

Draft Release

Integrating People's Adaptation Planning in Zambia

Transforming Landscapes for Resilience and
Development in Zambia (TRALARD II)
Ministry of Green Economy and Environment
Ministry of Local Government and Rural
Development

Global Center on Adaptation
People's Process on Housing and Poverty Zambia
WeForest Zambia

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SUB-PROJECT MANUAL



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People's Process on Housing and Poverty Zambia (PPHPZ) is a non-governmental organization working in partnership with a grassroots movement known as the Zambia Homeless and Poor People's Federation (ZHPPF). The alliance works to address security of tenure challenges, housing challenges, and other problems emanating from poverty through community-led approaches to development and positive engagement with government and other stakeholders.



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ACRONYMS

CSO	Civil Society Organization
CLD	Community Led Development
DDCC	District Development Coordinating Committee
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
8NDP	Eighth National Development Plan
GCA	Global Centre on Adaptation
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
FIPC	Free Prior Informed Consent
LAP	Local Area Plan
LLA	Locally Led Adaptation
MGEE	Ministry of Green Economy and Environment
MLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPCC	National Policy on Climate Change
PAP	People's Adaptation Plan
PPA	Provincial Planning Authority
PPHPZ	People's Process on Housing & Poverty in Zambia
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDI	Slum Dwellers International
TRALARD	Transforming Landscapes for Resilience and Development
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
URP	Urban and Regional Planning
VLUP	Village Land Use Plan
WFZ	WeForest Zambia
ZHPPF	Zambia Homeless and Poor People's Federation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This manual serves as a practical guide for implementing People's Adaptation Plans in Zambia under the second phase of the Transforming Landscapes for Resilience and Development (TRALARD II) Project. Building on lessons from TRALARD Phase I, the manual supports the integration of Village Land Use Plans (VLUPs) into community-led adaptation processes aimed at enhancing climate resilience, land use planning, and sustainable natural resource management. The People's Adaptation Planning process ensures that communities are at the center of identifying risks, setting priorities, and shaping development plans that are responsive to their specific vulnerabilities and aspirations.

Importantly, the manual demonstrates how VLUPs contribute to the operationalization of Integrated Ward Development Plans (IWDPs) supported by TRALARD I. Further, VLUPs inform and structure ward-level priorities, enabling the IWDPs to reflect ground-level realities at zone level - the lowest unit of governance.

This manual outlines the full process of developing People's Adaptation Plans from community mobilization and stakeholder engagement to data collection, plan formulation, validation, and approval. It also provides guidance on integrating legal, environmental, and spatial planning frameworks to ensure that People's Adaptation Plans are credible, implementable, and aligned with national development and adaptation strategies.

The manual is intended for use by TRALARD Project Implementation Units (PIU) local government planners, civil society organizations, traditional leaders, and community-based facilitators. It emphasizes inclusive participation, locally led planning, and climate-smart decision-making to achieve sustainable and resilient development outcomes at the village level.

CHAPTER ONE

CHAPTER ONE

1.0. BACKGROUND ON THE TRALARD II PROJECT

The Transforming Landscapes for Resilience and Development Project was initiated by the Government of Zambia with support from the World Bank to enhance the resilience of vulnerable communities and ecosystems against climate and environmental shocks. TRALARD Phase I focused on Luapula, Muchinga, and Northern Provinces and achieved notable progress in strengthening community-led natural resource management, promoting diversified livelihoods, and implementing climate-resilient infrastructure. Through community forest management groups (CFMGs), integrated livelihood support, and participatory ward-level planning, TRALARD Phase I laid the groundwork for scalable, locally-driven solutions to climate vulnerability and natural resource degradation.

Building on these achievements, TRALARD Phase II expands the geographic focus to Copperbelt and Southern Provinces while consolidating investments in Luapula, Northern and Muchinga, with increased emphasis on climate adaptation, ecosystem restoration, and participatory land use planning. A key innovation under Phase II is the systematic integration of Village Land Use Plans (VLUPs) into People's Adaptation Plans ensuring that adaptation strategies are grounded in both community priorities and ecological realities.

1.1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE MANUAL

This manual has been developed as a practical guide for stakeholders involved in the planning, facilitation, and implementation of People's Adaptation Plans under the TRALARD II framework. It translates the core principles of Locally Led Adaptation (LLA) and community-led spatial planning into actionable steps, tools, and templates that can be applied across diverse local contexts.

It is aligned with Zambia's policy and legal frameworks, including the Urban and Regional Planning Act of 2015, the National Adaptation Plan, the National Green Growth Strategy and the Eighth National Development Plan (8NDP). The manual contributes to the broader TRALARD II goals by enabling communities to articulate their own climate adaptation strategies while also supporting sustainable land use and enhanced local governance.

1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE MANUAL

The primary objectives of this manual are to:

- Provide structured guidance on how to integrate VLUPs into People's Adaptation Plans in a participatory and coherent manner.
- Equip facilitators, local authorities, and community members with practical tools and steps for inclusive planning.
- Strengthen institutional capacities for climate-responsive land use planning.
- Enhance the coherence between grassroots planning and national adaptation priorities.
- Ensure that the resulting plans serve as actionable documents that can guide development investments and climate finance targeting.

1.3. TARGET USERS

This manual is intended for use by:

- Project Implementation Units and other TRALARD II implementing partners.

- Local government planners and sector specialists, particularly in land, agriculture, forestry, and climate adaptation.
- Traditional authorities and local leaders responsible for land governance and mobilization.
- Community mobilizers, enumerators, and co-researchers involved in data collection and engagement.
- Civil society organizations (CSOs) and non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) supporting community development and environmental conservation.
- Development partners and technical advisors involved in capacity building and implementation support.

1.4. HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

This manual is designed as a hands-on, field-oriented guide for PIU, practitioners, local authorities, and community organizations involved in People's Adaptation Planning and Village Land Use Planning under the TRALARD II Project. It is structured to allow for both sequential reading and targeted reference depending on the user's role or stage of involvement in the planning process.

For local government officers and planners, the manual offers guidance on aligning community-level planning with district, provincial, and national frameworks. It includes sections on legal compliance, stakeholder coordination, and integration of adaptation into land use decisions.

For community facilitators and NGOs, it provides detailed steps on community mobilization, participatory data collection, visioning, and facilitation of inclusive decision-making. Tools and templates for workshops, mapping, and data validation are included.

For traditional leaders and community members, the manual outlines the importance of local and indigenous knowledge and authority in guiding planning processes, promoting customary land rights, and endorsing the resulting adaptation strategies.

1.5. ORGANIZATION OF THE MANUAL

Chapter One: Gives the background to the TRALARD II project and explains the scope and objectives of the manual. It also outlines the target users and its application.

Chapter Two: Introduces the People's Adaptation Planning approach and explains its guiding principles.

Chapter Three: Walks users through the key planning steps, including situational analysis, community engagement, and plan development.

Annexes: Provide tools, checklists, and sample questionnaires for practical use in the field.

CHAPTER TWO

CHAPTER TWO

2.0. INTRODUCTION TO PEOPLES' ADAPTATION PLANNING

The People's Adaptation Plan, anchored in the Village Land Use Planning (VLUP) methodology, offers a systematic, participatory, and inclusive framework for guiding land use planning at the village level in Zambia. This methodology is designed to promote sustainable land management, strengthen climate resilience, and ensure equitable access to land and natural resources. It does so through a transparent, evidence-based process that places community knowledge, needs, and aspirations at the center of spatial planning decisions. VLUP recognizes that local communities possess valuable insights into their landscapes, resource use, vulnerabilities, and development priorities, which are critical for designing responsive and effective land use plans.

The VLUP methodology is aligned with the country's Urban and Regional Planning Act No. 3 of 2015, which provides the legal foundation for all physical and spatial planning activities across the country. In particular, Section 5 of the Act emphasizes the decentralization of planning functions and supports participatory approaches that incorporate traditional authorities and local communities in plan formulation (URP Act, 2015). VLUP operationalizes these provisions at the village level by formalizing land use planning within customary settings and ensuring that outcomes can be recognized within broader statutory planning frameworks, such as Integrated Development Plans (IDPs). This alignment enables seamless integration between grassroots-level planning and district or regional spatial planning systems.

The VLUP process emphasizes the active engagement of all relevant stakeholders,

with deliberate inclusion of marginalized groups such as women, youth, persons with disabilities, and vulnerable households. Participation is guided by the principles of free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC), which promotes community ownership, social legitimacy, and long-term sustainability of the resulting land use plans. The People's Adaptation Plan is thus grounded in values of inclusivity, transparency, multisectoral coordination, accountability, and climate responsiveness.

Through strengthening local governance systems and promoting inclusive, participatory decision-making, the People's Adaptation Planning process aims to enhance land tenure security, support the sustainable management of natural resources, reduce exposure to climate-related risks, and foster inclusive and resilient socio-economic development across rural Zambia. This manual provides detailed technical guidance on each phase of the process to ensure that practitioners, traditional authorities, local governments, and communities can facilitate effective, sustainable, and equitable land use planning at the village level.

2.1. RATIONALE FOR LAND USE AND ADAPTATION PLANNING

2.1.1. Land Use Planning

The sustainable management of land and natural resources is fundamental to the socio-economic development, environmental integrity, and climate resilience of rural communities (Smith & Johnson, 2020; GECC Act, 2024). In Zambia, where a significant proportion of land is held under customary tenure, the absence of clear, participatory, and formally recognized land use planning

frameworks at the village level has contributed to several challenges. These include land degradation, insecure tenure, unsustainable exploitation of resources, land use conflicts, and increased vulnerability to climate-related shocks (Chileshe et al., 2018).

Village Land Use Planning offers a structured, inclusive process through which communities can define, negotiate, and formalize decisions around land and natural resource use (Mwila, 2019). VLUPs directly contribute to the operationalization of Zambia's national and sub-national planning frameworks, including the Urban and Regional Planning Act No. 3 of 2015, which provides for the preparation of IDPs at local levels. Furthermore, VLUPs align with key national strategies such as the National Adaptation Plan (NAP), the National Green Growth Strategy, and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, all of which underscore the need for decentralized, ecosystem-based, and participatory land use planning.

Securing land tenure and reducing land-related conflict are among the core objectives of VLUP. In areas lacking clear land use agreements and boundaries, disputes are frequent, often leading to displacement, social unrest, and diminished investment in land productivity (Kaufman, 2021). VLUPs help formalize land allocation and usage through participatory and legally grounded processes, ensuring clarity in land rights, recognizing customary tenure, and enhancing security, particularly for vulnerable groups such as women and youth (Shumba & Gwanja, 2020).

VLUPs also play a vital role in promoting sustainable natural resource management. In the absence of land use regulation, communities often experience deforestation, soil erosion, biodiversity loss, and ecosystem degradation (Kambikambi et al., 2020). By zoning land for specific uses such as agriculture, settlements, grazing, conservation,

and forestry, VLUPs help align resource use with environmental limits. This supports long-term ecological health and the sustainability of ecosystem services essential for rural livelihoods (Mukuka & Phiri, 2022). Additionally, VLUPs complement legal instruments like the Statutory Instrument No. 89 of 2021 on Community Forest Management Groups (CFMGs), which mandates participatory planning in forest management.

