



Voice and Accountability Project:

Community Empowerment for Improved Local Service Delivery

**REPORT PRODUCED BY: CIVIL SOCIETY FOR POVERTY REDUCTION ZAMBIA
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KABULONGA, LUSAKA, ZAMBIA**

Report Date: March 2025

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Acronyms

CDF	Constituency Development Fund
CSPR	Civil Society for Poverty Reduction
DEBS	District Education Board Secretaries
JSDF	Japanese Social Development Fund
KII	Key Informant Interviews
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
PEO	Provincial Education Officer
PIM	Project Implementation Manual
PLG	Participatory Local Governance
PTC	Parent-Teacher Committees
PTA	Parent-Teacher Associations
SAC	Social Accountability Committees
SSI	Semi-Structured Interviews
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
V&A	Voice and Accountability
WDC	Ward Development Committees

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Executive Summary

Zambia is a low-resource country with a centralized education system. The government has committed to a decentralization plan; however, implementation has been delayed. The education system is trying to accommodate more learners as a result of free education policy recently introduced. This Impact Survey aims to evaluate the **effectiveness, relevance and sustainability** as part of the transformative effects of the Voice and Accountability (V&A) Project on community engagement in education service delivery. The survey assesses the project's ability to strengthen citizen participation, improve transparency, and enhance accountability in education service delivery at local governance level. The findings from the impact survey will inform lessons learned and provide recommendations to enhance the quality of future programming.

a) Improve Project Effectiveness

- I. To evaluate how the V&A Project has contributed to strengthening community awareness and participation in school governance and service delivery.
- II. To measure progress towards the sustainability of Social Accountability Committees (SACs) and their ability to function independently beyond project funding.
- III. To assess whether the project has led to improved education outcomes, including reductions in teacher and student absenteeism, enhanced school budget transparency, Safe school plans implementation, better access to textbooks and construction renovations in the project schools.

b) Increase Project Accountability

- I. To assess whether the social accountability trainings, education service delivery monitoring tools, interface meetings and scorecards have effectively contributed to local government and school management decisions on education service improvements.
- II. To determine the level of institutionalization of SACs and their integration into local governance structures such as Ward Development Committees (WDCs) and Parent-Teacher Committees (PTCs).

c) Enhance Learning on What Works and What Does Not in a Fast-Changing Context

- I. Identify best practices, challenges, and success factors in Education service delivery social accountability.

Project description: The Voice and Accountability project is a four-year pilot program in 45 schools in nine districts in Eastern and Western Provinces. The goal is to improve education services to these communities by increasing knowledge and skill levels. Community members received training about their rights and the use of social accountability skills to hold education officials accountable.

Survey description: Two surveys were designed to assess the impact of project activities on the improvement in education services. The first survey questionnaire was completed by 375 individual community members; while the second was designed as a key-informant questionnaire for 61 decision-makers and administrators such as Headteachers and District Education officials. Both surveys gathered data on the effectiveness of the project measured against five focus areas in education, and MOE indicators as well.

Survey results: The results from both surveys showed positive effects of project activities on education service delivery in all five project focus areas, and in the MOE indicators.

Key Findings

Assessment Focus	Key Finding Area	Description	Rating/Result
Impact	Improved Attendance and Involvement	Enhanced pupil and teacher attendance, safe school plans, and infrastructure improvements.	Positive (58%-66% improvement)
Impact	Awareness of CDF and Budget Transparency	Increased community awareness of CDF application process and school budgeting.	Very High (91%-97% awareness)
Impact	Enhanced School Governance	Improved transparency and accountability in school grants and budget utilization.	Significant (91% awareness of CDF and school budgets)
Impact	Reduced Absenteeism	Notable reduction in teacher and pupil absenteeism through community involvement.	Positive (58% reduction)
Impact	Infrastructure Development	Improvement in classroom construction and renovation efforts.	Moderate (47% effectiveness)
Effectiveness	Training and Capacity Building	Social accountability and scorecard training was rated highly effective.	High (77%-81% effectiveness)
Effectiveness	Data Collection Skills	Monitoring of education service delivery. Comprehension and digital tool adoption is still an issue.	Moderate (69% effectiveness)
Effectiveness	Community Monitoring	Community-driven monitoring structures are operational but need continuous capacity strengthening.	Moderate (<i>Ongoing support needed</i>)

Effectiveness	Service Delivery Improvements	Improved school budgeting and accountability practices through community-led interventions.	Substantial (66% effectiveness in governance)
Relevance	Community Involvement in Education Governance	Strengthened participation of PTAs, SACs, and WDCs in decision-making and planning.	Highly Relevant (97% awareness)
Relevance	Responsive to Local Needs	Addressed gaps in governance, teacher absenteeism, and resource allocation.	Relevant (Addressed key education governance issues)
Relevance	Inclusive Participation	Active involvement of traditional leaders, women, youth, and WDCs in accountability processes.	Relevant (Increased stakeholder participation)
Sustainability	Community Ownership and Participation	Local governance structures empowered to continue accountability efforts independently.	Moderate (Ongoing capacity building needed)
Sustainability	Institutionalizing Social Accountability Committees	Integration of SACs and PTAs into existing local governance frameworks.	Moderate (PTAs still dependent on school administration support)
Sustainability	Resource Mobilization	Limited funding for essential initiatives and operations affecting long-term viability.	Low (Dependence on external funding)
Sustainability	Political Influence	Potential threats to sustainability due to political interference in governance structures (WDCs)	Risk Identified (Need for depoliticization towards the 2026 Elections)

1.0 BACKGROUND

Zambia's education sector faces significant challenges that hinder access to quality learning, resource allocation, and overall service delivery. Despite government efforts to expand education access, high student dropout rates, low literacy levels, and poor learning outcomes persist, particularly in rural and marginalized communities. A lack of qualified teachers, inadequate school infrastructure, and a shortage of learning materials further exacerbates the education crisis.

Delayed and insufficient delivery of textbooks and learning materials has been a persistent challenge in Zambia's education system. Many schools, especially in rural areas, face delays in receiving essential learning resources, forcing teachers and students to rely on outdated or incomplete materials. The lack of sufficient books limits students' ability to develop literacy and numeracy skills, contributing to low learning outcomes. Without adequate learning materials, teachers struggle to deliver quality lessons, and students are unable to engage fully in their studies, ultimately affecting academic performance and retention rates.

Poorly maintained or incomplete school infrastructure has also hindered access to quality education. Many schools, particularly in remote and underserved communities, lack adequate classrooms, sanitation facilities, and clean water supplies. Overcrowded classrooms remain a major concern, as schools are forced to accommodate more students than their facilities can handle. The absence of proper sanitation and hygiene facilities disproportionately affects girls, especially during menstruation, leading to higher dropout rates. Without proper school infrastructure, students and teachers face harsh learning conditions, making it difficult to maintain consistent attendance and engagement.

The education sector also suffers from teacher shortages and high absenteeism, which negatively impact student learning. Schools often lack a sufficient number of trained and qualified teachers, leading to overburdened classrooms and inadequate lesson delivery. The shortage of teachers is more severe in rural areas, where educators are less willing to be posted due to poor working conditions, lack of accommodation, and limited career development opportunities. Additionally, teacher absenteeism remains a widespread issue, further disrupting learning and reducing the quality of education provided to students. Inconsistent teacher attendance results in significant learning gaps, making it difficult for students to keep up with the curriculum and progress to higher education levels.

Despite free education at primary and secondary level, financial constraints remain a major hurdle, with families struggling to afford hidden costs such as uniforms, books, and transport, making education inaccessible for many low-income households. In addition, Zambia's high poverty rates and economic instability have exacerbated challenges in education service delivery. Rising inflation at 16% as at February 2025 has driven up the cost of essential goods, including school supplies, making education less accessible to low-income families. The rapid depreciation of the kwacha, caused by high sovereign debt, reduced export revenues, and declining investor confidence, has further weakened the government's ability to fund education adequately.

To address these challenges, Zambia's decentralization policies emphasize greater citizen participation in education service delivery. However, there is a lack of effective community engagement and social accountability mechanisms in school governance. Community structures such as Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) and Ward Development Committees (WDCs) often lack the capacity and resources to advocate for better education services. Moreover, there are limited mechanisms for public

consultations where communities can voice concerns about school management, resource allocation, and policy implementation.

1.1 Importance of the Voice and Accountability project

The Voice and Accountability (V&A) project objective is to improve education service delivery by building community awareness, and by providing social accountability skills to hold education authorities accountable. The Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR) is implementing V&A in 45 schools in nine districts (Katete, Sinda, Mambwe and Vubwi in Eastern Province, and Kalabo, Senanga, Kaoma, Sesheke and Kalabo in Western Province of Zambia). These districts are among the poorest and most underserved in Zambia, with an estimated poverty rate exceeding 60% and limited access to quality education services. Many schools in these areas face challenges such as teacher shortages, inadequate infrastructure, and low student retention rates.

This pilot project explores the assumption that better education service provision happens when communities have more knowledge and skills to hold education officials accountable. The theory is that communities with more informed and capable members can demand and receive better quality education services. Knowing if this assumption holds—and to what extent it is true—is important at this time in Zambia as the government plans to decentralize service delivery to the district level. This devolution process should necessitate more active community involvement to provide feedback on the quality of the education in their community.

The Voice and Accountability (V&A) Project was designed to empower communities by strengthening citizen engagement in education service delivery. Funded by the Japanese Social Development Fund (JSDF) and administered by the World Bank, the project is implemented by Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR) with technical support from the Partnership for Transparency Fund (PTF).

