



# Community-Based Dialogue Platforms for Gender Equality

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**PATA 2024 SUMMIT**

# Gender Based Violence in Zimbabwe: the context

- 40% of women 15-49 have experienced physical and or sexual violence by an intimate partner (ZIMSTATS, 2019)
- An estimated 16.2% of women between 20-24 years are getting into marriage before the age of 18
- Proportion of child marriages is higher, at 22.7% in rural areas as compared to 7.2% in urban areas
- Various factors are attributed to child marriages .....poverty, low levels of education, religious practices as well as cultural and traditional beliefs
- Results in lack of self-efficacy in negotiating safe sex and speaking out against GBV among the most marginalized groups in rural areas due to information deficits, reduced self-esteem and exposure to entrenched stigma and discrimination from society compounds their exposure to GBV

# The Peace Hut Model

- Peace huts are safe spaces for communities to address GBV
- Peace Huts spaces can be physical structures or any space that is accessible and safe for everyone in the community e.g. a tree shade
- Peace Huts are required to have committee members for smooth operations (6-8 people)
- Powerful tool for inclusion and representation, leadership and gender equality



# What makes the Peace Hut Unique



- Peace huts are powerful platforms for inclusion and representation eg women, young people and Persons with Disabilities are represented.
- Cases are resolved at no cost
- Peace Huts work closely with service providers who have diverse expertise eg Ministry of Health, VFU, Ministry of Education

# Achievements

- Raising awareness on GBV- communities now know where to report GBV (increase in knowledge among communities)
- Resolving community conflicts & GBV cases
- Referring Cases of GBV to other stakeholders. One CCW in Mutasa has testified that, *“Peace huts are now making my work easy as I am getting more referrals”*.
- Peace huts are also playing an important role in linking up young girls who drop out of school with other NGOs & Gvt ministries who can assist with payment of school fees.
- Peace Huts are encouraging women to venture into economic empowerment projects such as gardening, chicken rearing, goat rearing, etc

# Case Studies

Chipo (not her real name), a 14-year-old girl, eloped with a 27-year-old man while she was in Form One at a school in Manicaland Province, Zimbabwe. Chipo's mother was part of the Peace Hut Committee, the group helped her search for her daughter. Once Chipo was found, she received counselling and support, which encouraged her to return to school. Today, Chipo is back in school and performing exceptionally well, achieving high grades.

Sekai (not her real name) and her husband often argued because he had multiple girlfriends, which led to financial strain in their household. Much of her husband's earnings were spent on alcohol and his relationships, leaving them unable to afford their children's school fees. Sekai sought help from the Peace Hut in Mutasa District. The Peace Hut assigned two members (one male and one female) to mediate between Sekai and her husband. Over the course of 4 dialogue sessions, the couple was able to work through their issues. Today, they are living peacefully and are financially stable enough to send their children to school.

# Lessons Learnt

- Peace hut is a strategy that promotes movement building, which is key in ensuring that everyone plays their role in preventing GBV.
- Peace huts are key in linking up with different stakeholders who have diverse expertise.
- Peace hut is a strategy that promotes project sustainability- Even if the project comes to an end, the peace huts will continue tackling GBV issues

# Thank you

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## Contact

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