a heterogeneous community of approximately 6000 inhabitants of mainly Swazi and Zulu heritage. Most of the population is of Protestant (65 percent) or indigenous beliefs (30 percent) and a smaller part is Muslim (10 percent) or Roman Catholic (5 percent).

Located at 800 meters above sea level, the surrounding landscape is dominated by grazing land and fields which are watered by a number of small streams and used for irrigation purposes. The largest stream in the area is the Mzinsangu. Livestock is grazing and is herded in the communal grazing land. In winter the animals scavenge freely around on the land and the lack of fencing makes the animals a significant problem during this time of year. Most common livestock are cattle, sheep and goats. Cattle is used as medium of exchange (marriage) and kept as a status symbol.

Despite supporting a relatively large population the village of Zombodze has a very limited infrastructure. Except for a few buildings, the village has no electricity only few solar panels. Although a large part of the village still does not have easy access to water, through a community initiative clean water is provided from taps in the eastern part of the village and there are several private households that have bore holes with the rest of the community relying on surface water. The land is communally owned under the authority of a traditional leadership which distributes land to citizens following the Swazi law and culture, and in practice, land is inherited from generation to generation. In order to access larger shops, banks and medical services, people must travel either 15 km to the nearest town of Nhlanguano or across the South African border which is only 4 km away.

There are only a few jobs available within the village and among these are teaching, shop keeping and some seasonal work. Most jobs are found outside the village either on nearby plantations or in bordering communities in South Africa. With a national unemployment rate of 34 percent and disappearing investments, Swaziland as a whole faces a serious socioeconomic situation that is being exacerbated by the continuing

spread of HIV/AIDS. Currently the country is dealing with almost a third of its sexually active population infected and the rate is rising.

At a national level, the average fertility rate in Swaziland is 4.5 children born/woman and the infant mortality rate is 7.8 deaths/1,000 live births. Life expectancy of the Swazi population is in average 39.47 years. Following the national literacy rate, 81 percent, Zombodze has a relatively well educated population.

In an attempt to address the challenges faced by the community of Zombodze; water shortages, poor infrastructure, high unemployment and rising HIV rates, development efforts are required. The local people of Zombodze have responded with initiating various community projects like a sewing group, carpentry workshop, general store, community garden and water projects. We think these projects are very important to the welfare of the community and offer the most income generating activity in the village. From preliminary research it appears that these projects have been largely successful, encouraging strong participation and as a result benefiting a significant percentage of the community.

It is largely understood by development theorists and agents that to focus on community encourages participation of a broader body of people than by focusing on individuals and as such the benefits and long term success rates are greater. One of the most common examples of participation is the promotion for community projects. It is the goal that through participation community members will be active on all levels of development as Cohen and Uphoff explain, "With regard to rural development... participation includes people's involvement in decision-making processes, in implementing programmes, their sharing in the benefits of development programmes and their involvement in efforts to evaluate such programmes." Once fully immersed in the process, individuals then become empowered as contributors to the project, gaining ownership over the outcome. This progression is currently supported by most international development agencies including the World Bank. Given the immense support for participatory community projects as the most successful tool for development, it is almost difficult to find critique of its usefulness in the field, and yet there are numerous examples where community-based projects have failed. In order to begin to evaluate the effectiveness of community projects we must first identify the constraints

### ***Research Question***

*What are the most crucial constraints faced by community projects in Zombodze?*

To properly examine this research question we need to break it down into four working questions, which will enable us to analyse the different components of the research question and thereby receive an in-depth understanding of the area of examination. By separating the research question into four working question we also have an opportunity to link the different part of the question to each other, which will help us in answering the research question.

### ***Working Questions***

- 1) How are community projects influenced by the (power) structures in the village?
- 2) How are the projects structured and how do they impact the community?
- 3) How do the community projects determine their success or failure?
- 4) What factors have a crucial influence on the success or failure of the community projects?

### **Deepening of the working questions**

Each working question varies in terms of its importance to the research question and the weight it will be given in the field, well aware that this could change once we are in Swaziland. The first is necessary as preliminary understanding, the second builds upon this foundation and the third delves into the core of our research leading to the forth and final question which will be intrinsic to our report. As such while the first two are important for general understanding it is really the last two where we will be put the majority of our focus. We have structured the working questions to follow the format outlined in our table: first - Community Structure, second – Project Structure (general membership & funding), third – Project Structure (goals & implementation) and fourth – bring together the table while also addressing (trust & equity and other areas for analysis).