The V&A project involves considerable local training: sessions were designed to provide information to communities about their education rights, the system of education delivery, including the responsibilities of the education officers in their district and province; and, social accountability methods, including monitoring skills. At each school a social accountability committee was formed to focus efforts and report back their observations to education officials using public forums so that issues could be resolved.

The V&A project aims to:

- Increase community awareness of education policies, school budgets, and service delivery processes.
- Enhance citizen participation through social accountability tools, including community scorecards, interface meetings, and digital data collection using Kobo Collect Software.
- Monitor key education indicators, such as school budgets and grants, teacher and student absenteeism, safe schools plans implementation, textbook delivery, and school infrastructure development.
- Strengthen engagement with local authorities, ensuring that school management is transparent, accountable, and responsive to community needs.

By promoting community-led monitoring, the V&A Project aligns with Zambia's decentralization agenda and serves as a model for enhancing accountability in education service delivery. The project provides a framework for scaling up citizen engagement in other decentralized sectors, ensuring sustainable improvements in service delivery across Zambia.

I.2 Specific objectives of the evaluation were:

I.2.1 Effectiveness

The evaluation measured the impact of V&A interventions on community participation, school governance, and overall education service delivery. It assessed changes in community awareness, participation in decision-making, and the ability to hold duty bearers accountable.

- Some of these questions on effectiveness were:
 - I. To evaluate if the V&A trainings were effective.
 - II. To assess whether the project has led to improved education outcomes, including reductions in teacher and student absenteeism, enhanced school budget transparency, safe-school plans implementation, better access to textbooks, and improved construction renovations in the project schools.

I.1.2 Relevance

The study examined how well the project responded to the needs of local communities and stakeholders. This included assessing whether the interventions addressed existing gaps in governance, teacher absenteeism, and school funding transparency.

Questions on relevance focused on:

- I. To assess if the project activities contributed to improvements in MOE education-related indicators, this was not the primary goal of the V&A project.

I.1.3 Sustainability

The assessment focused on the extent to which the V&A Project's outcomes could be sustained beyond its implementation period. It reviewed community-led monitoring structures, social accountability committees, and institutional adoption of project-driven reforms. The role of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), Ward Development Committees (WDCs), and other community structures in maintaining accountability mechanisms was analyzed.

Questions on relevance focused on:

- II. To assess if the communities believe that the benefits of the V&A project are sustainable.

Overall, the guiding questions were: Did the respondents think that the training they received adequately prepared them to agitate for better education service delivery? Did the monitoring positively affect the delivery of services? Do the communities believe that they can sustain the benefits of the project.

2.0 Methodology

In February 2025, two surveys were developed to assess the impact of the project: the community impact survey interviewed individuals from the community, while the key informant survey interviewed headteachers and other decision-makers. This report presents the findings from both surveys.

2.1 Overall Approach

The impact survey employed a mixed-method approach of data collection using both qualitative and quantitative data elements. This mixed-method approach allowed for data triangulation, which helped to explain fully the richness and complexity of the data. The data triangulation across sources. These sources include questionnaires, and key informant interviews. This was done to assess and provide information on the impact of the of voice and accountability project intervention in Eastern and western Provinces of Zambia.

2.2 Survey Design

The Voice and Accountability (V&A) Project Impact Survey employed a rigorous mixed-methods research design, integrating quantitative and qualitative methodologies to ensure a comprehensive assessment of the project's impact on education service delivery, community engagement, and governance accountability mechanisms. The survey design was aligned with the Project Implementation Manual (PIM) and adhered to best practices in impact evaluation and participatory monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

The survey utilized a sequential explanatory design, where quantitative data was collected and analyzed first, followed by qualitative data collection to provide context and deeper insights into the observed trends. This approach ensured a data-driven evaluation, where qualitative findings were used to explain, validate, and expand upon key trends identified in the quantitative dataset.

Two surveys were created: a community survey for users of education services; and, a key Informant survey for decision-makers. (See appendices). Both surveys used open-ended and multiple-choice questions. All Community surveys were completed using face-to-face interviews, translating questions in English to the local language, and then recording responses in English.

2.3 Data Collection Period

The surveys were conducted between February 4th and February 28th, 2025.

2.4 Sample Targeting

The sampling strategy for the component of the evaluation was purposive, ensuring representation of all key stakeholders across the districts where the project is being implemented. It incorporated variation by engaging stakeholders with diverse interests and perspectives while also optimizing cost-effectiveness by selecting a limited number of operational areas. A total of 450 participants took part in the evaluation, with 405 participants engaged in Semi-Structured Interviews (SSI) and 45 participants interviewed as Key Informants (KII). This sample size is deemed sufficient to ensure data saturation, drawing from evaluators' experience with similar assessments.

Participants Types	No. of SSI participants	No. of KII participants	Total
Headteachers	-	45	45
WDCs	45	-	45
SAC Members	45	-	45
Traditional leaders	45	-	45
PTC members	45	-	45
Learners	90	-	90
Youth	45	-	45
Women	45	-	45
Total	405	45	450

Table 1: Description of Participants

2.4 Data Analysis & Documentation Process

A comprehensive data analysis plan was developed following the validation of data collection tools, ensuring methodological rigor and alignment with the Impact Survey Objectives. Quantitative data was processed, cleaned, and analyzed using MS Excel and Stata 17.0, incorporating descriptive statistics (means, percentages, frequencies). Data was disaggregated by gender, age, and location to enhance comparability. Qualitative data from Key Informant Interviews was manually analyzed using content analysis, identifying key patterns and insights. The questionnaires were deployed on Kobo Collect System.

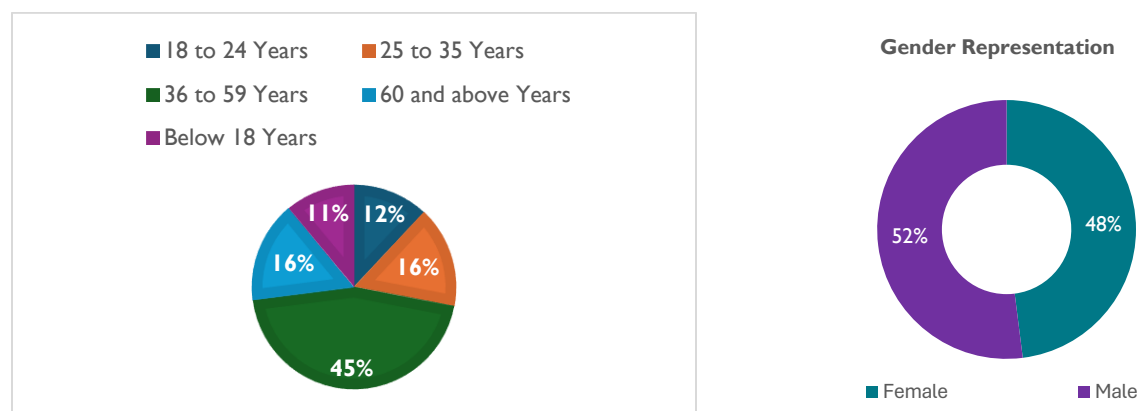
2.5 Ethical Considerations

CSPR staff, community facilitators, and provincial coordinators collected the data. Data Collectors were trained in research ethics and adhered to informed consent procedures, securing assent for minors with parental approval. Interviews were conducted in open environments, in familiar languages, and ensuring confidentiality.

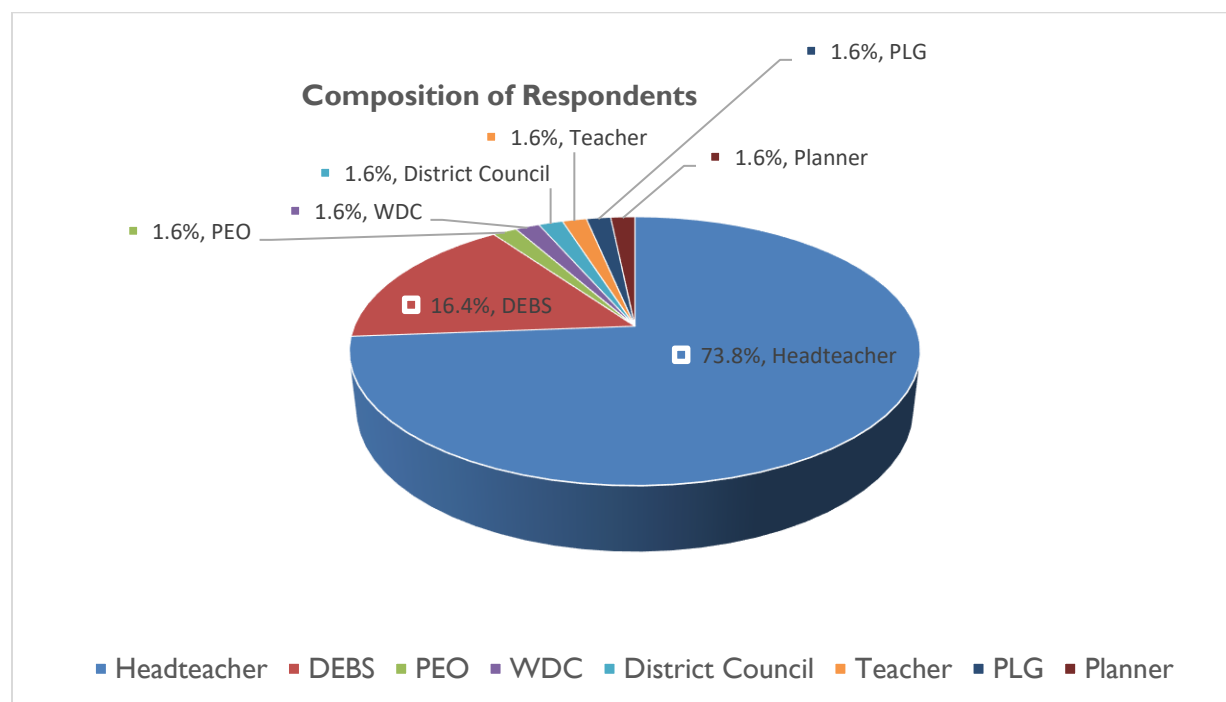
3.0 Presentation of Findings

3.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Surveyed Respondents

The majority of participants (45%) were aged 36 to 59 years, with a balanced gender representation of 52% female and 48% male, ensuring diverse perspectives.

