



Report on Public Meeting Kuwadzana-Nazarene Church.

Date: 25 March 2019.

Participants: Portia Chando, Gaudencia Timbatimba, Community Coordinators, Ruvimbo Bushu, Programs Intern and Precious Shumba, Director.

- 1. Introduction:** A public meeting was held in Kuwadzana on 28 February 2019 with 110 residents in attendance. The District Officer and the Revenue Officer for Kuwadzana District Office, who had confirmed their attendance, did not turn up, to the disappointment of residents. The aim of the meeting was to discuss service delivery issues in Kuwadzana. The secretaries of Kuwadzana 1-6 suburban residents' committees took turns to provide their suburban reports and updates. Key service delivery issues that they raised are inconsistent refuse collection, erratic water supplies and water disconnections and poor representation by their elected councillors. The residents resolved to go to the District Office and have a meeting with their local District Officer in order to find a lasting solution to their challenges and also to establish a working relationship.
- 2. Opening prayer:** Grace Masara, Chairperson, Kuwadzana 4.
- 3. Opening Remarks:** Rachael Mukize, Chairperson Kuwadzana 6.
- 4. Introductions:** Secretaries of all structures introduced the leadership of their structures and asked their members to rise up and greet the rest of the participants.
- 5. HRT Mandate:** Chando explained to the residents about the HRT saying it was formed by Precious Shumba in February 2008 as a non-partisan residents' organisation which exists to build capacity of the residents to productively engage with their elected representatives and other duty bearers as a means of improving standards of living in communities. The Community Coordinator explained the role of the HRT in the community and to service providers, reiterating that it was an organisation that has people at heart. The HRT works extra hard in ensuring that at the end of the day all residents always get services that they pay for. The state of service delivery in Harare affects every resident, and the HRT advocates to work with residents to ensure that they are not lacking any service without a valid reason. Therefore the organisation plays a mediatory role between service providers and residents.
- 6. Membership:** The community coordinator also explained to the residents the benefits of being an HRT member which include getting free knowledge about human rights, solidarity is provided

to the ratepayer, service delivery information, educative workshops, referral letters are provided to members. For one to become an HRT member, they should pay two dollars, valid for a year.

7. Service delivery presentations from suburban secretaries

7.1. Tariro Zvirewo, Secretary, Kuwadzana 5b

- 7.1.1. Monthly bills not being distributed to residents. The City of Harare has not provided any reasons for this situation. The bills continue to accumulate. Rates were raised from \$32 to \$90 every month, and this has increased the burden on ratepayers. No meter readings are taking place, and the Council is now using estimated figures to bill ratepayers.
- 7.1.2. Inconsistent refuse collection- Refuse was last collected in October 2018 and this has resulted in illegal dumpsites being created at Kuwadzana 5 shops, 115th street, and 91 streets.
- 7.1.3. **Fifty percent discount promotion:** The residents really wish the City Council could extend the discount promotion as it was really helping them in reducing debts.
- 7.1.4. **Water bursts-** The Council takes too long to attend to water bursts which is dangerous to children. For instance the water burst in 117 crescent Kuwadzana 6 Primary School corner in 115th street has been flowing since last year and up to now it has not been attended to despite residents making numerous reports. When are they going to attend to these faults?
- 7.1.5. **Erratic water supplies** as residents can only have access to water when the City Council wishes to do so. She demanded that their right to water be respected, because water is a human right, concluding that the City fathers are neglecting residents.
- 7.1.6. Residents of Kuwadzana 5 B plead with the City Council to approve of payment plans no matter the amount of money one has. This is how they had built a strong working relationship with the former Revenue Officer identified as Mr Zigomo.

7.2. Wendy Leonard, Secretary, Kuwadzana 5A

- 7.2.1.1. Inconsistent refuse collection as the refuse truck was last seen in December 2018 in the area which has led to the creation of more dumping sites and this can trigger an outbreak of typhoid.
- 7.2.1.2. **Water crisis in Kuwadzana-** She complained that the water from City Council is not safe to drink and sometimes they failed to get even the dirty water from Council.