As rural communities face intensifying climate risks—including droughts, floods, and shifting rainfall patterns—VLUPs serve as critical tools for localized climate adaptation. The plans incorporate climate risk assessments, gender-sensitive adaptation strategies, and the promotion of resilient practices. By integrating zoning, hazard mapping, and sustainable land use options, VLUPs strengthen community resilience and adaptive capacity (Chirwa & Banda, 2021; Masangano et al., 2019).

VLUPs also contribute to integrated local development by providing spatial frameworks for locating infrastructure (e.g., roads, schools, boreholes), productive zones, and conservation areas (Nkhoma & Tembo, 2020). This facilitates the harmonization of village-level priorities with Integrated Ward Development Plans, district development strategies, and national frameworks—thereby improving coordination, efficiency, and equity in development investments (Nyirenda et al., 2021).

Participation is a cornerstone of the VLUP process, ensuring inclusive engagement of community members, including women, youth, and marginalized populations. This participatory approach fosters local ownership, strengthens governance, and builds capacity for collective action and accountability (Phiri & Sinyangwe, 2022). As a result, VLUPs promote social cohesion and more equitable development outcomes (Kafumbe, 2021).

Finally, VLUPs serve as legally recognized frameworks for community-led land and resource governance. When aligned with national legislation, they create a credible basis for investment, enable development financing, and support partnerships between communities, government, and civil society. This ensures that external investments are aligned with community needs and values, while promoting benefit sharing (Kabamba, 2020; Mwansa & Zulu, 2022).

By protecting critical ecosystems—such as wetlands, forests, and river catchments—VLUPs also advance disaster risk reduction and environmental protection. Their support for nature-based solutions contributes to biodiversity conservation and strengthens ecological resilience (Lungu et al., 2019; Musonda & Tembo, 2021), further reinforcing Zambia’s commitments under the National Biodiversity Strategy and international frameworks such as the Convention on Biological Diversity.

2.1.2. Adaptation Planning

The rationale for integrating adaptation planning into land use planning is rooted in the growing recognition that climate change is fundamentally reshaping land use patterns and threatening the resilience of human and ecological systems. Without forward-looking and proactive strategies, climate-related hazards such as floods, prolonged droughts, heatwaves, and land degradation will increasingly undermine the sustainability of infrastructure, settlements, livelihoods, and natural resources. Adaptation planning, therefore, serves as a vital mechanism to ensure that land use decisions are responsive to current and projected climate risks.

In the Zambian context, adaptation planning in land use aligns closely with national climate policy frameworks, notably the NAP, which outlines Zambia’s medium- and long-term

adaptation priorities across sectors, including land use and spatial planning. It is also guided by the National Policy on Climate Change (NPCC), which provides the overarching framework for coordinated climate action at all governance levels. The NPCC emphasizes mainstreaming adaptation into planning instruments and recognizes land use planning as a key entry point for building resilience in both rural and urban settings. Furthermore, Zambia’s Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement commit to enhancing adaptive capacity and resilience through integrated planning, with land use and natural resource management being among the priority adaptation sectors. The integration of these frameworks ensures that adaptation planning at the local level supports national and international climate commitments.

Adaptation planning helps communities enhance resilience by embedding climate risk considerations into land use decision-making processes. This entails adjusting development priorities to account for projected climate impacts such as extreme weather events, temperature shifts, and altered hydrological patterns. For example, zoning flood-prone areas for low-density or non-structural uses can prevent high-risk development and mitigate potential loss of life and property (IPCC, 2022).

Crucially, adaptation planning also supports sustainable development by promoting land use patterns that align with environmental, social, and economic resilience goals. This includes the incorporation of green infrastructure, sustainable building practices, and resilient urban design strategies. Such approaches reduce environmental footprints while fostering long-term community viability (Seto et al., 2014). Land use planning thus becomes a vehicle not only for immediate community development but also for long-term sustainability under changing climatic conditions.

Incorporating future climate scenarios into land use decision-making allows for proactive risk management and reduces future disaster recovery costs (Sussman & Freedman, 2021). Ecosystem-based adaptation, including the preservation of wetlands, forests, and other ecological buffers, also supports vital ecosystem services—such as water regulation, carbon sequestration, and biodiversity protection—which in turn enhance human resilience to climate stressors (Reid et al., 2020).

In addition, the increasing integration of adaptation into legal and institutional frameworks both globally and nationally reinforces the urgency of embedding climate resilience into spatial planning. Countries like Zambia are formalizing these linkages through legislation, policies, and implementation strategies that mandate adaptation considerations in development planning. Complying with such requirements ensures that land use planning not only adheres to legal mandates but also contributes to broader resilience-building efforts and reduces future exposure to legal, social, and environmental risks (United Nations, 2018).

2.2. TRALARD II PROJECT

The People's Adaptation Planning process is a core component of the Transforming Landscapes for Resilience and Development Phase II (TRALARD II) project, as it places communities at the center of designing and implementing climate adaptation strategies. This process is specifically targeted within the Muchinga and Copperbelt Provinces, focusing on Lavushimanda, Kanchibiya and Mpika districts in Muchinga Province and Lufwanyama and Masaiti districts in the Copperbelt Province. The selected districts were prioritized based on their vulnerability to climate-related risks, ecosystem degradation, and socio-economic challenges. By grounding interventions in these geographically defined

areas, the project ensures that adaptation measures are context-specific and responsive to the distinct ecological and socio-economic dynamics of each district.

Under TRALARD II, the People's Adaptation Planning process supports the operationalization of locally led adaptation principles by empowering communities to assess their climate risks, identify priorities, and develop actionable plans that align with their development aspirations.

This participatory approach is essential for enhancing the resilience of both communities and landscapes, particularly in areas experiencing deforestation, unsustainable land use, and climate variability. The rationale for embedding People's Adaptation Planning in TRALARD II is informed by lessons learned under TRALARD I, which demonstrated that community ownership and inclusive planning are vital for delivering sustainable and equitable outcomes. Importantly, the process builds on and complements the Gender Sensitive Climate Risk Assessments already undertaken by TRALARD by ensuring that gender-differentiated vulnerabilities and capacities inform the planning and prioritization of adaptation actions. This complementarity strengthens the equity and effectiveness of the adaptation response.

During TRALARD I, the project facilitated the preparation of Ward Integrated Development Plans (WIDPs) as a foundational unit for participatory planning. In TRALARD II, this model is further strengthened through the integration of Village Land Use Plans into the broader People's Adaptation Plans. This nested planning approach ensures that land use zoning, ecosystem restoration, infrastructure development, and livelihood interventions are all guided by a shared, community-driven adaptation vision. The participatory nature of the planning process also strengthens

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Selected Project Districts

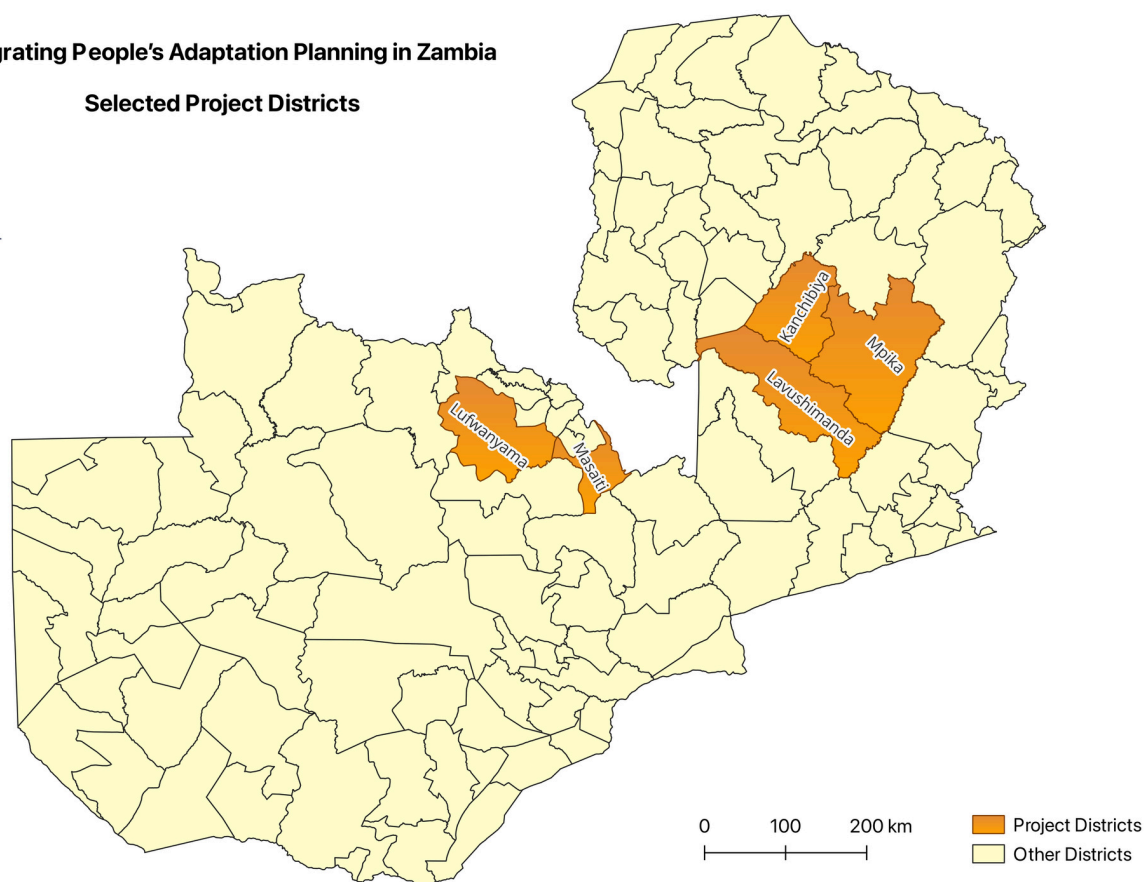


Figure 1: Selected project districts in Muchinga & Copperbelt Provinces

governance, accountability, and trust between citizens and government institutions.

The institutionalization of People's Adaptation Planning within TRALARD II ensures that spatial planning processes are directly linked to Zambia's broader climate resilience architecture. This includes alignment with the Green Economy and Climate Change Act (2024), which mandates climate-responsive planning, and supports Zambia's commitments under the NAP and the Nationally Determined Contribution Implementation Framework (Republic of Zambia, 2021).

By embedding climate resilience in village-level planning, TRALARD II seeks to contribute to building long-term adaptive capacity of rural communities.

2.3. APPROACH AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

To effectively guide the implementation of People's Adaptation Plans, this manual draws on several complementary planning approaches that have proven successful in enhancing community resilience and adaptive capacity.

While many related frameworks are acknowledged, this work is primarily built around three foundational approaches: Locally Led Adaptation (LLA), which empowers communities to define and drive their own climate adaptation strategies; Community-Led Development (CLD), which ensures inclusive participation and ownership of planning outcomes; and the Integrated Planning Approach, which promotes coordination across sectors and alignment with statutory development frameworks.

Together, these approaches foster grounded, participatory, and systemically connected planning processes that reflect both local priorities and national climate resilience goals.

Locally Led Adaptation is a concept that emphasizes empowering local communities to take the lead in developing and implementing climate change adaptation strategies. It shifts the focus from top-down approaches to bottom-up initiatives, recognizing that local communities have the most valuable knowledge and understanding of their unique climate risks and vulnerabilities. The following Principles of LLA should be applied flexibly, taking the context into account (see *Figure 2*).