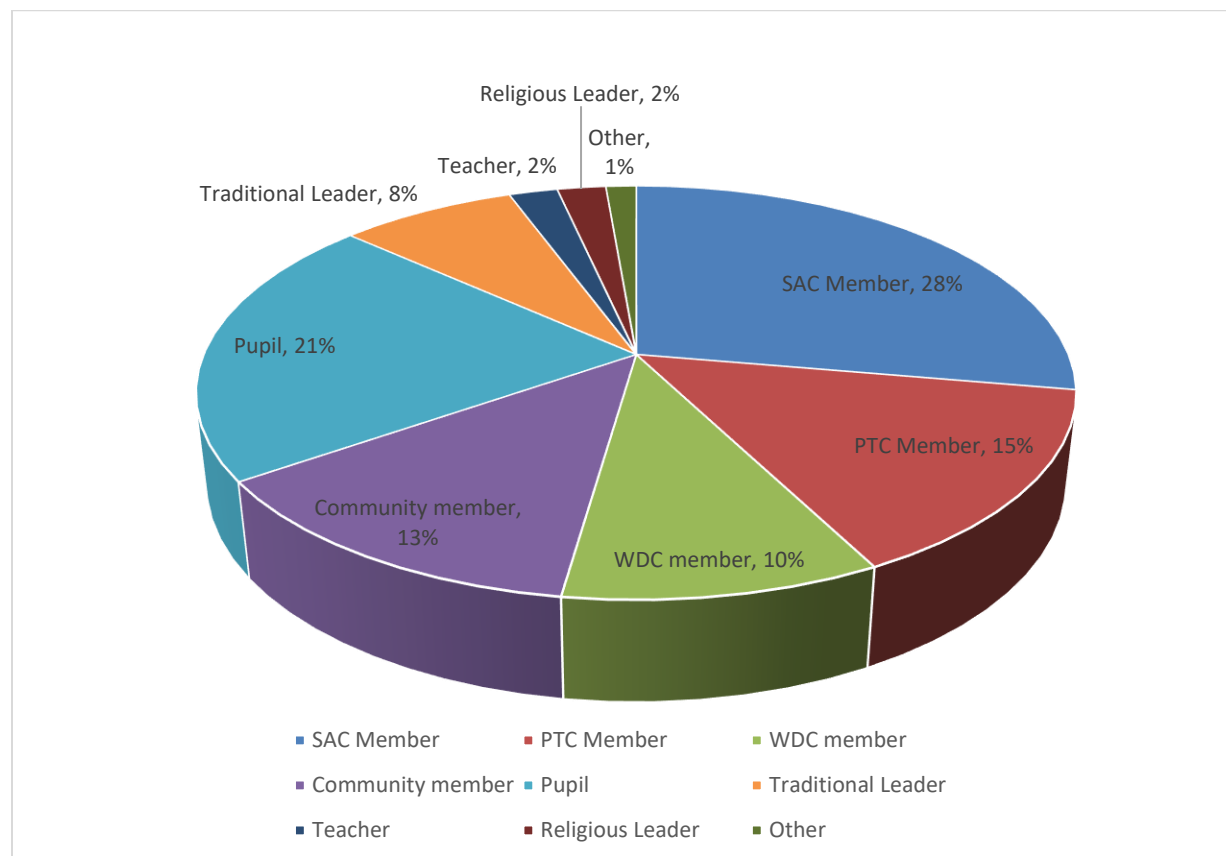


Key Informant Interviews: The majority of respondents were Headteachers (73.8%), followed by District Education Board Secretaries (DEBS) (16.4%). Other stakeholders, including PEO, WDC, District Council, Teachers, Provincial Local Government, and Planners, each accounted for 1.6%, ensuring a diverse representation of education administrators and governance bodies.



Semi Structured Interviews: A total of 375 individuals were interviewed from all nine districts¹. The composition of the respondents is shown in this pie-chart.

Figure 1: Composition of survey respondents



3.2 Effectiveness of V&A project Interventions

3.2.1 How effective was the V&A project training?

This question was only asked in the community survey; the data is summarized into four categories. The evaluation of V&A training interventions demonstrates a high level of effectiveness, with "Very Effective" ratings consistently exceeding 69% across all thematic areas. Scorecard Training recorded the highest effectiveness at 81%, indicating strong capacity-building outcomes in data-driven monitoring and evaluation. Social Accountability (77%) and Human Rights & Entitlements (75%) also reflected substantial positive impact, suggesting that participants gained significant competencies in governance oversight and rights-based advocacy.

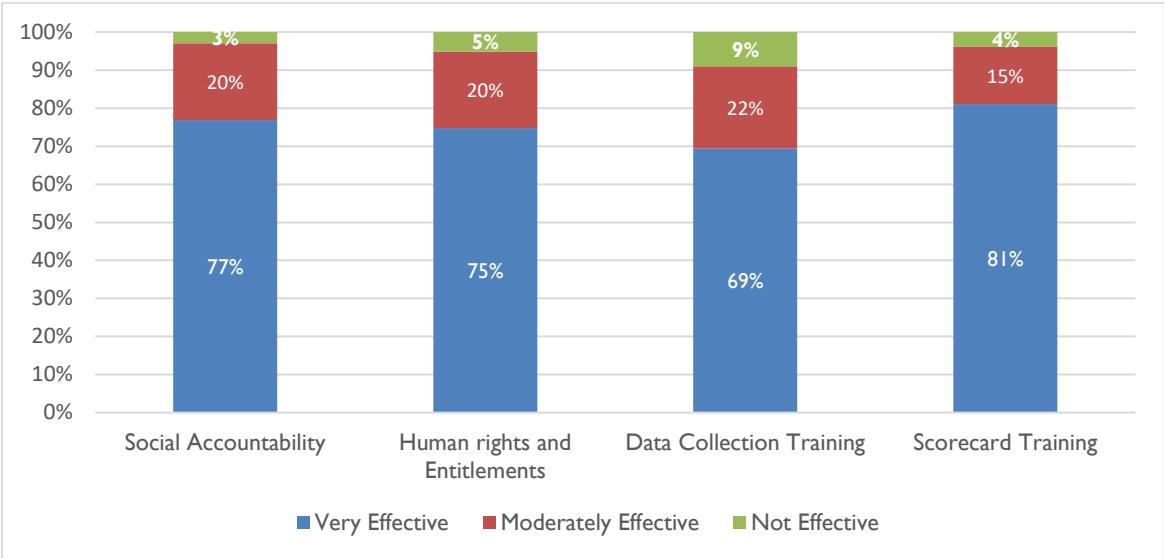
Data Collection Training had the lowest "Very Effective" rating at 69%, coupled with the highest proportion of "Not Effective" responses (9%). This indicates potential challenges in methodological comprehension or digital tool adoption, necessitating further capacity-strengthening interventions. The

¹ The two missing districts are Vubwi and Nalolo Districts; these districts were used to pre-test the community survey tools. Consequently, the tool was changed for the remaining seven districts; only the data from these seven are used in this report. Only 50% of the data from Mwasiti school was also used due to Missing or Incomplete Data.

presence of Moderately Effective responses (ranging from 15%-22%) highlights areas for iterative improvement, particularly in refining training methodologies and ensuring contextual relevance.

Overall, the findings suggest that the V&A project’s training interventions are well-received and impactful, with room for optimization in data collection methodologies and stakeholder engagement strategies to enhance knowledge retention and practical application in accountability mechanisms.

Figure 2: Assessment of the effectiveness of the V&A training interventions



3.2.2 How effective was the V&A project in improving the five focus areas?

This question was only asked in the community survey. The Voice and Accountability (V&A) Project has been

“The school budget is now open to everyone, and we take part in planning. The finance committee involves some community members as participants, and the budget is displayed on the notice board for everyone to see. This openness has increased awareness and strengthened accountability within the school.” (Community Member, Western Province)

