



#WHATWOMENWANT FOR GENDER RESPONSIVE SOCIAL SERVICES DELIVERY (GRSSD) BY ACCOUNTABLE AND TRANSPARENT LOCAL AUTHORITIES

A Discussion Paper Presented to the Minister of Local Government Public Works and National Housing

Harare, 25 October 2022

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The paper was prepared by the Institute for Young Women's Development (IYWD), Zimbabwe Women's Resource Center and Network (ZWRCN), Community Youth Development Trust (CYDT), Community Tolerance for Reconciliation and Development (COTRAD), Zimbabwe Organisation for Youth in Politics (ZOYP), Hands of Hope Trust (HoHT) and Gweru Residents and Ratepayers Association (GRRRA). The organisations I have mentioned are community based and civil society organisations that represent Mashonaland Central, Midlands, Mashonaland East, Masvingo, Bulawayo, Manicaland and Matabeleland South provinces, who are vested in advocating for and have partnered with citizens and worked alongside local authorities in their respective provinces to advocate for progression towards Gender Responsive Social Services Delivery (GRSSD), enhanced accountability and transparency of local authorities in the quest of achieving GRSSD. The paper outlines key asks by young women and women from local communities that have emanated as issues that the women of Zimbabwe want to be achieved at a higher policy level to enable its implementation at a local level for the full attainment of GRSSD. This paper is being submitted for discussion to the Honorable Minister of Local Government Public Works and National Housing and Parliamentarians who are engaged in their capacity as Gender Champions, being motivated to act on the #WhatWomenWant key asks to even the playing ground for ultimate attainment of GRSSD in an environment where local authorities and the citizens they serve practice social accountability and transparency in Zimbabwe.

1.2 THE CIVIL SOCIETY'S KEY ASKS – WHAT WOMEN WANT FOR GENDER RESPONSIVE SOCIAL SERVICES DELIVERY (GRSSD)

As women of Zimbabwe, we want to thrive; we want to contribute towards Zimbabwe's sustainable development in a way where we can breathe and live fully. We see that many changes are needed. Some of these are policy changes, some of these are changes in how we use and care for our resources, some of these are changes in values, attitudes, beliefs, norms, and how we view and treat one another; some of them are practices and how social services are delivered. We are seeking nothing short of transformational change, and we know that this will come in small and big ways and that these changes will require something from every individual, family, and every part of our communities, country and world. As Zimbabwean women we want:

1) Public Services that work

We want public services that work, are affordable or free, and easily accessible, in both rural and urban areas, and are responsive to our rights and needs. These include clean water, decent housing, electricity, streetlights and quality universal health care, and reproductive health care services. **To ensure this, our call to the Minister of Local Government Public Works and National Housing is as follows:** we call on the Ministry to put in place mechanisms that are widely publicized for all citizens to know and follow up on to ensure that local government authorities are able to facilitate the provision of fully working health care systems and ensure that social services such as consistent supply of potable water and sanitation services, provision of electricity and street lighting for our safety and accessible and disability user friendly public places are availed.

2) Women in Public Life

We want full and equal participation of women in all decision-making structures and processes that impact our lives. From community management structures to district development to local and national governance, we want full and equal rights to participate without fear, or violence. **To ensure this, our call to the Minister of Local Government Public Works and National Housing is as follows:** As we women are affected more by public services including health, water provision, we ask that the Ministry includes women in influential and functional positions within local government so we can make informed decisions about providing public health-care as the mostly affected group by functional or dysfunctional public services. We acknowledge the 30% quota system in local government, but we call for the current 30% quota to be included within the existing local government seats within the technical, management and decision-making arms of local government, not as additional seats outside of the functional ones as a more immediate request. As a more desirable goal building up on the current 30%, we request the Ministry to diligently put in place mechanisms and act on gender equality provisions of the 2013 Constitution of Zimbabwe (section 56). Specifically, we call on the Ministry to ensure 50/50 inclusion of men and women in local government with mechanisms to equally include young women within the quota, that is, 25% of the requested 50% functional women's quota in local government.

3) Accountability and Transparency

We want transparent and accountable authorities that utilises our national resources towards goods and services that expand ALL women's lives. **To ensure this, our call to the Minister of Local Government Public Works and National Housing is as follows:** We call on the Ministry to put in place mechanisms for tracking the work of local government and empowering citizens in line with the devolution agenda to meaningfully participate in local governments, with the power to hold local governments accountable for utilization of national and provincial resources for provision of gender responsive social services.

Below are the undersigned organizations to this position paper;

Institute for Young Women's Development (IYWD)
Zimbabwe Women's Resource Center and Network (ZWRCN)
Community Youth Development Trust (CYDT)
Community Tolerance for Reconciliation and Development (COTRAD)
Gweru Residents and Ratepayers Association (GRRA)
Zimbabwe Organisation for Youth in Politics (ZOYP)
Hands of Hope Trust (HoHT)