

## BUILDING CULTURAL ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISM

NEWS LETTER June ,2024.

THBF



*School Under  
the Microscope!*



The community meetings held in Ngandu village, attended by the 'Masimise' and 'Bana Bendyango', collectively known as the owners of the land, played a vital role in sensitizing the community on the prudent utilization of public funds in government-funded schools. This meeting was convened to prepare and transfer the knowledge imparted by the Healing Balm Foundation on the effective management of public resources in school



The Healing Balm Foundation's sensitization program has achieved significant milestones, with trained traditional leaders championing social accountability and transparency in public fund management. These leaders have successfully conducted community meetings in 4 villages, engaging over 200 community members, including youths, men, and women from diverse backgrounds. The program's impact is evident in the increased awareness and commitment to responsible resource management, ensuring a brighter future for the community

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The aforementioned villages gathered at the request of their highly esteemed traditional senior leaders. Topics covered during the 2-day session included, but were not limited to, social accountability and transparency of public funds, namely: school grants, constituency development funds, and school bursaries; corruption; and access to information, among others. The meeting was graced by Senior Chief Mukuni, the Prime Minister, and others in attendance included Bana Be Dyango, Simise, senior headmen and women, traditional leaders, religious leaders, the area ward councillor, the Ward Development Committee Chairperson, the Mukuni Secondary School Headteacher, and members of the general community.



During the same event, the Deputy Head Teacher of Mukuni elaborated on the significance of the community exercising oversight and accountability in the management of school grants. He exhorted all members of the community to collaborate and work in concert towards the development and well-being of the children, ensuring that schools provide a safe and nurturing environment for pupils. The Deputy Head emphasized the importance of the community remaining proactive and engaged in school matters, rather than adopting a passive stance. In conclusion, he urged community members to visit the school and conduct joint assessments, thereby



promoting transparency and accountability in the utilization of school grants. The Area Ward Councillor urged the community to leverage public offices for support whenever necessary. During the community meeting, he stressed the importance of citizens holding public officials accountable for their actions and inaction related to public infrastructure, resources, and other matters affecting their localities. The Ward Development Committee, represented by the re-elected

Chairperson, outlined the guidelines and procedures for accessing tertiary school bursaries under the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) and other available loans and grants. Furthermore, the community has a vital role to play in monitoring, evaluating, and proposing community projects to be implemented in their area.

A community engagement forum was convened at Nachilobe Community School, aimed at sensitizing the public on the judicious management of public funds, following a comprehensive training program with the Healing Balm Foundation. The Headteacher of Nachilobe Community School is pictured providing in-depth insights into the guidelines governing the utilization of school grants, underscoring the importance of transparency and accountability.



The Headteacher extended an invitation to the community to visit neighboring schools, fostering a collaborative environment to discuss matters pertinent to the prudent use of public funds. This gathering sought to enlighten community members on the intricacies of the decision-making process, emphasizing their vital role in shaping the future of their schools and community. By working in tandem, the

school and community can ensure the effective allocation of resources, promoting a culture of accountability and transparency, and empowering collective progress.

## Empowering the Community: A Step Towards Better Resource Management



The informed and trained traditional leaders in social accountability and transparency of public resources, holding meetings as agreed upon in their training with The Healing Balm Foundation in Mukuni and Musokotwane chiefdoms. Meetings were held in various locations within the two chiefdoms. The capacitated traditional leaders served their community well and eagerly await the next phase of

meetings with the schools. Community members were excited and inquired why such vital information had been withheld from them for so long. The knowledge gap and collaboration between the school and community were restored, and the community development funds were

thoroughly explained. Some communities expressed sadness, realizing they had missed out on these benefits for so long.

### *Lutwa and Kapande of Ngongwe village*



The second phase that followed after the capacity building of traditional leaders by the healing balm foundation was the community sensitization meeting by the capacited traditional leaders. The meetings took place in different villages extending the knowledge they received. The community is an integral part in the development and daily running of the school projects , it is with this realization that the community should be deliberately involved in the whole process of the financial management of the school

grants in order for them to have enough information such that they will have full information on whats going on.



