

EMERGING ISSUES: Gender Inclusion and
Emerging Technologies

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OUTLINE

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INTRODUCTION

As a communication professional tasked with the responsibility to set the agenda for public discussion, Gender inclusion in the age of technology scores high on the list of issues the world needs to pay attention to and work towards realising.

Among the Sustainable Development Goals, no. 5 – Gender equality is a very important discussion to have if we are to “enable an Inclusive Digital Transformation of Africa”. This is based on the conviction that technology is neutral in its function but requires further probing on whether it’s implemented and utilized with a gendered perspective.

It’s important to probe more specifically if the internet is utilized and treated equitably between men and women especially that the environments and communities in which emerging technologies are being introduced and implemented across Africa, are still prone to gender imbalances and inequalities.



BODY

- Gender inclusion refers to the state of ensuring that women have access to the same economic, political and social opportunities as men while disrupting the cultural systems and barriers that favour men over women.
- Addressing the gender divide effectively to achieve inclusion is not possible if we do not understand the scale of the problem and this is often due to lack of evidence. Working for a technology hub has made it much easier for my colleagues and I to contribute to bridging the gender divide by producing evidence based data using emerging technologies and tools for social impact.
- In Zambia for example, women account for about 51 percent of the total population yet despite gender parity at primary level, there is a higher dropout rate for girls at both primary and secondary school levels (Ministry of Gender Status Report 2016). This is problematic and threatens the attainment of gender equality in the long term hence the need to develop and use emerging technologies to solve such issues

BODY

- In Malawi, Inequality has continued to breed violence against women, Women and Law in Southern Africa Research and Educational Trust-Malawi Chapter reports that “violence is a significant problem that occurs in the home, community and the workplace. Women are particularly vulnerable to violence, including wife-battering, sexual harassment and assault, girl-child defilement, marital rape, incest, femicide, and widowhood rites. Sexual abuse also occurs within some traditional practices in Malawi and most women are blamed if their unmarried daughters become pregnant.”
- One way to addressing such challenges as Zambia’s and Malawi’s is by giving women and other minority groups a platform to speak out and provide evidence and insight into the scale of the problem. This is the power that technology places in our hands. Here are some examples of ICT-based platforms developed by my organization and working to address the gender divide and amplify the voices of minority groups.



UFULU WANGA



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About Ufulu Wanga



My Rights, Your Rights, Our Rights

Ufulu Wanga, Ufulu Wako, Ufulu Wathu

Ufulu Wanga is a human rights platform that seeks to provide basic and educative information on human rights issues, what to do when you feel your rights are being violated and the service providers that offer help in these different fields. The platform seeks to bridge the knowledge gap between human rights service providers and the citizens by providing information on human rights. The platform is secure whereby the anonymity and privacy of citizens is upheld.

For to be free is not merely to cast off ones chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.

- Nelson Mandela



mHub ICT-BASED PLATFORMS

Reports

Home > Reports



Mamuna wanga wakale wandimenya mondivulaza

Ndine tsikana waku mtandire ndipo ndakhala pabanja kwa zaka 4. Ine ndimamuna wanga banja linatha 2014 koma tili ndi ana awiri.