The first working question seeks to explain the community of Zombodze, power relationships and physical structure, and its impact on the projects. We will focus on **community structure** issues such as leadership, wealth, education, politics, religion, institutions, ethnicity and dispersal of funds may impact the projects. These forces could be a result of structural issues or the actors involved. We feel that in order to properly understand the constraints, which influence the local projects, we need to first look into the community itself.

The second question attempts to understand the different **project structures** and their impact on the community. General questions such as who is involved, who benefits and who does not, what services are provided, who initiates all with a consideration of gender, funding, wealth, geographical location, trust, ethnicity will be asked. The purpose of these first two working questions is to gain a thorough understanding of not only the community but as well the structure of the projects and their internal constraints, which leads to the third question.

In the third question we are attempting to understand the factors by which the projects determine their own success or failure. In order to properly evaluate the constraints we would like to understand what criteria the projects use for determining their own for success or failure. By using their criteria we are attempting to avoid applying our own Westernized bias on our evaluation. We will look at the **goals** of the specific projects, **how they are implemented** and in what time frame. For the different projects it may be easy to understand the success and failure of the different community projects, but the focus of the question is also to see understand the constraints underneath which determine the success or failure of the different community projects. As such we are not specifically focusing on the comparison of success or failure, rather the constraints behind the outcome.

The fourth working question brings together the three working questions and looks at the constraining factors on the success or failure, particularly in the areas of **trust and equity** and **collaboration and cooperation**. Some of the constraints may not have been recognized by the first working questions and so we will also look to see if **exogenous forces** such as climatic changes and national and international economic and development policies could have an impact on the local projects.

Using these four questions we feel that we will gain a comprehensive understanding of the challenges the projects must confront in order to be successful. We will look at the constraints initially from a structural perspective in order to establish a broad picture and then in more detail with each individual project. Finally in our analysis we will look to see if there are any common factors within those projects that have been successful and those that have failed.

### ***Key Concepts***

#### **Community**

There are various definitions of community; community as understood by someone in Copenhagen, Denmark is very different from the community context of Zombodze, Swaziland. While both represent valid experiences it would be impossible to force one model on to the other and yet western expectations of community are often imposed in development work with little regard to the subtle differences that may represent either the success or failure of a project. Therefore it is imperative that when working within the community context to try a gain a full and complete understanding of the intricacies of the community in question, in order to avoid imposing Western bias on to the situation. As such we have attempted to define community by fairly general parameters.

Following author Cornelia Flora's examination of rural communities in the United States, we have identified three different states by which to define community:

- a. **place or location** where people interact and engage with one another
- b. social system which provides for peoples needs meaning **institutions** like churches, schools, medical centers ect...
- c. shared sense of **identity** for example through their work

Using these states as a framework, Cornelia Flora explains in her book *Rural Communities - Legacy and Change* that it is then necessary to identify the more subtle and complex aspects of community. For example, the boundaries; social, physical and political, links to urban centres; the impact of national and global trends, the history of origination, the economic base; extraction, production, distribution or service, the power structure; elitism, pluralism or classism and finally a census of the members including

age, gender and education level. Once the broader framework has been established, it then possible to begin to recognize the needs of the individuals, looking towards enhancing the capacity of the community itself. For the purpose of our report, we will define community as representing a group of people who engage with one another through institutions at a certain place or location.

### **Constraints**

In order to be able to evaluate the community projects we will have to have an understanding of the constraints faced by the projects and its members. We will evaluate each project individually according to its own criteria and attempt to break it down into the 5 areas outlined in our methodology; membership, trust & equity, funding, goals & implementation, collaboration & cooperation. The specific data required for these areas and how it will be developed will be explained in detail in the next section.

## **Methodology**

The following section will look in detail at the areas we have identified as potential constraints and how we will go about retrieving the information required.