The **Community Led Development Approach** promotes inclusive decision-making at the local level, ensuring active participation from communities – especially vulnerable groups such as women, youth, persons with disabilities, and marginalized populations. By involving communities in planning and implementation, CLD helps tailor projects to local needs, fosters ownership, and supports sustainable development for long-term well-being.

The **Integrated Approach** recognizes that adaptation planning produces multiple outcomes that impact various development sectors and stakeholders. It emphasizes cross-sector collaboration and coordination to ensure that climate adaptation efforts are not implemented in isolation but are aligned with broader development goals. This approach fosters coherence between sectors such as agriculture, water, health, and infrastructure, while encouraging inclusive participation from diverse actors. By bridging silos, it enhances the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of LLA initiatives.

By embedding climate resilience in village-level planning, TRALARD II seeks to contribute to building long-term adaptive capacity of rural communities.

Other approaches considered in the development of this manual include the following approaches:

The **Strategic Planning Approach** involves developing a clear, community-driven vision that reflects the collective dreams, needs, and aspirations of local people. This inclusive vision-setting process ensures that the adaptation plan is rooted in local realities and priorities. By identifying and focusing on the community's most pressing concerns, the approach provides a structured framework to guide decision-making, resource allocation, and action towards climate resilience. It promotes ownership, coherence, and long-term impact by aligning adaptation efforts with locally defined goals.

The **Multidisciplinary Approach** involves drawing on expertise from multiple fields to inform planning and decision-making. It ensures that diverse knowledge areas are represented across all levels of participation—through technical teams, thematic groups, stakeholder forums, and consortia—enhancing the relevance and effectiveness of adaptation efforts.

The **Participatory Climate-Sensitive Community Planning Approach** is grounded in the recognition that local knowledge and perspectives are essential to building community resilience. Planning that reflects local priorities leads to climate change adaptation investments that are more relevant, sustainable, and cost-effective. This approach aligns with the principle of citizen participation, which is central to Zambia's decentralization efforts, as reflected in the National Decentralization Policy's theme, "Realizing Local Development through Citizen Participation."

PRINCIPLES OF LOCALLY LED ADAPTATION (LLA)



1 Devolving decision-making to the lowest appropriate level



2 Addressing structural inequalities faced by women, youth, children, persons with disabilities and displaced persons, Indigenous Peoples, and marginalized ethnic groups



3 Providing patient, predictable funding that is easier to access



4 Investing in local capacity to leave an institutional legacy



5 Building a robust understanding of climate risks and uncertainties



6 Flexible programming and learning



7 Ensuring transparency and accountability



8 Collaborative action and investment

Figure 2: Principles of LLA

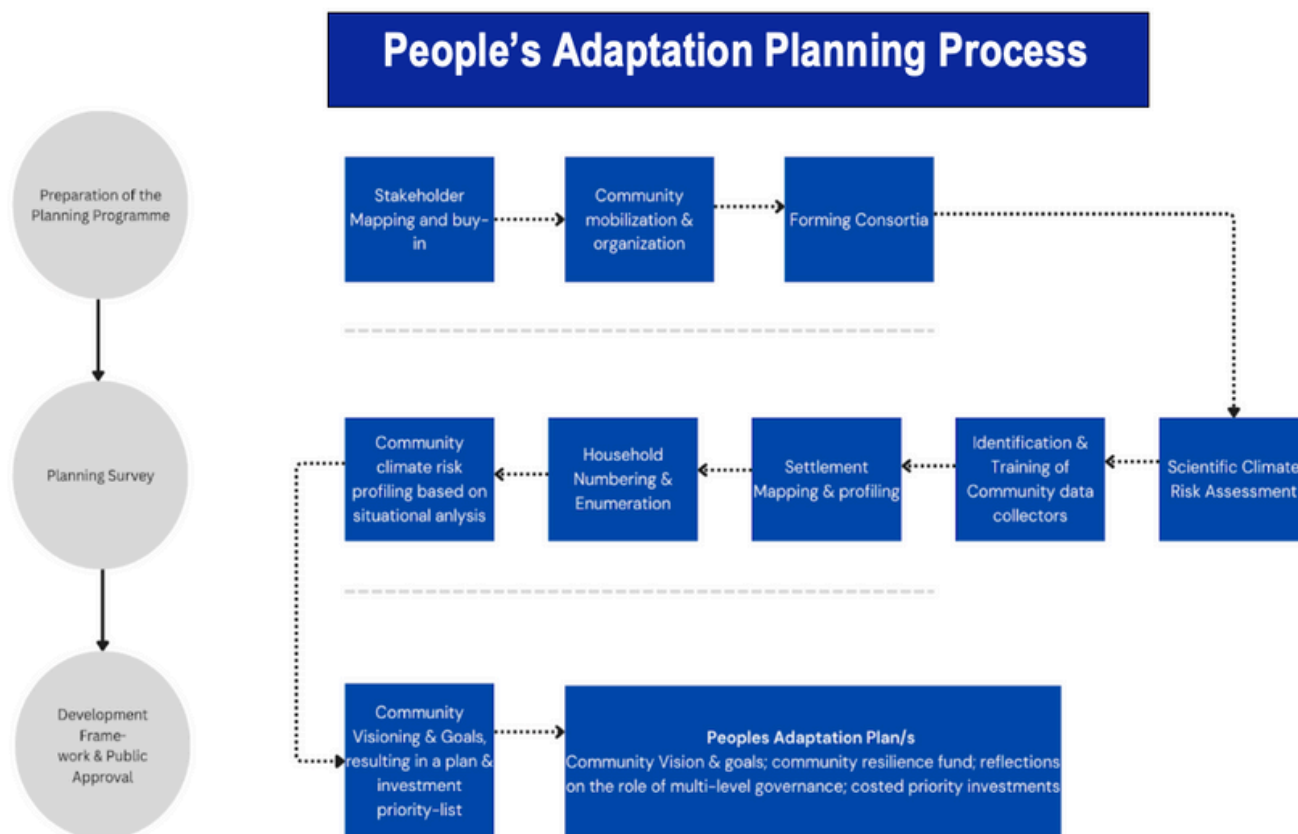


Figure 3: People's Adaptation Planning Process

2.4. PARTICIPATORY APPROACH TO PEOPLES ADAPTATION PLANNING IN ZAMBIA

People's Adaptation Planning is grounded in the principle that communities are best placed to understand their vulnerabilities, needs, and the adaptive actions most suited to their context. This participatory approach ensures that adaptation planning is not only inclusive and locally relevant, but also rooted in the lived experiences, indigenous knowledge, and development aspirations of the people most affected by climate change.

The process promotes inclusive decision-making through dialogue, consensus building, and shared ownership, especially among women, youth, traditional leaders, and other marginalized groups. It strengthens social cohesion and collective action, while linking

community-driven priorities with district and national adaptation frameworks.

The steps outlined below provide a structured yet flexible pathway for communities, facilitators, and planners to co-create effective and sustainable People's Adaptation Plans. The process map shown in *Figure 3* outlines the process utilized in the development of the People's Adaptation Plans.

CHAPTER THREE

CHAPTER THREE

This section of the manual provides a structured and methodologically rigorous outline of the People's Adaptation Planning process. This process operationalizes a participatory planning framework that integrates climate risk assessments, land use planning, and local development priorities into a cohesive adaptation strategy. The approach is rooted in the Principles of LLA, participatory climate-sensitive planning, and statutory land governance, ensuring that outputs are not only socially inclusive but also legally and institutionally coherent. The process is designed to ensure that the resulting plans are grounded in local realities, reflect lived community experiences, and are responsive to the adaptation needs of communities. From the rapid situational analysis through to the finalization and approval of People's Adaptation Plans, each step supports data-driven decision-making, alignment with national planning instruments, and the enhancement of climate resilience in rural settings.

3.0. RAPID SITUATION ANALYSIS

Situation analysis is the foundation of village land use and locally led adaptation planning. It provides a comprehensive understanding of the political, socio-economic, and environmental factors, ensuring that the planning process remains consistent, relevant, and responsive to local realities. While an in-depth situational analysis is conducted later—under the coalition-building and formation of local committees phase—it is essential to carry out a brief initial analysis beforehand. This preliminary assessment is not only critical for setting the stage for meaningful planning, but it also provides essential information that establishes a solid foundation for the development of the planning agreement, which is a legal requirement.

Undertaking this step early ensures that the entire planning process is grounded in accurate context and complies with statutory obligations from the beginning.

3.1. Review of the Legal Framework for Land Use Planning

Land use planning is typically guided by legislation, resulting in statutory, enforceable plans. In Zambia, however, complexities arise from the dual land tenure system—customary and state land. The Urban and Regional Planning Act of 2015 introduced new responsibilities for the government on customary land, but these are not widely implemented. Planning regulations also vary by resource type; for instance, the Wildlife Act applies to GMAs while the Forest Act applies to forested areas. It is also crucial to distinguish between land use plans and non-spatial development plans, though overlaps in mandates and information may exist.

Relevant legislation and regulations in Zambia include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Urban and Regional Planning Act, 2015
- Statutory Instrument No. 21, 2023
- Forest Act, 2015
- Wildlife Act, 2015
- Water Resources Management Act, 2011
- Mines and Minerals Act, 2015
- National Planning and Budgeting Act No. 1, 2020

It is important to note that clarification of the legal framework is important in understanding the applicability of various land use and development planning frameworks to the targeted area, the legal status and terms of

reference for the land use plan (e.g., whether it will be a legally binding document or not), and strategies for legalizing and implementing the land use plan.

3.2. REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT POLICIES, PLANS AND STRATEGIES

All relevant development plans and strategies must be thoroughly reviewed to ensure cohesion between the planned village land use and adaptation plan, as well as other plans at a higher level. This process can also help to draw on lessons learned, incorporate best practices, and guide the planning process accordingly.

According to the Urban and Regional Planning Act of 2015, local land use plans must be compatible with Integrated Development Plans. These, in turn, must align with regional development plans, which are required to be consistent with the National Planning Framework. Some relevant development plans and strategies include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Integrated Development Plans (IDPs)
- Forest Management Plans
- National Decentralization Policy, 2013
- National Adaptation Plan for Zambia
- Nationally Determined Contribution
- Implementation Framework for Zambia, 2023 - 2030
- Resettlement Policy
- Agricultural Policy
- Eight National Development Plan
- National Green Growth Strategy, 2024 - 2030

3.3. BACKGROUND RESEARCH ON STRATEGIC AREAS

Conducting a literature review is a valuable and integral part of the land use and adaptation planning process. It provides a foundation for understanding existing knowledge, identifying

best practices, and informing the planning process itself. Specifically, literature reviews provide a deeper understanding of socio-economic characteristics and demographics (population and livelihoods), the agro-ecological context (soil, vegetation, and land suitability), and climate information (historical trends and risks).

3.4. DEFINING THE TARGET AREA AND PLANNING GOALS

Administrative and physical boundaries of village settlements are not always clearly identified. This includes identifying land ownership, use and access rights, physical characteristics (such as location and boundaries), and culturally or historically significant assets requiring protection.

Equally important is the articulation of clear goals for the planning process. These goals will influence whether the process gains the support of both the Chief and the local authority. Typically, the designated “planning authority” is the Provincial or District Planner, while the Chief serves as the custodian of the land. As such, the Chief holds significant influence and can effectively approve or block the initiation of the planning process.