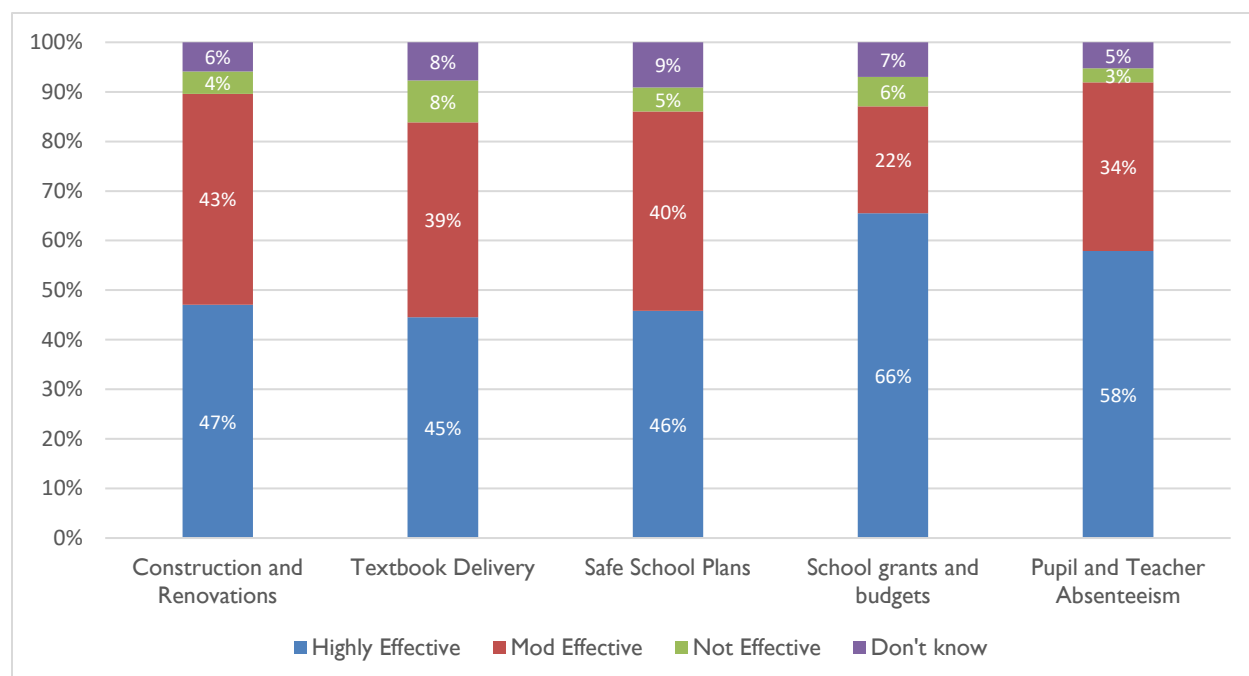
highly effective in improving school grants and budgets (66%) and reducing pupil and teacher absenteeism (58%), demonstrating strong progress in financial transparency and accountability within schools. Safe School Plans (46%), construction and renovations (47%), and textbook delivery (45%) also saw considerable improvements, though challenges remain. A notable proportion of respondents (22%-43%) rated these areas as moderately effective, suggesting that while progress has been made, further interventions are needed. Areas with lower effectiveness ratings, such as textbook delivery (*not effective*) and Safe School Plans (*not effective*). Safe school implementation scored lower for several

possible reasons. First, there were misunderstandings by the community about how to monitor this plan when they had never received any guidance beforehand. Establishing safe school plans was not part of the V&A project; the ZEEP project was tasked with the responsibility of initiating safe school plans in communities; however, no training was evident in the project 45 schools. Consequently, communities were confused. Only when the V&A project initiated a basic training on safe schools did the monitoring begin.

Construction monitoring also was not evident in all schools since only 22 schools experienced construction of some kind. Again, the V&A project adapted to this fact by informing communities of the CDF application process. For those schools that had no construction funds this training gave the schools a possibility of receiving funds in the future.

Overall, the V&A Project has made significant contributions to education governance, but sustained efforts are required to address infrastructure, textbook delivery, and safe school plans implementation concerns comprehensively.

Figure 3: How effective has the Interventions been in improving the five V&A project focus areas?



3.2.3 Has the V&A project contributed to improve the Ministry of Education indicators? - Community Members Survey

The Voice and Accountability (V&A) Project has had a positive contribution across multiple areas of

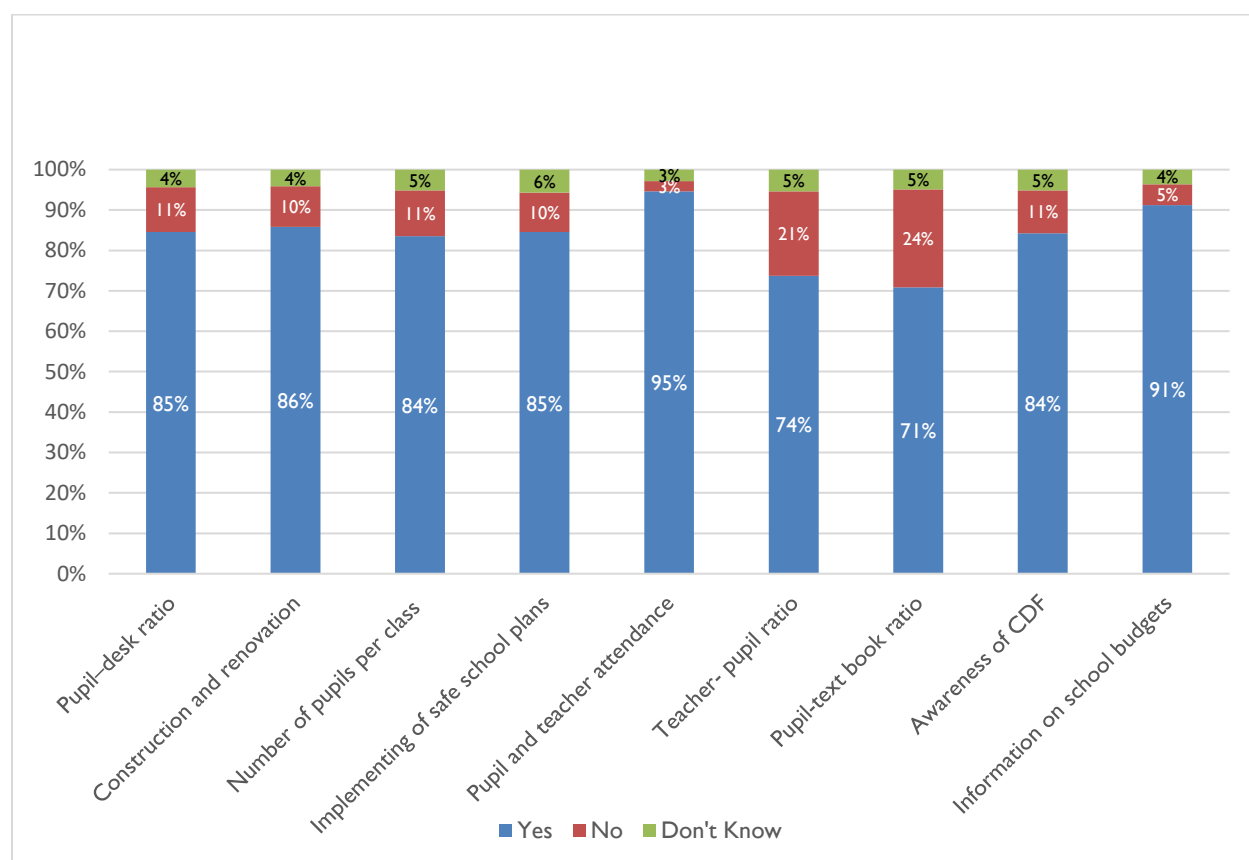
"There has been a big improvement in how the community engages with school management. People now know how to Dialogue, and they are more involved in decision-making at the schools. We also see fewer absentee pupils and teachers, and the classrooms are better maintained with more desks. It's clear that the project has made a real difference." (Education Administer, Eastern Province)

education service delivery, Information on School Budgets (91%), demonstrating strong improvements in financial transparency and community participation. Significant progress was also made in Pupil-Desk Ratio (85%)², Pupil and Teacher Attendance (95%), and Construction and Renovations (85%), reflecting the project's impact on resource allocation and school infrastructure. However, areas like Pupil-Textbook Ratio (71%) and Teacher-Pupil Ratio (74%) showed lower impact, indicating that further focus is required in addressing resource gaps and teacher deployment. The unintended impact in Awareness of CDF

(91%) was also observed. Overall, the V&A Project has demonstrated substantial positive contributions in strengthening community involvement and improving education governance.

² Although the improvement in the student-desk ratio is more likely due to the President's decree that all learners should sit on a desk by December 2024 using CDF resources, rather than V&A interventions.

Figure 4: V&A Project Interventions Contribution to Ministry of Education indicators.



3.2.4 Has the V&A project contributed to improve the Ministry of Education indicators? - Key Informant Survey

The results are even more positive than the community member responses. According to the key

"There has been a big improvement in how the community engages with school management. People now know how to Dialogue, and they are more involved in decision-making at the schools. We also see fewer absentee pupils and teachers, and the classrooms are better maintained with more desks. It's clear that the project has made a real difference." (Education Administrator, Eastern Province)