### *The use and selection of methods*

In an attempt to investigate the **community structure** of Zombodze, questionnaires that look into both the social and physical aspects of the community are needed. This includes highlighting the geographical locations of the rich and the poor, the different ethnic and religious groups and where the official buildings and institutions are located (Appendix C). We also want to gain an understanding of the levels of education represented in the community and at the same time find out who is involved and who isn't involved in the different projects. We will spend the first few days in the field completing the basic questionnaire with the other groups that will help us create a community map. The use of the questionnaire will provide us with a broad and general overview of the community that will give us with a foundation for further research. Well aware that mapping a community is a primarily superficial activity, we do hope that this exercise will give us an indication of where we should invest our energy. Following the construction of the map, we also want to interview a cross-section of people from the community including the rich and the poor, marginalized and non-marginalized. This is because we need to have a deeper understanding of the structures or actors in power and with influence over the different projects. At the same time we also need to hear the voice of the poor and marginalized people in order to find out their role in the community and to understand the perspective of those that have been excluded from the projects.

For investigating our three main working questions, we need thorough understanding the **structure of different community projects**. In order to receive a grasp of the different projects we feel that interviews with the organisation or people behind it are most informative. For comparison and analysis we will focus on different areas including: **membership and leadership, funding, trust and equity, goals and implementation and collaboration and cooperation**. In **membership and leadership**, we wish to find out who are the people that are organising and controlling the different projects. What is their ethnicity, what social class are they from, what is their religion, in what part of the village do they live etc. With **funding**, we want to focus on the economical aspects of the different projects, where the funding does comes from and how is it distributed. By **trust**

**and equity** we will focus on who is benefiting from the output and who is not of the projects as well as whom the different projects are targeting. **Goals and implementation** focus on the objectives of the projects including the criteria of success and the time frame of the different projects' goals and objectives. Finally with **collaboration and cooperation**, we will focus on how the different projects interact with the rest of the community and with other projects in Zombodze.

By having five main topics for the all the interviews we have created a semi-structured interview, which gives us the opportunity to guide the interview and receive the information we need but not enforce too much control over the outcome and the process. By doing it this way we can be flexible to the situation and the informant while still being able to replicate the interview guide and use it for later analysis. As well as having an understanding of the projects we also want to interview different households to see for what reason they aren't in any projects. This we allow us to see the different barriers to participating in the projects while also gaining another perspective on the effects of the projects on the community.

The choice of key informants will be done in accordance with the leadership and general membership of the different community projects. We hope to get in contact with at least two people from the different projects, to get multiple points of view. The selection of the different projects will be done rather randomly. In order to maintain our time schedule, we will divided up into to group of a minimal of two, one of us and a counterpart.



## **Field strategy**

### ***Time schedule of fieldwork***

In general we are planning to start the morning with a group meeting, with counterpart in order to schedule the activities of the day. In the evening we will debrief and transcribe the data of the day.

### **Activities of the days**

1. Sightseeing and getting self organised.
2. Questionnaire with the rest of the swazi-groups.
3. Questionnaire with the rest of the swazi-groups.
4. Interview of youth group and setting up more interviews.
5. 2-3 interview a day with people from different community projects.
6. 2-3 interview a day with people from different community projects.
7. Day without interview where we will analyse the material in order to see whether we are on the right track (hopefully with consulting the supervisor).
8. Interview with people not organised in community projects.
9. Interview with people not organised in community projects.
10. Open to chaos.

### ***Collaboration with our counterpart***

We are currently in contact with the three members in order to get their input of our work done so far. The counterparts come from all different backgrounds which we feel will be an asset to the project. Their practical experiences and knowledge of local customs will be valuable in finalising the synopsis and the later fieldwork in Swaziland. We acknowledge that at this point the collaboration may be difficult because of the above mentioned differences, but once in the field we hope that these differences will benefit the project.

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## Appendix A (interview guide)

### **Interview guide**

#### A. Methods

##### 1. Design, interview situation, transcription

#### B. Questions and themes

##### 1. Name and personal data

- Name
- Title
- Gender
- Income (should be specified)
- Job description

##### 2. Trust & Equity:

- What gains is involved for the members
- Democratic structure

##### 3. Funding

- Description of income products and input expenses
- How is surplus spending or how do you place it
- Storage buildings
- Improvements
- What income and what expenses

##### 4. Project Membership & Leadership

- How to sign up or how to qualify
- Information flow
- Limitations
- Who can join Or who can' t
- Improvements
- How old is the project
- Location of the meeting

5. Collaboration & Cooperation

- Do you collaborate with other community projects
- Learning and Teaching
- How do you collaborate
- Improvements