According to the Urban and Regional Planning Act of 2015, local authorities are required to enter into planning agreements with one or more Chiefs responsible for the targeted area in order to develop and implement an IDP or local area plan.

3.5. Stakeholder Mapping and Buy-In

All relevant stakeholders should be identified and their roles, interests, and levels of influence clearly understood within the context of the process. This is essential to ensure fair, inclusive, and transparent engagement from the outset. To achieve this, it is important to map out everyone who plays a role in—or is

Table 1: Stakeholder roles in the planning process

Role of the thematic Committees/ Consortiums- including other stakeholders	Provide technical expertise, sectoral alignment, and advisory support throughout the planning process, ensuring the integration of environmental, agricultural, social, and climate adaptation considerations into land use plans.
Role of the traditional leadership	Mobilize and encourage community participation, provide cultural legitimacy, mediate land-related conflicts, endorse the planning process, and ensure adherence to the approved land use plans within customary governance systems.
Role of the Local Authority	The Local Authority provides statutory oversight, technical supervision, legal approval, and coordination of the process, ensuring alignment with national laws and district development frameworks.
Role of the Communities	Actively participate in the planning process, contribute local knowledge, validate and adopt the land use plans, and take ownership of the implementation, monitoring, and periodic review of the plans.
Role of the Universities	Provide scientific and technical expertise, support tools development, data collection and analysis, and contribute to generation of knowledge products.

affected by-adaptation decisions. This includes traditional leaders, local authorities, farmers, women's groups, youth, and those who are often underrepresented or unheard, such as the differently-abled. The goal is to ensure that no one is left out in the planning process and that all voices are heard.

To ensure buy-in, stakeholders need to feel a sense of ownership in the planning process. That means using meaningful participation strategies that empower them—especially those most directly affected—not just to have a say, but to take the lead and have real control over land use and adaptation processes and decisions.

While all stakeholders should be engaged, it is important to note that some—such as Chiefs, targeted communities, WDCs, local planning authorities and district development coordinating committees—should be engaged early on in the process. See the below for more information on stakeholder engagement:

Chiefs: Given their power to veto the process, Chiefs must have a full understanding of both the process and its intended outcomes. It should be clearly communicated that the planned area remains under customary control, and that the role of the local authority is limited to enforcing or ensuring compliance with the agreed-upon plan. The product of this engagement should be consent or approval of the process by the Chief and expressed willingness to enter into a planning agreement with the local authority.

Targeted communities: Following the consent of the Chief(s), communities need to give Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), empowering them with the right to give or withhold consent for actions affecting their lands, territories, or rights which is consistent with their right to self-determination. The nature of the consent should be decided together with the community, taking into account local contexts. See *Figure 4* for more on FPIC.

FREE, PRIOR, AND INFORMED CONSENT (FPIC)

A foundational principle of inclusive development and a core safeguard under the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework.

it ensures affected communities, especially those with customary or collective land rights, are able to participate meaningfully in decision-making and provide or withhold consent based on complete information and without coercion.

FPIC is an ongoing, iterative process, a process that must be context-specific, culturally appropriate, and clearly documented, within the People's Adaptation Planning process following approval by traditional leadership and prior to the initiation of any technical planning activities.

KEY ELEMENTS OF FPIC



Free Consent is given voluntarily, without force, intimidation, or pressure from any party.



Prior Consent is sought well in advance of project implementation, allowing adequate time for deliberation.



Informed Communities must be given access to full, relevant, and unbiased information about the nature, scope, and potential impacts of the proposed activities.



Consent Communities may approve or reject a proposal through their own decision-making institutions and procedures.

The process and format of securing FPIC should be co-designed with the community, considering local governance structures, language preferences, and traditions.

The outcome of FPIC—including approval or non-approval—must be formally documented, publicly communicated, and referenced in planning agreement signed between the local authority and community.

Figure 4. Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC)

Ward Development Committee: Ward Development Committees (WDCs) are local bodies established at the ward level to facilitate community participation in governance and development. They serve as a link between residents and the local authority, ensuring community input in council decisions and promoting local initiatives.

Local planning authority: With consent from the Chief(s) and communities, the planning authority should formally be engaged to initiate the planning process through a council resolution and enter into a planning agreement with the Chief, in line with Section 35 and 25 of the Urban and Regional Planning Act of 2015, respectively. The resolution of the local authority should be widely circulated for public information through community radio stations and churches alike.

District Development Coordination Committee: Established in all districts and responsible for facilitating the planning and implementation of development activities within the district, this committee should be actively engaged to ensure a shared understanding of the process and the desired outcomes. It can also serve as a valuable platform for stakeholder review, leveraging its diversity and rich experience to foster a deeper understanding of the district's development context.

The mapping of these stakeholders can be guided by the matrix shown in *Figure 5*. It is important to ensure that stakeholders with high influence and high interest are always involved. Further, stakeholders can be categorized according to the consortiums that will be established, such as those focused on forestry, health, and land. Categorizing stakeholders by their areas of interest will support the future process of forming effective consortiums. More on consortiums and consortia formation to be covered in *Chapter 3.8*.



Figure 5. Stakeholder mapping matrix

3.6. PLANNING PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND ADOPTION

The development and adoption of the planning program will be developed by the local authority in collaboration with local communities. This program should identify the goals, objectives, development needs, priorities, issues, and concerns to be addressed in the planning process, including the estimated cost of the planning process; and clearly outline whether there are any deviations from the proposed People's Adaptation Planning processes proposed in *Figure 2*. Additionally, the program should also describe the proposed methods for identifying stakeholders to be involved in the planning process. This should include representatives from state institutions, local authorities, vulnerable groups, and traditional leaders. Special consideration must be given to language preferences and usage in the area; the needs of illiterate and vulnerable individuals; the roles and expectations of traditional Chiefs; and stakeholders with an interest in customary land.

3.7. COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION AND ORGANIZATION

Mobilizing and organizing communities is essential to bringing together residents of the

targeted area and fostering a strong sense of shared identity and affiliation. This collective identity is a critical foundation for reaching consensus on a common agenda and ensuring that the community can articulate its priorities throughout the planning process.



Community mobilization in Kaputula village, Chisamba district. Source: PPHPZ file photo

To support effective engagement, a reliable and inclusive platform for community participation should be established –if one does not already exist. The type of platform developed should align with the primary purpose of the planning process and serve to coordinate community involvement at all levels.

Communities can be organized through the existing governance structures such as Zone leaders, Ward Development members and councilors. However, ordinary community members can be mobilized into settlement networks or saving groups that support the planning process and act as pressure groups.

Settlement networks are platforms for all influential stakeholders in the settlements to meet to discuss community issues without political influence. Federation saving groups are also platforms that bring community members into groups that not only discuss savings but general climate and developmental issues in their communities. Settlement networks and saving groups act as avenues for bringing on

board various community members and groups on a common agenda free of political pressure.

For practical implementation according to existing village governance structures, a planning area can be divided into administrative or community units such as wards, villages, and households.

Ward Level: Each Ward is represented by a councilor and Ward Development Committee who participates in higher-level planning and decision-making. Each Ward is further divided into zones. Each zone has an elected representative who sits on the Ward Development Committee.

Zone Level: A number of villages may be grouped into one zone and headed by a senior head person. These zones are not in any way linked to the zones under local governance structures. They are traditional structures created by Chiefs for efficient administration. There is no defined number of villages to constitute a zone but in practice the range is between five and six (GLTN, 2015).

Village Level: A village typically is a collection of approximately 30 households or more and is headed by a village head person.

Household Level: Every household is individually represented, especially for sensitive decisions such as relocation or compensation.

This multilayered approach to community mobilization ensures efficient coordination, smooth flow of information, and inclusive participation at every stage of the process. See *Figure 7* for a step-by-step guide on community mobilization and organization.

To ensure the process is inclusive, do pay attention to minorities including indigenous groups where they exist.¹

¹ Global Center on Adaptation, 2022, pp. 204-218

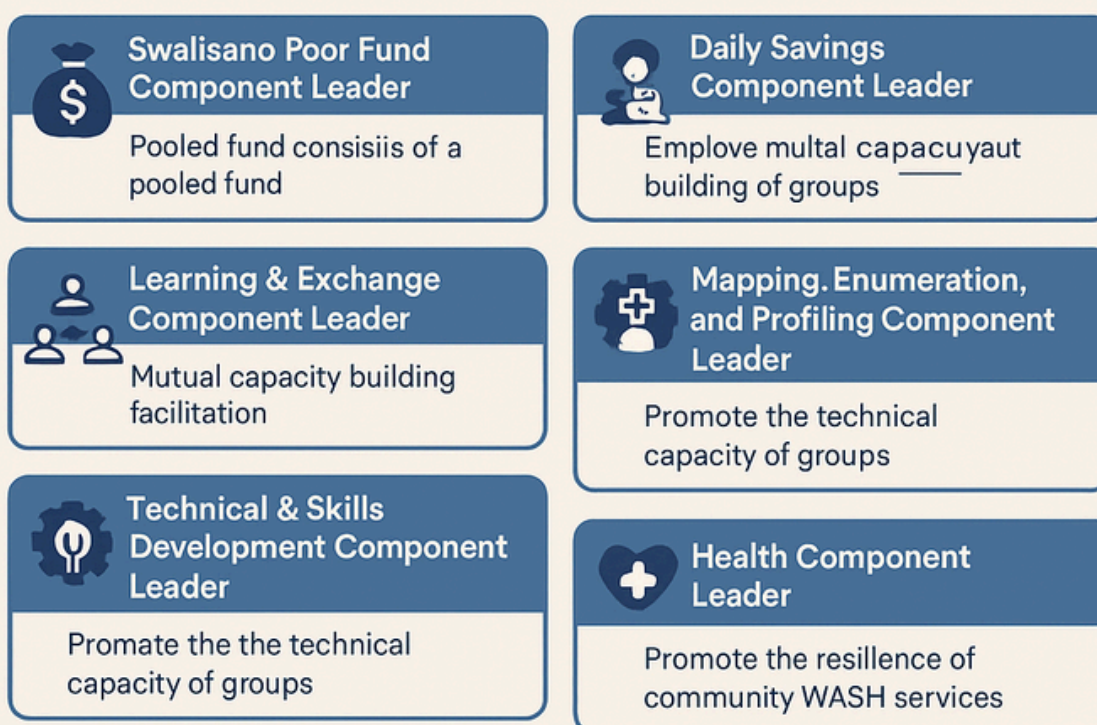
Featured Example: Zambia Homeless and Poor Peoples Federation (ZHPPF) Saving Groups Structure

- ZHPPF mobilizes saving groups in any areas that it tends to work in. In community that is to undertake People's Adaptation Planning processes, mobilization of saving groups one of the key activities that should be undertaken before the process undertaken.

Saving groups enable ZHPPF to:

- Utilize the platform to raise community awareness of the planning process.
- Enhance the participation of ordinary women and youth in Planning process, which is normally restricted to governance structures.
- Enhance the sustainability of the initiatives undertaken under the Planning processes, such as data collection and joint advocacy.
- Strengthen the voices of right holders by creating a formidable movement
- Create a platform for mutual capacity strengthening towards the development and implementation of locally led adaptation processes.