**WOMEN PARTICIPATION**

*On the other hand, Kamwi village held a community meeting with a total attendance of 146 members, showcasing a dominant presence of women (95) compared to men (36) and youth (15). This indicates progress, as women are taking the lead in addressing issues like corruption, school grants, and public funds.*

Traditional leadership encouraged the community to come in number hence being a small community men and women showed their support by coming through to the community meeting which took place in Gwalula Siamvula community the traditional leaders and other individuals who are impacted with knowledge stipulated the meeting as they gave the community an assurance of transparency, accountability and team work for the future of their community through the help of the healing balm foundation which has been impacting traditional leaders together with their people in training held in their communities tackling issues to deal with corruption, public funds and school grants.

During this community sensitization, the community showed great enthusiasm and interest in taking ownership of the issue, recognizing its importance and wanting to nurture it like their own child. They saw the value in being actively involved in managing public resources and ensuring transparency and accountability in government-funded schools.



In most cases, women have been exceptionally dedicated to attending community meetings in almost all the villages, taking the lead in seeking knowledge about public funds, school grants, and transparency between schools and communities. They are genuinely interested in understanding the affairs of these funds and grants. Meanwhile, the Healing Balm Foundation has been the strongest supporter of these villages, continually educating and empowering them through sensitization programs. As a result, community leaders have acquired vast knowledge, enabling them to

make informed decisions and drive positive change.

## *Simakalanga village*



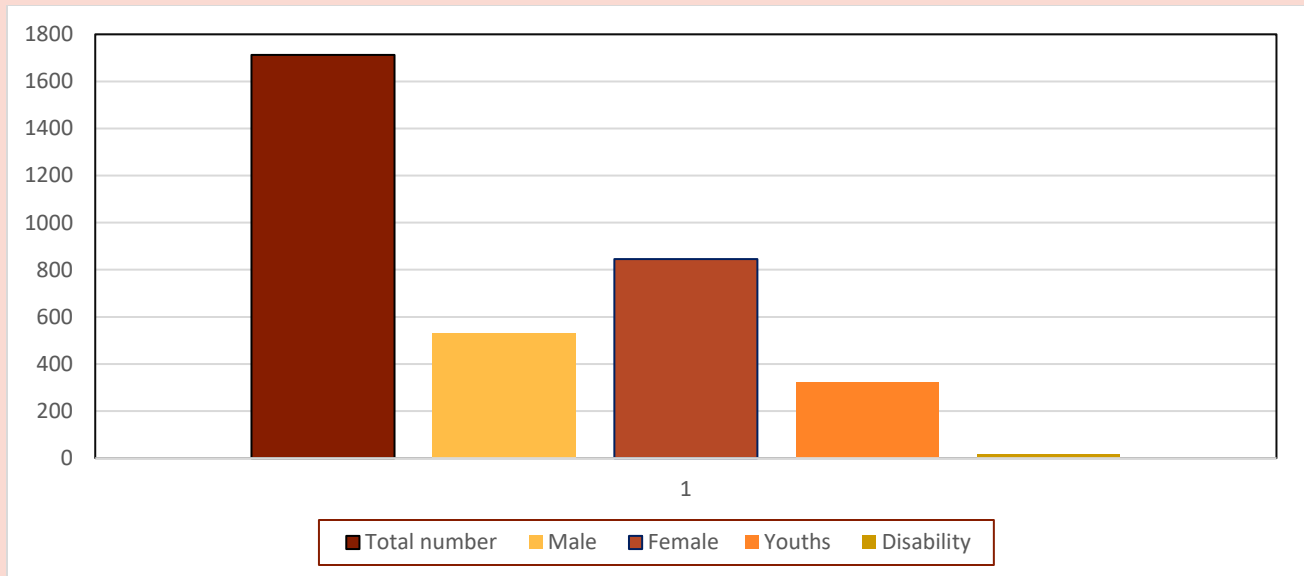
*Simakalanga also convened a community meeting, skillfully facilitated by Headman Mayomba, a distinguished leader who exemplifies a strong commitment to teaching and leading by example. This inspired the community to be highly engaged and eager to learn about the significance of these meetings. Consequently, the community remained attentive throughout the entire meeting, actively participating and acquiring new knowledge on practical matters such as school grants - including their allocation, utilization, and*

*beneficiaries. Previously, many community members believed that school grants were exclusively reserved for the head teacher, and that they had no role in the decision-making process. However, their understanding was broadened once traditional leaders, empowered by the Healing Balm Foundation's community training initiatives, shared their knowledge and insights. Similarly, Siatubi village had harbored the same misconceptions, but the foundation's efforts successfully introduced new knowledge and perspectives, fostering a more informed and engaged community.*

