

VOICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT

“Community Empowerment for Improved Local Service Delivery in Zambia”

OUTCOME HARVESTING REPORT

Report produced by: The Project Management Unit (PMU), CSPR National Secretariat, Kabulonga, Lusaka, Zambia | **March 2025**

INTRODUCTION

The Voice & Accountability (V&A) Project is designed to strengthen community participation in education governance by empowering Social Accountability Committees (SACs), Ward Development Committees (WDCs), and Parent-Teacher Committees (PTCs) monitor education service delivery and engage with local authorities. The project employed Outcome Harvesting as a key evaluation methodology to capture significant changes resulting from community-driven social accountability interventions on the project.

In February 2025 the Outcome Harvesting exercise, multiple community monitoring groups contributed insights, documenting key changes in education service delivery, stakeholder engagement, and policy influence. While the reported outcomes represent a broad and representative set of changes, they are not exhaustive, as some community members and committees may not have fully captured all transformations occurring within the implementation period. Moreover, given the nature of accountability work, some changes require a longer period to materialize, and previously unrecognized results may gain significance in later assessments.

Furthermore, the evaluation process ensured that outcomes are specific, relevant, and aligned with the project's objectives, particularly in enhancing transparency, improving stakeholder responsiveness, and strengthening education governance structures. While most of the documented outcomes highlight behavioral changes among SACs, school authorities, and local government officials, few demonstrate policy shifts in education service delivery responses as influenced by the project's interventions. The findings underscore the growing capacity of communities to hold decision-makers accountable and contribute to structural improvements in education services, funding allocations, and grievance redress mechanisms.

Ultimately, the Outcome Harvesting process within the V&A Project provided a structured approach to tracking impact, ensuring that community-driven monitoring mechanisms remain effective, scalable, and sustainable beyond the project cycle.



PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

To What Extent is the Voice and Accountability Delivering on its Results Framework Goals



Output

Percentage of trained community members reporting enhanced knowledge about their entitlements and education service delivery.

Achievement

94%

Outcome

Increasing Community Awareness for the Delivery of Education Services

Largely Achieved



Output

Percentage of underrepresented community members (females, disabled, Youth and minorities) in the targeted areas participating and reporting their views about education service delivery.

81%

Outcome

Enhanced Community Engagement and Participation in the Delivery of Education Services

Largely Achieved



Output

Percentage of education issues identified by communities that are addressed by school management or local authorities.

62%

Outcome

Strengthening Communities Capacities to Monitor Local Education Services

Largely Achieved



Output

Number of community members trained in social accountability in the education service delivery (of which are female)

94%

Outcome

Effective Community Engagement with School Management and Local Authorities

Largely Achieved



Output

Number of active community groups that have clear mandates, are attended by key community members and hold meetings on a regular basis.

100%

Outcome

Exchanges in Community Knowledge and Experience in Social Accountability.

Largely Achieved



Output

Number of community members participating in consultative meetings with school management and local authorities

1756
of which 706 are female

Outcome

Networking and capacity building of education-focused CSOs in Zambia.

Largely Achieved





PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

To What Extent is the Voice and Accountability Delivering on its Results Framework Goals



Output

Number of consultative meetings held between communities, school management and local authorities with full representation.

Achievement

118

Outcome

Project Management and Administration, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and Knowledge Dissemination

Largely Achieved



Output

Percentage of communities that have completed the monitoring of more than 3 education service activities

100%

Outcome

The Project Development Objective (PDO) is to strengthen community awareness and participation with school management and local authorities for accountable primary and secondary education services in the nine selected districts in Zambia.

Largely Achieved
(continuous)



Output

Number of school management and local authority meeting minutes that recorded community concerns and requests.

118

Outcome

Building community awareness and capacity to apply social accountability tools in education service delivery

Largely Achieved



Output

Number of peer-to-peer community learning events held.

9

Outcome

Building community awareness and capacity to apply social accountability tools in education service delivery

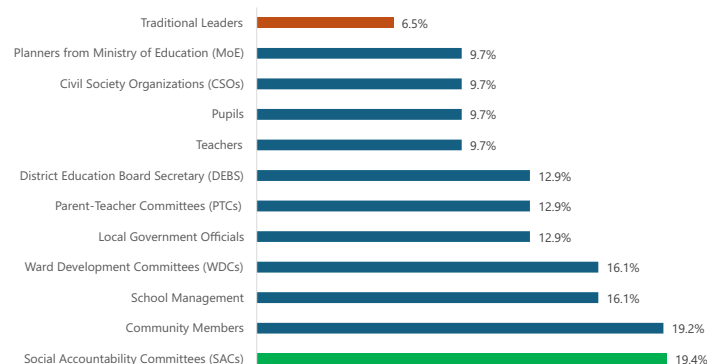
Largely Achieved

Where and how is the V&A Project having the most impact on education service delivery?