In view of the foregoing, the saving groups are made up of at least the following structure that allows them to foster community involvement.



In view of the foregoing, the saving groups are made up of at least the following structure that allows them to foster community involvement.

Figure 6. Featured example: Zambia Homeless and Poor Peoples Federation (ZHPPF) savings groups mobilization approach

Step-by-Step Guide: Community Mobilization and Organization

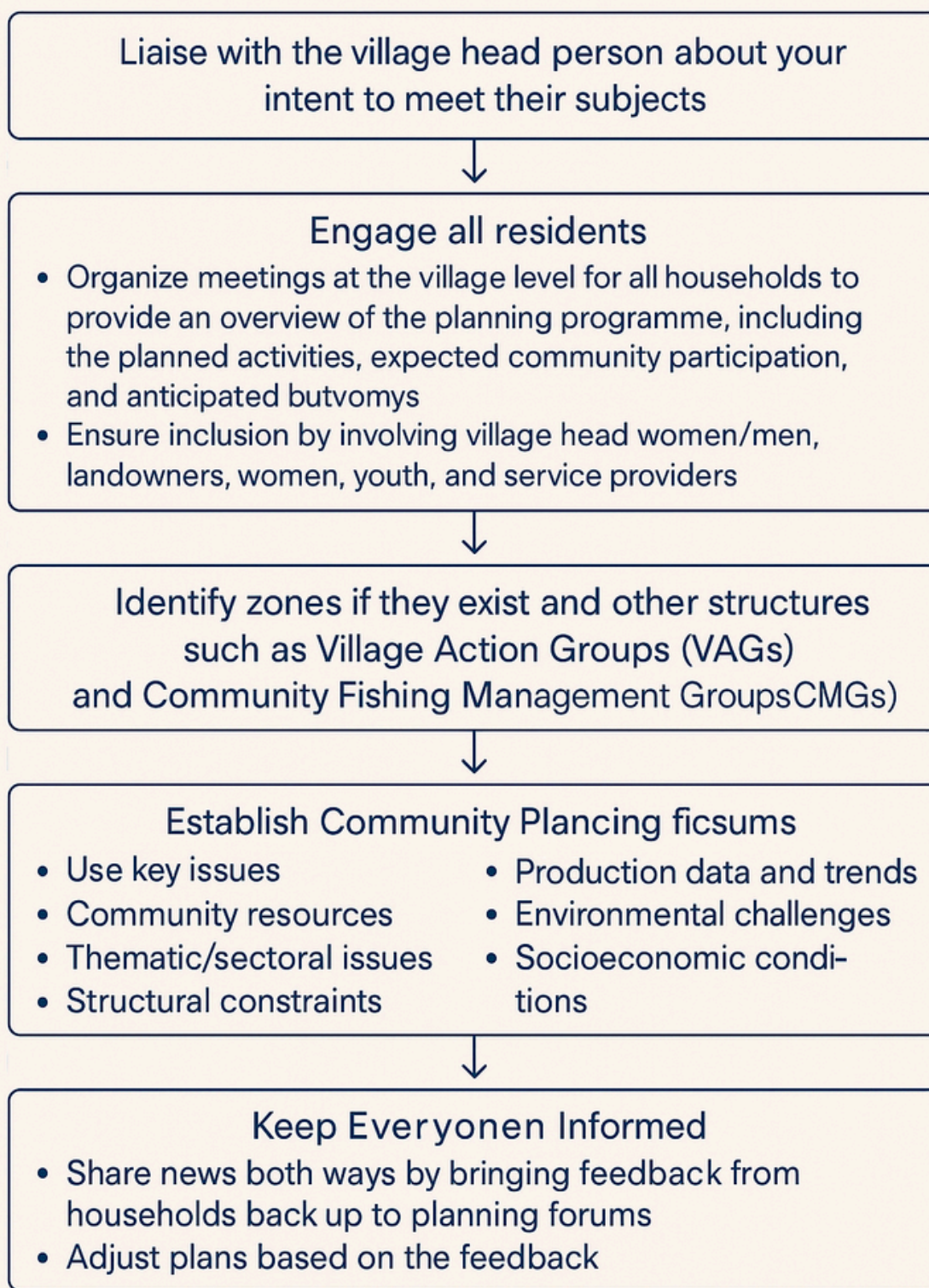


Figure 7. Steps to community mobilization and organization

3.8. COALITION BUILDING/FORMATION OF CONSORTIA

When it comes to ensuring meaningful participation and truly leaving no one behind in the planning process, no single actor –whether government or civil society– can do it alone. A collective approach is essential. This means building inclusive, well-structured consortia or similar platforms where communities, local governments, and civil society organizations come together to plan at scale. As experts put it:

"It requires coordinated effort and resources from communities, local government and civil society. In particular, neither local government nor one civil society organization will have all the required technical expertise in-house to undertake necessary planning activities. To solve this, leaders should recruit experts from leading civil society organizations in each sector to contribute their specialized knowledge to consortia and provide additional capacity for local government departments..."²

Through such consortia, stakeholders can combine their strengths, fill knowledge and capacity gaps, and ensure that planning processes are inclusive, technically sound, and locally grounded.

This reduces unhealthy competition among stakeholders that might otherwise work in silos or pull in different directions. It also provides a unified platform for engaging departments across local government and relevant line ministries. To ensure effectiveness, each consortium should be formed around a key thematic area –such as climate resilience, agriculture, water management, or land tenure, guided by priorities already outlined in existing development and land use plans, national strategies (such as the Eighth National Development Plan, the NAP, and the Green Growth Strategy), as well as insights from background studies and stakeholder consultations. Thematic sectors can conduct engagements and produce

sector reports that can be consolidated into a single situational analysis.

Inclusivity is the cornerstone of effective consortia. Every consortium must reflect a diverse mix of voices and institutions, including community members, traditional leaders, local community-based organizations, line ministries, and farmland owners. Leadership should ideally come from experts in the relevant thematic area, preferably based within local government or the appropriate line ministry.

To ensure proper coordination and delivery of agreed milestones, each consortium should carry out a stakeholder review to confirm that all relevant actors are represented. More importantly, roles should be clearly defined and a realistic work plan developed to guide implementation.

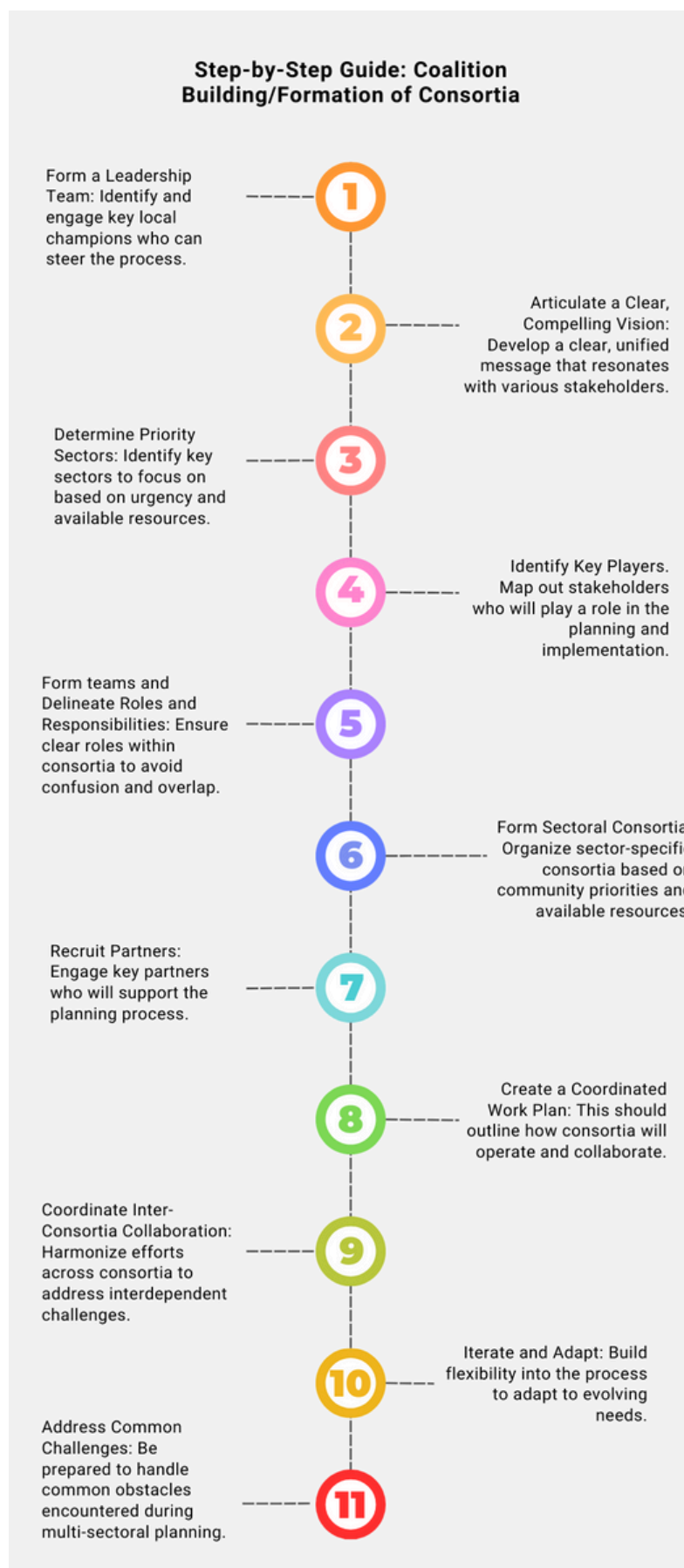
Finally, all consortium members should be trained in participatory land use planning and mapping. This ensures that they not only guide communities effectively but also document the process accurately and consistently.

3.9. SELECTION AND TRAINING OF COMMUNITY MOBILIZERS

Recruiting and training residents to collect data and mobilize other community members is essential to a community's collaboration with local governments, not only during the planning process but also throughout implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Involvement of residents as data collectors and mobilizers transforms them from passive beneficiaries into active partners, ensuring that planning and implementation are people-centered and inclusive, thereby promoting community ownership.

Residents should be selected on merit and trained to act as co-researchers and

^[2] https://cmsllahub.gca.org/assets/determining-roles_02jun.pdf



community mobilizers. **Co-researchers** are residents who take on the responsibility of data collection and other research activities in collaboration with action researchers, local government planning professionals, NGOs, and academic institutions. **Community mobilizers**, on the other hand, work alongside local governments and development partners to co-plan initiatives. In practice, many residents play both of these roles.

The selected community mobilizers and co-researchers should be trained as "trainers of trainers." This means they will not only perform their duties but will also be able to recruit and train additional mobilizers and co-researchers if needed. To ensure they can carry out these responsibilities effectively, the training should focus on community mobilization, data collection, and interpersonal skills such as leadership, communication, and facilitation.

The recruitment process should aim for a fair and broad distribution of community mobilizers and co-researchers across all regions, ensuring inclusive participation. This will also help in supporting further recruitment, training, mobilization, and planning activities throughout the area.

Materials used for training should be adapted to the participants' experience levels and specific needs related to the process. A combination of classroom learning and field tasks, following an action-reflection-action approach, should be employed to address real-world challenges as they arise. The training should remain flexible, allowing for the introduction of additional topics as new needs emerge.

