

Education is the key to life!

"Council recognises that every policy decision affects women and men differently in order to ensure that the impact of all policy decisions addresses the specific interest and needs of women and men"- Draft Gender & HIV/AIDS Policy.

COUNTRY	Zimbabwe
Baseline score	61%
Latest score	67.5%
Population	56 333
Characteristics	Farming area
Contact person	O. I Tsvuura
Designation	Gender Focal Person
Contact details	0772723305

Ruwa is one of Zimbabwe's most progressive towns. It is the only town which not only has a high density, but that looks more like another town which is middle or low density in terms of housing infrastructure that are built there.



Ruwa became a Centre of Excellence for Gender in Local Government in 2010. In less than two years, the Council's gender score has risen from 61% to 67.5% (this score will be independently adjudicated at the March 2013 SADC Protocol@Work summit). During Gender Links's verification visit, Gender Focal Person Oscar Tsvuura presented a plethora of evidence that included a draft HIV/AIDS gender policy which is still to be adopted by the Council. It is good to note that the council has, within its 2013 budget, a component on raising gender awareness with an allocation of \$5000 from no allocation at all in 2012. In the most recent council strategic planning document, which is still in draft form, the council sought to review their vision and mission as their core values include being an equal opportunity employer. This is a sentiment that Nathaniel Munhamo also shares as he aptly says "I would also like to take a role in encouraging other female workmates to further their studies so that they can have equal opportunities as their male counterparts".

Ruwa is currently very active in the building of primary schools. For a long time, the area did not have adequate primary education facilities. As a result, primary school children had to go to Harare to get primary education. Consequently, the council undertook to construct schools for the community (Ruvheneko and Runyararo Primary schools). This has gone down well with a lot of individuals, particularly one teacher, Mrs. Sigudhu. She also happens to have a daughter enrolled at Runyararo Primary School.

For over 15 years, the council has faced water shortages. Remarkably, the council has been able to cope in the provision of water by providing alternative water sources. It now has motorised boreholes at strategic points in the town for easy access to water. Even the residents acknowledge that this strategy has eased their water woes. One Mrs. Mabuto reiterated that "the water issue has now been resolved by these boreholes that council has installed. It takes me about 30 minutes to fill 100-200 litres of water, whereas in the past I would spend the whole day at one designated water point, meaning that I did not have the opportunity to do any other cores during the day." Perhaps one of the biggest achievements to date by the council in order to curb water shortages has been the construction of the

Nora Valley Pipeline project. This will ease all water shortages and at least ensure that women spend more time doing more productive work than fetching water.

The council has seen itself progressing from one which had silent policies that dealt with gender issues, to one which tries to bring out the gender component in their policies. The Gender & HIV/AIDS Policy comes to mind when we start discussing such issues. Though still in draft form, the council has already alluded that it should be adopted soon. The Council Chairperson, Councillor Pinias Mushayavanhu, reiterated that "I have also facilitated the availability of a gender policy although it's still in draft form and is awaiting adoption."



Tapiwa Zvaraya interviews Mrs Mabuto on the water issues in Ruwa Photo: Evans Gwatidzo

The council is one of a very few councils in the country which is led by a female. Actually, the top to senior managerial positions are occupied by women, i.e. the Town Secretary and Director of Financial Services. In addition, the only female councillor in the council sits on all but one committee of council. She also is the chair of the finance committee, considered to be one of the most important committees in council. The rest of the committees are chaired by men. The council has a staff complement of 225, with only 46 women. It is however great to notice that there are now men in unconventional jobs. Perhaps this is one of the best practices in council, in that they also employ men as evidenced by their office front desk.

Ruwa is a water stressed town making people susceptible to communicable diseases like typhoid. It is against this background that the town has a typhoid campaign team led by the council's Environmental Health Officer, Benam Nyawo who happens to be the only man in a team of 27 (8 supervisors and 19 care-givers). In addition, council prides itself in the formulation of local environmental plans in a bid to sustain the environment. Their budget also caters for stringent penalties for anyone destroying the environment. Other campaigns that council runs are GBV campaigns with the help of line ministries like the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender & Community Development (MWAGCD). In 2012 council had one such campaign in which they were advocating for the prevention of GBV.



1Ruwa Town Council residents fetching water prior to the installation of boreholes at strategic points Photo: Oscar Tsvuura

Ruwa does not have a lot of land and as such, most land in the town is privately owned. However, on the provision of land, council has enclosed the forms that spouses need to consent to the sale of any land. "Perhaps the council needs to look at their land allocation strategy as currently land is allocated on a first come, first serve basis" said Oscar Tsvuura, the Gender Focal Person. As stated before, council is doing a lot to allocate land, especially for the 2 schools they have helped construct in the town.

Like the Harare City Council, Ruwa now has departmental GFPs (A total of 6 members who are equally balanced). The GFPs' reports feed in to the Health & housing Committee which handles gender issues. This is the one way the council monitors its gender activities within council. It is their notion that every employee gets a chance to learn about gender mainstreaming activities. Nathaniel Munhamo aptly put it "I have come to understand that gender equality does not mean that women and men will become the same, but rather imply equal treatment of women and men in laws and policies, and equal access to resources and services within families, communities and society at large."

PARTICIPANT LIST
EVENT: Ruwa Verification
VENUE: Ruwa Town Council
DATE:13 February 2013

NAME	SEX M/F	ORGANISATION	DESIGNATION	PHONE	FAX	E MAIL
T Makoni	F	Ruwa	Resident	0776359257		
Oscar Tsvuura	M	RTC	GFP	0772723305		ostsvuura@gmail.com
Nathaniel Munhamo	M	RTC	Internal Auditor	0775273850		nmunhamo@yahoo.com
Mvembe Tafirenyika	M	RTC	Credit Controller	0772831820		tmvembe@gmail.com
Chikwangwadze LM	F	RTC	Accountant	0774107113		mchikwangwadze@gmail.com
Kwashi Chiratidzo	F	RTC	Clerk	0773517443		
Badza M	F	RTC	Building Inspector	0773372414		memory.badza@yahoo.com
Evans Gwatidzo	M	GL	Intern	0773259061		
Tapiwa Zvaraya	M	GL	Prog Officer	+263773955517		progzimbabwe@genderlinks.org.za

Attendance statistics by gender:

Females	4	44.4%
Males	5	55.6
TOTAL	9	100%