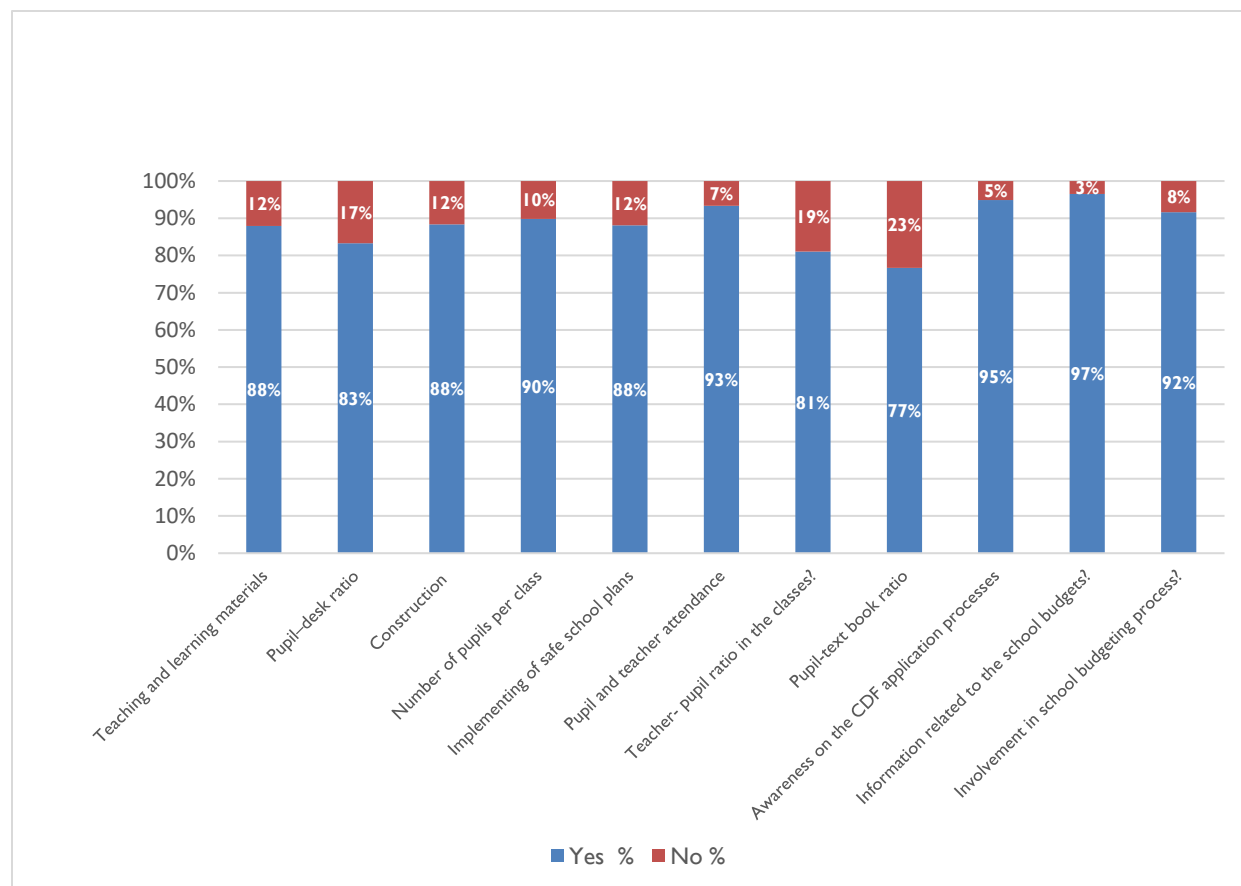
informants (90% are headteachers and DEBS officials) the V&P project has had a positive effect on all these MOE indicators. Similar, to the data from the community survey, the two lowest scores—Pupil-textbook ratio and Teacher-pupil ratio—are areas where communities have less control. The findings show that the Voice and Accountability (V&A) Project demonstrated a strong positive impact across key education service delivery areas, with high approval ratings from respondents. The highest impact was observed in awareness of the school budget information (97%) and the unintended was knowledge

levels on CDF application process³ reported at (95%), access to school budget information (97%), and involvement in school budgeting (92%), indicating strengthened community engagement and transparency. Improvements were also seen in pupil attendance (93%), safe school implementation (88%), and construction efforts (88%). However, challenges remain in the pupil textbook ratio (77%) and teacher-

³ The CDF application process in Zambia involves obtaining and completing the relevant form, attaching supporting documents, and submitting it to the local Ward Development Committee for evaluation.

pupil ratio (81%), suggesting the need for further interventions in resource allocation and teacher deployment. Overall, the findings highlight the effectiveness of the V&A Project in improving education governance and accountability.

Figure 5: Did the V&A project have an impact on the Ministry of education Indicators and other sectors.

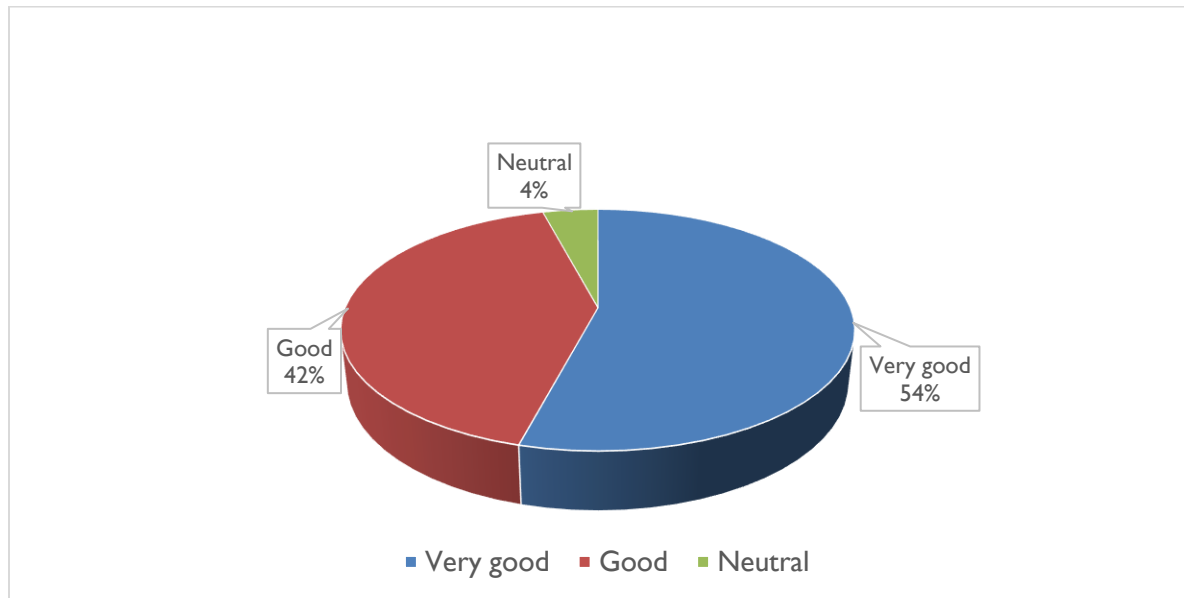


"Attendance by both teachers and pupils has greatly improved. Teachers are more accountable now because of community monitoring and support from the School Accountability Committees (SACs)" Female Pupil Western Province.

Since the implementation of the V&A Project, 96% of respondents rated education service delivery as either "Very Good" (54%) or "Good" (42%), indicating strong satisfaction with the project's impact. Only 4% remained neutral, suggesting that most stakeholders recognize improvements in school governance, infrastructure, teacher attendance, and financial transparency. These findings affirm the V&A Project's effectiveness in enhancing

education service delivery and community engagement.

Figure 6: How would you rate the Education Service Delivery since the V&A project started?



3.3 Relevance

The following were key findings:

- Improved performance and activeness of the PTCs
- School authorities are more responsive in addressing education concerns raised by the community now than before, compared to Local Authorities.
- Ward Development Committees are using the Project structures to identify community priorities for CDF (funding).
- Increased interest and participation of community structures such as traditional leaders, WDCs, and student representative councils.
- Head Teachers have noted improved cooperation from the PTCs and support for school plan.

3.4 Sustainability

The Voice and Accountability (V&A) Project has established a highly sustainable model by strengthening local governance structures, enhancing community participation, and institutionalizing social accountability mechanisms in schools. The integration of Social Accountability Committees (SACs), Ward Development Committees (WDCs), Parent-Teacher Committees (PTCs), and traditional leaders has created a foundation for continued monitoring of education service delivery, reducing dependency on external facilitators.

A key factor contributing to sustainability is community ownership, with respondents highlighting their commitment to continued participation in school decision-making, conducting checks and balances, and monitoring education service delivery. Community members have expressed their willingness to attend meetings, engage in sensitization efforts, and collaborate with school authorities, demonstrating an understanding of their role in sustaining the project's impact.

The assessment focused on the extent to which the V&A Project's outcomes could be sustained beyond its implementation period. The guiding question is: *Do the respondents believe that they would continue project activities?* Sixty-one percent of the respondents in the Community impact survey were "Very Confident" the benefits could be sustained.

Figure 7: How confident are you in your community's ability to sustain the benefits of the CSPR V&A project after its completion?