Figure 8. Steps to consortia formation

Table 2: Step-by-guide to selection and training of community mobilizer

No.	Step	Key Actions
1	Determine the Scope	Assess households Estimate needed mobilizers Identify early challenges
2	Develop Training Materials	Cover technical and soft skills Begin with basic modules Use local examples
3	Recruit Residents	Work with local leaders Ensure diversity Issue letters of admission
4	Organize the Training Schedule	Weekly 3-hour sessions Group by neighborhoods 3–6-month training timeline
5	Determine the Course Format	Intro, review, feedback, new skills, field task
6	Train in Data Collection	Teach mapping, profiling, enumeration Assign practical fieldwork
7	Train in Community Mobilization and Organization	Form cells/clusters Teach facilitation and leadership Practice engagement
8	Address Challenges and Build Resilience	Discuss group dynamics and conflict Offer extra sessions as needed
9	Expand Training Topics Based on Needs	Stay flexible Add sectoral topics like hygiene or disaster preparedness
10	Support and Motivate Mobilizers	Offer stipends, meals, certificates Celebrate efforts publicly

3.10. COMMUNITY-LED DATA COLLECTION AND VALIDATION

3.10.1. Settlement Mapping and Profiling

Mapping the boundaries, natural resources, physical infrastructure, cultural resources, financial resources, land uses, and essential community services –such as water, sanitation, education, health, and transport—is vital for understanding the geographical limitations of a settlement. Mapping helps reveal the potential of local natural resources, identify how land is currently being used, and assess access to key services or highlight where they are lacking. This process also clarifies the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders, supports effective planning and intervention, and strengthens advocacy for sustainable infrastructure, services, and land use practices.

The mapping exercises will be determined by the

developed survey tools. To ensure effective settlement mapping, a team that includes GIS experts and community-based data collectors (community mobilizers and co-researchers) is required. Where possible, experienced community co-researchers should be trained to actively support the process.

Preparation begins with obtaining satellite imagery, digitizing structures, and identifying key landmarks, forests, and other areas of interest. This is followed by a ground-truthing exercise, where the map is verified on the ground and service location data is collected in collaboration with the trained community enumerators. This collaborative approach is essential for fostering community ownership of the data, which not only supports development planning but also strengthens the community's voice in negotiations and discussions with local authorities.



*Mapping exercise in Mungule village, Mungule chiefdom.
Source: PPHPZ file photo*

Settlement profiling on the other hand provides people with a wide understanding of the status of their communities. This approach serves as a starting point to help make the unseen and unrecognized issues known to their local governments. It enables communities to use settlement profile data as a starting point to open up negotiations with local governments and to help these authorities more accurately identify the requirements of their constituencies (SDI, 2013).

Settlement profiling can be conducted using a standardized questionnaire. Trained co-researchers can work in small teams, interviewing selected respondents to get a snapshot of the community's overall conditions. It helps capture the history of the community and how it's evolved to its present setting. Respondents should be selected from a diverse group of people, particularly those with greater understanding of the community. Profiling also helps in the refinement of the enumeration tool, so that it is more focused on the local realities.

3.10.2. Enumeration

Household level surveys or census conducted in the context of climate-related risk assessments typically aim to gather socio-economic and vulnerability data on how households are affected by and adapt to climate-related challenges.

Information collected concerns socio-economic challenges, climate change induced vulnerabilities, housing conditions, access to services, land ownership and land control mechanisms, community concerns in the neighborhoods, adaptation capacities and resilience (ability to recover from shocks and stresses), the understanding and perception of risks, individual and collective aspirations, and priorities. Typically, enumeration data or household-level surveys can also be used to advocate for specific services, investments, partnerships or projects by providing reliable and detailed information.



*An enumerator collecting data in Ndiliwa village, Chamuka chiefdom.
Source: PPHPZ file photo*



Figure 9. Community-led enumeration process

STEPS TO COMMUNITY MAPPING AND PROFILING

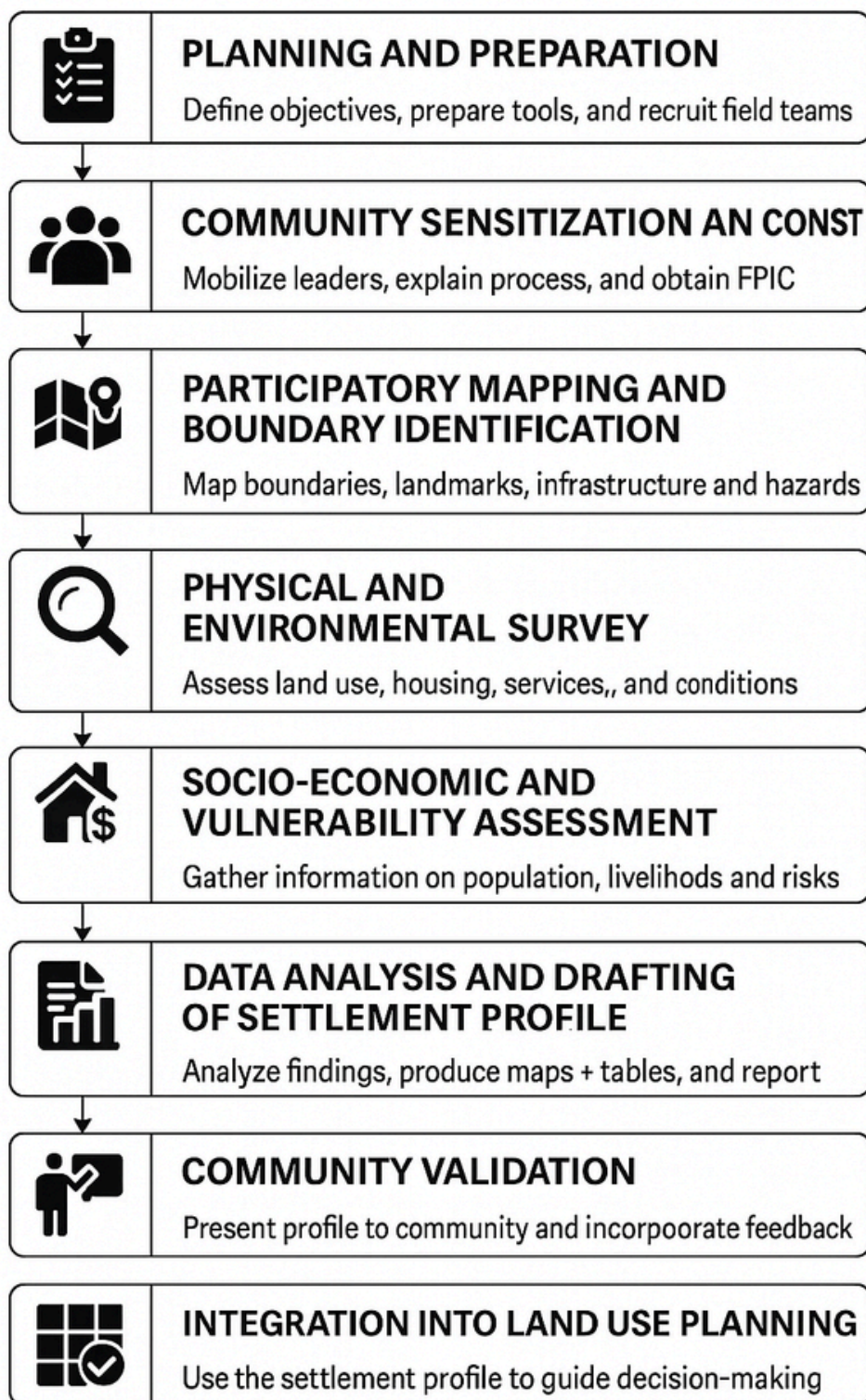


Figure 10. Steps to community mapping and profiling

3.11. COMMUNITY CLIMATE RISK PROFILING

Climate risk profiling is the systematic process of identifying, assessing, and mapping the exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity of a specific area, population, or sector to climate-related hazards such as floods, droughts, extreme temperatures, and storms. It combines local knowledge, scientific data, and climate projections to understand how current and future climate conditions could impact livelihoods, ecosystems, infrastructure, and social systems.

The goal of climate risk profiling is to inform planning and decision-making processes by prioritizing actions that reduce vulnerability and strengthen resilience at local and regional scales (IPCC, 2022; World Bank, 2021). In participatory land use planning, climate risk profiling enables communities to integrate adaptation strategies directly into spatial planning, ensuring that development initiatives are both climate-resilient and sustainable (UN-Habitat, 2020).

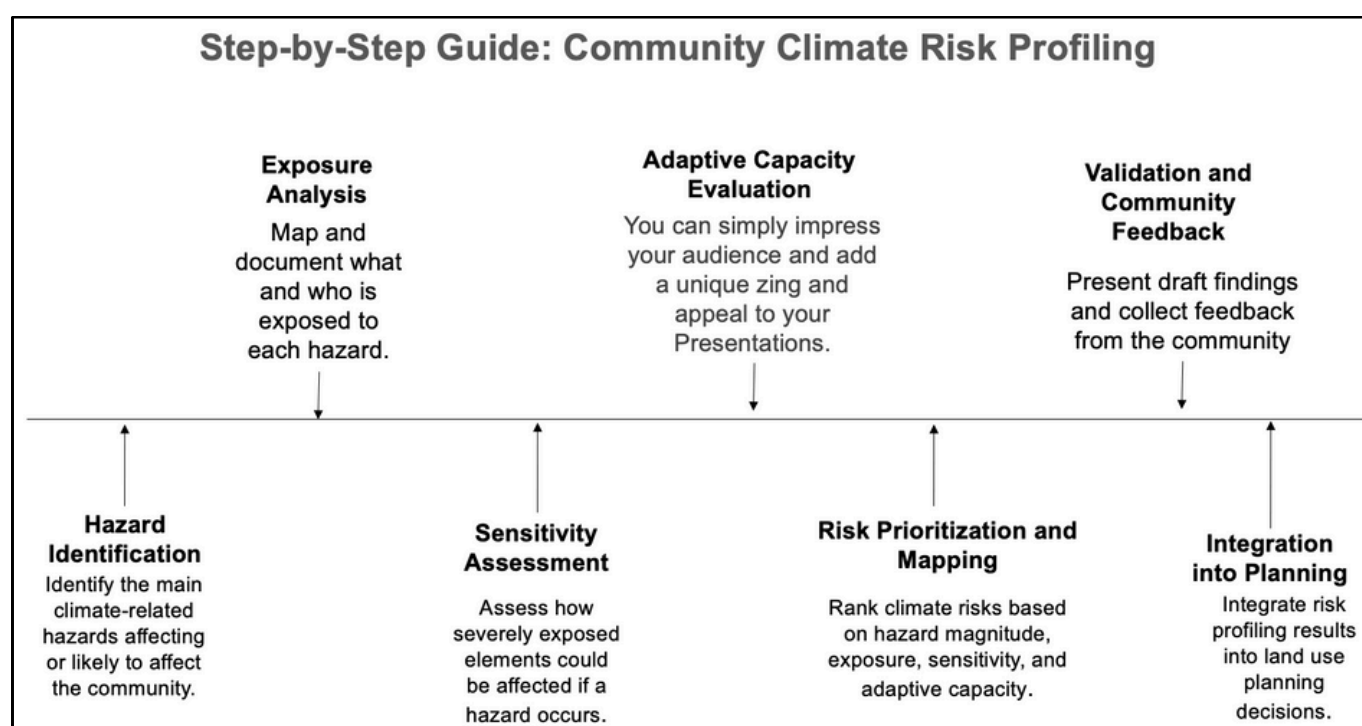


Figure 11. Community Climate Risk Profiling

3.12. DATA VALIDATION AND SHARING

3.12.1. Data Validation

Data validation is a critical step to ensure the accuracy and reliability of information gathered and conclusions. These exercises should be conducted with representatives from the project-affected communities—particularly those who were involved in the data collection process—as well as other relevant stakeholders.