### *“Empowering Traditional Leaders, Enhancing Community Knowledge”*

It is through these gatherings that has brought great impact and massive change in the lives of many communities that were empowered by the healing balm foundation that has continued to fight against corrupt practices mostly in schools in the heart of more than 23 villages were visited that brought about change in these communities under Musokotwane and mukuni chiefdom. The traditional leaders were happy to be the centre of the movement that the organization brought to their doorstep indeed the foundation will be remembered for the great empowerment it did in the lives of many through sensitization.

*The graph below provides a visual representation of the concepts discussed earlier, offering a glimpse into the topics we've been exploring*



In conclusion, the traditional leader engagement has proven to be a powerful and effective tool for community sensitization meetings. Utilizing traditional leaders as a tool to fight against corruption has been a massive success, and it has proven to be the most effective way of reaching out to the community. The leaders have also demonstrated a keen interest by actively participating in the learning and teaching of the community about corruption, public funds, and school grants. This approach has not only raised awareness but also empowered the community to take action against corruption and ensure accountability in the management of public resources

*The* trained traditional leaders in social accountability and transparency of public resources, in collaboration with The Healing Balm Foundation, held meetings as agreed upon in their training in Mukuni and Musokotwane chiefdom. These meetings, held within the two chiefdom, have significantly strengthened the community's awareness of corruption and understanding of school grants and their purposes. As a result, there has been notable development in the community due to the community meetings. The traditional leaders have expressed their gratitude to The Healing Balm Foundation, ACC, and DEBS for the excellent work done. The trained and informed leaders have successfully disseminated the information impacted upon them by The Healing Balm Foundation, leaving the community amazed at the wealth of knowledge their leaders possess to drive community development forward.

**Maunga Primary School sensitization of school grants and Corruption**



The Healing Balm Foundation, Anti-Corruption Commission, and DEBS visited Maunga School, making it a momentous day for the school and community. The foundation and its partners came well-prepared for the meeting, which proved highly productive. The community had been unaware of the school grants, their purpose, and the budgeting process, as they had not been involved in the

process due to a lack of meetings. The community score card revealed poor communication between the school, Parent Teacher Committee (PTC), and the community, with many indicating a lack of knowledge about budget processing, duration, and the amount received by the school. The school acknowledged that they had not realized the importance of sharing grant information with the entire community, and instead, had only shared it with the PTC.

Furthermore, the information was only shared with the Parent Teacher Committee (PTC) board members, excluding the wider community from accessing this information. The community remained uninformed due to the failure of the trained individuals to disseminate the information, instead keeping it among themselves. Nevertheless, as the Healing Balm Foundation and our partners, we prioritized ensuring that the people of Maunga and the school agreed on the importance of transparency and accountability. We facilitated the community's commitment to attending meetings when summoned, bridging the communication gap between the school, PTC committee, community, and their traditional leaders.

KAMWI PRIMARY SCHOOL



Even with a top rating, the school faced challenges in engaging parents to attend meetings. The school management struggled to effectively communicate with parents, which was exacerbated by high rates of absenteeism and teenage pregnancy. To address these issues, the foundation, DEBS, and the school



management collaborated to identify the root causes and develop solutions.



Chuunga Malazu Primary School, under the Mukuni chiefdom, has recently faced corrupt practices that have undermined its integrity. However, the community has shown enthusiasm and full participation in addressing these issues, as they previously lacked knowledge on how to report corruption. Through a recent meeting, community members were informed about the proper channels for reporting corrupt practices, although some individuals expressed fear of retaliation or wrongful accusation if they report such incidents. The previous school head teacher was found to have engaged in corrupt activities, including the embezzlement of school resources, such as iron sheets, and unilaterally managing the school budget without transparency or accountability. The Anti-Corruption Commission has entrusted the community and the school with the responsibility of reporting any suspicious corrupt practices that may arise. The former school headteacher was found to have misused school grants, as he was the sole signatory for the school. Unfortunately, he was transferred to another school in a different town before he could be held accountable for his actions. The community of Chuunga is seeking justice and transparency in this matter. As a foundation committed to upholding justice, THBF has vowed to advocate for the rights of the people of Chunga Namalazu village. Through our efforts, we have uncovered the hidden agenda of the corrupt former headteacher at Chunga Namalazu Primary School in Mukuni Chiefdom and will continue to push for accountability and justice.



