



LOCAL DIALOGUE - ZAMBIA

SUPPORTED BY:



*WE ARE CREATING A WORLD WHERE
GRASSROOTS ACTIVISTS, DONORS AND
ALLIES BELONG TOGETHER.*

LOCAL DIALOGUE: GRASSROOTS ACTIVISTS AND MOVEMENTS



In August of 2021, grassroots activists, social movement leaders and community-based organizations, as part of the Grassroots Solidarity Revolution campaign supported by CIVICUS, held dialogues to discuss the funding landscape in grassroots work. The activists were drawn from different provinces of Zambia, each with experience working in informal social movements that activate communities for positive sustainable change.



CONVERSATIONS AROUND GRASSROOTS ACTIVISM



- During the dialogue, the conversations centered on the challenges that grassroots activists and informal groupings such as social movements and community-based organizations face in their work because of inadequate support from enablers.

The conversations were centered on:

- Lack of funding and resources for grassroots activists.
- Bureaucratic funding processes and conditions that disqualify social movements from accessing support.
- Lack of shared understanding between activists and enablers.
- Self-care and personal wellbeing of activist involved in grassroots work.

TESTIMONY FROM A GRASSROOTS COMMUNITY ACTIVIST ON LACK OF TECHNICAL SUPPORT



“Over the last few years, I have noticed a number of funding opportunities been advertised with little to no provision by the donor to provide a platform for youth activists or upcoming youth-led organizations/social movements to be able to get knowledge and skills that are needed for them to competitively apply for the funding opportunity. This has led to many activists, social movements and community-based organizations ran by youth to miss out on such funding opportunities. There is need for the donors to begin to make available sessions on which activists can be able to engage them on the funding opportunity been advertised.”
- LORRETTA CHINGANDU.

EXPERIENCES OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS WITH FUNDING



In the breakout groups, the activists discussed some of the experiences that they have had in accessing funding. It was noted that most of the movements have not been able to access any type of funding for their work despite applying, those that have managed to receive funding had challenges in using these resources as they did not respond to their targets but the targets of the donors.



SELF CARE AND PERSONAL WELLBEING OF ACTIVISTS IS KEY TO BUILDING SUSTAINABLE IMPACT AND OUTCOMES



Grassroots activists agreed that personal wellbeing and self-care were important to ensuring that they continued to implement their engagements effectively and efficiently in their respective communities. During the dialogues, activists took time to sing and dance to revolutionary songs of solidarity as a way of keeping a healthy body.



TESTIMONY FROM A SOCIAL MOVEMENT LEADER ON THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN FUNDERS AND ACTIVISTS



“There is a tendency of enablers and activists misunderstanding the type of role that each play to make the world a better place. This has led to a relationship that seems to center only on management of funds. There is an urgent need to fix this toxic relationship before it begins to affect the important work that both parties play in fighting social injustice; the relationship needs to be built on trust, accountability and a shared understanding of the important roles that both activists and enablers play in changing the world. Fixing this relationship begins with seating on the table and knowing each other well.”

- MPUTA POWER NGALANDE - DZUKA CHOLINGA.

TECHNICAL SOLIDARITY SUPPORT



During the dialogue, activists also emphasized the need for a strong coalition on various issues that affect women and young people in the different communities they work in to avoid working in isolation. It was agreed that activists who have some experience in grants and fundraising should make efforts on sharing their expertise with other activists and youth-led organizations.



NEXT STEPS

The activists agreed to continue such engagements to assist each other on understanding the funding landscape in order for them to better learn how to take advantage of it to make their work easier. The activists also chose representatives amongst them that will be part of the next dialogue with national funders and enablers who can best represent their aspirations of how they envision a sustainable and friendly funding landscape.



MEET THE

GRASSROOTS CHANGEMAKERS



Sam



Naro



Nawa



Dahlia



Tina

"We want to promote spaces where grassroots organising and resourcing realities are recreated for hope and empowerment."

The Grassroots Solidarity Revolution sprang from hours of meaningful connections and conversations by five grassroots activists known as the Grassroots Change makers and the global alliance for civil society, CIVICUS. We have been working tirelessly together since January 2021, co-creating a grassroots-led campaign that prioritizes grassroots needs, visions, voices and ideas to engage donors, allies and other key actors in shifting more and better resources to grassroots activism.

Other activists can participate in the campaign by:



Join this grassroots-led movement calling for an overhaul of the relationships and systems between activists, donors and ally organizations. Now more than ever, we must break down barriers that separate us. We need to build radical solidarity, release the flow of resources and care for activists on the front lines and work together to drive positive social change.

We are mobilising a global community to cultivate trust, new ways of thinking, deeper conversation and meaningful collaboration between grassroots activists, donors and allies. For details on how you can join this initiative, click on this link: <https://civicus.org/grassrootsrevolution>

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GRASSROOTS SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN DIALOGUE HELD IN ZAMBIA



<https://civicus.org/grassrootsrevolution>

Facebook Page: https://web.facebook.com/CIVICUS?_rdc=1&_rdr

Instagram Account: <https://www.instagram.com/civicusalliance/>