Ideally, validation sessions should involve a diverse group of community representatives that reflect the full range of experiences within the community, including diversity in age, gender, social, cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds, geographic locations, and levels of vulnerability. To avoid overburdening the same individuals, it is important to rotate participation and hold discussions in small, area-specific groups.

Tips for Developing Community Climate Risk Profiling

Ground the Process in Local Knowledge



Start with community input
Consult elders, youth, or other groups to capture diverse

Map Hazards, Exposure, and Vulnerabilities



Identify key hazards, assess exposure, evaluate vulnerable internalities

Integrate Scientific and Local Data



Use scientific data with local perceptions

Ensure Inclusivity



Include marginalized groups
Build local engagement

Take a Temporal Approach



Assess past, present, projected risks

Understand Socio-economic and Ecological



Understand both socio-economic and ecological

Document and Validate



Create clear risk profiles
Validate findings w/ community

Connect to Planning and Action



Ensure findings inform adaptation planning and action plans

Figure 12. Tips for Developing Community Climate Risk Profiling



*Data validation in Mankalu Village, Chibombo District 2.
Source: PPHPZ file photo*

Where possible, issues raised during validation meetings should be addressed on the spot. If concerns cannot be resolved immediately, follow-up visits to the field—with the participation of community members—should be arranged to clarify or correct the data. Involving researchers from academic institutions in the validation process can further strengthen the credibility of the findings and support broader knowledge-sharing efforts.

Finally, data should be presented in a clear, concise, and accessible manner, ensuring participants have the opportunity to ask questions, express concerns, and contribute to refining the information.

3.12.2. Give Back: Sharing and Managing Data, Information, and Outcomes

It is essential that all participants see the results of their efforts to maintain trust and transparency throughout the process. Sharing data not only validates people's contributions but also helps communities better understand their priorities, laying the groundwork for informed planning and collective action.

Data should be more than just a set of findings presented at community meetings. Since it is generated by and belongs to the community, it should—ideally—be made freely accessible to all residents, as well as to municipalities and other

relevant stakeholders. While making data fully accessible can be challenging in practice, every effort should be made to ensure equitable access.

Municipalities have a key role to play in safeguarding, managing, and maintaining data and information relevant to their jurisdictions. They are also responsible for ensuring this data remains available for future use and reference. Strengthening the capacity of both local and national authorities to access, share, and publish data—ideally through open-data platforms—is vital to promoting transparency, informed decision-making, and ongoing collaboration.

Step-by-Step Guide: Data Validation and Sharing

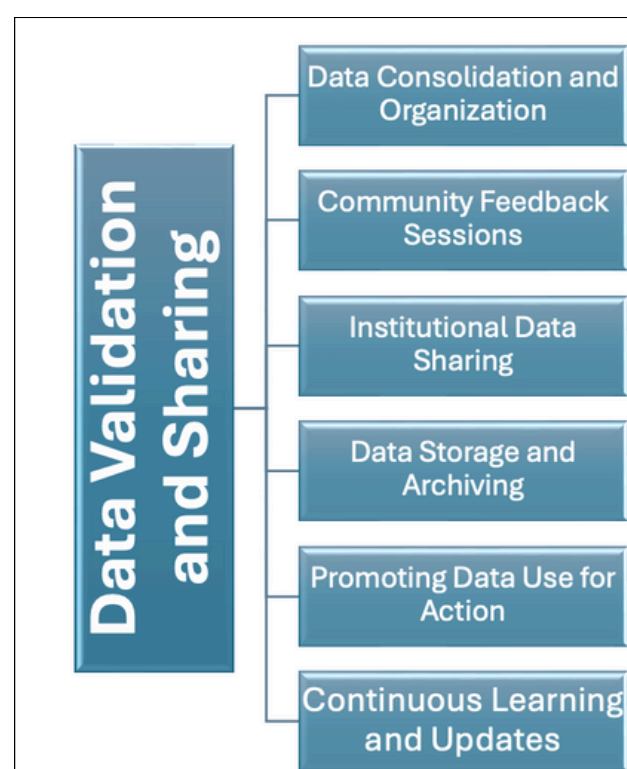


Figure 12. Data validation and sharing

3.13. DETAILED SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

After data collection and analysis, the next step is to develop a detailed situational analysis that provides an in-depth understanding of challenges and opportunities aligned with the

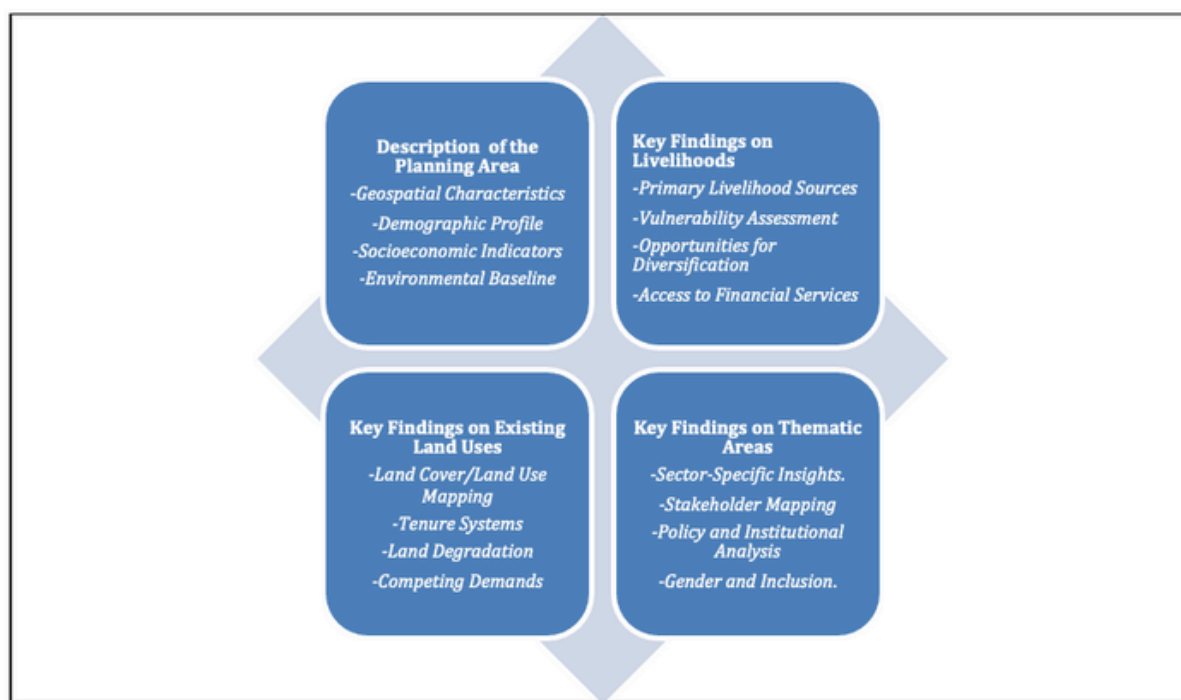


Figure 13. Critical Components of the Situational Analysis

established research questions. The situational analysis should be structured according to key thematic areas (consortiums or sectors) to ensure focused and actionable insights. Data collection should be organized by consortium, with analysis conducted at both the individual consortium level and through cross-consortium synthesis to identify systemic linkages. Other sections with emerging issues from the situational analysis can be included in the situational analysis.

3.14. DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE'S ADAPTATION PLANS

3.14.1. Community Visioning

Conversations about climate change can often feel discouraging for communities, as they underscore growing risks and uncertainties that threaten long-term livelihood security. To shift this narrative toward positive and locally relevant development, the community visioning process invites participants to explore and share their aspirations, hopes, and ideas for the future of their community. This approach encourages people to look beyond immediate challenges and envision the kind of future they want to create.

The vision statements that emerge from this process serve as a foundation for identifying practical actions to achieve those aspirations according to the consortiums. They also provide a framework for understanding how climate change may impact the community's goals, and for exploring strategies to minimize those impacts. In doing so, community visioning reframes the conversation—focusing not only on problems, but on possibilities—making the adaptation process more hopeful, empowering, and forward-looking.

Focus group discussions on community visioning will be undertaken in each and every Zone in the village with cell or household representatives, if resources allow. This process is conducted through community meetings and focus group discussions and is guided by two key methodologies: Future Search and Appreciative Inquiry.

The **Future Search** methodology brings together a diverse range of community stakeholders to collaboratively explore shared aspirations and long-term goals. It enables participants to articulate a collective vision and define clear objectives, while also identifying potential barriers to achieving them.

Table 3: Future Search Methodology Steps

Phase	Session	Key Activities
Understanding the Past & Present	Session 1: Climate Trends & Impacts	Present scientific climate data and past disaster case studies
Understanding the Past & Present	Session 2: Stakeholder Perspectives	Group discussions on climate impact, mapping adaptation efforts and barriers
Envisioning the Future	Session 3: Scenario Building	Brainstorm best/worst case scenarios, use back casting to define resilience pathway
Envisioning the Future	Session 4: Common Ground & Conflicts	Identify shared priorities, discuss trade-offs
Action Planning & Commitments	Session 5: Priority Strategies	Rank measures and define short- and long-term actions
Action Planning & Commitments	Session 6: Accountability Framework	Assign roles and set monitoring indicators

At the same time, **Appreciative Inquiry** focuses on uncovering and building upon existing community strengths—such as successful local climate initiatives, available resources, and the skills and experiences of community members (see *Figure 14*).

By emphasizing what is already working well, this approach highlights opportunities for community-led action and resilience. Together, both the Future Search and Appreciative Inquiry methodologies foster a visioning process that is inclusive, constructive, and deeply rooted in the community's own capacity to lead transformative change.

3.14.2. Identification, Prioritization, and Rationalization of Development and Adaptation Strategies

The identification of development and adaptation strategies builds on earlier participatory analysis, engaging diverse community groups in open dialogue. These discussions complemented by community studios focus on development needs, the impacts of climate change on livelihoods, current coping and adaptation mechanisms, and possible alternative strategies that align with the community's vision. The aim is to develop

at least three iterations that are not only effective but also sustainable and resilient over the long term.

Community studios involve the community drawing land use plans in line with their visions identified during the Future Search methodology. The communities are given white flip charts and markers with the boundaries to demarcate the land in a way that meets their vision.



Local Area Plan validation meeting, Ipusukilo, Kitwe.
Source: PPHPZ file photo

The consortiums hold three meetings with zone representatives to cost the identified projects. The costing process involves estimates based on similar projects undertaken or requests for quotes. The costs of the projects can be used for a comparative analysis using a cost benefit assessment tool.