6. Goals & Implementation

- Main objects of projects
- Success criteria for project
- New or revised goal
- How are goal implemented

7. General issues

- Strengths in the organisation
- Weaknesses in the organization
- How can you use your strengths better
- How can you improve your weaknesses
- Do you consider any of these as a limitation in your project
- Where is the project most successful
- What do you consider to be the worst part
- How do you see the future of the project

Appendix B (Study Table)  
Study table over the field work in Swaziland

| Issues   | Topics  |                                  | Data   | Methods   |                                |
|--|---|----------------------------------|--|---|--------------------------------|
| <p align="center"><b>Community Structure</b></p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Members (age &amp; gender)</li> <li>2) Wealth</li> <li>3) Education</li> <li>4) Institutions</li> <li>5) Ethnicity</li> <li>6) Religion</li> <li>7) Politics</li> </ol> |                                  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) who lives in Zombodze?</li> <li>1-2) what are the income levels?</li> <li>1) percentage of community in projects?</li> <li>2-3) what are the primary sources of income?</li> <li>3) what are the education levels?</li> <li>4) what are the institutions?</li> <li>5) what is the ethnic make-up?</li> <li>6) what is the religious representation?</li> <li>7) who is in charge?</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1=&gt;7) Questionnaire</li> <li>4-7) Contact with Youth Organisation</li> <li>1=&gt;7) Literature review</li> <li>1=&gt;7) Interview with Professor in Swaziland</li> </ol>  |                                |
|  | <p align="center"><b>Project Structure</b></p>  | <p>Leadership and Membership</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Ethnicity</li> <li>2) Gender</li> <li>3) Wealth</li> <li>4) Religion</li> <li>5) Politics</li> <li>6) Royalty</li> </ol>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1=&gt;7) who is involved in the project?</li> <li>2) Women/Men?</li> <li>3) Poor/ Rich (look to number of buildings, cattle, vehicles)?</li> <li>7) formally educated or not? (number of years completed, languages spoken- Swazi, Zulu, English and level of fluency?) other education?</li> <li>1) what is their ethnic</li> </ol> | <p>Interview questionnaire</p> |

|  |         |  |  |            |
|--|---------|--|--|------------|
|  |         | <p>7) Education</p> <p>8) Geographic location</p> <p>9) Organisation</p> <p>10) Services</p> | <p>background?</p> <p>4) what is their religion? (Muslim, Indigenous, Protestant or Roman Catholic)</p> <p>8) where is the project located?</p> <p>8) how far do people have travel?</p> <p>8) where are the meetings held?</p> <p>5) does it have political connections?</p> <p>-how old is the project?</p> <p>9) how is it managed (who)?</p> <p>9) what is the org. of the group/project?</p> <p>9) who is in charge?</p> <p>9) who makes decisions?</p> <p>9) why did the project start?</p> <p>10) What services are provided?</p> |            |
|  | Funding | 1) Management  | <p>1) where does the funding come from?</p> <p>1) what is done with the surplus?</p>   | Interviews |
|  |         | Success & failures   | <p>1) what are the goals of the project?</p> <p>1) what is the time</p>  | interviews |

|                           |                                 |   |   |             |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|-------------|
|                           | Goals & Implementation          |   | <p>frame? (short vs. long)</p> <p>1) Have the goals been implemented?</p> <p>1) Have they been successful?</p>  |             |
|                           | Trust & Equity                  | Beneficiaries & Losers  | <p>1) who is being targeted?</p> <p>1) whose needs have been addressed or not?</p> <p>1) Who is benefiting from the projects?</p> <p>1) Who is not?</p>   | interviews  |
|                           | Collaboration & Co-operation    | <p>1) Other projects</p> <p>2) The Community as a whole</p> <p>3) Other Communities</p> | <p>1) Is their co-operation amongst the groups?</p> <p>3) Information sharing between communities?</p> <p>3) How is this done?</p> <p>1) Can the projects be ranked?</p> <p>1) What are the ties between projects?</p> <p>1) How are the comm. leaders involved?</p> <p>1=&gt;3)How could it be improved?</p> | interview   |
| Other Themes for Analysis | Accessibility<br>Representation |   | <p>-whose voices are being heard</p> <p>-how democratic are the projects?</p> <p>-how does status within community influence the projects?</p>  | Observation |