Impact on type of Actors

The Voice & Accountability (V&A) Project has influenced key stakeholders in education governance and social accountability, leading to notable behavioral and institutional changes. Government agencies, including District Education Board Secretaries (DEBS) and Ministry of Education (MoE) planners, have shown increased responsiveness to community concerns and adopted participatory decision-making. Social Accountability Committees (SACs), Ward Development Committees (WDCs), and Parent-Teacher Committees (PTCs) have strengthened their roles in monitoring education resources, influencing budget allocations, and holding school management accountable. Parents, teachers, and pupils, particularly from marginalized groups such as children with disabilities and unaccompanied minors, have become more engaged in school governance and advocacy. Traditional leaders and civil society organizations (CSOs) have played a crucial role in mobilizing communities and collaborating with government institutions to enhance education accountability. Additionally, faith-based and community-based organizations have contributed to education awareness, school infrastructure development, and stakeholder engagement. The V&A Project continues to foster sustainable collaboration among these actors, ensuring long-term education governance improvements and institutional accountability.

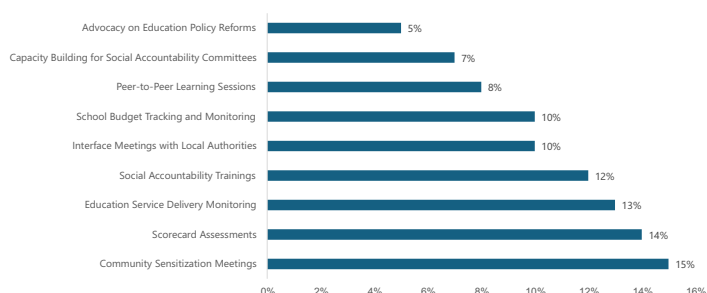
Percent Contribution from Change Actors



Which Activities from the Voice and Accountability Project key to supporting these achieved outcomes?

The Voice and Accountability Project's key activities contributed to the achieved outcomes, with community sensitization meetings (15%) driving awareness and participation. Scorecard assessments (14%) and social accountability training (12%). While Interface meetings with local authorities (10%) strengthened governance and engagement and education service delivery monitoring (13%) enhanced accountability mechanisms. School budget tracking (10%) improved financial oversight, while peer-to-peer learning sessions (8%) facilitated knowledge exchange.

Activities that contributed to Harvested Outcomes



FINDINGS

Assessment of the V&A Project harvested outcomes based on - Intended vs. Occurred Outcomes.

Intended and Occurred (Green)

These outcomes in Green were planned in the project objectives and successfully achieved.

Increased enrollments - Improved enrolments have been recorded in all V&A schools. Reports from Kapungwe, Chimasuko, and Seya Primary also indicated a rise in school enrollments due to community sensitization, interface meetings, and local government engagement. This aligns with the V&A outcome on increased access to education services.

Improved learner performance - Schools such as Kapungwe Day Secondary and Seya Primary recorded improved exam pass rates attributed to better teaching conditions and increased teacher-pupil engagement, since the inception of V&A Nalolo district has been performing well in the grade 9 examination.

Enhanced transparency and Accountability - Kataba, Lyamutinga, Mwasiti, Kalobolelwa, Nang'umba, Kalabo day, Kalukundwe, Namaloba, Ngundi Chimbundire Schools implemented public school budget displays, promoting fiscal responsibility and most of them took an initiative of translating the school budgets into silozi.

Increased community awareness and participation - Community engagement levels improved significantly due to social accountability workshops and capacity-building initiatives under the V&A project. This is evidenced in all V&A schools. Community initiatives in the schools to support educational outcomes have also improved. Community builds temporal and permanent structures such as in Nande, Nang'umba Play parks in Kalukundwe, and Kashokoto.

Improved infrastructure - Several schools (Mangomba, Sianda, Kataba, Matongo, Litoya, Kalabo day Nande, Kapungwe Primary. In Western province Sonso Primary school used to be a grass thatched school there is now a one by three classroom block and a teacher house, Sianda has boarding house for girls,) constructed E.C.E classrooms and dormitories, matching MoE and the V&A Project expected outcomes.

Reduced dropout and absenteeism rates - Chimasuko Primary and Kasamanda, Kashokoto, Ngundinoted significant reductions in absenteeism and dropouts, aligning with MoE's efficiency improvement target and V&A outcomes.

Equity in Education - Kaoma and Nalolo Districts reported improvements in female and marginalized group enrollment, linking to MoE's outcome of equitable access and V&A indicator (2) in the results framework.

Unintended & Occurred (Blue)

These outcomes in blue were not explicitly targeted but emerged as significant positive impacts.

Improved Teacher & Pupil Punctuality in Eastern Province - This has been reported in Nang'umba.

Stronger Parent-School Relationships - Chimbundire School reported a noticeable improvement in parent-teacher interactions. Lusu- East has also reported improved relationship between community and school management.

Reduced Teenage Pregnancies - Seya Primary saw a decline in teenage pregnancies, which was not a direct project goal but resulted from increased school attendance.