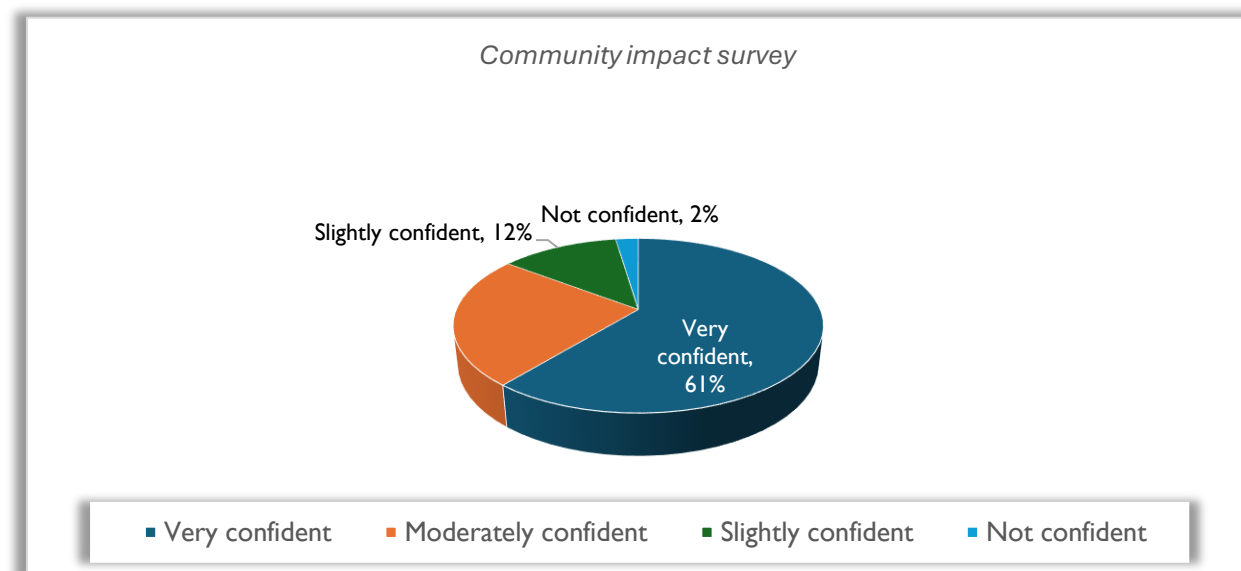
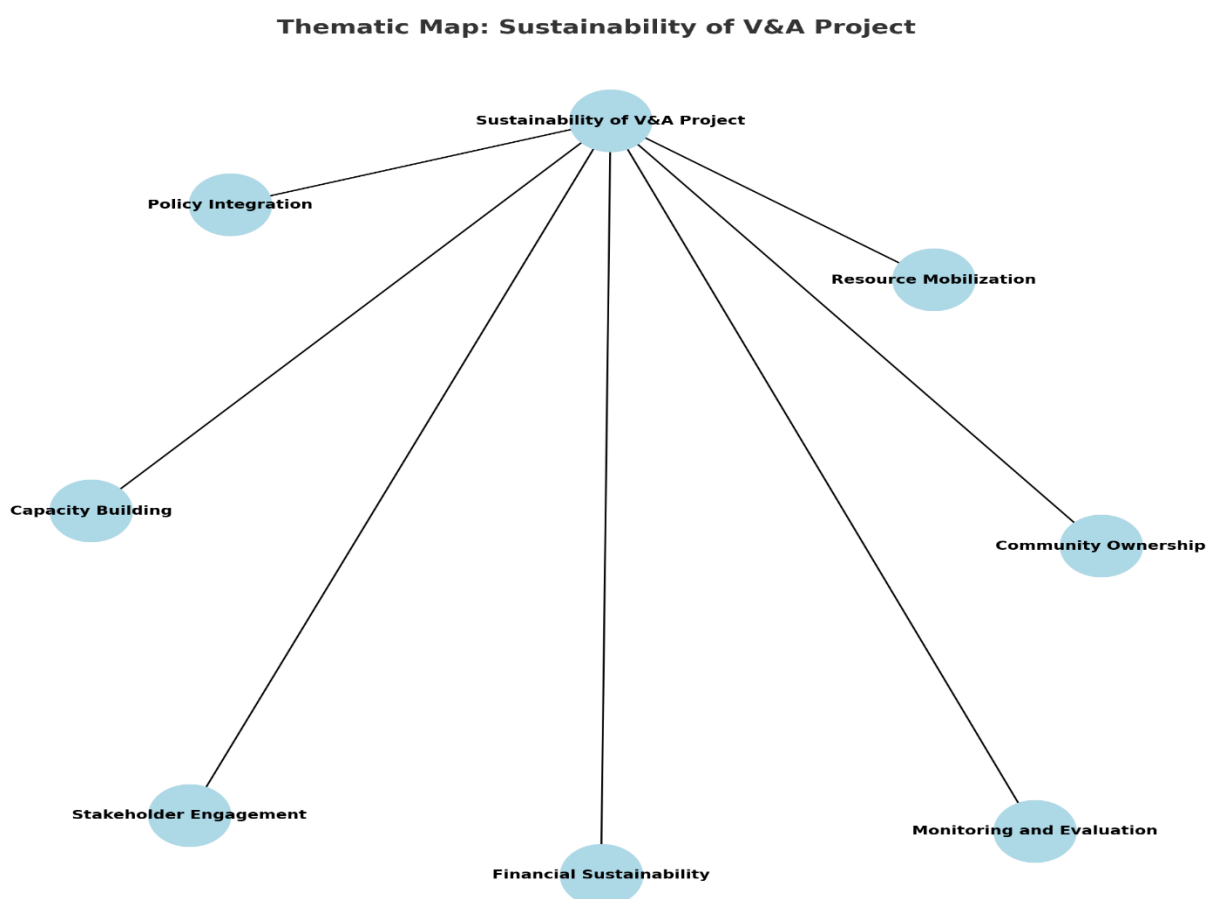


Figure 8: Thematic Map of factors that will affect sustainability of the V&A project



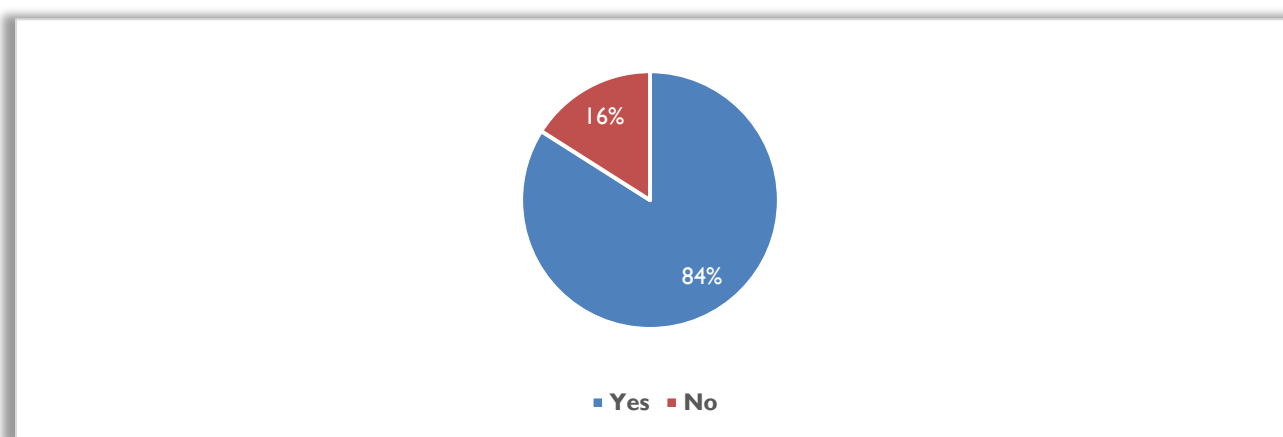
Despite these strengths, several challenges could hinder long-term sustainability:

- Limited Inclusion of Key Stakeholders – Some respondents suggested greater involvement of traditional leaders, Women focused structures, faith-based organizations, and youth groups to ensure broad-based support.
- Resource Constraints – Community structures lack funding for essential initiatives, particularly for school renovations, resources for PTC meeting and Social Accountability Committee meetings.
- Political Influence on WDCs and PTCs⁴ – Some respondents raised concerns about political interference in WDCs, which could undermine objectivity and accountability in the education sector.
- Capacity Gaps – While SACs and PTCs have been trained in social accountability, human rights and entitlements, continuous capacity building and provision of reference materials is needed to adapt to evolving governance frameworks and reinforce community engagement.
- Lack of Infrastructure Support – Several respondents highlighted the need for additional classrooms, teachers' houses, and sanitation facilities, which could impact the education service delivery and long-term project success.

3.5 Cross cutting issues

3.5.1 Redress Grievance Mechanism

Figure 9: Are you aware of the Redress Grievance Mechanism (Sharing complaints in relation to Education Service delivery in your community) on the V&A project?

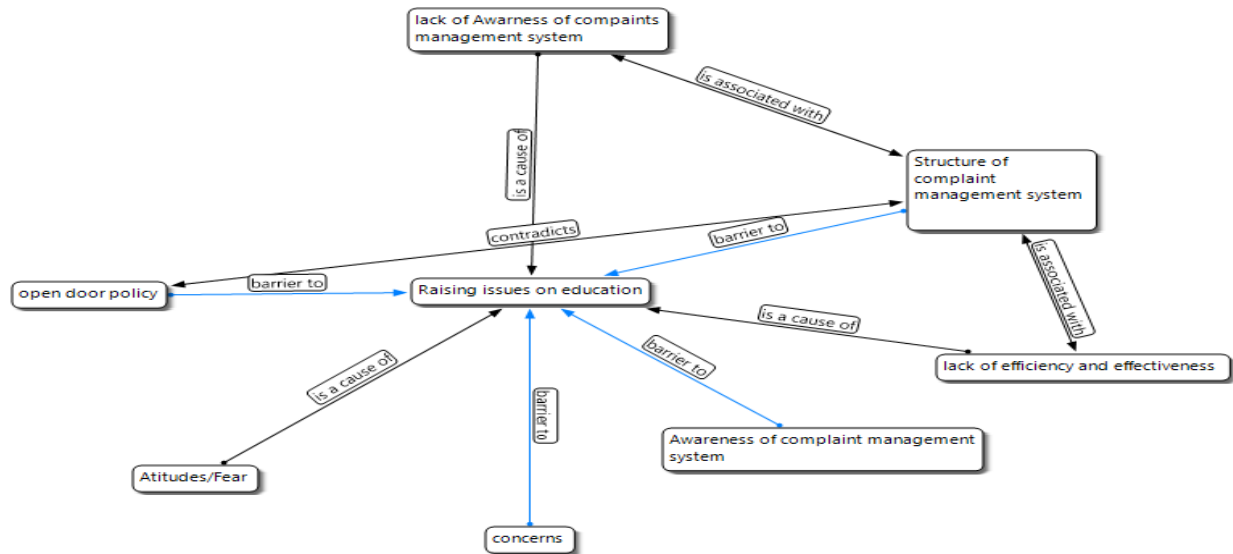


⁴ PTC means Parents and Teachers Committee and WDC means Ward Development Committee