7.2.1.3. Sewer Bursts- Sewerage bursts have become a problem in Kuwadzana and the City Council seem to be ignoring the reports from residents. They reportedly take too long to repair these sewerage bursts.

7.2.1.4. The local roads in Kuwadzana are heavily potholed and the Council is doing nothing to repair them or even filling the holes with gravel. It is dangerous especially in the rainy season when motorists incur huge costs repairing their damaged vehicles.

7.3. Tariro Pindura, Secretary, Kuwadzana 3A

7.3.1.1. The residents in Kuwadzana complained about public toilets at the shopping centres. The toilets are closed and not working therefore people, especially men end up urinating on shop walls and in the open thereby contaminating the environment.

7.3.1.2. Tariro also mentioned the water problem they are facing as they are receiving dirty water and sometimes they do not get water. The issue of contaminated borehole water is also a major concern given that boreholes provided residents with alternative water when council water is unavailable.

7.3.1.3. Another challenge in Kuwadzana is about burst water pipes. The council takes time to attend to such reports, and this affects some residents as water will be lost through these leakages.

7.3.1.4. Residents are not receiving their monthly bills and no meter readings are being done yet they continue to receive exorbitant bills every month.

7.3.1.5. Street lights have not been working for a long time. This endangers the community and makes them prone to robbery or sexual abuse especially for the girl child and women.

7.3.1.6. No medicines at local clinics. Residents pay consultation fees and are asked to buy medicines at pharmacies which require American dollars, yet very few people have access to that money. Residents were disappointed by the Council Officials who failed to attend the meeting and instead send an intern student as his representative. Residents argued that the D.O does not have the people at heart.

7.4. Grace Masara, Secretary, Kuwadzana 4

7.4.1. No bill statements coming for rates. Paying their rates through Eco cash but money not being credited on their account.

7.4.2. Inconsistent refuse collection as the refuse truck was last seen in October last year.

7.4.3. No public toilets. There is one toilet working at Kuwadzana 4 Shopping Centre and it is being used by both men and women, increasing the risk of sexual harassment of women.

7.4.4. The butchery at Kuwadzana 4 Shopping Centre disposes blood on the street after cleaning/ washing meat.

- 8. Plenary:** After the presentations by the Suburban secretaries, an open discussion ensued, and we highlight some of the comments made.
- 8.1. Moreblessing Mangwiro complained about the City Council failing to attend to sewer bursts in time as they always give excuses that they do not have fuel and residents have to provide fuel to be attended to in time.
- 8.2. Nester Zinhanzva raised the issue of grass cutting. The City Council is failing to cut grass along roads. This contributes to road accidents and a lot of women end up being raped or robbed on their way especially now that the street lights are not working.
- 8.3. Everest Chiduwa complained about purchasing Zesa tokens using Eco cash as they take up to five days before they receive the token and they get their money back without any apologies from the service provider.
- 8.4. The residents were not happy with the District Officer and his team for not attending the meeting they had confirmed two days before the meeting.
9. **Going Forward:** Residents resolved to engage the District and Revenue Officers at Kuwadzana District Office so that they understand why they did not attend the residents' public meeting. The Residents had resolved to stage a demonstration within the next two weeks but then resolved to pursue dialogue first. There was a case of elderly women whose water had been disconnected, and the residents' leaders said they would pursue the matter.
10. **Closing Remarks:** The Director started by thanking the residents for committing their time to HRT work when they could as well do other things. He expressed disappointment that the service providers who were invited and confirmed did not turn up on the day of the meeting. He denounced the District Officer saying if she lacked a heart for community service, the residents should demonstrate and demand that she be removed from Kuwadzana or she has to change her hostile and arrogant attitude. It was unfortunate that the District Office is reversing the gains made during the tenure of the previous District Officer and his Revenue Officer who combined so well that they managed to build a very strong relationship with residents, thereby increasing council revenue. The residents were empowered of their rights; he also talked about issues to do with corruption, land barons and secretary documentation to be properly done. He urged HRT Secretaries to fully document meetings and produce detailed reports for the benefit of HRT members at community level and even the service providers they would be engaging.
11. **Closing prayer:** Noreen Mubvakure.

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