Report Categories

- All >
- Constitutional Mandate >
- Child Marriages >
- Domestic Violence >

ICT-BASED PLATFORMS



MZINDA PLATFORM REPORTS

OVER 18 MONTHS

535 TOTAL CITIZEN REPORTS
318 THROUGH SMS
217 THROUGH WEB

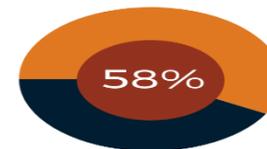
Total Citizen Reports



**72% RESPONSE
RATE TO CITIZEN
REPORTS**

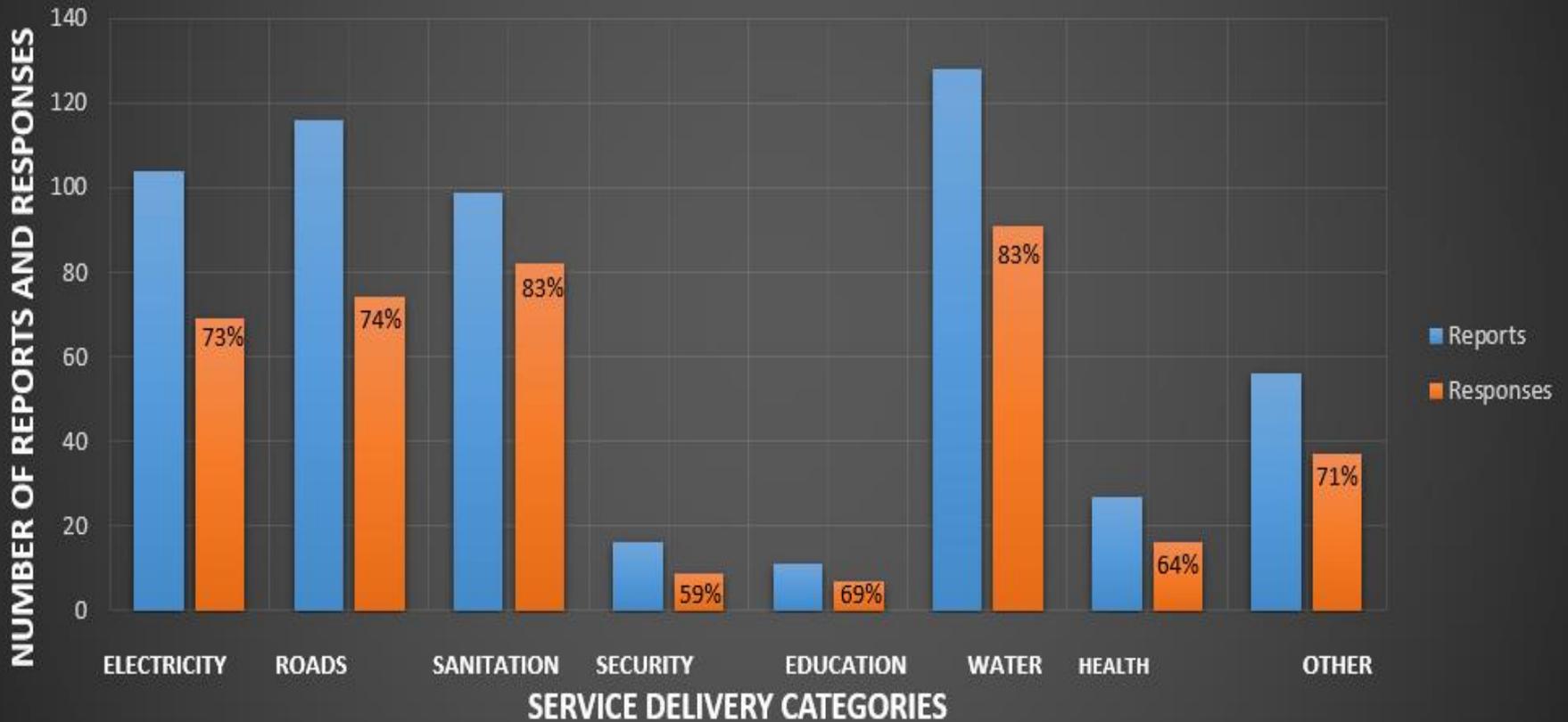


**58% OF CITIZEN
REPORTS
RESOLVED**



mHub ICT-BASED PLATFORMS

Responses to Citizens Reports per Category



mHub ICT-BASED PLATFORMS



- Dashboard
- Administrative division
- Team
- Polling station
- Manage Candidates
- Manage forms
- Incident Alert
- Events
- Manage statement
- Manage SMS
- System setting

Dashboard » Categories » Manage

Category of Questions



Search

Displaying 1-6 of 6 results.

Category	
Voter Info and Education	
Voter Register Inspection	
Voter Registration	
Political Party Behaviour	
Personal Rights & Freedoms	
ZEC Preparations	





CONCLUSION

As images above show, technology and ICT based tools are great but they do not solve all problems, they merely complement already existing mechanisms, the most effective of which is consistent human interaction to achieve great social impact.



Recommendations

- Invest in identifying, supporting the development of technologies that amplify the voices of women and provide evidence-based data for corrective measures to bridge the gender divide.
- Promote access to information on rights and freedoms through ICT tools.
- Improve access and affordability of ICT-based tools for inclusive digital transformation.
- Deliberately develop and popularize women focused content using technology to increase participation and reinforcement of rights and freedoms.



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