3.5.2 Education Issues

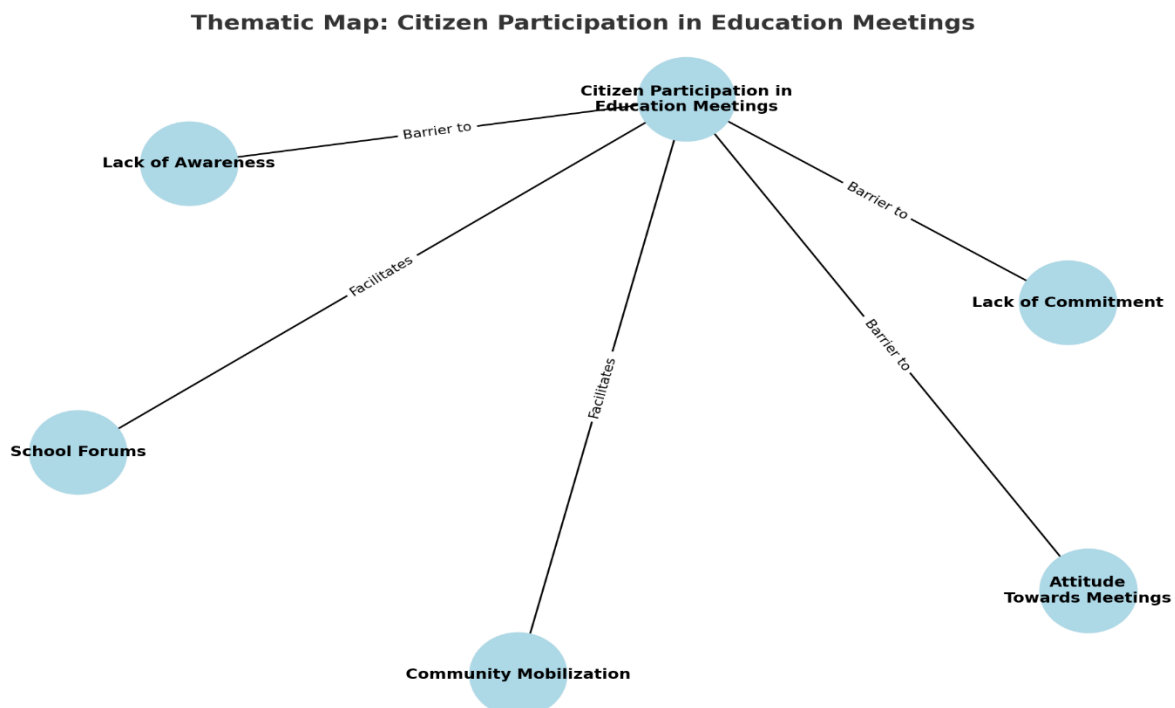
Thematic map captured by figure 9 illustrate various factors found to have had influence on Citizen's ability to discuss any issues concerning the Education Service Delivery and how subsequently interact with the itemized themes.

Figure 10: Thematic map – Raising issues on education



3.5.3 Participation in Education Related Meetings

Figure 11: Summaries the interplay of factors that either enhance or reduce community participation in meetings.



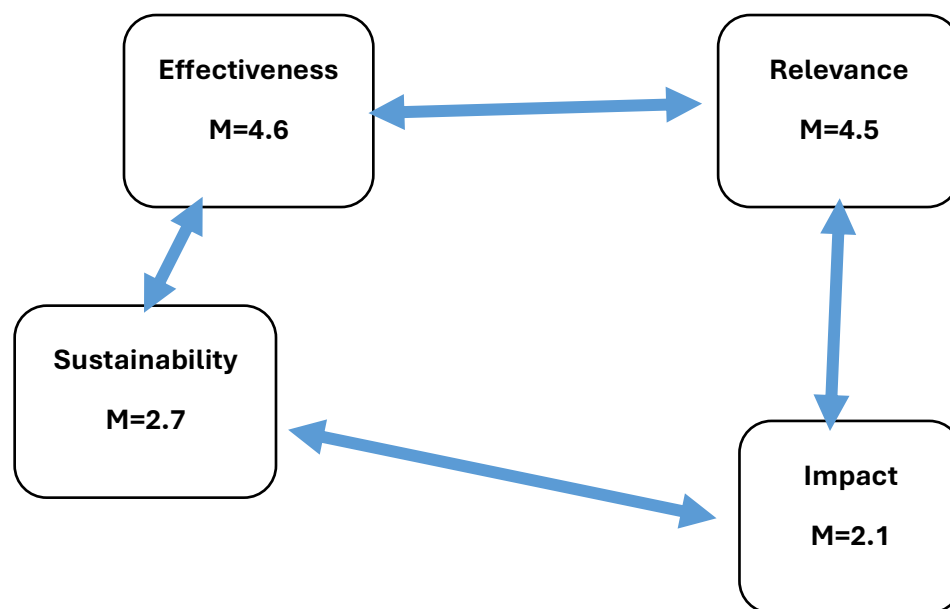
4.0 Conclusions

The V&A Project has demonstrated significant impact on education governance, community participation, and service delivery across nine districts in Zambia. Key successes include enhanced awareness of school budgeting (97%), improved pupil and teacher attendance (93%), and increased involvement in decision-making (92%). Infrastructure development, textbook availability, and safe school plans have also seen notable progress, though persistent gaps remain in resource allocation, construction monitoring, and teacher deployment.

While the project has strengthened education accountability and transparency, sustaining these gains requires institutional support, increased funding, and ongoing community engagement. Scaling up social accountability mechanisms, strengthening governance structures, and ensuring policy alignment with decentralization efforts will be critical in fostering long-term improvements in Zambia's education sector.

The findings underscore the need for a multi-stakeholder approach, with government agencies, civil society, and local communities collaborating to build a more transparent, inclusive, and effective education system.

Furthermore, it is noted that the V&A project achieved the goals based on the mean averages obtained as indicated below. The mean was obtained on a scale of 5. These were measured in terms of Effectiveness, Relevance, Sustainability and Impact. As observed, the project still needed some time to establish real and maximum impact. Further analysis still has to be done in relation to impact. The highest means were observed in Effectiveness and Relevance respectively. Most indicators were somewhat achieved though some still need attention (sustainability and impact).



Impact Assessment in a project like Voice and Accountability (V&A) Project is surely a long term issue. Although the V&A Project is implementing valued interventions, some desired outcomes may be long term. For example, critical need areas such as the lack of teachers, teacher houses, and adequate textbook materials in all the project schools cannot be resolved immediately. Suffice to say V&A Project has influenced communities to be proactive and most schools have projects aimed at redressing these

identified critical needs whose completion is long. Some low level degree of impact is observable, however, there is need to wait and probably evaluate during final project evaluation anticipated for August 2025 a few months from now to assess the impact on long term outcomes.

5.0 Recommendations

Based on the analysis of the V&A Project's impact on education governance, service delivery, and community engagement, the following recommendations are proposed to sustain and enhance the gains made:

- Strengthening Community Engagement in Budgeting planning process and Accountability. Decentralization will lead to increased emphasis on community participation and monitoring. To meet this challenge communities will need knowledge and skills.
- Leverage the high awareness levels (97%) of school budgeting to formalize structured participation mechanisms for Parent-Teacher Committees (PTCs), Ward Development Committees (WDCs), and Social Accountability Committees (SACs). There is need to formally intergrate SACs into PTCs or WDCs to continue monitoring education service delivery.
- Ensure budget information is consistently displayed and disseminated to communities, enhancing transparency and oversight.
- Enhance Textbook Availability and Learning Materials. The government should prioritize the allocation of dedicated funds to ensure the consistent updating and procurement of textbooks and digital learning resources especially now the introduction of the new curriculum in 2025. This commitment is vital for improving educational outcomes and maintaining the relevance of teaching materials. The Constituency Development Fund (CDF) can support these efforts by facilitating targeted procurement and efficient distribution of learning materials. To maximize impact, the Voice and Accountability (V&A) project should continue its efforts in training and monitoring, empowering Social Accountability Committees (SACs) to track the availability and quality of educational resources. By building community capacity in monitoring textbook delivery, the V&A project will help ensure that all students have access to the necessary materials for effective learning.
- Addressing classroom infrastructure challenges is essential for creating a conducive learning environment and reducing overcrowding. The government must invest in constructing new classrooms and renovating existing facilities to meet the growing demand for education. Additionally, the CDF should be leveraged to support infrastructure improvements by providing additional resources for repairs and expansions. The V&A project can play a vital role in this process by fostering community involvement in monitoring construction projects. Through active participation and oversight, communities can ensure that infrastructure developments are completed efficiently and to the required standards, ultimately fostering greater transparency and accountability.
- Community involvement in school governance is a critical aspect of promoting accountability and responsiveness in educational administration. Government policies should mandate robust community participation in school decision-making processes, ensuring that local voices are heard and respected. The CDF can bolster these efforts by funding community-led initiatives aimed at enhancing governance structures. Meanwhile, the V&A project should continue to strengthen community capacity through training and support for community representatives. By empowering communities to actively participate in governance, schools will benefit from more transparent and inclusive decision-making practices.

- Teacher capacity and attendance are fundamental to maintaining a stable and conducive learning environment. The District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) holds the responsibility of recruiting qualified teachers to address shortages and ensure consistent classroom presence. However, recruitment alone is not sufficient. The V&A project, through the proactive monitoring efforts of SACs, should continue to track teacher attendance and address any issues that may arise. The real-time monitoring using KoboCollect will help maintain a reliable teaching workforce, reducing disruptions to the learning process and enhancing overall education service delivery.
- Budget transparency and social accountability are fundamental to ensuring the effective and responsible use of educational funds. The government must enforce standardized budget disclosure protocols across all schools, creating a culture of openness and financial accountability. The CDF can further support this initiative by providing targeted funding for training on transparent financial management practices. There is also need to hire more qualified accountants in the schools. The V&A project should continue to facilitate regular community meetings and interface sessions, enabling stakeholders to give feedback budget utilization and assess its alignment with educational priorities. By promoting transparency and community oversight, schools will be better positioned to manage resources effectively and maintain community trust.
- CSPR Zambia V&A project needed to be implemented for an adequate period of at least 5-6 years; this would have given a lot of meaning to undertake an impact evaluation. Some of the indicators (those from Ministry education) cast in this evaluation needed adequate implementation time to measure effectiveness, impact and sustainability among others.
- In line with the previous observed recommendation, the V&A project also needed more time to increase opportunities to improve its inclusion criteria to ensure increased participation of individuals living with disabilities and women, and further strengthen engagement with the Stakeholders and media to improve advocacy messaging, and broaden platforms for citizen to seek explanations for failings in services so as to collectively identify local solutions to observed failure in service delivery.