Cost Benefit Analysis

Types of costs that can be included are as follows:

Direct costs: Created by the project, such as labor, inventory, raw materials and implementation expenses

Indirect costs: Associated or partially associated with the project, such as overhead costs from management, rent, and utilities.

Intangible costs: Impact that can't be measured directly, such as the impact on the community or their social networks.

Opportunity costs: Potential benefits lost from choosing this alternative instead of another. For instance, potential restricts to a protected forest as a result of the efforts to restore the forest.

Cost of potential risks: Regulatory risks, competition, and environmental impacts.

Once identified all costs and benefits are analyzed, the project(s) that are economically viable are identified.

In cases where infrastructure plays a central role in the proposed development and adaptation strategies, it is important to recognize that conventional infrastructure standards may be unrealistic in rural settlements, where resources are limited. Applying formal planning standards without adaptation may increase community vulnerability or disrupt social cohesion.

To address this, it is essential to assess the implications of applying such standards and engage in dialogue with both government and community stakeholders. This allows for the negotiation of alternative approaches that preserve community bonds while meeting essential standards for health, safety, dignity, and accessibility—prioritizing collective needs over individual ownership. A detailed methodological guide for assessing planning standards and negotiating alternatives is available in [Locally Led Planning: A Guide for Building Climate Resilience in Urban Informal Settlements](#) (Global Center on Adaptation, 2022, pp. 238–254).

Following identification and prioritization, all proposed adaptation strategies must undergo a screening process to ensure feasibility, gender-responsiveness, and climate-resilience. This process is undertaken by the consortiums and focuses on the following:

Feasibility Screening: Development and adaptation strategies must be technically, financially, socially, and environmentally viable within the specific local context. Feasibility screenings help to determine which strategies have strong potential, what risks may be involved, and whether additional support or complementary actions are needed. Strategies deemed unfeasible—due to challenges beyond the community's control should be removed from the list, and advocacy efforts initiated to engage relevant state or institutional actors in addressing those barriers.

Gender Screening: To ensure gender responsiveness, community members assess who benefits from the proposed strategies, their impact on the workload of women and men, and whether they promote equitable access to productive resources and their benefits. This screening evaluates whether strategies contribute positively, negatively, or neutrally to gender equality. Any strategy with potentially negative impacts on gender equity is excluded from further consideration.

Climate Screening: Communities may propose strategies that address immediate needs but overlook long-term climate risks. To avoid maladaptation and ensure climate resilience, all strategies should be reviewed against observed climate trends, available projections, and potential future scenarios. This helps ensure the strategies are robust in the face of expected changes in temperature, rainfall, and extreme weather. Where necessary, strategies are adjusted or new ideas are introduced to strengthen resilience, underscoring the importance of flexibility in planning.

With a clear and agreed-upon list of screened best iterations, the next step is to identify the resources and mechanisms needed to implement, monitor, and evaluate them effectively. It is also important to define who will do what—clarifying the roles and responsibilities of all key actors. This includes not only community members themselves but also government agencies, civil society organizations, and private sector partners who will play a role in supporting the implementation of activities.

The proposals from the communities might require rationalization by the technocrats to ensure that they are feasible and fit into the acceptable standards. Thus, the consortiums meet to look at the proposals and adjust them accordingly.

3.15. FINALIZATION, VALIDATION, ADOPTION AND APPROVAL OF THE PLANS

The finalization and approval of the People's Adaptation Plans is a critical phase that ensures the planning process is inclusive, legitimate, technically sound, and legally recognized. This phase consolidates the community's vision, formalizes their decisions, and aligns them with the statutory frameworks under the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD).

STEP 1. PREPARATION AND SHARING OF DRAFT PEOPLE'S ADAPTATION PLANS

Once participatory data collection, zoning, and preliminary planning activities are completed, draft People's Adaptation Plans are prepared for each village. These drafts incorporate land use zones, prioritized adaptation and development actions, and identified bankable projects that can attract investment and support community resilience.

The draft plans are shared at the zonal level, where villages are grouped into practical administrative or geographic clusters. Five zonal meetings are organized by the consortiums and thematic committees, during which all residents are invited to participate. At these meetings:

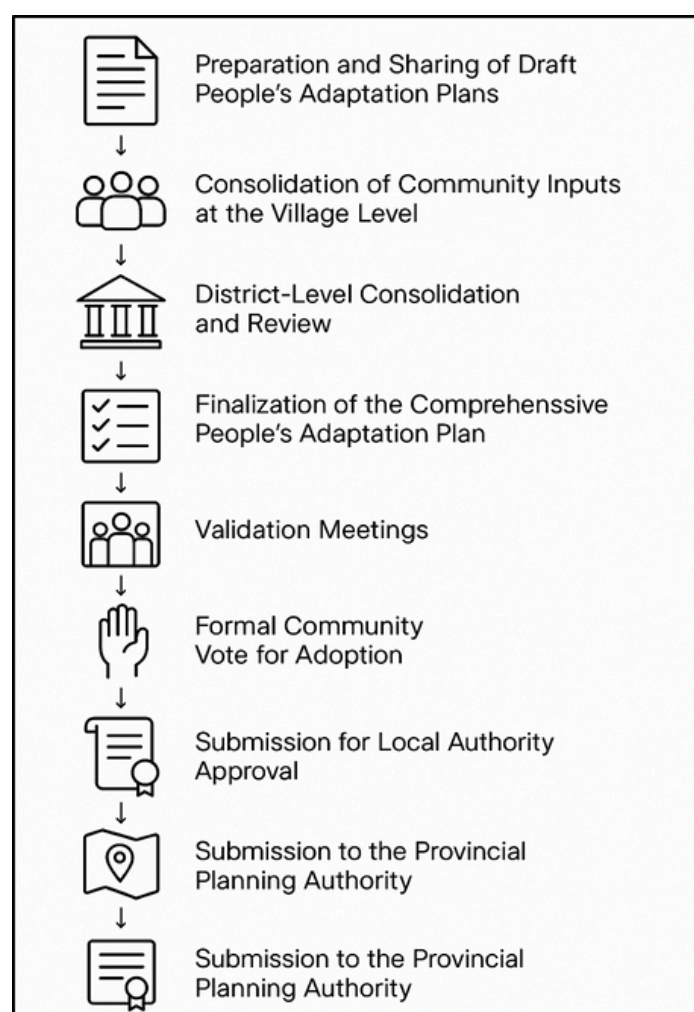


Figure 14. Finalization, validation and adoption of People's Adaptation Plans.

- The consortium presents three options or iterations for land use and development strategies based on the technical analysis.
- Full presentations are made outlining the costs, benefits, risks, and trade-offs associated with each option.
- Community members are given the opportunity to review, ask questions, and make suggestions for improvements
- Residents are also encouraged to vote on the bankable projects they would like prioritized in their respective communities, ensuring that investment choices are people-driven.

Special efforts are made to ensure the meaningful participation of vulnerable groups, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, and marginalized households.

STEP 2. CONSOLIDATION OF COMMUNITY INPUTS AT THE VILLAGE LEVEL

Following the zonal meetings, village-level meetings are organized with traditional leadership (including Chiefs and Headpersons) and representatives from all participating villages, traditional leaders, local authority officials (District Council and Planning Department), sectoral agencies (e.g., agriculture, forestry, water), and consortium members.

During the district meeting draft plans from each village are presented for technical review, and consistency with District IDPs and other statutory frameworks is assessed. Opportunities for inter-village collaboration and synergies are also identified and stakeholders collectively review and endorse the district-wide adaptation and development framework informed by the plans. Necessary adjustments based on technical advice or harmonization needs are incorporated at this stage.

STEP 3. DISTRICT-LEVEL CONSOLIDATION AND REVIEW

Following the zonal meetings, village-level meetings are organized with traditional leadership (including Chiefs and Headpersons) and representatives from all community groups (e.g., women's groups, youth groups, farmers, business owners, vulnerable populations, etc.).

At these meetings feedback from the zonal meetings is reviewed, additional inputs from the village level are collected to refine and consolidate the drafts, conflicting inputs are mediated and resolved through consensus-building facilitated by neutral technical teams, and communities validate the list of prioritized projects, zoning agreements, and development strategies.

The output of this step is a consolidated draft People's Adaptation Plan for each village, which reflects the collective aspirations, needs, and strategies identified through a participatory process.

STEP 4. FINALIZATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PEOPLE'S ADAPTATION PLAN

After district-level consolidation, a comprehensive People's Adaptation Plan is finalized. The Plan organizes all community-prioritized development and adaptation actions into a structured framework that includes: Specific activities and interventions; clear timelines and implementation schedules; detailed budgets for each activity; and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) indicators and milestones.

Care should be taken to ensure that the action plan is technically feasible, climate-resilient, socially inclusive, and legally compliant. The finalized draft People's Adaptation Plan is compiled into accessible formats for public sharing.

STEP 5. VALIDATION MEETINGS



*Local Area Plan validation meeting, Ipusukilo, Kitwe.
Source: PPHPZ file photo*

The finalized draft People's Adaptation Plans are validated through community meetings or formal stakeholder hearings. This process allows members of the community to review the plans and recommend any adjustments if necessary. During validation the following should occur:

- The full content of the plan(s) is presented in simple, understandable formats;

for instance, through maps, posters, and translated summaries.

- Special accommodations are made to reach illiterate persons and vulnerable groups to ensure that no one is left behind.
- Feedback and minor corrections are documented and incorporated.

Validation ensures transparency, accountability, and shared ownership of the final plans.

STEP 6. FORMAL COMMUNITY VOTE FOR ADOPTION

Once validation is completed, a formal vote is organized within each village for the adoption of the People's Adaptation Plan. Community members vote to approve the Plan as a binding local development and land use document. This voting process strengthens the democratic legitimacy of the Plan and reinforces community ownership of future implementation activities.



*Mabonga CFMG Annual General Meeting.
Source: PPHPZ file photo*

STEP 7. SUBMISSION FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY APPROVAL

After village-level adoption, the final Plans are formally submitted to the Local Authority (the District Council) for statutory review and approval. This process includes technical verification that the Plans align with district spatial and development plans and formal approval through a Council Resolution is issued by the Local Authority. The approved People's Adaptation Plans are then recognized as official statutory planning documents under local government structures.

STEP 8. SUBMISSION TO THE PROVINCIAL PLANNING AUTHORITY

Following district-level approval, the Plans are submitted to the Provincial Planning Authority under the MLGRD. The Provincial Authority reviews legal compliance, technical coherence, and alignment with provincial and national planning policies. Upon provincial approval, the People's Adaptation Plans attain full statutory recognition, enabling access to national programs, development financing, and protection under planning law.

The People's Adaptation Plans provide a critical opportunity to influence planning policy by demonstrating the value of locally led, climate-informed, and spatially grounded planning processes. As instruments developed through inclusive, community-driven methodologies, People's Adaptation Plans offer practical evidence for the effectiveness of bottom-up approaches in shaping land use and development priorities. These insights can inform the review and revision of IDP guidelines, ensuring they are more responsive to local realities, support participatory governance, strengthen downward accountability, and institutionalize mechanisms for community input. Through integration of the principles and tools of People's Adaptation Planning process, the IDP framework can be reoriented to better capture climate resilience strategies, inclusive land management practices, and the socio-economic aspirations of communities in rural settings.



*Mabonga CFMG handover meeting.
Source: PPHPZ file photo*

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5. APPENDIX