Habakkuk Trust joined the rest of the world to celebrate human rights day on the 10th of December 2015, which were held under the theme: Our Rights, Our Freedoms – Always (this was also the theme for the UN 2015).

The main celebrations, held at White water Secondary School in Matobo District Council, officiated by Ward 25 Councillor Lucy Hlatshwayo and Ward 16 and 17 Councillors as well as community members from Wards 16, 17 and 25.

The event also featured soccer matches between Ward 16 and Ward 17’s finest teams and the winning team (Ward 16) then played with former Highlanders football stars. The lineup also entertained by Victory Siyanqoba Arts group, an Amabhariza arts group from Ward 16, a praise poet as well as music.

The event was aimed at bringing together community members and making them aware of the importance of upholding and promoting human rights and freedoms enshrined in the Constitution of Zimbabwe. Habakkuk Trust believes that total community transformation and sustainable development can only occur if people know their rights and exercise their responsibilities as citizens of Zimbabwe.

Branded t-shirts, newsletters and copies of the Constitution were distributed to encourage community members to know their rights and freedoms and what they can possibly do when their rights are violated.

Habakkuk Trust has nine Community Advocacy Action Teams in Matobo District which are advocating for human rights related issues in their Wards with the view of improving the welfare and livelihoods of the people.

### Youth Speak Out

Youth participation in most community development programmes is usually disappointing. I want to find out why when we are faced with an economic decision making process that involves community development initiatives. This is what they had to say:

Nonhlonhlo Ncube from Buzi village in Matobo Ward 17:

I don’t think that young people do not want to attend or participate in community initiatives. What happens is that when they are calling community members for community meeting, they clearly say that they want youth representatives from households. Most of the youths do not represent their households because there are no supporting people to represent with their parents. It therefore becomes difficult for youths to attend as we need to make sure that some of the youth are best chosen by their parents.

At times when you attend those meetings you can’t believe that you are there because you are always people who do not find young people are capable for saying what they are doing about the development in the area. So when we attended these meetings, of which many of us don’t, we just sit and listen to other people making decisions on our behalf. Many young people are not employed and many of them depend on their relatives in South Africa. What we lack most are human rights training and skills training programmes that would encourage us to do something better with our lives instead of attending to get money. However there are no programmes aimed at teaching young people about their rights and no programmes that target young people only.

Adelaide Ncube from Dewe village Ward 17:

She echoed similar sentiments saying young people have a lot to contribute to community development initiatives to their elders because they abstay involved in such initiatives.

There should be programmes that will assist empowering young people alone because once young people are connected with their elders they lose their voice. There are hundreds of youths in Dewe village but usually when these community meetings, you will only see one or two of them. Young people are free and work better with the people of their age, not with elders.

Youth participation in community initiatives was going to be far much better if there were programmes. Therefore I calling young people who are our leaders to lead things. This is the reason why people, including young people do not participate in community development. You will find that most times young people are not called to discuss anything. It is also important for leaders to look for leadership to look for youth participation in initiatives, especially in the areas where the youth are calling community members for community meetings and initiatives. If you can’t see the young people, you will miss important decisions on our behalf.

### More Women Take Up Leadership Positions

Habakkuk Trust has trained five more Wards on local level advocacy, in Matobo District, with four of the wards being led by female councillors.

Amongst the trained is Matobo’s only female headman, headman Ward 17, 18, 24 and 25, Headman Nqindi, born Eunice Ncube which is a first in rural communities.

In an interview with Habakkuk Trust, Headman Nqindi said she faced resistance from men in the community who did not want to be led by a woman. She also alleged that there were some officials in government departments in the District that blocked down female leaders making it hard for them to address pertinent community challenges.

Matobo Ward 17 Councillor Sibuhle Hlongwane echoed the same sentiments and said it was not easy for a woman to work in a male dominated society but has since adapted.

“However, it was not easy in the beginning because the Ward did develop a lot that we used to do in front of people. But now I also stand my ground and convince them to listen to what I have to tell them.”

### Community Mapping and Development

Habakkuk Trust trained three more Wards on mapping and development. The Ward teams were trained on conflict resolution, leadership, resource mapping and development.

Habakkuk Trust trained Ward 25 Councillor Lucy Hlatshwayo, Ward 17 Councillor Sibuhle Hlongwane and Ward 12 led by Councillor Nomhle Mpofu, Councilor of Nkhironda Ward and Ward 6 by Mr. Pius Mlilo. Some of the issues which came out of the five Wards included lack of accessible healthcare, lack of basic resources, distribution of resources, lack of access to clean water as well as lack of access to health care.

These Wards were trained on conflict management, human rights, citizen participation, leadership, resource mapping and development.
COMMUNITIES URGED TO REPORT HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS
By Simachile Mafuta

The Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC) has urged communities to report human rights violations that happen in their communities. Speaking at a human rights day celebration at Shifiletso Conference Centre recently, Headman Isaiah Namathe said there is a need for communities to be aware of their rights and responsibilities. He added that, “We need to report violations in our communities so that the relevant authorities can take action.”

In its programming in Matobo District, Habakkuk Trust has observed that community members are not aware of their rights, and they do not know how to report violations. The Trust, which organises two-day Local Level Advocacy Programme (LLAP) training workshops, has observed that community members are not aware of their rights and responsibilities.