6.0 Appendices

6.1 Community Survey

» Section C: Effectiveness

Implementation Effectiveness:					
Q25.How rate the effectiveness of the CSPR Voice & Accountability project Trainings?		Moderately Effective	Very Effective	Not Effective	Don't Know
Social Accountability	*	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Human rights and Entitlements	*	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Data Collection Training	*	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Scorecard Training	*	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q26.Give an overall reason for the ratings on the training above. *					
Q27.To what extent have social accountability monitoring tools been used to monitor education service delivery at your school or community? * <input type="radio"/> Rarely used <input type="radio"/> Often <input type="radio"/> Sometimes used <input type="radio"/> I dont know					
Q28.How often do communities hold school authorities accountable? * <i>Make probes on: What happened? • process • Efficiency • Effectiveness . Challenges •Opportunities</i> <input type="radio"/> Never <input type="radio"/> Rarely <input type="radio"/> Sometimes <input type="radio"/> Often <input type="radio"/> I dont Know					

Q29.Has there been change in the involvement of key stakeholders(i.e community members, school authorities, traditional leaders, civic leaders) in ensuring improved education service delivery since the V&A Project started? *

☐ Increased involvement
☐ Reduced Involvement
☐ No change (Stayed the same)
☐ I don't know

Q30. How inclusive do you perceive the project's implementation to be, especially in involving minorities, persons with disabilities, the elderly, women, and youths? *

☐ Highly inclusive of all groups
☐ Moderately inclusive, with notable gaps
☐ Inclusive of only a few groups
☐ Not inclusive at all

Q31.In your opinion what current enablers that have contributed to success of the CSPR V&A project? *

.....

Q32.In your opinion what current barriers can hinder the success of the CSPR V&A project? *

.....

Q32. To what degree, level or extent do you think monitoring of activities UNDER THE V&A has improved public delivery in the PROJECT areas?	Ineffective	I don't Know	Moderately Effective	Highly Effective
Construction and Renovations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Textbook Delivery	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Safe School Plans	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School grants and budgets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pupil and Teacher Absenteeism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q33. Based on your opinion, what has been the CSPR V&A Project contribution to the following since it started?	Answer	If Yes, Explain (what did CSPR or SACs Do? How Did CSPR Contribute?)	If No, Explain. How CSPR did not contribute
Pupil–desk ratio	<input type="radio"/> 3. I don't Know <input type="radio"/> 1. Yes <input type="radio"/> 2. No	*	*
Construction and renovations	<input type="radio"/> 3. I don't Know <input type="radio"/> 1. Yes <input type="radio"/> 2. No	*	*

Number of pupils per class (+ or -)	<input type="radio"/> 3. I don't Know <input type="radio"/> 1. Yes <input type="radio"/> 2. No	*	*
Implementing of safe school plans (SRGBV for girls and boys)	<input type="radio"/> 3. I don't Know <input type="radio"/> 1. Yes <input type="radio"/> 2. No	*	*
Pupil and teacher attendance	<input type="radio"/> 3. I don't Know <input type="radio"/> 1. Yes <input type="radio"/> 2. No	*	*
Teacher- pupil ratio	<input type="radio"/> 3. I don't Know <input type="radio"/> 1. Yes <input type="radio"/> 2. No	*	*
Pupil-text book ratio	<input type="radio"/> 3. I don't Know <input type="radio"/> 1. Yes <input type="radio"/> 2. No	*	*
Awareness on the CDF application processes	<input type="radio"/> 3. I don't Know <input type="radio"/> 1. Yes <input type="radio"/> 2. No	*	*
Information related to the school budgets	<input type="radio"/> 3. I don't Know <input type="radio"/> 1. Yes <input type="radio"/> 2. No	*	*

<p>Q34. How would you rate the education service delivery at the school in your community since the start of the CSPR V&A Project? *</p> <p><i>Since the project started in 2022 to date?</i></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Very good</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Good</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Neither good or bad</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Bad</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Very bad</p>
<p>Q35. How efficient do you think the Government, School authorities responds to concerns about education service delivery? Rate them out of 5 *</p> <p><i>This can be at school level, district - DEBs Office, provincial - PEO etc. Probe on timelines</i></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Very Efficient</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Efficient</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Neutral/I dont Know</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Inefficient</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Very Inefficient</p>
<p>Q36. How efficient do you think the Head master/teachers are in responding to concerns about education service delivery? Rate them out of 5 *</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Very Efficient</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Efficient</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Neutral/I dont know</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Inefficient</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Very Inefficient</p>
<p>Q37. How efficient do you think the PTC are in responding to concerns about education service delivery? Rate them out of 5 *</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Very Efficient</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Efficient</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Neutral/I dont know</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Inefficient</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Very Inefficient</p>

<p>How confident are you in your community's ability to sustain the benefits of the CSPR V&A project after its completion? *</p> <p> <input type="radio"/> Not confident at all <input type="radio"/> Slightly confident <input type="radio"/> Moderately confident <input type="radio"/> Very confident </p>
<p>Are there any needs of the school in terms of structures overlooked in the CSPR V&A Project design that can affect the sustainability of the project? *</p> <p><i>E.g Governance structures - PTC, WDC, SAC, Traditional leaders etc</i></p> <hr/>
<p>What are you doing as stakeholders/Community members to ensure sustainability of the benefits of the project? *</p> <hr/>

» Cross cutting issues

<p>Are you aware of the Redress Grievance Mechanism (Sharing complaints in relation to Education Service delivery in your community) on the V&A project? *</p> <p><i>Suggestion Boxes</i></p> <p> <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No </p>
<p>What are the major challenges in relation to education service delivery in your community? *</p> <hr/>
<p>Any suggestions or comments in relation to implementation of the voice and accountability project so far? *</p> <p><i>Probe on what else in relation to V&A Project would you like to tell us, not captured by previous questions?</i></p> <hr/>

6.2 Key Informant Survey

The demographic questions are not included.

» Section C: Participation

Implementation

Effectiveness**:

Do community members hold duty bearers or public service providers in the education accountable? if yes, how? please explain

Probe on : Areas of concern and accountability they have raised? Channels used to communicate these concerns? Are their concerns resolved?

What has been the role of stakeholders (i.e community members, school authorities, traditional leaders, civic leaders) in ensuring effective education service delivery since the Voice and Accountability started?

PTC, Community and parents, Pupils, WDC

How has the CSPR V&A contributed in involvement of community and stakeholders in the process of new curriculum review.

2023 to 2024

What do you think is the role of the Headteacher, DC and DEBS office in mobilizing community participation in civic issues especially in education?

» Intervention Assessment

What has been the impact on the following since the start of implementation of the CSPR V&A project in 2022 to date?	If Yes explain, how CSPR V&A contributed	If No, explain how the CSPR V&A didn't contribute
Teaching and learning materials in classrooms	<input type="radio"/> 2. No <input type="radio"/> 3. I don't Know <input type="radio"/> 1. Yes	
Pupil-desk ratio	<input type="radio"/> 2. No <input type="radio"/> 3. I don't Know <input type="radio"/> 1. Yes	
Construction and renovations	<input type="radio"/> 2. No <input type="radio"/> 3. I don't Know <input type="radio"/> 1. Yes	
Number of pupils per class	<input type="radio"/> 2. No <input type="radio"/> 3. I don't Know <input type="radio"/> 1. Yes	

Implementing of safe school plans	<input type="radio"/> 2. No <input type="radio"/> 3. I don't Know <input type="radio"/> 1. Yes	
Pupil and teacher attendance	<input type="radio"/> 2. No <input type="radio"/> 3. I don't Know <input type="radio"/> 1. Yes	
Teacher- pupil ratio in the classes?	<input type="radio"/> 2. No <input type="radio"/> 3. I don't Know <input type="radio"/> 1. Yes	
Pupil-text book ratio	<input type="radio"/> 2. No <input type="radio"/> 3. I don't Know <input type="radio"/> 1. Yes	
Awareness on the CDF application processes	<input type="radio"/> 2. No <input type="radio"/> 3. I don't Know <input type="radio"/> 1. Yes	
Information related to the school budgets?	<input type="radio"/> 2. No <input type="radio"/> 3. I don't Know <input type="radio"/> 1. Yes	
Involvement in school budgeting process?	<input type="radio"/> 2. No <input type="radio"/> 3. I don't Know <input type="radio"/> 1. Yes	

What are some of the problems in relation to education service delivery that your community, district or province faced that have been solved following V&A Project introduction?

What do you think can be done to strengthen relationships and engagement between community and duty bearers?

Has there been any improvement towards public dialogue on the delivery and quality of education services since the CSPR V&A Project started? If yes, explain these changes

Please describe, from your position in the education sector, why enhancing participation accountability and governance in education is important?

Has the V&A project improved community capacity to undertake social accountability (SA)? If yes please explain?

How would you describe the effectiveness of Parents and Teachers committee (PTCs) after the introduction of the CSPR V&A Project?

Please describe the complaints and feedback mechanisms that are currently available to community members/PTC. And how do you perceive the effectiveness of (main complaints mechanism)? Do you think there is the need for additional (capacity building/strengthening) of the complaints management system?

What should be done to ensure sustainability of the V&A Project interventions?

Any suggestions or comments?