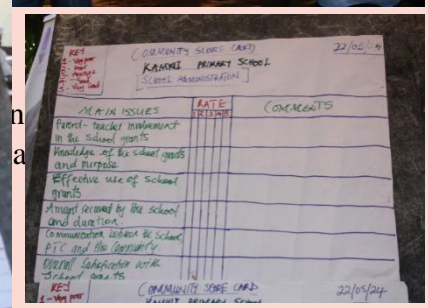
*Some individuals who purchased the iron sheets have come forward to explain how they acquired them, revealing that they were exchanged for either monetary compensation or traded for goats. Notably, some headmen were also deceived by this unscrupulous individual, who believed he could exploit the community with impunity. However, his fraudulent activities have now been exposed, and justice is being sought. These individuals have expressed their distress and*

*frustration, stating that they were unaware the iron sheets belonged to the school and had no idea they would face consequences. However, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) and the Senior Headman have assured them that they will be protected from any repercussions if they return the iron sheets and refund the money they received. This assurance has brought some relief to those who were unwittingly caught up in the corrupt scheme.*



The trained Senior Headman was overjoyed that the truth had finally been revealed in his community. He urged the community members who had purchased items, including iron sheets, which were proceeds of corruption, to return them to the school. Additionally, he called for the corrupt former head

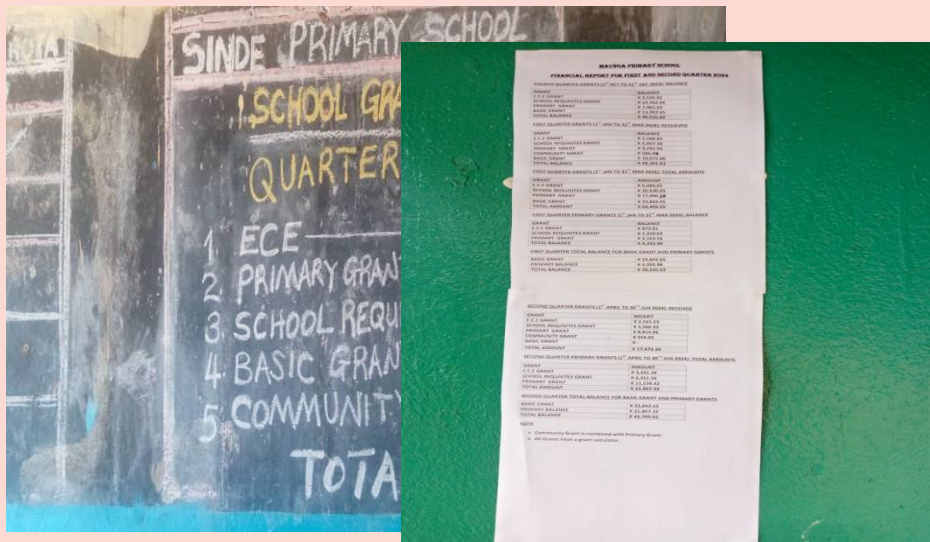
teacher to be brought to justice and face accountability for his actions. The Senior Headman's leadership and commitment to integrity have helped to restore trust and transparency in the community.