Speaking at a Habakkuk Trust organised Local Level Advocacy Programme (LLAP) training workshop at Silozwi Primary School in Matobo Ward 16, Commissioner Japhet Ndabeni Ncube urged communities to know their rights and come forward with their human rights related issues.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

1. Enforcement of Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms

   1. Any of the following persons, namely—
      a) any person acting in their own interests;
      b) any person acting on behalf of another person who cannot act for themselves;
      c) any person acting as a member, or in the interests, of a group or class of persons;
      d) any association acting in the interests of its members;
      e) any association acting in the public interest;
      f) any person acting on behalf of another person who cannot act for themselves;
      g) any person acting on behalf of another person who cannot act for themselves;
      h) any person acting as a member, or in the interests, of a group or class of persons;
      i) any association acting in the interests of its members;
      j) any person acting on behalf of another person who cannot act for themselves;
      k) any association acting in the public interest;
      l) any association acting in the interests of its members;
      m) any person acting on behalf of another person who cannot act for themselves;
      n) any association acting in the public interest;
      o) any association acting in the interests of its members;
      p) any person acting on behalf of another person who cannot act for themselves;
      q) any association acting in the public interest;
      r) any association acting in the interests of its members;
      s) any person acting on behalf of another person who cannot act for themselves;
      t) any association acting in the public interest;
      u) any association acting in the interests of its members;
      v) any person acting on behalf of another person who cannot act for themselves;
      w) any association acting in the public interest;
      x) any association acting in the interests of its members;
      y) any person acting on behalf of another person who cannot act for themselves;
      z) any association acting in the public interest;

   2. The fact that a person has contravened a law does not debar them from approaching a court for relief under subsection (1).

   3. The rules of every court must provide for the procedure to be followed in cases where relief is sought under subsection (1), and those rules must ensure that—
      a) the right to approach the court under subsection (1) is fully facilitated;
      b) the court, while observing the rules of natural justice, is not unduly delayed by procedural technicalities, and a person with particular expertise may, with the leave of the court, appear as a friend of the court.

   4. The absence of rules referred to in subsection (3) does not limit the right to commence proceedings under subsection (1) and to have the case heard and determined by a court.

COMMUNITIES URGED TO EMPOWER PEOPLE LIVING WITH DISABILITIES
By Ndumiso Ncube

Rural communities have been urged to involve people living with disabilities in decision making and development processes. People living with disabilities constitute about 10 per cent of Zimbabwe’s population but in many rural areas, they have been overlooked. They are viewed as disabled and are not involved in decision making, development and economic processes.

Speaking at a Habakkuk Trust organised two-day Local Level Advocacy Programme (LLAP), held at Staid Primary School in Matobo Ward 16, Mr. Vernon Ntaisi who is living with a disability said, “There is a need to incorporate people living with disabilities in decision making and development processes.”

In Ward 16, participants claimed that they do not benefit from the Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) yet they have wildlife, sand and grass which can be used sustainably. It was agreed that the community in Ward 16 will advocate for access to the said resources in their Wards.

There were two people with disabilities at the workshop where one of the advocacy issues identified was the involvement of people living with disabilities in decision making and development processes. Mr. Vernon Ntaisi received a Certificate of Excellence for his sterling performance at the workshop.

CONCERN OVER COMMUNITY BENEFIT ON NATURAL RESOURCES

By Nondumiso Ncube

Matobo villagers living in areas, which they say are international monuments and natural resources have claimed that the famous Matobo National Park, balancing rocks, and caves that are internationally recognised and part of their heritage have not benefited them in any way as they continue facing economic difficulties as well as lack of access to clean water.

Speaking at a Habakkuk Trust organised Local Level Advocacy Programme (LLAP) training workshop at Staid Primary School in Matobo Ward 16, participants expressed concerns that they have natural resources but have seen little or no benefit to their Ward.

Participants said that they have about five caves with ancient paintings done by the San community which they could benefit from but tourists are allowed to view their fees of charge because there are no set mechanisms to ensure that villages pay something for viewing the sites.

One participant, Mr. Mbiko Ncube said, “There is a lot of money generated in our Ward, at the National Park but it doesn’t come back to us as a community. Decisions are made about our resources but we are not part of the decision making processes.”

In Ward 25, participants who attended LLAP training in Matisa said their area has wild animals which they can benefit from but they do not know whether these animals are theirs or belong to a farm close to their villages. In Ward 17, participants claimed that they do not benefit from the Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) yet they have wildlife, sand and grass which can be used sustainably. It was agreed that the workshop will be followed up as they will be involved in the management of the resources in their areas and how they should benefit from the said resources.

Matobo Ward 16 Councillor Ethel Nyanjaro highlighted that all caves are managed by the National Museums and Monuments which overseas tourism attractions. She added, “All caves belong to the National Museums and Monuments, including those in villagers’ homesteads,” she said. “As councillors we only know the number of caves that are there, the Museums authority does not tell us about the revenue they generate from the caves.”

Nyanjaro said the proceeds generated from other natural resources under CAMPFIRE are accounted for but the caves are not part of the programme.

It was agreed that the community in Ward 16 will advocate for access to information and clarity on policies regarding the management of historical monuments and natural resources in their Wards.