Peer-to-Peer Learning Among Community Members - Schools in Kaoma and Nalolo districts Community members began conducting their own engagement meetings, even outside of project intervention sites.

Improved Advocacy Capacity of Local Communities - Nalolo district stakeholders developed advocacy skills they now use to engage authorities on broader education and governance issues. Mwasiti in Sinda and Litoya were able to lobby other donors for Boarding facilities, Classroom block and water reticulation system. In Senanga district social accountability have been using social accountability tools to monitor the health facilities at least at one community. This was clearly an unplanned yet very potentially beneficial outcome.

Collaboration Between Schools & Education administrators - Kaoma schools reported a new level of cooperation between school management and district education boards, strengthening education service delivery.



Unintended & had a Negative Outcome (Orange)

These outcomes in orange were either unintended or negative.

Negative Attitudes & Resistance to Change - Seya Primary and Kasamanda explicitly reported community reluctance to engage in school governance structures, slowing down adoption of transparency measures.

Similar, some stakeholders in Sesheke at Lusu primary, and Kaoma in Namaloba actively resisted new governance structures (SACs), making implementation difficult.

Environmental Degradation Risks - Mungomba raised concerns about environmental degradation due to new construction projects, something not factored into the initial project design.

Inefficiencies in Response & Delays - Mphonwa Primary waited over 3 years for promised desk provisions, leading to community frustration. This is the same situation at Imusho and Kalabo day.

Bureaucratic Barriers in School Monitoring Processes - Kaoma districts faced delays due to bureaucratic red tape, preventing community groups from effectively monitoring school budgets.

Delayed Rollout of Community- Driven Monitoring Systems - Some districts expected decentralized community oversight but faced setbacks due to administrative challenges. Dependence was more on interface meetings when the DEBs and other stakeholders attend. This is a challenge with Mata Secondary school where the community members have a lot of complaints but cannot escalate it with the service providers.

Intended & Did Not Occur (Yellow)

These outcomes in blue were not explicitly targeted but emerged as significant positive impacts.

Delays in Infrastructure Development (E.C.E Classrooms & Water Supply) - Mwasiti experienced significant delays in Early childhood education classroom construction, linked to slow funding disbursement from the Constituency Development Fund.

Slow Implementation of School Governance structures - Some schools faced challenges in establishing participatory school governance structures (PTCs, SACs), despite being a project target. Further reports from Kaoma indicate that some schools struggled to fully integrate accountability mechanisms, particularly in community monitoring of school budgets. Imusho combined has had challenges in electing and main attaining a functional PTC.

Standard Construction and learning Materials - The desks received under CDF are too small for the upper primary learners and poor quality. Ngúma, Kalabo day, Lyamutinga, Sianda, Litoya, Lui-Wanyau received poor-quality desks and classroom materials, impacting intended learning environment improvements.

Challenges in Expanding Community Engagement Models - Some districts struggled to replicate successful engagement models beyond initial pilot schools, limiting the full realization of intended change. This was shown in schools such as Kashokoto, Mangango, Ngúma.

Key Project Intervention Contributions by the Voice and Accountability Project in the Education sector targeting the Ministry of Education Outcomes.

Outcome Statement	V&A Contribution Status
Enrolment of pupils has improved (MoE Outcome)	Partially Contributed
Absenteeism by teachers has reduced (MoE Outcome & V&A Outcome)	Partially Contributed
School budgets displayed on notice board	Fully Contributed
Improved pupil desk ratio (MoE Outcome)	Partially Contributed
Community awareness on education service delivery	Fully Contributed
Transparency in school budget utilization	Fully Contributed
Increased access to clean water in schools	Partially Contributed
Improved sanitation facilities (MoE Outcome)	Partially Contributed
Teacher-student ratio improved (MoE Outcome)	Partially Contributed
Reduction in early pregnancies (MoE Outcome)	Partially Contributed
Enhanced community participation in school activities	Fully Contributed
Increased efficiency in school operations (MoE Outcome)	Partially Contributed
Increase consultative meetings increased (V&A Outcome)	Fully Contributed
Infrastructure improvements (classrooms, sanitation, desks) (MoE Outcome)	Partially Contributed

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CONCLUSION

The V&A Project significantly enhanced community awareness and participation in education governance across nine districts. Community members, particularly Social Accountability Committees (SACs) and Parent-Teacher Committees (PTCs), gained a deeper understanding of their roles in monitoring education service delivery. This shift contributed to strengthened school-community relations, greater ownership of education services, and increased transparency in school resource management. The project achieved notable outcomes, including the institutionalization of social accountability practices, increased policy responsiveness, and capacity strengthening for sustainable education services monitoring. Additionally, the project promoted inclusivity in education governance, particularly for marginalized groups, and contributed to tangible improvements in education service efficiency, such as increased pupil enrollment and reduced absenteeism. The project's approach has demonstrated potential for scalability and sustainability beyond the initial intervention districts.