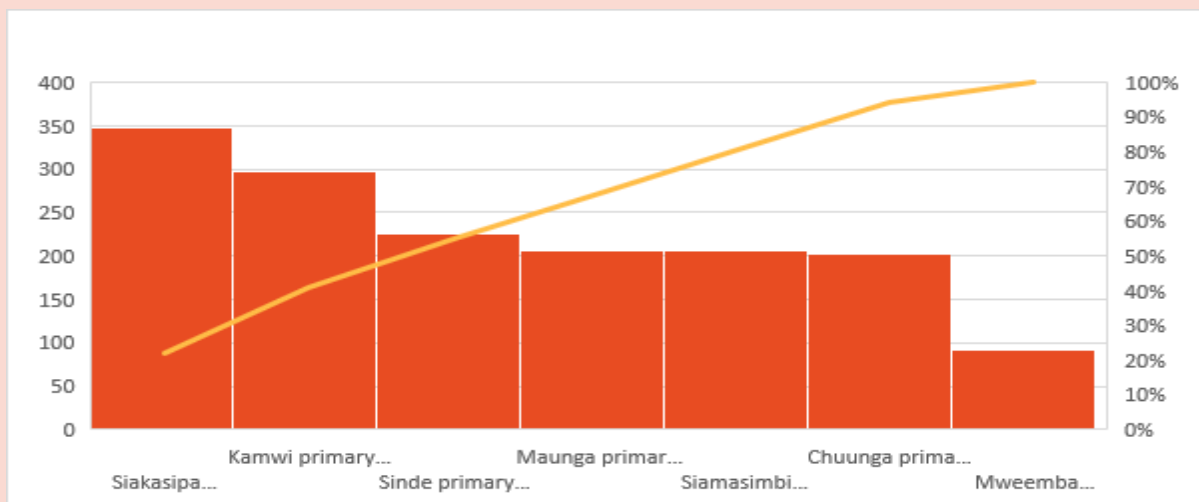
# Grants in the Spotlight

S/N	GRANT	REMARKS	AMOUNT
1	ECE	K31777	K2809.06
2	PRIMARY	K11328.40	K10,255.85
3	REQUISITE	K672201	K5075.07
4	BASIC	K1283758	K7520.86

Following a series of school meetings, the school administration took a significant step towards transparency and accountability by publicly displaying the allocation of school grants. This move was aimed at showcasing the responsible use of funds to traditional leaders and the community. The initiative was later adopted by the Kazaungula District Education Board Secretary, who directed all schools in the district to follow suit and display their grant allocations. This move promotes accountability and transparency in the use of public funds, fostering trust and collaboration between schools, communities, and traditional leaders.



Summary of the total number reached during school meetings.



## SUMMARY

We have made significant strides in promoting transparency and accountability in public fund management. We have successfully conducted community meetings and engagement forums in 23 villages, empowering traditional leaders and community members to demand accountability and transparency in public fund management and reached a total of 3437 community members.

Our capacity-building efforts have trained traditional leaders to conduct community meetings and promote transparency and accountability. We have also achieved public disclosure of school grants, promoting transparency in public fund management

Community engagement and awareness have increased significantly, with women taking a lead role in addressing corruption and public fund management. We have strengthened community-led initiatives and partnerships with local stakeholders, improving financial management.

Overall, our efforts have contributed to a more transparent and accountable management of public funds, empowering communities to demand better governance and resource management. We remain committed to promoting good governance, corruption reporting, and accountability, as well as community development and empowerment, financial management.

The Healing Balm Foundation is on a mission to revolutionize cultural accountability, empowering traditional leaders to unlock the full potential of their communities! Our key areas of focus in this project include

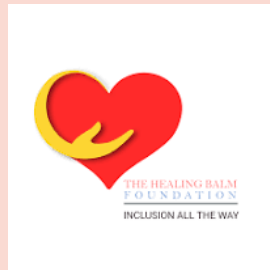
- Public Disclosure of School Grants
- Transparency and Accountability in Public Fund Management
- Community Engagement and Empowerment Promotion of Good Governance and Responsible Resource Management

Empowering Traditional Leaders through Capacity Building and Amplifying Their Voices for Transparency and Accountability.

By working together with communities, traditional leaders, and local stakeholders, we strive to build a more accountable and transparent society, where resources are managed effectively and efficiently to benefit all.

THE HEALING BALM FOUNDATION

## ABOUT US....



*Our organization is dedicated to empowering communities to demand transparency and accountability in the utilization of public funds, particularly in rural areas where access to information is limited. We believe that citizens must hold state actors accountable, and this cannot be overstated. Additionally, we work with vulnerable rural communities to adapt to climate change and find alternative livelihoods to charcoal burning. We also empower women with entrepreneurship skills, encouraging them to utilize local resources and their inherent talents to start businesses. Furthermore, we provide financial management training to help them grow their ventures. Our other areas of focus include Disability Inclusion, where we advocate for the inclusion and leadership of persons with disabilities in their communities and national development. We also support child-led households and caregivers of the elderly, enabling them to start businesses and achieve financial independence.*



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**Disclaimer:** *The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of The Healing Balm Foundation and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union (EU) or the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).*